

Alexander I Gray and Ibrahim Al-Marashi (eds.)

# Peace and Conflict: Europe and Beyond

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**HumanitarianNet**

Thematic Network on Humanitarian  
Development Studies



# Peace and Conflict: Europe and Beyond



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Editors

**Alexander I Gray**  
**Ibrahim Al-Marashi**

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## Introduction

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Violence and conflict are recurring themes in contemporary times. Often, it seems that wherever one turns one is confronted by catastrophes resulting from poor human relations. From newspapers to the evening news, the mass media continually exposes us to the psychological and physical manifestations of violence and conflict — flashing images portraying humiliation, degradation, genocide or war. Due to their socially destructive and seemingly omnipresent nature, violence and conflict have been studied and debated extensively amongst journalists, scholars, policy makers and analysts. Peace and Conflict Studies is an increasingly observed discipline, as researchers seek to investigate these issues and to aid in the building of knowledge which can be used towards transforming conflict. Using case studies from Europe and beyond, this edited volume seeks to provide theoretical tools and alternative approaches for examining the root causes of violence, and to extrapolate possibilities for transcending peace through conflict transformation. The reader is presented with specific case studies from the Middle East, South Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean rim and South America.

This work emerged from the collaborative effort of participants in an Intensive Programme entitled 'Peace and Conflict Case Studies: Europe and Beyond' held at Sabanci University, Turkey, July 2005. The Programme constitutes part of the curriculum towards HumanitarianNet's European Doctoral Enhancement in Peace and Conflict Studies (EDEN), bringing together doctoral candidates from across Europe and from diverse academic backgrounds, but with a shared interest in Peace and Conflict Studies. Participants were selected based on their expertise in the fields of international law, conflict resolution and peace building. The contributions in this edited volume are based on the Intensive Pro-

gramme's agenda which sought to analyse the integration of theory and practise in conflict transformation, and European and alternative approaches to dealing with conflict.

The contributions in this volume derive their inspiration from both the lectures presented during the Intensive Programme and the individual research platforms of participants. Professors from eleven universities contributed to the more than twenty lectures that made up the core of the Programme. To compliment formal learning in the classroom and to emphasise the practical dimension of the Programme, participants and lecturers visited NGOs in the city of Istanbul. Following nine days of lectures and case study visits, participants undertook role playing during the simulation of an inter-religious meeting aimed at resolving the disputed access to holy sites in the city of Jerusalem.

\* \* \* \*

The chapters in this edited work are divided into three sections, 'Approaches to the Study of Conflict,' 'Europe' and 'Beyond Europe.' The chapters in the 'Approaches' section deal with the challenges of methodology and field work and the importance of human rights when researching peace and conflict case studies. Chapter One, 'Challenges in Data Collection in a Violently Divided Society' by Marcello Mollica, examines data collection in the study of violently divided societies. The contribution is based on ethnographic field work conducted in Northern Irish Protestant and Catholic enclaves. It examines the long term legacy and perceptions of acts of self-immolation of Republican prisoners in 1980-81. The work also offers links between the difficulties experienced in data gathering and the theoretical framework such that challenges can become a source of data in their own right.

Chapter Two, 'Exhuming Bones, Reintegrating Memories: the forgotten victims of the Spanish Civil War, an ethnohistorical approach' by Ignacio Fernández de Mata, centres around the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. Fernández examines the massacre of defenseless civilian populations in smaller rebel-controlled villages and towns, focusing on stories about the victims and their memories and testimonies. Historical and anthropological methods are used to uncover the memories, emotions and experiences of these victims of the Spanish Civil War. This research seeks to build knowledge about the lives of the defeated, the relatives of the murdered, those without a voice. In short, it is about the 'reds', a people that Fernández portrays as having been excluded from history.

Chapter Three, 'Mending the Wrongs: the importance of human rights in post-conflict peace-building' by Daniela Nascimento, analyses



how human rights have been incorporated into peace building processes. Nascimento argues that violations of basic human rights are frequently at the root causes of contemporary conflicts but that their importance is often overlooked in the context of post-conflict peace building processes. Based on this analysis, it is suggested that new ways to better incorporate a transversal human rights dimension are required in order to ensure better results of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes. In fact, it is suggested that the main challenge to successful post-conflict peace building is acknowledging and including a clear and comprehensive human rights dimension. In this way, human rights become a necessary and more effective tool to long-term peace sustainability.

Section Two, 'Europe,' examines conflicts in the Balkans as well as the 'War on Terror' in the European context. Chapters Four and Five deal with the representation of conflicts, and of parties to those conflicts in the Balkans. Chapter Four, 'Humanitarian Imperialism as a Spin-Off of Cultural Imperialism: problems engendered by misrepresenting the Balkans' by Robert C. Hudson, examines the problems of misrepresenting the Balkans. He analyses the role of cultural identity and representation in forming public opinion in conflict. Can anything can be learned from the representation of cultural identity in time of conflict and post-conflict aftermaths? Focusing on the Serbian context, Hudson explores how a deeply embedded cultural imperialism in the West has fed into a kind of humanitarian imperialism, whereby post-conflict rehabilitation has often been nurtured by what is little more than a benign, post-modern colonialism. The chapter serves as a strong reminder that strategies of international interventions need not only have a strong background in international relations, peace studies and international law, but also empathy and knowledge of the histories, languages and cultures of the regions in which they will work.

Chapter Five, 'The Role of Identity in the Dynamics of New Forms of Violent Conflict' by M. Selin Türkeş and António Marco Bernardino da Silva Rosa, uses the 1999 Kosovo conflict as case study. Türkeş and Rosa analyse the way particularistic and exclusivist identities are created in the globalization era, in order to justify today's wars. The structural transformations which took place after the end of the Cold War, such as the weakening of the welfare of the state, the disappointment created by the socialist and post-colonialist ideologies, or the diminution of public employment led to uncertainty and insecurity. These phenomena have led to the emergence of new forms of political aggregation around religious and nationalist identities.

Chapter Six, 'Responding to Terror: an analysis of the evolution of EU counter-terrorism strategy in the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> era' by Fraser

Patrick Gray, is an analysis of the EU's counter-terrorism strategy in the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> era. Gray asserts that the EU recognizes jihadist terrorism as an internal, as well as a global threat. Since the EU perceives terrorism as primarily a policing problem, rather than a military one, it has responded to this threat by increasing co-operation among national policing bodies of member states both prior to 11 September 2001, and after the London bombings of 7 July 2005. Hence the EU employs tactics such as intelligence and policing, alongside military force to dismantle the threat. Some member states have utilised a primarily military approach but in the British and Spanish cases military responses to resistance movements have proven a dismal failure for the state, while increased dialogue with 'terrorists' has resulted in less terror, less violence, and greater chances for peace and security.

Section Three, 'Europe and Beyond,' examines cases of conflict in Turkey and Columbia and war journalism in Iraq. Chapter Seven, 'The EU Enlargement Process as a Peace Promotion Instrument: the Kurdish conflict in Turkey' by Andre Barrinha, analyses the Kurdish conflict in Turkey and possibilities for its resolution through the European Union (EU) enlargement processes. The argument is that, as peace and stability are compulsory requisites to join the EU, then in theory any conflict within a country will have a tendency to be solved. Barrinha describes the evolution of the enlargement process, Turkish-EU relations, and Turkey's Kurdish problem. His analysis concentrates on the degree of influence that the enlargement process has on the Turkish-Kurdish conflict, especially in light of the re-escalation of fighting in 2004.

Chapter Eight, 'The Structural Failure of the Colombian State and a Non-Exclusionary Peacebuilding Initiative' by Maurizio Tinnirello, examines the conflict in Columbia in the context of the structural failure of its state and proffers 'a non-exclusionary peacebuilding initiative.' Violence in Colombia has endured decades and is multifaceted in nature. Irregular armies are locked in conflict with weakened national armed forces; external intervention and the drug trade have exacerbated Columbia's problems at the expense of civilians. Tinnirello argues that the Colombian state has failed to resolve the conflict due to its exclusionary and fragmented socio-economic/political practices that have constructed a society 'that cannot be called civil.' Tinnirello proposes an alternative conflict transformation initiative which includes recognizing the failure of the state and suggests a model based upon non-exclusionary practices that will generate processes than can form 'real communities and civil society.'

Chapter Nine, 'War Journalism: instrumentalizing media in Iraq (2003-2004)' by Cristina Sala Valdés and Jordi Santandreu Lorite, discusses the

media's coverage of the war in Iraq. They trace the development of War Journalism after the Second World War with the improvements in communication technologies. It was argued that the most recent case of embedding journalists in the 2003 Iraq War was a political strategy of the combatants to justify wars to their societies, as well as to protect their interests and public image. Embedding has resulted in journalists reporting on war in such a way as to satisfy governments. Sala and Santandreu suggest an alternative way of reporting on conflict, otherwise known as peace journalism, where journalists can inform the public but also help create an understanding of the root causes of a conflict, the actors involved and their interests and finally, the way to peace.

\* \* \* \*

The themes in this volume deal with conflict in the European and non-European context. What differentiates this work is that more than just analyzing the conflicts, they offer either methodological or theoretical alternatives for their transformation. While not discarding the value of traditional approaches to conflict resolution a new generation of peace workers is emerging and proposing that a certain level of conflict is a natural and sometimes necessary aspect of human relations. There is a growing recognition that it would be almost impossible to rid society of conflict altogether. A view that is gaining increasing currency is one which promotes the idea of conflict transformation. This approach entails transforming levels of conflict in order to alleviate discord, avoid violence and create circumstances for future peace-building.



# Chapter One

## Challenges in Data Collection in a Violently Divided Society

Marcello Mollica

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### Abstract

Data collection is a major concern in studying violently divided societies. Challenges researchers encounter may dramatically affect reliable contributions to the field of polemology. This paper suggests a practical link between difficulties experienced in data gathering and the theoretical framework such that challenges can become a source of data in their own right; this makes the latter functional to a better understanding of the former. The research was based on ethnographic field work conducted in Northern Irish Protestant and Catholic enclaves during my doctoral studies. The research examined the long term legacy and perceptions of acts of self-immolation, which involved Republican prisoners who gave or attempted to give their life for a political cause in 1980-81. I maintain that what may appear as a socio-methodological problem can be viewed as a helpful component towards clarifying internal dynamics in deeply rooted ethnic conflicts when seen through the lens of participant observation, within ethno-graphically specific boundaries.

### Introduction

Suicidal behaviour has not been studied systematically with respect to conflict dynamics and the socially constructed concept of political martyrdom and its implications. I believe there is a need to understand the communal and social dynamics that motivate political violence. Likewise, there is a need to understand that different societies may have different values regarding the individual, the community, and life itself. Of course, I have looked at only one of the many aspects relevant to any conflict, i.e., mutual understanding between different groups and the

failure to appreciate different meanings between cultures. To validate my theoretical framework and, more precisely, to assess that the social dimension was crucial, I have chosen as a case study the Republican hunger strikes of 1980-81 in Northern Ireland.

However, in this paper, I will present some challenges I encountered in my data collection. These challenges add to the often ignored social dimension which reflects the cultural bias of western societies, which place heavy emphasis on the individual. I also believe this field of research requires further investigation, since some societies do not have the same concept of the individual and they place greater emphasis on the community over the individual. Thus, the family, community or ethnic group are given a higher priority, and values are evolved that may well seem incomprehensible to outsiders. This paper aims, also, at contributing to the timely debate over the issue of challenges in peace research by considering, in practice, four different aspects: the ethnographic dimension, some ethical concerns, the identity component and, finally, the contextualization of data collection.

## Data gathering in Northern Ireland

One of the most important phases of my doctoral research was the opportunity to work as a Marie Curie Fellow at the Magee Campus (University of Ulster) of Derry/Londonderry for one year<sup>1</sup>. The importance of staying in Northern Ireland and promoting my project and its objectives cannot be understated. The Fellowship offered unique opportunities to gather data at local libraries, inquire about post-conflict behaviour of persons who had experienced conflict in the past, collect information about the Republican hunger strikes of 1980-81<sup>2</sup> and their

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<sup>1</sup> I worked under the supervision of Dr. Stephen Ryan, Senior lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies.

<sup>2</sup> The Irish National Liberation Army (INLA)/Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) hunger strikes of 1980-81 were part of an ongoing campaign, popularly referred to as the 'troubles,' that began in Northern Ireland in 1969. The hunger strikes were the direct result of claims by prisoners convicted under the UK's Prevention of Terrorism Act (29<sup>th</sup> November 1974), which held that those convicted of terrorist acts should be treated as ordinary criminals. The prisoners claimed that they were political and wanted to be treated accordingly. They pointed not only to past treatment but also to previous experience in UK prisons and a policy that had allowed for categories of political prisoners with special prison conditions. However, the atmosphere had changed by the 1970s. With an ongoing and murderous campaign by paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, the rise of Middle Eastern terrorism, and left and right wing terrorism throughout Europe affecting the world government, attitudes were changing and a harder line was being taken. The

participants<sup>3</sup>, and observe several events of relevance<sup>4</sup>. I was able to screen the interviewees, plan field trips, and schedule and conduct my interviews. The opportunity to receive preliminary feedback and to engage in discussion was extremely valuable. Upon returning to Leuven (Belgium)<sup>5</sup>, I also received useful feedback from the staff of my department, who offered different perspectives on the issues. However, some aspects of data collection in a society divided by violence need further attention.

### The ethnographic field work

The ethnographic dimension played an important part in my research. The descriptions of events and the events themselves came together and often the boundary between description and 'experience' was very narrow. At times, personal involvement in the events was the only way I could collect the information I needed or to meet people who could facilitate meetings with prospective interviewees. This pro-

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hunger strike was the prisoners' last weapon in their ongoing and increasingly desperate struggle with the government for political status. In 1981 ten Republican prisoners starved themselves to death (Dingley and Mollica: 2005).

<sup>3</sup> The majority of the hunger strikers belonged to the PIRA. However, I interviewed the only two surviving long term INLA hunger strikers. John Nixon, on hunger strike from 27 October to 18 December, 1980; interviewed at Ex-Prisoners Assistance Committee (Expac) in Monaghan (Republic of Ireland) on 19 and 26 May, 11 and 26 June, 2003. Liam McCloskey, on hunger strike from 3<sup>rd</sup> August to 26 September, 1981; interviewed at Buncrana (Republic of Ireland) on 4 April, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 15, 17 and 27 June, 2003, and at Magee Campus, University of Ulster, Derry/Londonderry (Northern Ireland) on 28 June, 2003. The two hunger strikers were given a long semi-structured list of questions, which they partially filled out in my presence and partially on their own. They responded verbally to some questions and wrote their replies to others. No one was present during the interviews other than the respondent and me. One interviewee allowed me to audiotape-record part of his interview. Each interview took almost a week to complete due to interruptions and other time constraints. In these interviews I omitted references to events unrelated to my topic as well as subjects that might have raised ethical concerns in my doctoral dissertation. I have not reported what was said in open discussions unless I could prove or support it with reliable literature. However, I have quoted almost verbatim what the respondents have said or written.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to important Republican events including commemorations, unveilings of memorials, parades, *etcetera*.

<sup>5</sup> I was in Northern Ireland from the 15 March 2003 to the 15 March 2004; during that time I was enrolled as a doctoral student at the Centre for Peace Research and Strategic Studies, Faculty of Social Science, Catholic University of Leuven.

cess typically followed a customary pattern in which the last stage was ending up in a pub<sup>6</sup>.

I spent six months on one side of the ethnic divide and six months on the other. Throughout this time, however, I sometimes crossed the 'border' and conducted my interviews with persons living on the opposite side, who were aware of what I was doing. Sometimes the interviews were conducted in 'neutral' places such as pubs or cars, which made the interviewees feel more comfortable, though many argue that the conflict is over. I gained deep insight into their lives and environment, and often took 'tours' with paramilitary members of one community on the other side of the ethnic divide, where changes in their 'confidence' could be clearly seen. At times I felt a sense of discomfort knowing that persons on one side of the ethnic divide were seeing me in the company of their 'perceived enemy' on the other side. I started with the Republican side (where I already had some contacts<sup>7</sup>) and then moved to the Loyalist side (through a cross-link network of former 'prisoners of war'). Once I successfully infiltrated one side of the divide, it was then more difficult to return to the other side, and my movements arose suspicions on both sides.

On a more descriptive level, I attended commemorations for a period of one year. I was often an invited guest. At times, people treated me with at least suspicion, if not hostility. However, for the most part, I only encountered problems at the beginning of my research. I later realized that it was not the number of contacts that mattered, but the path the research had to follow. I had to know the right person and talk as little as possible. Still, I had to report investigations and considerations that came up in consequence of my 'involvement' in the events. I was approached by paramilitary personnel and asked about the 'why' or the 'what' of my research. Thus, the 'trust' factor was important, and the only way to establish trust was to tell the truth and reassure persons on one side of the ethnic divide that similar research was being done on the opposite side as well. Sometimes I just omitted any reference to the other side. However, I started keeping field diaries and establishing fieldwork relationships. I wrote prior to going on fieldwork and once back home. The descriptions of events and fieldwork helped me to refine, if not generate, my theory (Mollica: 2005).

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<sup>6</sup> For instance, *The Talk of the Town*, a Loyalist pub on London Street in the mainly Catholic/Republican city side of Londonderry.

<sup>7</sup> I was a full-time student at the University of Ulster on the Postgraduate Diploma/MA in Peace and Conflict Studies programme from 1995 to 1997.



## Ethical issues and concerns

A few problems arose during my data collection. Sometimes the methodology had to be changed suddenly in order not to lose the data. For example, some people were asked to respond to several written questions they had not seen before. Others had to be given more time. I had permission to tape-record some interviews, but not others, for various reasons. I had no major problems approaching ex-prisoners, political or military leaders, or family members. I did not have to seek advance permission to proceed with my interviews (but I do not know if my interviewees were required to get permission), and no one refused to meet with me at least once. Of course, some confidential sources have asked to remain anonymous.

The issue of ethical concerns in collecting information on Northern Irish societies has been studied by Smyth and Robinson (2001). They argue that, despite the comfort an *undercover* role offers, it is 'ethically dubious and is likely to jeopardise the researcher's safety' (Smyth and Robinson: 2001, 6).

I never was *undercover* in my role as a researcher, above all because I was so easily identified. The few times I tried to conceal where I was coming from, I was discovered anyway, and learned it was futile and made no further attempts. During the interviewing at the Protestant Youth Club<sup>8</sup>, a girl borrowed a pen from me, which unfortunately was labelled *Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*<sup>9</sup>. She looked at me and said: 'Fuck, that's a Catholic pen!' When I blushed with embarrassment, she responded, 'It's okay, I won't care!' Another concern was how to best obtain information. Despite the Irish Republican Socialist Party's<sup>10</sup> (IRSP) sustained efforts, their means of communications are still very inefficient, and I had to gather information about the Patsy O'Hara<sup>11</sup> commemoration on 20 May 2003 from the Provisional Sinn Fein<sup>12</sup> (PSF) office. The woman at the desk told me, 'That's not our

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<sup>8</sup> The seven (six females, one male) 11-13 year old youngsters at the Protestant Youth Club of the Fountain in Londonderry were given a questionnaire, on 27 November 2003, in the computer room of the Youth Club, which they completed in the presence of a Youth Worker and myself. The same Youth Worker spoke in advance about the questionnaire (but not its content) to 11 youngsters who regularly attend the Youth Club. The seven youngsters were not given the opportunity to communicate during the interview.

<sup>9</sup> Catholic University of Leuven.

<sup>10</sup> The IRSP is the political wing of the INLA.

<sup>11</sup> NLA volunteer and hunger striker whose (1981) funeral was reported to have the same attendance as the (1972) funeral of the Bloody Sunday civilian casualties in Derry.

<sup>12</sup> PSF is the political wing of the PIRA.

business!' However, she gave me the information that was published in a local Republican newspaper.

Above all, the interviewees were reluctant. They responded to me in the same way they responded to Pádraig O'Malley (1990, 37). People were afraid they might say something that could jeopardize the consolidated 'mythology' about the hunger strikers. A family member of a deceased hunger striker<sup>13</sup> was initially very discreet because, some years ago, his/her thoughts were 'misinterpreted' in a newspaper report. It was possible to build confidence by having some leading party member or paramilitary personnel present at an interview, but such confidence had to be maintained over time. Furthermore, interviews with the family members of deceased hunger strikers were difficult because of their sensitive nature (Duffy and Mollica: 2004). Meanwhile, in the other community, it was the different degree of involvement in the issue that arose suspicion. However, the 'talks' were often such that the boundary between legality and illegality was nearly invisible and could be easily crossed. A paramilitary attack, once acknowledged by its representative political wing, assumes a political dimension. It is often the case that members of a paramilitary group are also members of the related political wing. Thus, I cannot report some issues here because it would break an at least implicit agreement I made with them that was based on mutual trust.

A final concern regards the hunger strikers themselves. According to Smyth and Robinson (2001, 5), ethical challenges for researchers came up when dealing with 'victims of conflict' and also 'perpetrators of violence.' I do not know if the authors had the hunger strikers in mind. However, it is intriguing that the two come together in the hunger strike. John Nixon was both a 'volunteer' and a 'perpetrator' of self-inflicted violence. I had several lunches with John Nixon in Monaghan (Republic of Ireland) and with Liam McCloskey in Buncrana (Republic of Ireland). Aside from the fact that their lives followed different paths after their release from prison, it was difficult for me to look at each man and differentiate the victim from the perpetrator (at least before I met them). Now, I see them as the embodiment of the pains they suffered while on hunger strike, and consequences of their action are quite visible in their lives, and evident on their own bodies (Mollica: 2005).

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<sup>13</sup> INLA volunteer Kevin Lynch from Dungiven (Northern Ireland), who was on hunger strike for 71 days. He died on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1981, at 01:00 am, in the so-called H-block of the Maze/Long Kesh prison (Northern Ireland).

## The identity component

Smyth and Robinson (2001, 7-10) have identified major difficulties, mostly concerning the identity of the researcher, which are inherent in the research of societies divided by violence. One problem is that the researcher, once 'identified,' may lose 'impartiality' in the eyes of the interviewee. However, the self-identifying researcher might continue to conduct the research in a 'detached' and 'objective' way. Secondly, these authors address the issue of the researcher's 'emotional involvement' with their subjects of study, which may influence their 'judgement' and the type of 'information gathered.' Thirdly, they argue that access difficulties might be created by the same 'identity of the researcher' or because the topic has been 'over-researched.' In this case, access may be denied to 'outsiders', or to researchers who have no 'accountability' to the community, or because of prior bad experiences with the media. Finally, the last concern is one of 'personal safety.'

I must confess that the themes articulated by these authors are quite impressive to me. I was not aware of their book before I began my research and learned about it only after my stay in Northern Ireland had ended. I agree with almost everything they say and I personally experienced many of the theoretical situations that they discuss. However, I would still argue that a natural state of 'neutrality' is achievable, but cannot be sustained for very long. In my opinion, the problem is the timing of the research itself. I argue that neutrality is eventually lost as one continues to live in the community, not as a political scientist who simply conducts interviews and then leaves, but as an anthropologist who starts to become sympathetic. It is not an issue of weakness of principles or identity; it is simply a matter of timing. Thus, timing can jeopardize the acquisition of reliable data. However, in order to collect data in communities divided by violence, it is often necessary that the researcher compromises on timing, or agrees to live in 'their' area for a while to 'see how we live.' Thus, 'taking up residence' becomes instrumental to the collection of data, but at the same time, is dangerous because the researcher's 'human side' may interfere with rational objectivity. I believe I re-conquered 'neutrality' once back in Belgium, having sincerely shifted my 'orientations' towards both communities several times. In my experience, the place where the data is considered helps to increase 'detachment'.

With respect to ethical concerns, it is difficult to fulfil the commitment, especially after the data have been collected (even at an informal level). It is very easy to cross the boundaries of 'mutual trust.' The interviewees are completely aware of attempts to spoil their information and realize that

their information might be re-contextualized in a different environment or re-ordered according to the schedule of the researcher.

Finally, I am unsure about the conflict itself as a source of suspicion. Providing the interviewees with the historical background of the researcher may be helpful (and was in my case). Paramilitaries<sup>14</sup> 'escorted' me when I told them that I conducted similar research in the other community. Access was granted to interview the children when it became known that the same<sup>15</sup> was granted on the other side of the peace-line<sup>16</sup>. Suspicion diminished when one side perceived the other side as giving up more than they were. This happened in both communities. However, they shared an initial common fear that the data might be used against them. My identity was not a concern in this case. Once I was accepted, I had no problems. One might consider the manner and chronology of my acceptance, but there is no need to go into that here. Furthermore, being an Italian and Catholic by implication did not create problems for me in the Protestant ethnic enclave<sup>17</sup>. They did not expect me to use data against them any more than persons belonging to their own community because, even if I was a 'Catholic bastard', I was not a 'Fenian<sup>18</sup> Catholic bastard'. I was living among them. I voluntarily paid my donation to a collector for the Loyalist Prisoners of War, and was happy to cook spaghetti for the children of the Youth Club when asked. I established accountability with them just by living with them and being part of their world. I was a foreigner, not an enemy. The enemy lived on the other side of the peace-line and remained there. Thus, when I lived with Republicans, the Loyalist areas and pubs were 'no good' for me, and when I lived among the Loyalists, the Republican areas and pubs were 'no good' for me. Several times I was warned by residents of both sides of the peace-line to 'be careful' when going to the other side. It was as if the community's bond was extended to me by virtue of my living among them. It was enough to

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<sup>14</sup> Ulster Volunteer Forces (UVF) members.

<sup>15</sup> On June 2003, 71 (38 females, 33 males) 11-13 year old students at the Saint Patrick College of Dungiven (Northern Ireland) were given a questionnaire during class. They completed it in the presence of the school Principal, their teacher, and myself. They were not told in advance about the questionnaire, nor given the opportunity to communicate during the interview.

<sup>16</sup> A wall on Bishop Street, in Derry, that separates the Fountain Protestant community from the Catholic community.

<sup>17</sup> The Fountain is a walled area enclosed within a larger Catholic ethnic unit in the so-called *city-side* of Derry.

<sup>18</sup> In Northern Ireland the term is often used by Loyalists to indicate Republicans or people who espouse violence against the British rule in general.

be granted the benefits of protection. I was implicitly protected and it was their way of saying that they cared for me. The community of Fountain, divided by violence<sup>19</sup>, was expressing feelings of sympathy through means they developed in their segregated environment (Mollica: 2005).

## Contextualisation of data collection

Smyth and Robinson (2001, 7) argue that the issue of 'contextualisation' in violently divided societies is crucial in data collection and subsequent data analysis. Thus, the issue must be addressed because it may imperil the acquisition of data and force the researcher to adapt to the on-going changes brought about by various circumstances, not only fear or distrust (as the two authors argue), but also the researcher's own mistakes, which I contend should be reported if the researcher wants to contribute something useful to further data collection in such societies. I made several mistakes in my research that prevented me from collecting all the information I wanted from certain people. In some cases, either I or someone acting on my behalf approached the person in the wrong way. I would not repeat the same mistakes now. However, second chances are rarely given in violently divided societies.

In the Republican community of Dungiven (Northern Ireland), an area controlled mostly by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), and to a lesser extent by the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), I encountered some problems with data acquisition because I was researching a highly contested issue and challenging the dominant Republican<sup>20</sup> paramilitary group and (following the 2003 Stormont<sup>21</sup> elections and, more recently, the 2005 UK general elections) the largest political Nationalist<sup>22</sup> organisation. However, my being a Catholic by implication established trust, and the identity issue became an important and helpful compo-

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<sup>19</sup> A recent survey (Smyth: 1996) shows that 77% of the residents saw the area as 'segregated' and a major negative aspect is their loosing of 'natural friendship' as well as their lacking of 'understanding' in respect to the other community.

<sup>20</sup> In Northern Ireland, Republicanism is a political orientation which aims at a unification with the Republic of Ireland through peaceful or violent means. However, on 28 July 2005, the leadership of the largest Republican organization, the Óglaigh na hÉireann (PIRA), has ordered an end to the armed campaign.

<sup>21</sup> The Local Assembly for Northern Ireland.

<sup>22</sup> In Northern Ireland, Nationalism is a doctrine which aims at a unification with the Republic of Ireland through peaceful means.

ment. On the other hand, living and researching in the strictly Loyalist<sup>23</sup> enclave of the Fountain, which is controlled by the Ulster Defence Army (UDA) whose permission is needed, at least implicitly, to gain admittance to the community, may have jeopardized data acquisition. Here, a different, lengthier, and more complex strategy was needed. Furthermore, being Catholic by implication may have brought about distrust, and the identity issue was a potential liability. For this reason, I avoided any discussion of religion issues, unless asked.

Finally, the current health status of Liam McCloskey (55 days on hunger strike) and John Nixon (53 days on hunger strike) is largely affected by the consequences of their long fasts. Furthermore, Liam McCloskey recently became a very religious person and now regrets his INLA past, while John Nixon has no such regrets. He recently stood in the local Armagh (Republic of Ireland) elections on a left Republican ticket, but lost because of an internal Republican political battle with PSF that left him with feelings of deep animosity. To a lesser extent, similar feelings were revealed in the interviews with the IRSP President<sup>24</sup> and other past and current leading members of the IRSP and INLA, who in recent years were labelled as criminals and drug dealers by leading PSF men (Mollica: 2005).

## Conclusions

This paper has presented facets of my 2003-2004 field research in Northern Ireland. It has shown some of the challenges I met in researching a highly contested issue involving the memory of people who voluntarily laid down their lives for a political cause and which may be still seen as both victims and perpetrators of violence. Given this framework, anyone can be called a victim and any victim called an aggressor; and, above all, the political communities can easily transmit or manipulate the memory of acts of perceived martyrdom. A major task of my doctoral dissertation was, precisely, to analyse the impact of actions wherein self-immolation was the main goal. I submit that it is the social dynamic that is the most important factor for understanding the use of the human body as a deadly weapon.

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<sup>23</sup> In Northern Ireland, Loyalism is a doctrine of someone loyal to the United Kingdom; it may also indicate affiliation to Protestant para-militarism.

<sup>24</sup> IRSP President Gerry Ruddy, interviewed in Costello House, Belfast, on 24<sup>th</sup> June and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2003.

However I also believe that we can add to the debate by giving also a 'narration' of data collection, personal experience and mistakes made, since presenting field work problems and their resolutions may help understanding the on-going process by which a hunger striker is made into a martyr or, better, the on-going making of the image of the enemies. In other words, it can help understanding why and how they are portrayed as either martyrs or criminals, how to bring about vengeance, how to enhance or inhibit conflict resolution processes. This is why many aspects of data collection in a society divided by violence need further attention and clarification beyond the methodological analysis. In my case, for instance, the cultural descriptions challenged my confidence in aspects of my theoretical analyses. It seemed that theories about violence and conflict can not be applied *sic et simpliciter*.

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## Chapter Two

# Exhuming Bones, Reintegrating Memories: the forgotten victims of the Spanish Civil War, an ethnohistorical approach

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### Abstract

Employing an ethnohistorical approach, this work concerns itself with studying a particular aspect of the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. The subject is located in the rearguard, in the cities and villages controlled by the rebels where victims had no possibility to defend themselves. It concerns a “Dirty War”, in fact a carnage of sorts. The research examines the massacre of defenseless civilian populations in smaller rebel-controlled villages and towns, focusing on stories about the victims and their memories and testimonies. Historical and anthropological methods are used to uncover the memories, emotions and experiences of these victims of the Spanish Civil War. The research is interested in what actually happened during the War, who died, and who were the murderers. The true purpose is to understand the lives of the defeated, the relatives of those who were shot, those who came to be considered as second class citizens, those dispossessed of their rights and voices — in short, it is about the ‘reds’, a people, it is argued, that were excluded from history.

*What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?*

W. Owen,  
“Anthem for Doomed Youth”, 1917.

During the second half of 1936, in a part of Spain dominated by military rebels, there occurred one of the most significant slaughters in the country's history. From mid-July 1936 until the end of the year, Spain experienced the so-called ‘Hot Terror’. This massacre of the civilian

population was accompanied by innumerable crimes, imprisonments, abuses and vexations. This work will neither concern itself with battles or skirmishes, nor with bravery, pride or service to the fatherland; rather, its subject is located in the rearguard, in the cities and villages controlled by the rebels where victims had no possibility to defend themselves. It was a kind of 'dirty war', in fact a carnage. The murders of this period represent a figure of between 59 and 70 percent of the total victims of the repression during the Civil War and the postwar<sup>1</sup>, however, not much is known about these massacres.

History rests on the winners' shoulders. And the loud shout of the victor is a unique one. Most of us had forgotten, as usually occurs, those at the bottom, the voiceless people, the silenced many. Suddenly, we find ourselves hearing a growing whisper, which becomes a persistent roar metamorphosed in the shout of outsiders.

This research is focused on the stories of the victims of the Civil War, in their memories and testimonies in a reduced area of the north of Spain, in the town of Aranda de Duero (Burgos) and its surrounding area. This work is based on historical and anthropological methods, delving deep into their memories, emotions and experiences. It seeks to discover what happened, who died, who were the murderers, but the main purpose of this project is to understand the lives of the defeated, the relatives of those who were shot, those who came to be considered as second class citizens, those dispossessed of their rights and voices: the *reds*. A people excluded from history.

In the Spanish case, the exploration of memories of events that transpired 67 years ago, is a difficult and complex process. It is a long stretch of time, but it seems that most memories are still alive. In fact, at present the claims of the defeated families have produced a renewed interest in past events, provoking a very necessary debate in Spanish society over a subject considered by some to be better cast into oblivion. This conflict needs to be considered and the struggle for memories and interests as the first step to solve an unclosed past.

Franco's regime was a useful mirror for the Southern Cone of Latin American Dictatorships —the dictator won the war, cleaned the country of Marxists, and died in his bed after four decades of total control. For Spanish researchers today, the revisionist thinking and human rights social movements of those Latin countries serve as a model for understanding and facing the legacies of Franco's regime.

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<sup>1</sup> JULIA, S. (coord.), Casanova, J., Sole I Sabate, J.M., Villarroya, J., Moreno, F. 1999. *Víctimas de la guerra civil*. Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy.

First, there is a need to reflect on the repression, legacy of the Franco's regime, memories of the war, changes in Spanish society with recent social movements, conflicts between memories, and the encountering of victims.

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The evocation of the Spanish Civil War is a powerful icon for a lot of people, and is often a radicalized symbol.

The Left shows the Second Republic as a lost Arcadia, the moment of the great political efforts and struggles for the modernization of the country, the Republic of Letters with the so-called *Silver Age* for literature and Art — something unquestionable — the kingdom of freedom and liberation. It is, in fact, an untenable image for that conflictive period. For the Left, the war is seen in a romantic way, as a dichotomy between democracy and dictatorship, liberty and oppression. What is kept silent is the fact that the revolution (and its crimes) occurred in republican territory. This can be explained as a brandished mythologized view after a long imposed silence, secretly born during the second part of the regime — at a colloquial level — and during the Transition.

On the other hand, the traditional rightist view represented the war as a struggle between evil and good, civilization and barbarism, religion and atheism, *Spanish-ness* and an international Marxism. The Apocalypse appeared again: the enemy was an incarnation of the devil, said the Catholic Church, declaring that the war was a Crusade. This image was built up during the first year of the war and, of course, was intensively developed during the long years of Francoism.

We have to consider these two opposed and contradictory interpretations as a consequence of an unresolved past, a non-debated situation, and, a conflict between memories.

Franco's regime died in 1977. But what about the effects of its profound intervention in social references, concepts of morality, assumption of his redemptive and sacred origin, crystallization of a unique Spanish being against other ideologies and peripheral cultures? Francoism still casts a deep shadow over present day Spanish life.

If you read any peninsular newspaper's book review section you will find many of books on the Spanish Civil War that focus on slaughters, crimes, and the 'disappeared' — most of them written by journalists or amateur writers. The media refer to these books using expressions such as 'the untold story', 'the forgotten events' or 'the truth about...', and they sell! The Spanish Civil War is a successful topic for literature and movies.

A significant number of important Spanish historians rebel against the popular idea of the 'untold stories'. For example, Santos Julia has recently written a condemning article against expressions like 'oblivion or silence' as relating to the Spanish Civil War<sup>2</sup>. He argues that there have been thousands of books written about this subject over the past 25 years — which is true. There is two parallel worlds — the street and the academy — which are, in a way, mutually ignored. Julia's words sound a bit strong because he does not try to understand why this social demand exists, and why people believe that the Spanish Civil War is a topic insufficiently discussed. An important part of the answer connects us with the afflictions of the victims.

The Spanish Transition has been idealized as a model for countries emerging from authoritarian regimes. The main lines of that process were of special interest in finding agreements, avoiding conflictive situations with a centrist or less-ideologized helmsman heading the ship. It is no wonder this meant avoidance of events of the Spanish Civil War! It was held that the moment for claims had to wait, the old guard was alert and the military could not let any kind of counter-history occur. In fact, this attitude was something agreed upon amongst the politicians before the Transition itself, during the last part of the dictatorship, when all the opposition parties agreed upon and developed a speech addressing general culpability for the outbreak of the violence, and signed declarations regarding the necessity for a new future together.

The government of the Transition made some timid changes, like giving pensions to the former soldiers, widows and/or orphans of the republican faction. At the beginning, the families felt that the time had arrived to recover the corpses of their beloved dead, and this produced in them a lot of anxiety. But they had to postpone their claims and rights because of the context of the official discourse of the centrist government: which stated that in order to build a new democratic framework, the question of the disappeared would have to wait. Therefore, the Spanish Transition was another waiting period for the suffering. The worst phase for the victims was when the Socialist Party won the 1982 elections, governed during three terms, and paid no attention to this topic. This provoked great frustration and is remembered as a treachery to the memories of the victims.

Some villages began their own exhuming task in secret. A few of them took place between 1978 and 1981, with no publicity. But the

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<sup>2</sup> JULIA, S. 2003. 'Echar al olvido. Memoria y amnistía en la transición'. Claves, nº 129, enero 2003. The article develops his own introduction to *Víctimas de la Guerra Civil*.

failed *coup d'état* of the Guardia Civil Lieutenant Colonel Tejero provoked the return of all the old fears, and the disinterring process was definitely stopped. Since that time, a shadow of silence has fallen over the claims and memories of the relatives of those who were shot.

It was only after almost two decades, in the summer of 2000, that the *Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica* (ARMH — Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory) was created following the first exhumation of a grave in El Bierzo, a small region of León province. The fast expansion of this group was amazing to witness. There were only two people in the first association, (Emilio Silva, grandson of one the El Bierzo's exhumed, and Santiago Macias). However, an illustrated report published in the Sunday magazine of *El País*, the main Spanish newspaper, gave birth to hundreds of letters and e-mails from people around the whole country, denouncing familiar cases and demanding recovery of the bodies. This situation overwhelmed Silva and Macias. As time passes, new local delegations of the ARMH are being created in many provinces all over Spain.

The ARMH works with volunteers, mostly Spaniards but also foreign citizens of the non governmental organization 'International Civil Service'. The presence of foreigners was thought to provide a shield against accusations of political intentions and also a way to internationalize the exhumations in a context of human rights. This strategy was designed because the Spanish Right believes that all reclamations made by those identified with the defeated of the War are necessarily subjective and charged with bad will. The main activity of the ARMH is the recovery of corpses and to dignify found remains in a new burial. The movement is well known all over the country now, their undertakings — supported by the claim they presented before the Working Group on Forced Disappearances of the United Nations — are covered in the mass media, and the founders of the Association are becoming well known in Spain's political and social scene. Silva and Macias produced a book entitled '*Las fosas de Franco*' (Franco's Graves) published by a leading Spanish publishing house. The book is one of these 'untold stories'.

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## The Victim's story

There are many wars inside a war, but the trend is to simplify any kind of interpretation about the facts. During the conflict, the propaganda articulates the slogans, the ideological necessities: we are the good,

God is with us, our fight is right... also the definition of the enemy as a non-person, a devil against which the violence is justified, a process normally started before the war starts but intensified during it. When the enemy is not foreign, but may be your neighbor the situation becomes more problematic.

In the Spanish case, although there was a well-known difficult situation during the last period of the Second Republic and across the whole country, the outbreak of rebel violence truly surprised everybody. Nothing similar had ever occurred in Spain. Memories of previous civil wars, the Carlistas wars, and the 1923-1927 Primo de Rivera dictatorship did not lend themselves to people thinking about such forms of behavior. What occurred in 1936 was an unexpected, cruel and extreme form of violence<sup>3</sup>.

The use of extreme violence was designed in the rebel plans. It was not an uncontrolled or spontaneous action as some scholars used to say. From the very beginning, the perpetrators made lists identifying the leftists in each village, and county towns organized the repression as intricately as a spider's web. Every act and movement was prepared. The fascist groups that took charge of these tasks were perfectly coordinated and never acted over their own villages; they were sent to different places, in order to try to reduce the aftermath impact of the repression, a lessening of the chaos.

We can speak of an extermination plan of the so-called *reds* without doubt, especially if we examine the lists of casualties. We must know that this extermination resolves two main questions. On the one hand, the rebels knew about the insufficient support to the coup, as the division of Spain in two main parts showed. It implies a problem of security and control they could impose over certain areas. Assassination of the local *reds* was a strategy for the transformation of previously red spaces into safe places. On the other hand, this was a radical measure that helped him to obtain a kind of 'blood pact' with a large part of the civil-

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<sup>3</sup> The term of extreme violence is used for qualitative phenomena «*como las atrocidades que pueden venir aparejadas con el acto de violencia y que algunos autores han llamado 'crueldad'*», y a fenómenos cuantitativos «*esto es, la destrucción masiva de poblaciones civiles no directamente implicadas en el conflicto*». (...)Cualquiera que sea el grado de su desmesura, ésta se piensa como la expresión prototípica de la negación de toda humanidad, ya que quienes son víctimas de ella suelen ser 'animalizados' o 'cosificados' antes de ser aniquilados. Más allá del juicio moral, conviene interrogarse sobre las circunstancias políticas, económicas y culturales capaces de engendrar tales conductas colectivas. Semelin, J. 2002 'Violencias extremas: ¿es posible comprender? *Revista Internacional de Ciencias Sociales*. UNESCO. December, nº 174. Page. 4. In the particular case of the Spanish Civil War, the enemy was treated as an object using the expression 'red'.

ian population involved in the repression tasks. It was a policy of non-return; too many hands were soiled with blood<sup>4</sup>.

These measures and relationships explain the extent of violence but do not convey its intensity or degree of cruelty and radicalism as it really occurred in the civilian population: they could not believe what was happening, there were no arguments or solid reasons for what was transpiring. Their confusion was so clear that we still find among the testimonies of the victims interpretations invoking envies and bad feelings as the main cause of the death of their relatives. They try to use traditional logic to explain the prevailing social behavior, the principles that explain tensions and arguments in a small community. But this is not possible in this case. Traditional thinking reveals itself sterile in applying reason to warring tendencies. In many ways, wartime is a time outside of time<sup>5</sup>. The truth of the matter is that people were shot during the Civil War because they had links with parties or trade unions of the Left. It was a kind of *eugenic* policy.

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The concept of victim embraces more than just those who died. First, it includes those who were shot and imprisoned by the National Forces — military or fascist groups. Second, it includes those usually forgotten, the indirect victims: relatives (especially women and children, deep in their sorrow), people excluded in their own communities, the ill-treated, the tortured, the humiliated, the punished, and those who are usually in a very difficult economic situation. These victims are the principal concern of our study.

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<sup>4</sup> ESPINOSA MAESTRE, F. 2002. 'Julio de 1936. Golpe militar y plan de exterminio' en Casanova, J. (coord.) *Morir, matar, sobrevivir. La violencia de la dictadura de Franco*. Barcelona: Crítica. Page 55.

<sup>5</sup> 'To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be Unjust. The notions of Right and Wrong, Justice and Injustice have no place. Where there is no common Power, there is no Law: where no Law, no Injustice. Force and Fraud, are in war the two Cardinall virtues. Justice, and Injustice are non of the Faculties neither of the Body, nor Mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his Senses, and Passions. They are Qualities, that relate to men in Society, not in Solitude. It is consequent also to the same condition, that there be no Propriety, no Dominion, no *Mine* and *Thine* distinct; but only that to be every man can that he can get; and for so long, as he can keep it. And thus much for the ill condition, which man by mere Nature is actually placed in; though with a possibility to come out of it, consisting partly in the Passions, partly in his Reason.' HOBBS, T. 1981. *Leviathan*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.

The murderers of the so-called 'National Zone', in the non-combatant area, were trained following the written instructions of General Mola, the *Director* of the July 1936 *coup d'état*. According to the General's instructions, 'all the political party and trade union boards of directors who did not sympathize with the Movement had to be imprisoned, and suffer exemplary punishments in order to strangle rebelliousness and strike movements'. Before this command, in the first report, on 25 May, he demanded that the members of the National Zone exert 'an extremely violent action' against the enemy<sup>6</sup>. In the region of the old Castile, as in other parts of the country, his instructions meant a meticulous effort to detain and kill all the leftists or sympathizers. The facts show that there was an authentic extermination plan. Before the end of the year, thousands of people had been murdered without any kind of trial. As I said before, this period received the name 'The Hot Terror'.

Research about the effects of the repression on the civilian population must consider the wide variety of shapes it adopted; a will to exterminate those considered hostile to the regime, in addition to the intentional development of repressive measures towards social groups assumed to be *reds* through their marriage or kinship ties. People identified as *reds* through these means suffered expropriations, arbitrary detentions, public vexations, they were exploited as labor force, and suffered constant humiliation in the streets, and were insulted and repressed in their daily lives.

In the area studied in the project — Aranda de Duero and the surrounding area — the first men assassinated were from the lower and lower-middle-classes: small farmers, day laborers, municipal police officers, shop assistants, clerks. Most of them found it necessary to combine two or more different activities in order to make ends meet<sup>7</sup>.

These men did not demonstrate a common activism or political commitment. Most were affiliated to a trade union with their only intention being the attainment of better salaries. This kind of security was important in a poor countryside with high unemployment. At that time, the evolution of public works — for example, the construction of the railroad and water canalization — made possible the expansion of these trade unions, which in turn tried to facilitate the best access to jobs for their members. In smaller villages, the demand for better salaries and work-

<sup>6</sup> MOLA VIDAL, E. 1940. *Obras completas*. Valladolid: Librería Santarem.

<sup>7</sup> FERNÁNDEZ DE MATA, I. 2003. *Memoria etnohistórica del estudio de las seis fosas comunes de la guerra civil (1936-1939), del término de Costaján 'La Rastrilla', de Aranda de Duero (Burgos)*. Universidad de Burgos - Ayuntamiento de Aranda de Duero.



ing conditions was directed to landowners through the *Casa del Pueblo* (People's House). Obviously, the participation of workers in trade unions was driven not by ideological or political commitment but rather by the urgent necessity for better working conditions. Today, almost 70 years later, we find that the testimonies of relatives of the poorest families of that time reflect memories about poor labor conditions, general poverty and the lack of political commitment held by their relatives. These relatives were the ones who repeated over and over again, that their loved ones had been killed 'because of envies and bad feelings'. But for the perpetrators of the National Zone there was no distinguishing between reds — all of them were enemies.

Of course there was also a politicized segment of the population, a kind of little *avant-garde*, apart from those politicians elected to serve in the municipal government, who had special interests in national affairs. They coordinated local policies and represented the republican Popular Front, the left wing coalition which won the national elections in February 1936. It is highly probably that their names were written at the top of the killing lists. Until this day, relatives still proudly maintain and experience the political commitment as shared by their murdered loved ones.

The July 1936, events started with the declaration of Martial Law by the military rebels. The result of this for the town of Aranda de Duero was that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July the captain of the Guardia Civil read a proclamation in the town hall, dismissing the elected town councilors and appointing a new council.

From that day, the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, many men were detained and swiftly imprisoned in the municipal jail. All of them held identity cards from leftist parties. A certain number of prisoners were conducted to the provincial jail in the capital where they did not experience any better luck than those who stayed behind in the town.

Sunset was the time of the day chosen by the falangists groups and civil guards begin 'hunting' leftists. It was between dinner and bed time. In other cases, when the requested person was not at home, the falangistas notified the family that the person in question should go to the town hall in order to make a declaration. Usually, the chosen man would obey the law, ignorant of his real destiny. Trucks loaded with men from all over were carried to administrative centers. Not all the trucks arrived with their human cargo intact.

Time spent by prisoners in jail was difficult and precarious. Local prisons neither had the facilities nor the equipment to handle prisoners; relatives of the detained were responsible for their care, including provision of food. Day after day, women and children lined up in front

of jails with food and clothing for their parents, sons and brothers. This situation was extremely difficult for poor families as they were deprived of their workers and main providers.

Neither the detained nor their families received any kind of explanation about the imprisonment or its duration. Often, a wife, daughter or sister arrived at the jail with her usual package but was turned away by the warden. Sometimes family members were informed that the prisoner had been transferred to the capital. But soon rumors began to spread that such trips were trips to the death, and that the corpses were being hidden away in unmarked mass graves.

It is certain that prisoners were tortured and then shot. They suffered inhuman treatments, humiliations, vexations and brutal anxieties in the face of death. The aseptic illusion of being killed only by gunfire is rejected. In jail, prisoners experienced degrading treatment. Stories about how they were taken to places to be killed are full of dirty issues related with the militia's behavior. Murders were not swift or efficient; executions were committed in small groups where one group could watch the other die. Gunfire was inaccurate, so the convicted often had a long and agonizing death. There is recorded the testimony of a man who saw the shooting of his brother. He recalls that the body of his brother fell down over the bodies of those murdered the previous evening. He remembers that 'the hands of those laying there were still trembling, they were not yet dead!'

Perpetrators were commonly not in good mental or physical condition when conducting executions. Several testimonies describe them as drunkards, manipulated by their chiefs and officials, who plied them with alcohol to ensure that orders were obeyed. This may explain the inaccuracy of their shooting.

Squads were composed in a variety of ways: the main components were falangists — and several albiñanistas later integrated in the Falange. Sometimes members of the Guardia Civil joined. When military operations became stagnant in the near Somosierra front, falangist squads looking for excitement went down into the town and murdered people. But before murdering people they used to eat and drink at their expense.

A few murderers appeared in public bragging about their acts; their sense of power was such that they even talked to the relatives of those that they murdered. They told stories about moments of humiliation and physical abuse while the prisoners where tied. Prisoners were urinated on if they asked for water while they were dying. Evidence of torture must not be searched for only in the exhumed bones; full stories about what happened is needed. It could be that some of these tales were not true, but rather their purpose was to hurt the relatives; these horrible

stories became a psychological torture, a cruel punishment extended to the families.

Another heavy burden and constant torture for the relatives of victims was the impossibility of knowing where their relatives had been sent. On the one hand, they did not know anything about what happened to them once they were removed from local jails. It was believed that they were sent to prison in the capital. When relatives finally discovered that their loved ones had never arrived in the capital, an intense panic fell over them — where were the mortal remains of their loved ones?

The disappearance of these men caused great trauma to their relatives. First, it generated great anxiety for the families of the disappeared; they could not verify the existing rumors and several of them tried to keep hope alive. Second, although they could have accepted the death of their loved ones, there were no bodies. In the Catholic culture it is believed everybody is part of an ideal community, integrated for the living and the dead. Deceased people do not leave Earth completely in the Catholic view. The carnal part goes to the cemetery, a new place for its remains, where they can be visited and practice some rituals to dignify their memories. The spirit goes to an incorporeal community, compound of different places: paradise, hell or purgatory. This last one, the purgatory, is the first stop before heaven. In this no-place, according to the Catholic faith, the souls purify their sins in order to continue the journey. People on Earth, the relatives, can help them with their transition by praying, paying for masses to be held in their names and lighting candles in churches. These practices were very common in Castilian traditions. Since at least the XVII century, brotherhoods were constituted in order to pray and accompany the dead, paying for the ceremonies and burial. The rituals are very important. They give emotional support to the relatives, and build up a sense of a community to overcome adversity. The relatives, widows and orphans can rebuild their social roles helped by the funeral rituals. In this sense social conventions such as: wearing black, mourning, gathering in houses or parishes, create new social spaces for widows and orphans. Through these practices families receive and feel the support of their neighbors and reconstruct their roles in society<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> FERNÁNDEZ DE MATA, I. 2003. 'Disinterring the Spanish Civil War. Encountering the Victims'. Lecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (EE.UU), cosponsored by the Latin American and Iberian Studies Program and Legacies of Authoritarianism Program. 27 October 2003.

FERNÁNDEZ DE MATA, I. 1997. *De la vida, del amor y la muerte*. Burgos: Librería Berceo.

FOSTER, G. M. 2003. *La cultura tradicional en España y América*. Sevilla: Signatura Demos.

None of the families during the 'hot terror' were able to mourn for their beloved dead, in fact, it was officially forbidden. Instead of receiving the support of their communities, the relatives of the murdered suffered taunts, humiliations and threats. One of our informants, who was an orphan child at the time, told us that he used to hear exclamations such as 'the bad roots must be pulled from the beginning', as a way to reject and disapprove of him being the son of a red. As we see, these kind of popular sayings convey the purifying and exterminating thinking against reds. Only the affected families could help each other, but most of the time secretly. This was another instance of exclusion for these socially stigmatized groups, which meant a rupture of the previous traditional social networks. This situation generated a new universe for social relationships, based on experiences of suffering and alienation: new friendships, engagements and marriages among excluded people created an underground support network.

The policy of exclusion and suffering was deliberate, exemplified by the permanent silence of those responsible for the burials and disappearances as well as the locations of some of the mass graves. Neighbors knew of the existence of some of these graves, but the Guardia Civil forbade anybody from visiting them during the Franco era. Orders preventing the wearing of black or mourning came from headquarters in the form of a decree signed by General Cabanellas<sup>9</sup>. It was, a drastic rupture from traditional customs; consolation and readjustment of social roles occurred during this period.

This inconsolable suffering has been permanent until today. In recent interviews, I have encountered people in their 80's breaking down and weeping when they tell me that the only reason for them to remain alive is to find the remains of their parents or brothers and bury them in a cemetery with dignity. The relatives are so concerned because for them the bodies of the victims are not resting in a sacred ground but they 'are lying in the earth, like animals'. Until the bodies receive proper burials they will not be part of the total community previously mentioned. On the other hand, for the few families who have defined themselves as atheist, the cultural importance of burials in cemeteries is significant not for sacred values but for socio-cultural values. The perpetual robbery of the dignity of the deceased is of great sorrow to relatives, a pain that must not be ignored or undervalued. The main objective in life for these families is to dignify the remains of their relatives. At present,

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<sup>9</sup> The story of that decree was written by José M<sup>a</sup> PEMÁN in his book *Mis almuerzos con gente importante*. Barcelona: Dopesa, 1970, pages 149-154.

some collective graves have been localized and opened. In some cases, it is extremely difficult to identify individuals due to the large number of corpses in these mass graves<sup>10</sup>.

There is an ongoing juridical struggle between social movements and the national government — social activists demand that the government be responsible for DNA analysis, an expensive practice at this time. If this is not possible, the families will accept a collective burial including all of the names of those who were shot. Dignity. The elderly need to feel they have fulfilled their promises, that they have resolved their debts to ancestors. This is the basis of the new social movement of affected families, the *raison d'être* for their claims. This is a denied memory fighting for recognition.

However, this is not the end of the victim's experiences. There is also the vexations, punishments, humiliations and labor exploitation suffered by the women (widows, daughters and sisters) of the assassinated reds. This defenseless and silent part of our society — our women of honor and virtue — has to deal with a new torture, focused on the denigration of their image: the *pelonas*, women whose hair was cut by the fascists. The Pelonas suffered the humiliation of having their heads shaved in public, forced to drink castor oil and then being exposed in ridiculous parades, accompanied by band music. Women's hair was a symbol which expressed their social and marital status; the perpetrators rid them of this intrinsic feminine feature. The humiliation of appearing bald in public was reinforced over and over again through mockeries. This was a way to add to the men's punishment, since in Spanish culture women are the carriers of the honor and good name of the family. Furthermore, women were arbitrarily imprisoned in schools or dance halls, without any kind of comfort, as in the case of men their families had to care for them, providing food, etc. Often, they were obliged to clean houses, hospitals and barracks without any remuneration. The same thing happened to some imprisoned men. In some cases, even the council of the town hall initiated work projects for them. In addition, men who were not incarcerated, including the younger brothers of prisoners, had to provide free labor for the new authorities during the harvest and at other times<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> We have exhumed 81 corpses in 6 mass graves, all of them situated in the Monte Costaján of Aranda de Duero. And another 46 in two mass graves in a place called La Lobera, in Aranda de Duero. In the case of these mass graves it is impossible to individual corpses without DNA analysis.

<sup>11</sup> Libro de Actas Municipales de Aranda de Duero: 16 September 1936: Prisoners employed for repairing streets; 9 November 1936: A town councillor denounced that the water company is using prisoners without official permission.

The widows, with their hair cut or not, were completely defenseless at a juridical level. They were not recognized as legal widows. To be official widows, they needed the husband's death certificate, but without a corpse, this was impossible. The wives were essentially married to ghosts, who legally could not administrate the goods and properties registered in the name of their husband, nor could they receive any inheritance or remarry. It was not until 1937 that a law emerged, permitting registration of some of these disappeared as dead. But there were special rules governing this practice. First, only a certain number of cases were accepted, in order to avoid long official lists; second, the cause of death could never be stated as murder. There are a lot of people who were not registered as dead, including those who died single or without descendents. Other people were so scared that they did not want to be identified as relatives by the Francoist institutions, so they did not request the inclusion of names. A lack of information about the status of some of the disappeared affected the wretched monetary aids offered to the children of the widows during the postwar period. In order to obtain that ridiculous amount of money, they had to sign to the effect that their parents had died due to 'the causes of war'. Those who signed such documents were compelled to do so by the extreme conditions of poverty in which they were living. Those who had the privilege to avoid such humiliation today remember the resistance with pride.

Relatives of the *reds* suffered a complete loss of their men. On the one hand, we find homes where the father and several brothers were murdered. On the other hand, younger sons or brothers of these men felt compelled to enlist as 'volunteers' in the Falangist militias or in the Legión. It was a survival strategy. This resulted in new deaths on the war front as well as some crimes in the trenches, all leading to the further impoverishment of families.

25The arbitrary expropriations of goods, houses, lands and businesses, the economic penalties also occurred. The tragic situation experienced by the defeated was due to a combination of horror and exploitation. For them, remembrance of the Franco regime is conditioned to the imposition of silence and shame; this period would never be looked at in an objective or dispassionate way, but as a result of experience<sup>12</sup>. The paradox is that, once again, the victims were the most generous

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<sup>12</sup> 'How is the unexpressable to be expressed? Trauma is inherently about memory and forgetting. Awful experiences, especially of loss, are impossible to forget because they are beyond normal human comprehension or existing schemata and cannot be assimilated into personal and collective narratives.' RICHARDS, M. 2002. 'From War culture to civil society'. *History and Memory*. Bloomington. Volume 14, 1/2, Pages 93-120.

during the Spanish Transition, delaying their claims in order to help the new democracy. That democracy must now help them. In fact, this is the last opportunity to do so.

## Conclusion

Seventy years have passed since the beginning of the war, and more than twenty five since democracy was instituted. Some people are trying to build a bridge towards the past, in fact their own past, and by using their own bricks of memory. Building with these social materials is difficult and full of risks. Too many walls of memories have been erected, trying to define historical and political identities; these walls provide some ideological comfort for deaf people. This is a difficult moment to hear and reflect on the past. It is time to recover those excluded, those lost among oppositional walls.

The memory of those defeated without the paraphernalia of the battlefield is an isolated memory in the historical and political struggle. The creation of the ARMH (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory) is an interesting symbol of the reality of war, of the thousands of wars that exist inside one war.

In order to advance an understanding of the past, it is important to assume that both reality and history are complex. In papers and essays about the Spanish Civil War it is common to find the verse from Antonio Machado, *'Españolito que vienes al mundo, te guarde Dios, una de las dos Españas ha de helarte el corazón.* (Little Spaniard that joins the world, may God help you, one of the two Spains will freeze your heart). Machado's image of the two Spains makes it difficult to understand the effect of violence. The schematic views over the conflict hide the complex realities of the trauma experienced by victims. How many Spains are in the stories of the victims?

This kind of simplification sustains the old walls. In this way, the Right is anchored in its complacency image: their men fight for God and social order. For the Right it is impossible to recognize these inhuman slaughters. The recognition of these acts would mean to accept other interpretations of the war. For them, new narratives might break their own beliefs and convictions; their telling of history sustains their whole way of life and belief system. Devotion to their ancestors is based on heroic events of the past. This is the fatal legacy of a civil war.

The democratic Left has tried to build its wall with some kind of 'aseptic' bricks. The Left is obsessed with trying to demonstrate that they represent modernity and progress. They are trying to deactivate the

stereotypes imposed on them during Francoism. During the period they governed, the Left focused on the transformation of the country into a modern European society, putting aside conflicts over past ideologies and radicalisms. The perception of a new born and fragile democracy helped them to avoid or ignore the claims of the non-heroic defeated of the rearguard areas. Acting in this way, they froze an image of a republican lost Arcadia and the civil war as a heroic combat against military brutality.

Intervention in the public sphere of NGOs such as ARMH is producing the effect of a positive shock on Spanish society. It has been like a loud knock at the door of the collective conscience, a sort of reaction that some people have interpreted as a step backward because it has opened a Pandora's Box. But the truth is that the recent disinterring has become an inflexion point, a turning in history, something similar to the shocking arrest of Pinochet in London for Chilean society. The undeniable evidence of the bones of the victims recently found forces all of society to reflect on the past. This necessitates the building of bridges to the past in order to help us understand the sufferings and cruelties of the war, avoiding its myths. So first of all, our society need to know the truth, and to acknowledge what happened, in order to humanize ourselves.

The struggle for memories must face a naked historical truth, in fact, an ugly truth. Accepting a crude history will not lead us to a happy ending; it will not produce a 'Disney' reconciliation. We need to agree that historical events occurred, for good or bad, that the crimes were committed and that we all share some guilt and shame.

The main battle is between those who ignored the experience of the defeated and feel this new historical revisionism like a refusal to their own lives, past and memories, and the victims, left unconsidered until the present. The complexity of accepting the past might be easier when the war generation dies, but until this happens we cannot hide the facts, we cannot lose the testimonies.

The recent uncovering of mass graves combined with the formation of the ARMH provides a cornerstone to the official condemnation of the Franco regime which was signed by all parties in the Spanish parliament in November 2002 — although each party interprets it in a different way. For example, for the governing Popular Party (right wing) this declaration means the end of any other request or reclamation. Contrary to that, others see it like the beginning of the end. The success of this condemnation, the first officially undertaken since the end of the regime, has not given any support to the claims of the victims. In October 2003, the Spanish Ombudsman accepted ARMH complaints about not obtain-



ing any kind of collaboration from the Ministries of the Interior, Justice and Culture. In that month he declared that, 'the results of the petitions to the three ministries have been discouraging for affected citizens'. So, after recognition of the facts, there is only a juridical justice, and there is no public justice or return of dignity for victims and their relatives.

Memory is the framework for this vivid struggle. Memory should be used as a project for recognition and valor. We should make good use of the claims of the victims in order to give us the opportunity for a social consensus pertaining to the facts of the Civil War. The inclusion of those excluded in the collective historic sense must enrich us with more tolerance and responsibility. The disinterring of the Spanish Civil War should be the exorcism of all the ghosts of the past. And it should become the desired scar for this painful wound.



# Chapter Three

## Mending the Wrongs: the importance of human rights in post-conflict peace-building

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### Abstract

Although massive violations of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms are frequently at the root causes of most contemporary conflicts and humanitarian crises it is not always clear the importance and place given to human rights issues and objectives, as well as specific actions and practices, in the context of post-conflict peace building processes. Based on this analysis, one needs to question and analyse the type of human rights considerations being contemplated in current post-conflict reconstruction models, recognising its fragilities and limitations and suggesting new ways to better incorporate a transversal human rights dimension as a way to ensure better results of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes.

Stressing the undeniable link between human rights abuses and its contribution to conflict and recognising that one of the main challenges to successful post-conflict peace building is acknowledging and including a clear and comprehensive human rights dimension, the aim of this essay is then to critically analyse how human rights have been incorporated into peace building processes, by also showing its limitations and suggesting alternative ways of making human rights a necessary and more effective tool to long-term peace sustainability.

### The Challenge of Post-Conflict Peace-Building

The end of the Cold War raised hopes that the international community might employ an anticipated 'peace dividend' to repair the ravages of the superpower competition in many war-torn countries. By the mid-Nineties the world was confronted with some fifty armed con-

flicts, largely intrastate in nature<sup>1</sup>, which posed important obstacles and challenges to a reinvigorated UN system having to deal with new and complex humanitarian emergencies characterized by chronic violence, the breakdown of governance, the destruction of physical infrastructure, the displacement of populations, and massive human suffering. As the humanitarian tide crested, and the chance for peace re-emerged in many areas, the focus of international aid turned to laying the foundations for durable peace and recovery. Just as grinding poverty helped to ignite conflict, so it promised to complicate subsequent recovery (Shepard and Stewart 2000: 2)<sup>2</sup>.

In these contexts, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction seeks to prevent the resurgence of conflict and to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in war-torn societies. It is a holistic process involving broad-based interagency cooperation across a wide range of issues. It encompasses activities as diverse as traditional peacekeeping and electoral assistance (Report of the Secretary-General, 1999)<sup>3</sup>. It is a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institution building and political as well as economic transformation (Peace Building: Human Rights)<sup>4</sup>.

Sustainable recovery from conflict thus requires laying new foundations for social peace, political stability, and economic growth in war-torn countries. To advance these war-to-peace, political and socioeconomic transitions, donors have supported a wide and diverse range of essential activities. They have helped to draft and implement peace accords, plan and monitor disarmament, demobilize and reintegrate combatants, train local police, and restore human security; have promoted efforts to re-establish the rule of law, conduct democratic elections, and draft new constitutions, reform judicial systems, rebuild state struc-

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<sup>1</sup> Carter Center, *1997-1998 State of World Conflict Report*

<sup>2</sup> As FORMAN and PATRICK noted, *'In addressing the international community's potential for aiding post-conflict reconstruction, policymakers and members of the wider aid community have repeatedly invoked the most celebrated post-war recovery effort- the Marshall Plan. Certain broad elements of the European Recovery Program (1948-1952) might be worth incorporating in today's post-conflict assistance: its emphasis on local initiative and ownership; its mixture of economic and political conditionality, its focus on modernization as well as reconstruction; its finite duration; and (where appropriate) its regional approach.'*

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/54/1), August, 1999, available at [www.un.org/Docs/SG/Report99/postconf./htm](http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/Report99/postconf./htm)

<sup>4</sup> Peace Building: Human Rights, available at <http://cmtollkit.sais-jhu.edu/index.php?home=pb-overview>

tures, improve local governance, and monitor human rights (USAID a): 1997). They have also provided assistance to reintegrate refugees and displaced persons, guarantee essential services, restore transportation and communication links, rebuild social capital, and replace obsolete infrastructure. These are costly and complex undertakings. As Nicole Ball correctly considers, the phase immediately after a negotiated agreement and settlement 'places the heaviest demands on donor resources' (Ball 1996: 613). However, the problem is that too often donors still have the difficult task of trying to adjust the humanitarian and development responses and capacities to the transitional needs and challenges of post-conflict societies and to act in contexts often characterized by multiple actors with different goals.

### *Why are Human Rights Important?*

One of the main challenges to successful post-conflict peace building is acknowledging and including a clear and comprehensive human rights dimension. Although massive violations of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms are frequently at the root causes of most contemporary conflicts and humanitarian crises it is not always clear the importance and place given to human rights issues and objectives, as well as specific actions and practices, in the context of post-conflict reconstruction processes in its different phases: humanitarian assistance immediately after the conflicts, peace-building, etc. In this sense, it becomes important to understand and evaluate the results and impacts of such dimensions considering all the developments occurred in different countries and the contributions to a wider peace-building and self-sustained development processes. Based on this analysis, one needs to question and analyse the type of human rights considerations being contemplated in current post-conflict reconstruction models, recognising its fragilities and limitations and suggesting new ways to better incorporate a transversal human rights dimension as a way to ensure better results of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes (and make human rights also a part of the solution of the problems).

The creation of the United Nations in 1945 represented a major advance in the effort to enshrine and promote human rights in international relations and law. The UN Charter in its article 1(3) states that one of the UN's primary purposes is 'promoting and encouraging respect for human rights'. Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter require UN Member States to 'take joint and separate action' to promote 'universal respect

for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all<sup>5</sup>. In the decades after creation of the UN, the promotion of human rights has evolved and involved a series of efforts to expand the principle that human rights are a legitimate concern for all, namely with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966. From then on, both sets of rights should become an integral part of all UN activities and a concern for the whole international community.

With the end of the Cold War, one of the most important developments has clearly been the recognition and reinforcement of the universal value of human rights and of the need to effectively respect and promote them at all levels of international relations. The results were some clear and radical changes at all levels of international relations, opening the way to very important and positive developments such as a progressive erosion of the notion of absolute state sovereignty, greater democratisation processes, expansion and strengthening of civil society and most importantly an increased attention to, and understanding of, human rights issues as well as the roles of the various international actors in safeguarding them.

It became increasingly difficult for states to undertake massive human rights violations within their own territory, without being held accountable and/or condemned by the international community. It also became harder for the international community to ignore human rights violations worldwide.

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights confirmed the crucial connection between international peace and security and the rule of law and human rights, placing them all within the larger context of peace-building, democratization and development. The need to reinforce these vital links has been highlighted by the sharp increase in bloody conflicts and man-made calamities in recent decades. In fact, today some of the most serious threats to international peace and security involve armed conflicts among rival/warring factions within a state. Despite starting often as situations of internal violence, these frequently spill over borders, endangering the regions' security and resulting in complex humanitarian emergencies.

The denial of fundamental human rights relating to life, employment, housing, food or respect for cultural life, and large-scale discrimination

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<sup>5</sup> For complete wording and content of the articles, please see the United Nations Charter.

and exclusion from the decision-making processes of societies are at the origin of many serious crises today. Armed conflicts also clearly illustrate the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights. The collapse of infrastructures and civic institutions undermines the range of civil, economic, political and social rights. The rights to adequate housing, health, education, freedom of movement and expression, privacy and fair trial are only some of the fundamental rights and freedoms affected when hospitals and schools are destroyed or closed as a consequence of war: water and sanitation polluted, local administration unable to function, police and judicial systems corrupted or not functioning. As a consequence, government institutions often become increasingly militarized, with armed forces controlling and assuming civilian policing functions and military courts trying civilians (Human Rights and Conflict)<sup>6</sup>. In post-conflicts contexts and societies, especially after prolonged civil wars — as in the cases of Angola, Mozambique, *inter alia* — ill health, poverty and lack of any institutions are frequently the most clear and devastating long-term consequences of conflicts, and frequently, a UN priority.

Human rights express the basic standards of living in a state. They represent rights of the individual or groups *vis-a-vis* the government, as well as responsibilities of the individual and government authorities. Civil, cultural, political and economic rights cover the fundamental rules of social life. The post-crisis climate is one of violence and suspicion, in which there is little respect for human rights and the rule of law. Government institutions and the judiciary, which bear the main responsibility for the observation of human rights, are often severely weakened or completely powerless as a consequence of the conflict (Peace Building: Human Rights)<sup>7</sup>. Considering these undeniable and multiple links between human rights violations and conflict, a better way to overcome these situations may be to develop and apply specific human rights oriented programs and policy in peace-building work, having as a priority the task of creating strong national institutions as well as a strong civil society and raising awareness for the existence of human rights to which all are entitled and to the importance of being able to enjoy them in practice. The implicit idea is that human rights should be seen as a part of the solution for the conflicts.

Without prescribing for any one society a preferred model of economic development or cultural organization, the rights-based approach

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<sup>6</sup> Human Rights and Conflicts: A UN priority, available at [www.un.org/rights/HRtoday/hrconfl.htm](http://www.un.org/rights/HRtoday/hrconfl.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Peace Building: Human Rights, available at <http://cmtollkit.sais-jhu.edu/index.php?home=pb-human>.

to peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction may facilitate the growth of civil society and human rights standards intended to provide the impartial means through which reconciliation can be achieved. A human rights framework may also provide certain guarantees for justice and also protects against random retribution, establishing the parameters within which democratic societies can legitimately balance the interests of victims against larger concerns for social harmony (Human Rights and Conflict)<sup>8</sup>.

Another benefit of including a stronger and more active human rights component in post-conflict reconstruction is the role it can have in reinforcing local capacities for peace, which implies acting under some defined criteria (Anderson 1999). In fact, there are several activities that may be enhanced, such as the reinforcement of groups or sectors with moral authority that have been relegated to second place, reinforcement, organization and mobilization of an active civil society, and empowerment of local organizations with important roles in medium-term development of society.

Human rights programmes can also facilitate the successful transition between peacekeeping operations and humanitarian emergency assistance to long-term peace-building and sustainable development. Societies that are emerging from civil wars have particular needs in the area of human rights and economic development. As we have noted, the complexities and costs of post-conflict contexts require that special attention be given to repairing the large-scale damage inflicted on economic, health and educational infrastructures, but international development programmes can also contribute to healing the psychological traumas of conflicts. In fact, strengthening respect for human rights through development contributes to a climate of confidence that helps a society regain its equilibrium.

In the aftermath of conflict, violence often persists due to the dominance of the military and security apparatus. In many cases they make unlimited use of their license to establish safety and security. They remain unchecked due to the weaknesses of government institutions and a powerless judicial system. But a general improvement in the human rights situation is essential for the successful rehabilitation of war-torn societies. Healing of the psychological scars caused by conflicts and reconciliation at the community level cannot take place if the truth about war crimes is not revealed and if the human rights of the population are

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<sup>8</sup> Human Rights and Conflicts: A UN priority, available at [www.un.org/rights/HRtoday/hrconfl.htm](http://www.un.org/rights/HRtoday/hrconfl.htm)



not protected. In order to preserve and maintain political stability, human rights implementation must be managed efficiently and the rule of law must be restored.

Human rights field operations, as a part of a broader post-conflict peace-building effort, are a relatively new experience for the UN. No longer just a protection response to emergency human rights situations, field operations increasingly undertake technical cooperation programs aimed at strengthening national human rights capacities or infrastructures. Moreover, human rights components have become more commonplace in complex emergencies and UN missions of both peacekeeping and peacemaking nature. In all these operations, it is necessary to ensure proper integration of the human rights component into the overall project. Sometimes this requires realism: does one have to push ahead with investigations and prosecution of past atrocities, or does one have to wait for the appropriate moment and prepare national institutions to play a decisive role?<sup>9</sup>

In this sense, the United Nations is increasingly combining efforts to prevent or end conflicts with measures aimed at reducing human rights abuses in situations of internal violence. Special emphasis is placed on ensuring the protection of minorities, strengthening democratic institutions, realizing the right to development and securing respect for human rights. The UN is also making efforts towards strengthening its early warning capacity and response to conflicts by integrating human rights monitoring into peacekeeping operations, thus enhancing its ability to deal with allegations of human rights violations. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), for example, is developing close contacts with the UN departments, offices and programmes responsible for peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), DPA, the United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). This human rights programme is aimed at performing a crucial role also in post-conflict reconstruction, building mutual confidence and helping re-establish a climate of understanding between all the parties involved. The UN is also developing a two-track approach in which immediate humanitarian assistance and long-term development assistance eventually converge, with human rights as a crucial binding element in both. This means

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with Danilo Türk, available at <http://www.cceia.org/viewMedia.php/prmTemplateID/8/prmID/248>

that the various actors involved in the field must work together, aware of the common goals and mutual needs of parallel programmes.

However, the practical results of such a human rights component within the broader work of post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building are far from satisfying, thus demonstrating the important gap between theory and practice concerning human rights work and the still existing multiple 'flaws' of the current post-conflict reconstruction models.

In fact, there are also some practical limitations to integrating international human rights norms, standards and practices into peace-building responses, since such activities in the field of human rights tend to be concentrated on norms and procedures and seldom reach all the relevant areas of policy making. Furthermore, these activities are not immune to political selectivity and ideological interpretations which pose clear limits to more successful and positive initiatives. The UN is sometimes expected to deliver results in situations where norms-based activities simply do not suffice. Post-conflict reconstruction thus requires good diagnoses of all the relevant economic, social, political and practical problems; moreover, concrete tasks such as establishing an independent judiciary or credible media require not only a good understanding of human rights but also technical skills and resources.

In these problematic contexts, the human rights dimension is often undermined, ignoring its fundamental role in reconstruction processes. There is a perverse tendency to draw a rigid and strict distinction between human rights and other dimensions in post-conflict reconstruction, thus ignoring and undermining the need for a global and joint action in the field and the fundamental place and role of human rights in the whole process. The international community also must recognize that human rights protection after a conflict cannot be ignored or isolated from how the conflict is brought to an end and how sustainable peace and development will be achieved. Several experiences in assisting countries in transition to democracy — such as Guatemala or El Salvador — have shown and proved how important the inclusion of a human rights dimension in post-conflict reconstruction processes can be.

Stressing the undeniable link between human rights abuses and its contribution to conflict, promoting respect and protection of human rights in all dimensions of peace-building activities becomes not only desirable but also essential for the achievement of established goals (Rafael 2001:18). Therefore, and despite its complexity, it is exactly in these contexts that human rights must be integrated and included as a necessary part of post-conflict reconstruction work. Not

doing so only accentuates the tendency for the failure of reconstruction objectives.

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## Chapter Four

# Humanitarian Imperialism as a Spin-Off of Cultural Imperialism: problems engendered by misrepresenting the Balkans

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### Abstract

Cultural identity and representation can be powerful accelerants in forming public opinion and in leading to conflict. This article asks if anything can be learned from the representation of cultural identity in time of conflict and post-conflict aftermaths. By concentrating on the Balkans, and in particular the Serbian context, this article explores how a deeply embedded cultural imperialism in the West has fed into a kind of humanitarian imperialism, whereby post-conflict rehabilitation has often been nurtured by what is little more than a benign, post-modern colonialism. This article is written from the perspective that the association of the Balkans with primitiveness and barbarity is not only intellectually lazy, but also an incorrect judgement of the cultures and societies of South-East Europe. The author concludes that the solution to the problem of representation lies in education, so that the very participants in today's international interventions, not only have need of a strong backing in international relations, peace studies and international law, but also that they develop a keen knowledge, empathy and understanding of the histories, languages and cultures of the regions in which they will work.

*Μακάριοι οί εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοί υἱοί θεοῦ κληθήσονται*  
(Matthew 5 v. 9)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This has been translated in the NIV version of the New Testament as: 'Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the sons of God.'

It was Amílcar Cabral who once wrote: ‘...culture is an essential element of the history of a people, culture is, perhaps the product of history just as the flower is the product of a plant’<sup>2</sup>. Culture shapes and influences attitudes, ideas and experiences, and culture can be a key accelerant of a community’s identity in time of conflict. This, in turn means that culture can often play an important role in conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. With this in mind, I wondered if any lessons could be learned that may refresh the way we present and understand exogenous cultures and societies in current and future conflicts<sup>3</sup>. The cynical and short answer is probably ‘no’, given that we tend not to learn our lessons from history. Although, in the case under review, it is often the very historical narratives themselves, that may be held to blame for the dichotomous and essentialist views that we often have of the other.

In presenting my case, I have divided this text into two sections. The first section is entitled ‘Cultural Imperialism’, with intended reference to Edward Said’s eloquent book, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). In this section my source material is drawn from a small selection of literary examples, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-1990s<sup>4</sup>. The second section of my text is entitled ‘Humanitarian Imperialism’, and in this part of my work, I comment upon contemporary experientialist reality, whereby our management of post-conflict rehabilitation has been transmogrified into a kind of ‘benign colonialism’ or post-modern imperialism, so that the relevance of cultural identity becomes even more obvious when one considers that foreign policy is built upon the perceptions that decision makers may hold of the inhabitants of any given area.

My conclusion is that a traditional misrepresentation of the culture and identity of the exogenous ‘other’ can have a deleterious and negative impact upon the way that the international community conducts its affairs in this first decade of the twenty-first century.

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<sup>2</sup> Amílcar Cabral, *National Liberation and Culture*, 1973.

<sup>3</sup> The readers attention is particular drawn to Kevin Avruch’s *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> In my original presentation at the Sabanci University, I also provided a number of computer illustrations, however as these have been dealt with already in some detail elsewhere in a format that is easily accessible to members of the HumanitarianNet EDEN project, I have decided to concentrate on literary in this text. Readers may consult one of the earlier publications emanating from the Humanitarian Net EDEN project: Hudson, Robert, ‘From Lara Croft to the Kosovo Girl: identity, counter culture and the role of the Internet in Serbia during the Kosovo conflict’, in Aguirre, Mariano, Ferràndez, Francisco, *The Emotion and the Truth: Studies in Mass Communication and Conflict*, Universidad de Deusto, Spain, 2002, pp. 129-150, (ISBN: 84-7485-836-4).

## Cultural Imperialism

First, let us look at the literary tradition of what Maria Todorova, in her ground-breaking work, *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), has named as 'Balkanism'. In this essentially western discourse, which is not far removed from Edward Said's 'Orientalism' (1977), it soon becomes clear that South Eastern Europe, popularly known as the Balkans<sup>5</sup>, has attracted a tarnished reputation in the eyes of the West, where popular opinion, influenced by the media and the academy, has distanced the region from mainstream Europe. The Balkans have been marginalised and excluded and collectively transmogrified into Europe's 'other', whilst some communities in the so-called western Balkans, the 'former' Yugoslavia, and most notably the Serbs, have been represented in the collective conscience as tribal peoples, who have been essentialised and stereotyped largely through a reductivist media, which itself, has built its narrative upon two centuries and more of populist and, often pseudo-academic writing. Just as western opinion has patronised, excluded and marginalised the peoples of Africa and Asia in the past (as it is barely refraining from doing so in its current representation of Islam) so it continues to do so with South Eastern Europe. What, then, are we to make of expressions such as, 'Balkan mentalities', 'Balkan savagery' and 'Balkan tribalism', which seem to do little more than relegate the Balkans to a lower civilisational category? It is this crisis of representation and the inherent danger of observing the Balkans from above and from afar, which has affected the disciplines of anthropology, history, literature and philosophy in the past, and it is this very question of how we visualise, represent and think of the Balkans<sup>6</sup>, which is in turn affecting the way that the international community thinks about the process of rehabilitation in the region today.

Work on the representation of the peoples of South Eastern Europe has already been undertaken in the 1990s. Apart from Todorova's work, mentioned above, two other very useful books were published in the same year of 1997, namely Vesna Goldsworthy's *Inventing Ruritania* and Adam Burgess' *Divided Europe*. These confronted the gaping lacunae in the general public's awareness and understanding of South Eastern Europe. It was the absence of any useful and general English-language scholarship avail-

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<sup>5</sup> For a fuller and richer treatment of this subject, see chapter one of Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans*, entitled 'The Balkans; Nomen', pp. 21-37.

<sup>6</sup> HUDSON, ROBERT, 'Balkan na zapadu', *Forum Bosnae*, No. 18, 2002, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Hercegovina,, pp. 349-353.

able at the time<sup>7</sup>, that led to a proliferation of reprints of old texts on the Balkans in the early 1990s in a bid to quench the thirst of the educated reading public for background knowledge to what was actually happening in the 'former'-Yugoslavia. Consider Howard Temperley's *History of Serbia* (1912) in which he commented that the Slavs (in this case Serbs) were incapable of self-rule; then there is the much-maligned *Carnegie Report* (1913), which gave vent to the whole renewed popular discourse of blood-drenched earth in the Balkans; there was John Reed's *War in Eastern Europe* (1916), and R. G. D. Laffan's *The Serbs* (1917), to name but four examples taken from the period of the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Basically, anything was being published that appeared to provide the reading public with background to the then current crises, sadly re-fuelling, at the same time, the irrational, pointless, and sometimes hysterical onslaught of misinformation and the rapid reaffirmation of Todorova's Balkanist discourse. Far from being anodyne, or presenting the reader with a fair assessment of the cultural and political background to life and societies in South Eastern Europe, the reprinting of the books mentioned above provided the intelligent reader with the wrong kind of background as to what had really been taking place in 'former'-Yugoslavia. Clearly, we were learning the wrong kinds of history. Furthermore, these books were written in a style that might have been considered appropriate at the time of writing in the second decade of the twentieth century, but has since become totally inappropriate for a contemporary reading public. With the passage of time they had become little more than pseudo-historical texts that had totally misrepresented the Balkans to western readers.

In the spirit of Todorova, Goldsworthy and Burgess, I decided to carry out a short survey of Balkanist literature. So, by way of example, it is my intention to let these texts speak for themselves. The first problem, given resort to expressions used in the media, such as: 'Balkan mentalities', 'Balkan savagery' and 'Balkan powderkeg' was to try to situate and explain what was understood by the very term Balkan. A fine example of Balkanist essentialism was offered by the American journalist C. L. Sulzberger, writing in the early 1940s and re-printed in the introduction to Robert Kaplan's *Balkan Ghosts* (1993) — and more on Kaplan's highly essentialist text, later on:

The Balkans, which in Turkish means 'mountains', run roughly from the Danube to the Dardanelles, from Istria to Istanbul, and is a term for the little lands of Hungary, Romania, Jugoslavia, Albania, Bulga-

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<sup>7</sup> The French were better on this, although some horrors were also produced! One example of polemical and controversial scholarship, which reinforced the demonisation of the Serbs in particular, was GRMEK, MIRKO, GJIDARA, MARCO ET ŠIMAC NEVEN, *Le Nettoyage Ethnique: documents Historiques sur une idéologie serbe*, Fayard, Paris, 1993.



ria, Greece and part of Turkey, although neither Hungarian nor Greek welcomes inclusion in the label. It is, or was, a gay peninsula filled with sprightly people who ate peppered foods, drank strong liquors, wore flamboyant clothes, loved and murdered easily and had a splendid talent for starting wars. Less imaginative westerners looked down on them with secret envy, sniffing at their royalty, scoffing at their pretensions, and fearing their savage terrorists. Karl Marx called them 'ethnic trash'. I, as a footloose youngster in my twenties, adored them<sup>8</sup>.

Obviously this text is deeply loaded in its mis-representation and symbolism. Time and space precludes a deeper analysis, but I will attempt to highlight five glaring points that seem to jump out from the page.

First of all, consider the patronising tone in which the text is written. This is particularly brought out by the terminology employed: the 'little lands' and the condescending voicing of expressions such as '...westerners looked down on them with secret envy, sniffing at their royalty' which presents the audience with images of Ruritania and comic opera royalty<sup>9</sup>.

Then there is the reference to 'Balkan savagery' in expressions such as, 'a splendid talent for starting wars' and then, the juxtaposition of seemingly antithetical dualist praxis in the phrase: 'loved and murdered easily'.

Thirdly, consider the resort to expressions such as 'ethnic trash', clearly, by today's standards of writing, a dated, condescending, if not racist concept. Both Burgess and Todorova have remarked on how easy it was for western commentators to employ this kind of terminology, given that the peoples of the Balkans were white, and European. There were none of the hang-ups that we have found in describing conflicts in Africa or Asia in terms of political correctness. Todorova puts it more succinctly than this, at the same time, highlighting one of the main differences between Balkanism and Orientalism:

Balkanism became, in time, a convenient substitute for the emotional discharge that orientalism provided, exempting the West from charges of racism, colonialism, and Christian intolerance against Islam. After all, the Balkans are in Europe; they are white; they are predominantly Christian, and therefore the externalisation of frustrations on them can circumvent the usual racial or religious bias allegations<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> SULZBERGER, C.L., *A Long Row of Candles*, quoted in Kaplan, ROBERT D., *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History*, Macmillan, London, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> No doubt veiled references to King Zog of Albania or King Nikola 1 of Montenegro, reinforcing the whole Ruritanian discourse of the Balkans.

<sup>10</sup> TODOROVA, op. cit., p. 188.

Fourthly, the reader is confronted with glaring geological errors. From the start, the term Balkan is an inappropriate misnomer, referring to a mountain range to be found in Bulgaria, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the lands of the 'former' Yugoslavia. Anyone who has visited the Yugoslav successor states will be aware that the landscape around the Danube, the Banat and Vojvodina is flat becoming more undulating and hilly, then mountainous, as it extends southwards into central Serbia from Belgrade. Indeed, the lands of today's northern Serbia form a terrain which I once described in class as splendid tank fighting country, long before the wars in Yugoslavia ever seemed remotely plausible, when the main threat to the SFRJ seemed to come from the Warsaw Pact rather than the implosion of its own republics.

Finally, there is the seemingly innocent phrase tacked on at the end: 'I as a footloose youngster, in my twenties, adored them'. I connected with this sentiment immediately, on my first reading, as it seemed to fit in with my own feelings as a 'footloose youngster', when at the age of twenty-one, I found myself studying on a post-graduate fellowship at the Philosophy Faculty of the University of Sarajevo. It was only with reflection and a re-reading Said's *Orientalism*, that I realised what a deeply Orientalist (indeed, Balkanist) expression this was.

Our second extract, is taken from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), which seems almost to endorse those lines of cleavage and a clash of civilisations that Samuel Huntington would inform us about, much later, in the 1990s. Certainly, some of the sentiments expressed by Stoker, on reflection, were not far removed from some representations of the Balkans in teaching at my own *alma mater*, the School of Slavonic Studies, University of London, back in the mid-1970s:

(On leaving Budapest...)

The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East; the most Western of splendid bridges over the Danube, which is here of noble width and depth, took us among the traditions of Turkish rule.

(Out of Bistritz in the Carpathians...)

...I had to sit in the carriage for more than an hour before we began to move. It seems to me that the further East you go the more unpunctual are the trains. What ought they to be in China?<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> STOKER, BRAM, *Dracula*, 1897.

And, this example is followed by Archibold Lyall, writing in 1930:

Almost everywhere east of the lands of solid German and Italian speech there is a thin whiff of the Balkans in the air, hardly perceptible in Bohemia, but growing stronger with every eastward mile — a certain lack of comfort, a certain indifference to the rules and timetables, a certain *je m'en fichisme* with regard to the ordinary machinery of existence, maddening or luminously sane according to temperament and circumstances.<sup>12</sup>

Texts such as this raise glaring questions. What exactly is meant by 'the thin whiff of the Balkans in the air?' Why should German be described as 'a solid language'? And, again, we find the same sort of condescension that is to be found in the previous extract by Bram Stoker. The only difference is that whereas Lyall was part of a whole tradition of English-speaking Balkan travel writers that included Edith Durham and Rebecca West *inter alia*, Bram Stoker produced all of his work from the Reading Room of the British Museum, in Bloomsbury, London, without ever stepping a foot in the Balkans.

The final offering in this part of my presentation, is both ignorant in its content and questionable in its implication:

It is an intolerable affront to human and political nature that these wretched and unhappy little countries in the Balkan peninsula can and do, have quarrels that cause wars. Some hundred and fifty thousand young Americans died because of an event in 1914 in a mud-caked primitive village, Sarajevo. Loathsome and almost obscene snarls in Balkan politics, hardly intelligible in to a western reader, are still vital to the peace of Europe and perhaps the world.<sup>13</sup>

The description of Sarajevo as a 'mud-caked village' exposes not only the author's contempt for the city and his utter ignorance of the life and conditions lived in the capital of Bosnia, but also totally misrepresents any perception of Sarajevo as a regional capital and a major trading centre, dating to pre-Ottoman times, which became a centre of learning and sophistication that could be compared readily with pre-1492 Grenada. Sarajevo was a town that flourished in the so-called Ottoman 'Golden Age' of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, that became a major strategic and administrative centre during the period of Habsburg rule (1878-1918) and would become the capital of a federal republic in Tito's Yugoslavia. It could hardly be described as 'a mud-caked village'.

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<sup>12</sup> LYALL, ARCHIBOLD, *The Balkan Road*, Methuen, London, 1930, p. 164.

<sup>13</sup> GUNTHER, JOHN, *Inside Europe*, Harper, New York, 1940, p.437.

Note also the author's reference to 'loathsome and almost obscene snarls of Balkan politics'. This is the kind of language that causes very deep concern, because it feeds into the main thrust of the second part of this presentation, namely the kind of language that has been employed by leaders of the international community in the post-Dayton protectorates, which could have a deleterious effect upon maintaining stability in the region.

But this essentialist, Balkanist and reductivist image of the Balkans, conjured up by journalists, travel writers and authors of adventure stories, did not just end at the time of the Second World War. It was to raise its ugly head once again throughout the 1990s, as it continues to do so to this very day<sup>14</sup>. So, we bring this sad survey of essentialist Balkanist writing up to date, with the following noteworthy extract that appeared in *New York Times* on, 12 March 1995: '...the notion of killing people... because of something that may have happened in 1495 is unthinkable in the western world. Not in the Balkans'<sup>15</sup>.

This piece of journalism is a ludicrous example of the 'west is best' school of thinking. The date chosen by the writer has no specific historical significance, but just happens to be 500 years before the publication of this article. The text assumes, as in the first extract, that the people of the Balkans had a 'splendid talent for starting wars' and murdering easily. In fact, it simply serves to reinforce the whole discourse on Balkan savagery and blood-drenched earth, and teaches us that nothing has been learned in the way we have represented other peoples, faiths, communities and identities over the past fifty years.

So, without question, there has been, since the beginning of the 1990s, a revival of essentialist and reductivist talk and writing based on the out-dated theme of 'mentalities', reflecting the attitudes and interpretations of another age, and this has become quite popular amongst some journalists, academics, intellectuals and practitioners in the field, at the same time as influencing political leaders in their policies.

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<sup>14</sup> I introduced my presentation, in Turkey, by making reference to an article from the front page of the previous day's *International Herald Tribune*, part of the courtesy in-flight entertainment offered by Czech Airlines on my flight from Prague. The article was about a controversial Orthodox priest in Transylvania, but the journalist could not refrain from referring to images such as 'a land of dreaming haystacks' — so the Balkanist show goes on!

<sup>15</sup> COHEN, ROGER, 'A Balkan Gyre of War, Spinning onto Film', *New York Times*, 12 March 1995, p.24.

On this theme, it is now time to explore some of the literary 'gems' of one writer in particular, Robert Kaplan, and his book *Balkan Ghosts*, published in 1993. One becomes even more concerned when one reads that this book had allegedly influenced President Clinton in helping to form his policy on the Balkans in the early 1990s, for it was Kaplan who wrote that: 'The Balkans were the original Third World, long before the media coined the term.' (p. xxiii), in what he saw as: '...a time-capsule world: a dim stage upon which people raged, spilled blood, [and] experienced visions and ecstasies.' (p. xxi) Kaplan continues throughout his book in a similar essentialist, existential and ahistorical vein, with:

Twentieth-century history came from the Balkans. Here men have been isolated by poverty and ethnic rivalry, dooming them to hate. Here politics has been reduced to a level of near anarchy that from time to time in history has flowed up the Danube into Central Europe. (p. xxii)<sup>16</sup>

In other words, the Balkans are far too complicated an issue to get involved in and are therefore best left alone. This book seeks to be a contemporary 'classic' of a traditional genre, the Balkanist genre. Indeed it succeeds and should be read, if only for enlightenment on how not to present the peoples of the Balkans. And even if one might find it in one's heart to excuse travel writers and journalists for misrepresenting the Balkans, when it comes to academics taking such essentialist liberties, then one really does begin get seriously concerned.

The U.S. historian, Dennis Hupchick, provides one recent example:

Competitive conditions bred ethnic cultures frequently typified by extremes in expression — communal generosity and stubborn territoriality; overt hospitality and brutal atrocity; bouts of fun-loving enjoyment and irrational violence. All Balkan peoples traditionally have exhibited one common characteristic: A sense of passionate, tenacious group pride<sup>17</sup>.

This passage comes from an author who believes that in writing a history of the Balkans:

An exclusively ethnic historical approach is acceptable if focused on a single single society. Any attempt to understand the broader historical reality by relying exclusively on ethnicity becomes bogged down in the complexities of ethnic diversity, raising the problem of differentiating the proverbial forest from the trees<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> KAPLAN, ROBERT, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*, Macmillan, London, 1993.

<sup>17</sup> HUPCHICK, DENNIS, *The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism*, Hampshire/Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p.7.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12.

When I reviewed this book for the journal, *The European Legacy*, I argued that when dealing with late nineteenth and twentieth-century Balkan history one cannot avoid the issues of ethnicity and identity. To do so is to miss out one of the key issues that makes Balkan history tick in the modern and contemporary era<sup>19</sup>.

Another fine example of essentialism is provided by the psychologist, C.G. Schoenfeld, taken from his article 'Dimensions of the West's Involvement in the Third Balkan War' which may be found in Mestrovic's edited work *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War* (1996). Of course the titles of both the chapter and the book give it away. The concept of a third Balkan war takes us back to the reprinting of the 1913 Carnegie Report, whilst the term Genocide might suggest that the editor is not totally impartial in his representation of the war. In this text, the author uses a psychoanalytical perspective to shed light upon what he refers to as 'the abominable and inhuman behavior of the Serbians towards their former countrymen.'

Here is another Schoenfeld quotation:

As for the Serbians, they are a people whose self-esteem is obviously precarious. To this very day, they feel deeply aggrieved and humiliated by — and fantasize about reversing- their defeat by the Turks in the Battle of Kosovo back in 1389 (*which occurred a hundred years before Columbus discovered America!*)

These are not my italics, they appear in the published text! Otherwise, one is probably presented with a fairly straight forward reason as to why psychologists should exercise caution when dealing with history and politics.

Other academics have considered the problem of the representation of the cultural identities of the peoples of South Eastern Europe. One interesting example is Francine Friedman in her *Bosnian Muslims* (1996). In considering the importance of what she has defined as the ethno-nationalistic view of international affairs, Friedman acts as devil's advocate inconstrasting the following two views:

1. The former-Yugoslavia was made up of primitive, semi barbaric peoples who have never learned to settle their disputes except through violence. Therefore, Yugoslavia - and the Balkans- of which it was a part- are not quite 'European', insinuating not quite civilised.

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<sup>19</sup> HUDSON, ROBERT, *The European Legacy*, 2004, vol. 10, No. 3, p.238.

*Contra:*

2. On a continent that has witnessed such atrocities as Europe has throughout its history, Yugoslavs are neither more nor less civilised than other Europeans. Yugoslavia has at least four recent decades of non-violence —and Bosnia and Hercegovina in particular was the epitome of multicultural tolerance, lending the lie to its alleged barbaric underpinnings. Instead, the current conflict in Yugoslavia is the result of the cynical manipulation of historical and religious symbols and of misinformation by politicians attempting to retain power during the transition from communism rather than merely the reassertion of the natural Balkan persona<sup>20</sup>.

I know which of the two readings that I would identify with.

And, in due course, it is the politicians who pick up from the academics and all the travel writing and journalistic misunderstanding that has gone before. Even policy maker Lord David Owen, who worked so hard to bring about peace in Bosnia in the early 1990s, has since recorded in the introduction to his book *Balkan Odyssey*, that: 'History points to a tradition in the Balkans of a readiness to solve disputes by taking up arms... it points to a culture of violence... [and] dark and virulent nationalism'<sup>21</sup>.

Having considered the impact of cultural imperialism upon our way of thinking the Balkans, I now want to turn to what I believe is a relatively new concept, namely that of Humanitarian Imperialism.

## Humanitarian Imperialism

By Humanitarian Imperialism, I refer to a new kind of imperialism, based not upon exploitation as in Europe's colonial past (especially before the 1960s), but an imperialism that is based upon good intent, whereby the colonial officer of yesteryear has been replaced by the OSCE or UN field worker, the Red Cross worker, or the volunteer for *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (MSF). These are individuals, who belong to the international community who try to bring succour and relief to the poor benighted 'natives' in conflict and post- conflict situations.

To some extent, their work reflects Edward Said's references to the appeal of 'running the affairs of lesser peoples'<sup>22</sup> or his reference to the impact of missionaries, or of a 'prevailing western consensus that has come to regard the developing world as an atrocious nuisance, a cultur-

<sup>20</sup> FRIEDMAN, FRANCINE, *The Bosnian Muslims*, Westview Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 254.

<sup>21</sup> OWEN, DAVID, *Balkan Odyssey*, London, 1995, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> SAID, 1994, p. xxvi.

ally and politically inferior place'<sup>23</sup>. They take part in activities described elsewhere in Said's work, with reference to Rudyard Kipling, as being akin to 'taking up the white man's burden'. As for the new protectorates established in BiH and Kosovo, they are seen as being little more than a 'benign colonial regime', where the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Stabilization Force in Bosnia Herzegovina/European Union Force in Bosnia Herzegovina (SFOR/EUFOR), Kosovo Force (KFOR) and United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UN-MIK) along with a plethora of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are serving as the somewhat hamstrung agents of western imperialism, in the spirit of a 'new interventionism'<sup>24</sup> that was exemplified in NATO's conflict over Kosovo, and its quasi-colonial aftermath.

Humanitarian Imperialism may indeed have become the reality for the Balkans, as it has become a *de facto* reality in Afghanistan and Iraq. Adam Burgess has underlined the 'virtually colonial character of relations' between western and eastern Europe<sup>25</sup>, arising from what is essentially western arrogance in its attitudes to the east, with the West, on a 'moral mission'<sup>26</sup> to the 'politically unruly natives'<sup>27</sup>. Bosnians themselves are not unaware of these developments. The Bosnian intellectual, Dražan Pehar acknowledges that one option might be to transform Bosnia into a protectorate in which the OHR would probably be the one to take on the role of a 'BiH emperor' who would 'rule over a Bosnia in a fashion not unlike that of the period of Austro-Hungarian rule in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'<sup>28</sup>.

Indeed, when we have had former High Representatives, such as Carl Westendorp coming out with statements that imbue an essentialist view of the indigenous population, then this is very deeply disconcerting. He is quoted as having commented on how: 'It is ugly to democratise a country using force, but where you have such abnormal mentality in the leadership, then you have to do this'<sup>29</sup>.

It is in this context of believing in 'abnormal mentalities' that some policy advisors, politicians and other commentators have begun to advocate a 'be-

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>24</sup> CHOMSKY, NOAM, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo*, Pluto, London, 1999.

<sup>25</sup> BURGESS, ADAM, *Divided Europe*, 1997, p. 107.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>28</sup> Dražan, Pehar, 'Civic Elements of Compromise in the Crippling of Dayton', in *Forum Bosnae*, Sarajevo, BiH, Vol. 15, No. 2, July 2002, pp. 118-136. Edited by Robert Hudson.

<sup>29</sup> CARL WESTENDORP, (OHR) in David Chandler, *Bosnia: Faking Democracy after Dayton*, Pluto, London, 1999.



nign imperialism' or 'benign colonial regimes' and this has been reflected in the recent writings of Robert Cooper, one time foreign affairs advisor to British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and currently works as Director-General of External and Politico-Military Affairs for the Council of the European Union.

Cooper advocated the need for 'a new age of empire', in which Western powers no longer have to follow international law in their dealings with 'old fashioned' states, whereby they can use military force independently of the United Nations and impose protectorates to replace regimes which are seen to 'misgovern'. This is what Noam Chomsky has labelled the 'new military humanism' — which he considers to be a contradiction in terms, if ever there was one. By contrast, Cooper's articulate reasoning would argue that, as part of the 'new military humanism', the bombing of Yugoslavia could be justified on 'moral grounds' rather than legal ones.

In reading his *Breaking of Nations* (2003), one sees that Cooper has divided the world into three types of state: pre-modern, modern and post-modern. If the pre-modern state represents chaos; and the modern state is quite prepared to resort to war in a Clauswitzian sense, then the post-modern state no longer thinks of security in terms of conquest or of going to war, but rather in terms of transparency or 'mutual interference'. By Cooper's definition, the proffered examples of pre-modern states are Somalia and 'until recently' Afghanistan (and no doubt this train of thought might extend to Serbia-Montenegro, the Republika Srpska and one wonders if one should even add Kosovo to the list); whilst the examples of modern states are India, Pakistan and China. By contrast, the most developed example of the post-modern system is the European Union (although this is not, as yet, a state) which is seen to 'represent security through transparency and transparency through independence'.

The real bite in Cooper's reasoning, comes with the following passage:

The challenge to the postmodern world is to get used to the idea of double standards. Among ourselves, we operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security. But when dealing with more old-fashioned kinds of states outside the postmodern continent of Europe, we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era — force, pre-emptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the nineteenth century world of every state for itself. Among ourselves, we keep the law but when operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> COOPER, ROBERT, 'Why we still need empires', *The Observer*, 7 April 2002. See also, COOPER, ROBERT, *The Post Modern State — Re-Ordering the World*, The Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2003.

And, for Cooper, the best way of dealing with pre-modern or failed states is through colonisation, although he admits that colonisation *per se* is unacceptable to post-modern states, he argues that what is needed is: '...a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values.' - Hence, the term Humanitarian Imperialism!

Cultural identity and representation can be a powerful accelerant in forming public opinion, yet we must be aware of the errors of building public and foreign policy on decades, even a century or more of misinformed literary, journalistic and pseudo-academic misrepresentations, as this could have a negative, if not deleterious impact upon the way that the international community conducts its affairs in this first decade of the twenty-first century. From a practical and educational perspective, it would seem that one of the key tools to our understanding the problems in South Eastern Europe and elsewhere is to educate the international peace makers, the very participants in these international interventions, so that they not only have a strong backing in International Relations, Peace Studies and International Law, but also that they also develop a keen knowledge, empathy and understanding of the histories, languages and cultures of the regions in which they will work. These are issues which need to be addressed not only in Bosnia & Hercegovina, and Kosovo, but also with regard to the post conflict situations in Afghanistan and Iraq. And, with reference to my quotation in *κοινη* Greek, at the beginning of this chapter, when these issues have been addressed, then perhaps the peace makers will be truly blessed-although they might not, as yet, be the sons, or daughters, of God!

# Chapter Five

## The Role of Identity in the Dynamics of New Forms of Violent Conflict

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### Abstract

The scope of this chapter is to analyze the way particularistic and exclusivist identities are created in the globalization era, in order to justify and to feed today's wars. The structural transformations which took place after the end of the Cold War (i.e., the weakening of the welfare state, the disappointment created by the socialist and post-colonialist ideologies, diminution of public employment) led to uncertainties and insecurity. These facts open space for the emergence of new forms of political aggregation around religious and nationalist identities. Forms of political aggregation, both sub-national and transnational which compromise the state as the reference for the modern definition of enemy and friend as pairs and for the Westphalian conduct of war.

Post-Cold War conflicts have certain features which make them different from the classical interstate wars of the modern period. The central question has to do with the fact that the state has lost an important part of its role in the conduct and regulation of armed conflicts. First, there was a spread of non-state actors in today's wars, which develop their activities across borders. Second, these actors make use of illegal activities to finance their activities. Finally, their identities have a sub-national or a transnational character, which compromises the Westphalian distinction between friend and enemy as a form of political aggregation. This chapter will focus on the question of identity in the so-called new wars. It will demonstrate how the extremist religious and especially the nationalist groups contributed to the erosion of the state as a cor-

nerstone of management and organization of conflict. The Kosovo case will serve as a typical example of this theoretical framework.

## **Wars in the Modern Period**

This first part, which will analyze the question of conflict and the construction of identity around the idea of 'us' and 'them' as a form of political aggregation, was inspired in the vision of Carl Schmitt of the state as a particular institutional mechanism to manage, organize and limit the scope and the intensity of conflict between the different groups.

### *Politics and Conflict*

Politics is strongly connected with the phenomena of conflict, as its aim is to manage it. In order to achieve this purpose, politics has to impose limits on the conflict. Otherwise the conflict can evolve into uncontrolled political violence. Thus, as Behnke refers: 'limits on its [conflict] scope and intensity have to be imposed to keep it from deteriorating into a war of all against all, with the sole aim of mutual annihilation' (2004: 275). On the other hand Schmitt (1996: 53) states that conflict is infinite because of the principles of difference underlying it. Within a society we can always find new groups and subdivide them into smaller ones, taking into consideration their differences. This exercise can continue on the individual level<sup>1</sup>. However, at a certain point, it was necessary to aggregate those differences into political basic units, more or less cohesive, in order to organize and regulate conflict between the several actors.

During the modern period the state represented the maximum forum of that kind of aggregation and of inclusion of conflict in a specific structure, as a way to domesticate it through institutional mechanisms. In fact, as Aagaben (1998: 36) states: 'In the last 300 years, the state has been the level at which the political conflict has been conducted, and which defined the frontier between unity and plurality, order and anarchy, cohesion and conflict'. Therefore the state was the cornerstone for the conduct and the regulation of conflict.

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<sup>1</sup> In the realm of political relations, the groups who are formed to defend particular interests will get into conflict with those whom, in a certain moment, have opposing interests.

### *State, Conflict and Identity*

In order to enclose violence into a structured conflict, the state rests upon the territorialization and in the determination of the distinction between friend and enemy. Within the state (space of friends) the unity and cohesion must be maintained; out of the state territory (space of enemies), the conflict becomes a political reality. Therefore the sovereign state becomes the condition for identity and for the application of effective norms and rules over a specific collectivity. Nonetheless, as stated by Behnke (2004: 277): 'the limits to the conflict imposed by the state are not just effective in terms of the construction of a unifying solidarity'.

The concept of political also means a limit on the intensity of conflict through the distinction between friend and enemy, and not friend and foe. The first situation represents a distinction between pairs, which recognizes the right to existence of the other; the second implies a radical antagonism (Schwab 1998: 94-101). Again, in the first case the distinction rests upon a logic of mutual respect and in the restraint of the conflict, while the second tends to total war and to mutual annihilation.

Consequently the conflicts between states in the modern period were like a duel between equals. The tendency to total war was constrained by the mutual recognition of sovereign equality. On the other hand, the scope of the modern war was to impose ones will on to the other, and not its complete destruction (e.g. peace treaties in the two World Wars). This external limitation of conflict is based on the internal suppression of violent conflict. Each state supports itself through its own régime of truth, included in the concept of sovereignty. For that reason there is a mutual recognition between states of its national system of values, and the régime of truth behind the construction of a political aggregation is pluralized. For example this pluralization was enshrined in the international system through the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state. Nonetheless this pure model which gets quite near the reality of international armed conflicts in the modern period cannot be applied to the majority of conflicts in today's international system. This chapter will try to explain the reasons for these changes, taking into account the questions of identity.

### **Post-Cold War Order Conflicts**

In the past few years it seems clear that the actors and the type of violence have changed. In the first place, it is difficult to distinguish

between state and non-state actors. Secondly, violence crosses frontiers and is primarily directed against civilians, not against military forces. Finally, this new type of war has essentially a religious and a nationalist nature.

The causes of political aggregation, and what lies behind the new types of organized violence, according to Mary Kaldor (2003: 113), are based on two main reasons. The first deals with the collapse of the socialist and post-colonial ideologies. Even before the end of Cold War, these two variants generated disappointment for millions of people, because of authoritarianism, corruption and incapacity to accomplish development goals. Therefore, new ideologies rose as alternative forms of political mobilization, based on ethnicity and religion.

The second reason is related to discrediting the state as a generator of security. In recent years, structural changes are observed, such as the decline of the welfare state and public employment, accelerated urbanization, the deregulation of the economy, the appearance of an informal and criminal economy, massive waves of migration from poor countries to rich countries, and multiplication of the phenomenon of exclusion.

A third reason for these post-Cold War events can also be identified. The acceleration of the process of globalization is related to this sense of insecurity, since it creates a sensation of powerlessness, as crucial decisions regarding daily life are taken by actors who are not accountable to local populations.

The new nationalist, ethnic and religious forms of aggregation are precisely a way of creating a sense of certainty in times of uncertainty, security in times of insecurity, and psychological well-being when material well-being has disappeared.

The main features of today's religious and nationalist groups are a 'mythical past' and 'a fight against the Other.' Taking into consideration Kaldor's analysis (2003: 16-19), the majority of these groups believe that they are living in a situation of social decadence and this represents a justification for their existence, purposes and actions. In this sense, they feel nostalgic about a 'pure past' in which the nation was clean of foreigners, minorities and 'impure races.'

So these groups invent a past in a certain time and in a certain place, ignoring recent history and rigorous analysis of the historical period they use to reinforce their arguments. For example, the Serbs claim and celebrate the date of 13 June 1389 in which they were defeated by the Turks. Curiously, they identify the Albanians with the Turks, even if Serbs and Albanians fought side by side against the Ottomans.

The aforementioned nostalgia of the past is infused with warfare discourse. As Kaldor states: 'The concept of fight is, probably, the most

important feature of the sense of identity of the nationalist and religious groups'. For example, in some cases nationalist narratives usually relate stories of great battles, or simple examples of disorder (e.g. battle of Kosovo, 1389).

On the other hand, the ideologies of these kinds of movements are deeply marked by the division between 'us' and 'them'. The group defines itself by opposition to the other, which could be part of another religious or ethnic group. Such definition grants 'holy legitimacy' to their political causes and to their followers a feeling of being part of something greater than life itself. These arguments are used to fight against the so called historical injustice blamed on the Other.

This discourse contradicts the Westphalian distinction between 'friend' and 'enemy', and leans to the radical antagonism between friend and foe. From the moment the conflict emerges, the confrontational narratives tend to an erosion of the modern scope and limit of the conflict, and also to a radicalization of violence. In fact Snow (1996: 147) states that 'new internal wars involve higher levels of atrocity and inhumanity'.

The fights are not so much between two armies of two countries, which pretend to impose their interests on each other, but between different kinds of armed groups that often avoid direct confrontation. Actually, present developments evolve towards a symbolic and strategic violence materialized in the slaughtering of civilians, apparently in an absurd way. Thus, as a result of the absence of political centers of gravity: 'there is a lack of restraint in the way new internal wars are conducted' (Snow 1996: 145).

The aim of many of the recent armed conflicts has been the clear eradication, or even the extermination of the other (e.g. the Rwandan conflict). For example, the scope of war tactics in the ex-Yugoslavia was to create ethnically pure territories. In these cases, a rise in violence was related to an attempt to expel people from their own homes. The systematic violation was a typical practice in ex-Yugoslavia, not as a collateral effect of the war, but mainly as a deliberate war tactic to compel women (especially Muslims), to feel ashamed and threatened, and to never wish to return to their homes. In the same way, violence against symbolic objectives aims to erase any sign of the 'other's' culture. In Banja Luka, during the Bosnian War, two Ottoman mosques from the sixteenth century were completely destroyed. A few days later, the place was covered with grass, in order to hide any trace of Muslim presence in that zone.

Symbolic and strategic violence can be seen as a form of political mobilization, as in the way extremists are able to encourage extremist

feelings. 'The slaughtering and the deportations during the Yugoslav wars were what really widespread the ideologies which ... [were] the cause of conflict' (Kaldor 2003: 19).

The Yugoslav case is particularly useful as a suitable example of how the construction of identities around the antagonism between friend and foe contributed to the unrestrained character of the post-Cold War conflicts. To reinforce this perspective this article focuses on the Kosovo War.

## The Kosovo Case

Kosovo witnessed two types of conflicts during the 1998-1999 period; an internal armed conflict between February 1998 and June 1999 and an international conflict between NATO and Yugoslavia between March 1999 and June 1999. In this sense, not only the conflict but also the exclusion of the 'Other' can be examined at two levels; namely, domestic and international.

### *The Nationalist Claims on Kosovo*

Over the centuries, Kosovo has been inhabited by Serbs and Albanians, between which the administrative power changed hands many times, and it has become a center of ethnic conflict since the nineteenth century, stemming from the competing claims of the two groups (Waller *et al* 2001: viii). The Kosovar Albanians' deep-rooted wish to unite Kosovo with greater Albania challenged the Serb's desire to keep Kosovo within Serbian borders (McCgwire 2000: 3). According to Aleksander Pavkovic, '[a]part from its military and political aspects, the conflict over Kosovo is a conflict of national ideologies, which motivates each of the ethnic groups engaged in the conflict' (Pavkovic 2001: 3). Despite the fact that the majority of its population is Albanian, Kosovo is claimed to be the cradle for both of these nations and has become a symbol of nationalist desires both for Serbs and Albanians. For Serbs, Kosovo, or the 'Fields of the Blackbirds' in Kosovo, is viewed as a holy place of the Serbian nation; as a place where the Serbian Army is defeated by the expanding Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Kosovo of June 23, 1329. It has been a symbol of the Serbian self-sacrifice for the sake of Christian civilization in the Serb nationalist mythology. Accordingly, under the Ottoman authority, Kosovo became subject to a flow of Albanian and other Muslim populations, which re-



sulted in predominance of Albanians (Maull 2). On the other hand, the Albanians claim an ethnic and cultural continuity with the early Illyrians and accuse the Serbs of occupying the land of the Illyrian-Albanians, which they began to populate systematically in the twelfth century (Daskalovski 2003: 18). As the Albanians argue, Kosovo belongs to the Albanian nation; they have established a strong desire to separate Kosovo from Serbian control. However, when the Albanian National Assembly declared independence and achieved international recognition in 1912, Kosovo was not included in the new Albanian state and therefore remained with Serbia until 1918, and then with Yugoslavia (Maull 3). Predictably, the Albanians resisted integration into Yugoslavia both in 1918 and 1948 due to their deep-rooted wish to unite with Albania (McCgwire 2000: 3).

Although the emergence of the exclusive ethnic claims can be traced back to the nineteenth century, they became a locus of war only in the early 1990's, after Tito's death. Referring to Kaldor's argument, the rise of nationalism in Kosovo can be associated with the decline of communist ideology. After the Second World War, the communist elite of Yugoslavia tried to resolve the competing claims of Serbs and Albanians within the socialist and federal framework. 'Being equal members of the Yugoslav community, the Albanian national minority — or 'nationality' — also shared the land on which they lived with the Serbs and all other groups inhabiting Kosovo,' whereas communist doctrine recognized no exclusive right of control or possession of the province to any national group (Daskalovski 2003: 5). It was after the death of Tito, who is depicted as the only unifying element of the federation, that the dissatisfaction of Kosovar-Albanians with their political status led to student riots. In the meantime, the Kosovar Albanians oppressive discrimination and the Serbs subordinate status in Kosovo led to a growing political protest among the 200,000 Serbs, functioning as Milosevic's catalyst for gaining leadership in 1987 (McCgwire 2000: 3). 'In the aftermath of 1989, when the socialist project was discredited and the monopoly of the party was finally broken and when democratic elections were held for the first time, nationalism erupted into the open' (Kaldor 1999: 81).

Pointing to the linkage between the rise of nationalism and the rise of Milosevic, it is argued that war became a real possibility once the nationalist agenda became the governmental policy under Milosevic (The Kosovo Report 2000: 34). Surveys indicate that, particularly in the 1990's, with the rise of Milosevic, ethnic distancing was on increase with a reactivation of 'archaeological' buried layers of negative collective memories (Blagojevic 2003: 169). Research conducted in

1990 demonstrates that among all other ethnic/national groups in the country, Albanians expressed the strongest ethnic distance from Serbs (Nikolic 2003: 55).

A series of steps taken by Milosevic resulted in a rising Serbian nationalism, leading to tensions with Kosovar Albanians and finally resulting in a revoking of Kosovo's autonomy in 1990. Dejan Guzina notes that with the rise of Milosevic, '[i]nflammatory anti-Albanian rhetoric in the Serbian media and by prominent Serbian nationally oriented intellectuals served to justify a new round of Serbian domination in Kosovo' (Guzina 2003: 18). Despite the fact that available data demonstrates the contrary, the Serbian and Montenegrin population living in Kosovo claimed to be intimidated by local police, forced to sell properties and subject to systematic rape. 'In fact the evidence suggests that throughout the period of the so-called Albanian terror in the province, Albanians remained the prime target of repression by the Yugoslav political system' (Guzina 2003: 37).

Correspondingly, the speeches of Milosevic in the early years of his leadership in Yugoslavia signaled the exclusive nature of Serbian claims over Kosovo towards the Albanians. In November 1988, in front of 350,000 people who had gathered in Belgrade, Milosevic declared: 'Every nation has a love, which eternally warms its heart. For Serbia it is Kosovo'. (The Kosovo Report 2000: 41). The next year, on the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, the declaration of Milosevic to one million people was that: 'Six centuries later, again, we are in battles and in quarrels. They are not armed battles although such things cannot be excluded' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 41). In the same year, new laws hindering the Albanians were introduced and in 1990 Kosovo's autonomy was revoked, which resulted in an increase in human rights abuses and discriminatory governmental policies for the sake of Serbianization of the province. Street violence broke out when the Kosovo Assembly approved the measure and Yugoslavia sent troops, tanks, warplanes and 2,000 more police to Kosovo. 'It is said that at least one member of every Albanian family had been called to a police station, or had spent some time in jail, or was waiting for a trial' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 42).

The Kosovar Albanians responded with a declaration of independence in July 1990. While Albania recognized Kosovo as an independent republic in 1991, Ibrahim Rugova, who was leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK) and a devoted follower of Gandhi, was elected President in 1992 (Mccgwire 2000: 4). The declaration of independence and the elections were not recognized and were considered illegal by Belgrade.

Julie Mertus describes the circumstances as:

a culture of victimization and a history of real and imagined domination of one group over another, long-term human political and social oppression of a disfavored ethno-national group, structural poverty, unmet human development needs, media manipulation of misunderstanding among the general populace, and the absence of civil and political institutions which allow for divergent opinions (Mertus, 1999: 4).

According to her, these circumstances are an illustration of what happens when political leaders exploit the most humiliating truths about the Other in an attempt to create intense feelings of insecurity and victimization. At this point, it is crucial to emphasize that the Othering process was mutual and that besides the Serbian governmental policy to exclude Kosovar Albanians, the Kosovar Albanian media and Albanian educational system were also creating 'ethnic truths' and 'ethnic argumentation' by inventing Albanian history. Blagojevic uses the term 'mirroring' for the paradox of media war between the two parties.

Serbian and Albanian media were frequently offering identical arguments for their opposite causes: that a certain ethnic group had a longer history in a given territory; that a certain ethnic group is the only one who had been discriminated against a prior history; that a certain ethnic group was forcefully divided (...) into separate states and should be re-united (Blagojevic 2003: 173).

Despite the growing tension, a war did not begin in Kosovo until 1998. One fundamental reason for this fact is the Albanian strategy of non-violence. In Rugova's words: 'The Serbs only wait for a pretext to attack the Albanian population and wipe it out. We believe that it is better to do nothing and stay alive than be massacred' (quoted in *The Kosovo Report* 2000: 43). By applying a strategy of passive resistance, the Kosovar Albanians were expecting to get the support of the international community against Serbians who abused Albanian rights. In this sense, they were looking for an accord to address the problem of Kosovo. However, the US special envoy Richard Holbrooke insisted that the only issue on the agenda of the Dayton talks was a peaceful resolution to the war in Bosnia; Dayton did not even touch on the question of Kosovo (Judah 2001: 5).

### *The Approach of the International Community*

The Dayton Accords not only reflected the international community's avoidance of the Kosovo issue, but also signaled that ethnic territo-

ries had legitimacy and the only way to obtain international attention was to wage war (The Kosovo Report 2000: 50). 'Kosovo [*sic*] Albanians could not help but notice that Bosnian Serbs received a form of territorial recognition in the Dayton Peace Accords with the creation of Bosnian Muslim-Croatian Federation (...) within the Bosnian state. Some Albanians concluded that maybe violence did pay, while nonviolent resistance got you nowhere' (O'Neill 2002: 22). It was in this context that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged fully on to the scene. This can be interpreted as a milestone in the evolution of the conflict, and into the new type of post modern war in the sense that the KLA rapidly developed into a non-governmental actor, representing one of the parties to the conflict.

The first violent action was the killing of a Serb policeman in 1995 for which the KLA declared responsibility in 1996. The emergence of the KLA led to an increase in the already persistent police harassment and resulted in growing clashes between the police and peaceful protesters. The Serbian government justified searches, detentions and political trials by proclaiming the KLA a terrorist organization. The climax was the Serbian government's decision in 1998 to arrest Adem Jashari, a local Prekazi strongman who had joined the KLA. Killing his extended family of 58 people within a week resulted in the rise of village militias to defend their villages all over Kosovo. 'This was the beginning of the war' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 51).

It is widely argued that an international response began to be considered only after '[t]he major Western powers (...) started to panic as the possibility of everyone's nightmare scenario — war in Kosovo — became a possibility' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 23). Until then, the responses of international actors to what was going on in Kosovo were limited in number. The Brioni Agreement, brokered by the EU in 1991, was the first and last attempt to find a comprehensive negotiated settlement to the dissolution of Yugoslavia (The Kosovo Report 2000: 55). Before 1998, Bush's Christmas warning of 1992 to Milosevic is the only strong official statement during the crisis. The message, which was restated in the UN Security Council in 1993 by Madeline Albright, was that: 'In the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the US will be prepared to employ military force against Serbians in Kosovo and Serbia proper' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 56). However, the international community did not attempt to find a solution to the conflict in Kosovo until it escalated into an armed conflict in 1998.

This can be explained by the failure of the international community to recognize the new type of war surfacing in Kosovo. Basically, what was going on in Kosovo was beyond the modern wars, and the

international community was slow in not only responding to but also recognizing the conflict. Accordingly, the international community de-politicized the conflict by simplifying it as a primitive fight between ethnic groups. The portrayal of the conflict by the international media illustrated it as ethnic and ancient while ignoring the major role played by factions led by elites and the will of many people on both sides to live peacefully with each other. Interestingly, this portrayal not only justified the inaction of the international community until 1999 but also the action of this community after 1999. In effect, the position, or the would-be-position of the international community towards the conflict was apparent back in 1992. In MccGwire's words, '[t]he Christmas Message reflected the view that the root cause of the Yugoslav conflict was territorial aggression by Serbia, which was assumed to be an old-fashioned expansionist state led by a dictator' (Mccgwire, 2000: 5).

The turning point of the conflict can be regarded as the Yugoslav attack on the village of Racak in mid-January 1999, which left more than 40 ethnic Albanians dead. 'What the massacre at Racak initially triggered was an abandonment by the United States of its policy of attempting to preserve stability in the former Yugoslavia, a policy which had forced the international community to turn a blind eye to many of the worst atrocities taking place in an exceptionally violent part of the world' (Wyman 2001: 104). NATO responded on 28 January 1999, with the statement of the Secretary-General Javier Solana on the decision to authorize NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, unless the conflicting parties immediately complied with the demands of the international community. The decision was supported by Albright, the US Secretary of State: 'The choice is truly up to the leadership on both sides, especially the authorities in Belgrade. Either they cease fighting and agree upon a peaceful interim settlement, or they will face the consequences NATO has spelled out today' (quoted in Dauphinee 2003: 104). On 6 February 1999, the Rambouillet conference on Kosovo was held in France. Solana noted that 'when NATO brought the Serbs and the [KLA] together at Rambouillet, France, in February 1999, it was clear to everyone concerned that this would be the last opportunity for a comprehensive settlement' (quoted in Dauphinee 2003: 104) However, while the negotiations for a political solution continued in Rambouillet, the violence in Kosovo heightened (O'Neill 2002: 28). On 24 March 1999, 'NATO, deploying for the first time its armed forces in war, placed the controversial doctrine of humanitarian intervention squarely in the world's eye' (The Kosovo Report 2000: 19).

*The Role of the Media*

At the point that the internal armed conflict between Kosovar Albanians and Serbs developed into an international conflict between NATO and Yugoslavia, it is important to consider how parties organize their actions (Wendt 1992: 403). Media coverage provides a perfect source of represented symbols and discourse, and plays a key role in preparing the population for war. Correspondingly, Blagojevic explains the approach of CNN in two different roles: the creation of the otherness of the Balkans and the pressure that 'something should be done' (Blagojevic 2003: 167). According to her, '[w]hile the instigation of conflict takes place at the level of real interests and a clear cost-benefit analysis and is undertaken by those who are major decision makers, the actualization of conflict relies on the prior preparation of the ground and its self-justification' (Blagojevic 2003: 168). It is in this context that the media serves the international community as a vehicle for spreading the 'othering' mechanisms to justify intervention in Kosovo.

In this sense, the aforementioned identification of the Kosovo conflict by the international community as a primitive and ignorant ethnic slaughter enabled the international community to undertake 'humanitarian bombing', which inevitably led to 'collateral damage'. The self and other identifications are noticeable in President Clinton's announcement of the NATO air attacks, on 24 March 1999; 'he said that he was doing so because Serbian forces were 'moving from village to village, shelling civilians, and torching their houses'. Thus NATO supposedly was attacking to 'protect thousands of people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive'(Nikolic 2003: 65).

Blagojevic describes the role of the Western media in the Kosovo war as the professional invention of reality by pointing to the unbalanced and subjective media coverage. She lists fifteen mechanisms through which the Western media constructed the ethnic conflict and she mainly argues that '[t]he Kosovo conflict was represented through fragments of the truth which justified the initial assumption of Serbian guilt' (Blagojevic 2003: 175). Standish also stresses the CNN factor as providing NATO with the vital public support within most member states. The manner in which CNN provides such support can be again explained by the self and other identifications. The air attacks of NATO were intended against the Serbian policies against Kosovar Albanians. In this regard, NATO was otherizing the Serbs in defining its own self interest and identities. Based on the assertion that, '[c]onceptions of self and interest tend to 'mirror' the practices of significant others over time' (Wendt 1992: 404), the Serbs were being conceptualized as 'irrational

people, stuck in a six-century-old myth' (Blagojevic 2003: 175), which in turn enabled NATO to redefine its role as the world policeman.

As Marina Blagojevic explains, 'without (...) mobilization of propaganda through the media, ethnic conflict and/or war simply would not make sense for most of the social actors, who are almost always the main losers' (Blagojevic 2003: 169). In this sense, the media serves to promote public opinion towards engaging in warfare as a first priority. According to Popovic, this is achieved by creating a negative image of the enemy in which the media representation plays a major role. Given that the enemy was already constructed prior to the NATO air strike, what became necessary in March 1999 was 'to remind the public what both sides knew all too well: in Britain and America, that Milosevic and the Serbs, identified as the main culprits for wars in Croatia and Bosnia, were 'evil', for they committed atrocities unknown in the civilized world; in Yugoslavia, that the Western powers, who imposed 'unjust sanctions' against Yugoslavia and defamed the Serbs in the eyes of the world, have always had only one aim — the total destruction of the Serbian nation' (Popovic 3).

## Conclusion

The globalization process does not only imply the phenomenon of integration but also of fragmentation at social, cultural and political levels. It is in this contradictory context that the new wars are a mirror of what is happening in the world. This paper has explained the distinction between the new types of violent conflict from those of modern times, within a context of globalization, by emphasizing the role of the particularistic and exclusivist identities. The argument has been put forth by stating that instead of the Westphalian clear cut differentiation of 'friend' and 'enemy' at the state level, the post Cold War era has witnessed the differentiation between 'friend' and 'foe' within the space of unequal relations between state and non-state actors, which added to the new wars the possibility of extermination.

As the differentiation between 'friend' and 'foe' is actualized through the narratives within the process of exclusion of the Other, this paper similarly concentrates on the use of narratives in the Kosovo case at domestic and international levels. At the domestic level, the intensification of the conflict is analyzed with reference to the narrative that both Serbs and Kosovar Albanians used to otherize each other. At the international level, the narrative of the international community to exclude the Serbs as the other has been stressed. It is argued that by employing a narrative

that depoliticized the conflict, conditions were created to justify international inaction until 1999 in the case of Kosovo. Furthermore, it is also argued that the perception of the Kosovo crisis as a primitive and ignorant ethnic conflict was also rooted the international community's action in Kosovo. The discourse and symbols that became widespread and effective via media manipulation is emphasized in an attempt to clarify how the international community took the security dilemma between Serbs and Kosovar Albanians as inherent in their ethnic origins and also how it reconstructed a security dilemma while demonizing Milosevic to justify NATO bombardment. In Standish's words, '[a]s one Serbian minister remarked to me in November 1998, 'once the western media started using the term 'guerillas' rather than 'terrorists' for the KLA, we knew we had lost Kosovo' (Standish 2000: 6). The argument for the reconstruction of the security dilemma between Yugoslavia and NATO by the international community through the use of the media can be substantiated with Blagojevic's point: 'The media is definitely not only a mirror of reality; it is creating reality and it is extremely difficult to define boundary between the two' (Blagojevic 2003: 181).

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## **Chapter Six**

# **Responding to Terror: an analysis of the evolution of EU counter-terrorism strategy in the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> era**

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### **Abstract**

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 the United States has complained that the EU is not contributing enough militarily to the 'global war on terrorism', and is therefore 'soft on terrorism'. Perhaps this is because, at least at the EU level, there is recognition that the threat of jihadi terrorism is an internal, as well as a global threat and therefore diplomacy alongside intelligence and policing, rather than military force, is needed to dismantle the threat. Some individual member states have utilized a military first approach; yet British and Spanish experiences have shown that military responses to legitimate resistance have been a dismal failure for the state, while increased dialogue with 'terrorists' has resulted in less terror, less violence, and greater chances for peace and security. The EU perceives terrorism as primarily a policing problem, rather than a military one, and has generally responded to this threat by increasing co-operation among national policing bodies of member states both prior to Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, and after the London bombings of July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The primary effect of the emerging threat from international Islamist jihadists on European security strategy has been an accelerated process of co-operation among member states with regards to policing, intelligence, border and immigration control. The London bombings will likely intensify this evolution in international policing co-operation and co-ordination, while bringing to the foreground the need for collective co-ordination of EU foreign policy.

While Europe has long experienced various resistance and terrorist activities, the attacks on the United States of America on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, have rapidly increased both public and political sensitivity to terror-

ism as a primary international security concern. The American response to these attacks, namely the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, the massive undermining of domestic civil rights through the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and the *cart-blanche* breaking of international laws enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions can be categorized as an almost purely military approach. This response occurred without a concerted effort to understand why this event had taken place, even at the international diplomatic level<sup>1</sup>.

Although the EU reaction was to invoke the NATO alliance for the first time<sup>2</sup>, the primary reaction in Europe in general was to take a hard look at the source from whence this evil came. From the terrorist incident in Madrid on 11 March 2004 to the London bombings on 7 July 2005, there has been no talk of going to war, or military operations such as air-strikes against 'the enemy'. There is recognition, in Europe at least, that 'the enemy' is within<sup>3</sup> and therefore diplomacy alongside intelligence and policing, rather than military force, is needed to dismantle the threat. However, due to the tendency to use soft power rather than hard power, there has been a constant complaint that the EU is not contributing enough militarily to the 'war on terrorism'.

This view has been expressed White House officials, CNN News, to public opinion polls and even RAND Corporation's top specialist on Terrorism, Bruce Hoffman, who coined the phrase, 'America appears to believe that the EU is soft on terrorism.' This comes partially from the fact that the EU's ability to fashion a collective foreign policy is not yet cohesive, but also from an apparent ignorance of EU strategic thinking when it comes to counter-terrorism efforts, and where those efforts are best placed. Rather than emanating from weakness or lack of courage in the use of military force, EU strategies appear to take into account the damaging effects of massive military responses and seek to find alternative sources of prevention. Also, at least from a regional perspective, such thinking might evolve from an understanding of various individual state actions and counter-actions to terrorism, their successes and failures. Perhaps from recognition that brute military force, especially if mis-

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<sup>1</sup> "The official approach eschews causation. They don't look at why people resort to terrorism. Cause? What cause? Another example: on December 18, 1985, *The New York Times* reported that the foreign minister of Yugoslavia... requested the secretary of state of the US to consider the causes of Palestinian terrorism. The Secretary of state, George Shultz, and I'm quoting from *The New York Times*, 'went a bit red in the face. He pounded the table and told the visiting foreign minister, "there is no connection with any cause. Period.'" (Barsamian 2004:48).

<sup>2</sup> The secretary General of NATO at the time was Lord Robertson of the UK.

<sup>3</sup> Three of the four 'suicide-bombers' on July 7<sup>th</sup> were born and raised in England.

placed, actually encourages the same terrorist activity it is supposed to deter and dismantle.

On the whole, the EU perceives terrorism as primarily a policing problem rather than a military one, and has tended to respond to this threat by increasing co-operation among national policing bodies (Europol 2003), both prior to 11 September 2001 and after Madrid, 11 March 2004. Although there was a military response by some of the EU member states, with notable exceptions, to the attack on the United States, there was none after the bombings in Madrid and London.

The EU as a whole reacted in a similar pattern as in the past — the main effects of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the Madrid train bombings on European security strategy was to accelerate the process of increased co-operation among member states with regards to policing, intelligence, border and immigration control. The recent London bombings on 7 July 2005, will intensify this evolution in international policing co-operation and co-ordination. In order to clarify, a brief history of EU counter terrorism is useful.

In 1976 the European Community created TREVI (Terrorism, Radicalism, Extremism, and International Violence). The initial focus of this group towards cross-border police co-operation was dealing with international terrorism. There was recognition that as the EU nations integrated and national borders became porous, there would also be a greater movement of criminals and terrorist organizations (Anderson 1994). Early acclaim for the group was aroused by their success in severely damaging Hizbullah's fundraising operations in Europe in 1987 (Hoffman 1999). Success was contributed to the unprecedented co-operation between the police services of Britain, Italy, and West Germany (IBID). The strategy was beginning to pay off.

While TREVI continued its work, the 1992 Maastricht Treaty established a European Police Office, EUROPOL, as a central hub for co-operation in policing internationally. As this network grew and became heavily involved in countering international crime, the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council, in 1998, explicitly gave EUROPOL the duty of countering international terrorism<sup>4</sup>. This focus led to notable success, including the elimination of the notorious Greek terrorist organization known as November 17<sup>th</sup>. This work continued, supported by the Tampere Summit in October 1999 and the Santa Maria da Feira European Council in June 2000. After 11 September, 2001, and again after 11 March 2004, there has been an even greater emphasis on counter-terrorism within the organization, with added pressure on all member nations to co-operate on this issue more fully.

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<sup>4</sup> 'EU Counter Terrorism measures in the JHA Field' Ref. MEMO/04/59 12/03/2004, pp.2.

While some member nations (namely Britain, Spain, Italy, and Poland) joined the US in the illegal military invasion/occupation of Iraq under the pretenses of the 'war on terrorism' and non-existent WMD, most European nations decided against such actions, as did the EU as a collective. The American government viewed this as weak and/or cowardly behaviour. The Europeans were perceived, and portrayed, by Americans as being impotent with fear in the face of terrorism. Thus, after the Madrid train bombings, the series of events that led to the replacement of pro-war Aznar with anti-war Zapatero as President, and the withdrawal of Spanish soldiers from Iraq, only confirmed suspicions in the United States that Europe was 'soft on terror'.

Part of the problem was inability for an international consensus on the definition of terrorism. Arab states have persistently refused to label the Palestinian militant organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad as terrorist organizations, insisting that Palestinians are fighting a legitimate resistance to foreign occupation of their homeland. The Bush administration appears comfortable with the absence of a working definition of terrorism, preferring the more pliable 'I know a terrorist when I see one.' While the UN still struggles to find a working definition, the EU provided its version in 2002. It is as follows:

A terrorist offence is defined as an offence that is committed with the aim of intimidating people and seriously altering or destroying the political, economic, or social structures of a country (murder, bodily injuries, hostage taking, extortion, the fabrication of weapons, committing attacks, or threatening to commit any of the above, etc)<sup>5</sup>.

One supposes this is not referring to the US/UK invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, which has incurred all of the above cited offences with vigor.

After Madrid there was no immediate military response against Morocco even though there was no doubt the origin of the bombers was Moroccan, but rather an open, and very public, withdrawal/retreat from Iraq. Many in Europe, however, do not see this maneuver as a retreat so much as a step forward. As Spain had learned with the Goup Antiterroriste de Liberation (GAL) paramilitary death squads fighting ETA, if a democratic government breaks its own best laws and principles to combat terrorism, then the struggle is lost before it begins (Woodworth 2004:12). By withdrawing from Iraq, Spain was cleaning its hands of illegal and violent activ-

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<sup>5</sup> Article 1 of the Council Framework Decision 2002/475 JHA of 13 June 2002 on Combating Terrorism (Official Journal L164 of 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2002).

ity so that it would be in a position to fight terrorism in a way that has a chance of dismantling and defeating it.

The EU reaction to the Madrid train bombings was an even more rapid increase in soft power strategies focused on co-operation between member states police and intelligence services, as well as increased attention to co-coordinating collective EU foreign policy. Opening the Spring European Council in March of 2004, the leaders of the 25 member states began by reviewing counter-terrorism measures in the aftermath of Madrid and made a 'Declaration of Solidarity'. They adopted a counter-terrorism strategy prepared by European foreign and interior ministers that is essentially a more aggressive form of the Plan of Action previously adopted by the European Council on the 21 September, 2001<sup>6</sup>. Alongside promises that each state would fully implement the original Plan of Action by June 2004, including the European arrest warrant, joint investigations, and counter-money-laundering measures, member states also vowed to adopt proposals on the transfer of passenger data, inclusion of biometrics in identity documents, border controls, reinforcement of airports and harbors, seizure and blocking of terrorist financing by the end of June 2004. In June 2005 there was another deadline for adoption of regulations on the retention of communications data by service providers. These should require internet and mobile service providers to stockpile data for police/intelligence perusal and allow for GPS tracking and locating of terrorist suspects.

Statewatch, a British non-governmental organization, had this to say about the EU response:

An analysis of the 57 proposals on the table at the EU Summit on 25-26 of March (2004) in Brussels shows that of these, 30 are relevant to reinforcing counter-terrorist measures, and of those proposals, 27 have little or nothing to do with tackling terrorism — they deal with crime in general and surveillance. A number of the proposals would introduce the wholesale surveillance of everyone in Europe and could potentially be used for social and political control. Through logging all telecommunications (emails, phone calls, mobile calls, faxes and internet usage) and tracking all air travel in and out and within the EU, the Union is effectively adopting a version of the USA's controversial PNR, CAPPs II and US-VISIT plans. Another controversial proposal would have nearly everyone in the EU fingerprinted for the introduction of biometric passports and ID cards for citizens and the same for resident third country nationals. If in defending democracy measures are intro-

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<sup>6</sup> EU Counter-Terrorism Policy. EurActiv, Wednesday 31 March 2004. pp. 3 <http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcaturi=tcm:29-117489-16&type=LinksDossier>.

duced that fundamentally undermine civil liberties and peoples' right to privacy, it has to be asked what are we fighting for?<sup>7</sup>

Such statements are in no way new, having been reiterated incessantly by dissident academics and journalist such as Naomi Klein, Paddy Woodworth, Noam Chomsky, Robert Fisk, Johan Galtung, and countless others. The fear that keeps rearing its ugly head is that these emerging counter-terrorism strategies will be applied to crime in general, and thus the policies would be turned on the civilian population rather than against the terrorist who threaten them.

At the EU Summit, the notion of greater intelligence sharing among EU member states evolved into the suggestion, by Austria and Belgium, for the creation of a 'European CIA'. Although France and Britain shied away from this idea, citing possible information leaks with so many states involved, France followed by suggesting 'deeper intelligence sharing' between the five member states which have the largest intelligence agencies (France, Germany, Britain, Spain, and Italy). This would be manifest in increased levels of sharing in intelligence with Europol and Eurojust. However, it was agreed that eventually there must be an intelligence capacity integrated with the European Council structure for a swifter response time to the emerging threat of terrorism. This effort to harmonize anti-terrorism laws and ensure member states implement EU policies is personified in the creation the position of the EU Coordinator of Counter-Terrorism, dubbed the 'anti-terrorism Czar', who will co-ordinate policy and report directly to Javier Solana<sup>8</sup>. Gijs de Vries, former Dutch deputy Interior Minister, is the first person appointed to this position.

In the fight against terrorism, the EU has found many non-military counter-terrorism techniques, such as using its leverage as the world's largest trading bloc and humanitarian donor. After Madrid, EU economic policy evolved with regards to relations between the EU and other nations. The policy suggests that EU economic co-operation with non-EU states would be conditional upon the states efforts in counter-terrorism. Through such policies the EU is able to influence nations and states from which the source of terrorism is perceived, internationalizing their counter-terrorism capabilities legitimately, and non-violently.

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<sup>7</sup> Statewatch. 'Scoreboard on post-Madrid Counter-terrorism Plans'. 2004, pp. 1.

<sup>8</sup> The Declaration goes on to suggest that the coordinator should help ensure that counter-terrorism measures (both at the national and EU level) do not interfere with respect for fundamental rights, and that any interference with such rights is both necessary in the circumstances and strictly proportionate to an identified threat. There is no reference as to how such activities may be monitored.



EU counter-terrorism strategy is distinctly different from the American approach in other ways as well, such as the stated objective of finding and resolving the root causes of terrorism, an aspect which has been almost completely ignored by the current US Administration. In his speech on 25 March 2004, (after the Madrid train bombings) Javier Solana encouraged the rapid implementation of new counter-terrorism policies, stating, 'the EU must maintain its determination to understand and tackle the factors behind terrorism. No cause justifies terrorism, but nothing justifies ignoring the causes of terrorism.' He went on to say that he thought that dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could not be left until the war against terrorism was won, as it was an integral part of the perceived injustice by terrorists themselves<sup>9</sup>. Solana appears to understand what Bush and Blair do not, or perhaps he simply has less to lose by following a more reasonable and legitimate course of action.

Having said this about the European Union's responses to terrorism and resistance, it must be pointed out that these policies are often not representative of all its member states. While some EU states have not had to deal with terrorism, others have not been in a position to decide on such matters due to Cold War influences. Many states have viewed terrorism as primarily a criminal matter, thus leaving policing and intelligence units to sort it out. For example, Germany, experienced with Baader Meinhof and other left-wing terrorist groups, dealt with terrorism as a criminal matter.

However, some individual member states have utilized a military first approach. Two glaring examples are Britain's reaction to the IRA resistance in Ireland, and the Spanish reaction to the formation of ETA in the Basque Country; though there are others, including France's militant reaction to the Algerian independence movement. Without going into detail, in both cases the military responses to legitimate resistance has been a dismal failure for the state. The British approach to Irish resist-

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<sup>9</sup> The European Union attaches special importance to reviving economic activity and investment in Palestinian territory. The European Commission plays a crucial role in preserving the Palestinian Authority as a partner for peace in negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel by providing substantial financial assistance. In Barcelona, the Council reaffirmed its pledge of substantial economic contributions towards peace-building in the region, improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people, consolidating and supporting the PA, strengthening the economic basis of the future State of Palestine and promoting development and regional economic integration. Funds have been allocated towards infrastructure, capacity building, human rights, peace projects, food programmes, health and education programmes, shelter, water and social assistance. (EU Response to 11<sup>th</sup> September (pp. 5) - European Commission action, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/110901/>, Brussels, 3 June 2002 - MEMO/02/122).

ance was almost purely military<sup>10</sup>, using terror tactics on a massive scale. Instead of folding under the wave of state-terror<sup>11</sup>, the resistance grew in popularity and strength. Britain was forced to cede most of the island to the IRA in 1921 (26 of 32 counties), and remains in negotiations over the remaining six counties through more normalized political relations<sup>12</sup>. Sinn Fein, known as the political wing of the IRA, remains a growing and influential power in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Increased dialogue with 'terrorists' has resulted in less terror, less violence, and greater chances for peace.

The Spanish response to ETA, however violent, was far more covert. With the Spanish civil war in the recent past, and the foundations of Spanish democracy so fragile, the central government was not in a position to overtly utilize its military forces against the internal population. Instead, Spain proceeded to form clandestine paramilitary death squads within the ranks of the internal security services with the purpose of assassinating Basque civilians who were suspected of being involved with ETA, and terrorizing other civilians for supporting ETA (Woodworth 2004:51). In essence, the central government used the police to fight against ETA, and in doing so employed terrorism. A covert organization was formed — the GAL (the Group of Anti-Terrorists for Liberation).

While this strategy massively undermined legitimacy of the fledgling Spanish democracy, it served to increase ETA activities and strengthen the organization's support base within the Basque country (IBID). The GAL conspiracy created a major upheaval in Spanish society; subsequent investigations and court hearings over the following decades showed that the orders came from the very highest positions of power, including the President. The behavior of the Spanish central government provided much of the grass-roots support for ETA's cause.

Currently, the Zapatero government is back-tracking from Aznar's hard-line against Basque nationalism, and has reportedly opened a 'secret dialogue' with Batasuna, the pro-ETA political party that was banned by Aznar in early 2004. The speedy withdrawal from the illegal war in

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<sup>10</sup> London also proposed insufficient incentives in the form of political solutions, for example the Power-Sharing Executive that emerged from Sunningdale talks as early as 1972.

<sup>11</sup> The British forces were directing squads of English convicts, known as 'black and tans' for their uniforms, to terrorize rural native populations. This alongside military operations designed to quell civilian unrest through violence.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that Britain has been eager for some time to pass the responsibilities for Northern Ireland over to the Republic, but Unionist/Loyalist forces in the north refuse to be abandoned, and lobby for Britain to keep NI despite the absence of economic or any other national interest to do so.

Iraq has spawned animosity between Madrid and the White House, and future Spanish soft-power approaches to dealing with terrorism under the Zapatero administration are unlikely to impress Washington.

The British reactions to the London bombings on 7 July 2005, resemble more the American approach rather than the apologetic Spanish approach. Prime Minister Tony Blair has utilized the environment of national and political solidarity brought about by the terrorist incident in order to push through domestic policies that were previously seen as too authoritarian. These policies range from indefinite extensions to temporary incarceration of terrorist suspects, and new powers of deportation that attempt to circumvent Article III of the European Convention on Human Rights which prevents the UK from deporting a person to a state where they are likely to be tortured or treated inhumanly<sup>13</sup>, to the controversial new legislation on 'indirect incitement to terrorism' which applies to anyone in the world (not just in the UK) who exhibits the specified 'unacceptable behaviors'<sup>14</sup>.

In this latter case, we see the hubris of imperial power. The British government is making a law and holding the entire world subject to it. Of course, one should not expect to see ex-presidential candidate of the United States, Pat Robertson, in British courts for his recent televised suggestion that Hugo Chavez (the democratically elected President of Venezuela) is a threat to American interests and should be 'taken out' or 'kidnapped' using special forces<sup>15</sup>. Despite assurances from Blair and his

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<sup>13</sup> As part of the new counter-terrorism legislation introduced this fall, there will be a formalization of the process whereby the UK receives a signed declaration from the country of origin that a deportee from the UK will not be tortured or executed upon his/her return. Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, has already announced that Britain has already signed such an agreement with the Kingdom of Jordan, and is seeking further declarations from approximately ten other countries, including Algeria and Lebanon.

<sup>14</sup> The list of unacceptable behaviours is indicative rather than exhaustive. It covers any non-UK citizen whether in the UK or abroad who uses any means or medium, including: writing, producing, publishing or distributing material; public speaking including preaching; running a website; or using a position of responsibility such as teacher, community or youth leader to express views which: foment, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs; seek to provoke others to terrorist acts; foment other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK. 'Tackling Terrorism-Behaviours Unacceptable in the UK', Home Office Publication. 24 August 2005.

<sup>15</sup> The Oval Office was quick to distance themselves from Robertson's comments, though the reality that his hardcore Christian fundamentalist following in the southern United States is also a major power base for, and source of influence on, President Bush, was not lost on members of the media or political analysts. 'Evangelist tells 7m TV viewers: US should kill Venezuela's president', Julian Borger and Duncan Campbell. Guardian News, London. Wednesday 24 August 2005.

colleagues that these new laws are aimed at terrorism, not Islam, there has been extremely high numbers of Muslims being either spied upon or arrested in the application of new anti-terror policies. As Britain is set to hold the European Presidency next term, it will be interesting to observe whether British counter-terrorism strategies influence the overall EU strategy.

In conclusion, while individual EU member states have had varied responses to terrorism and resistance activities, military first approaches being prominent, the EU as a whole has tended to view terrorism as mainly a policing problem rather than a military one, and has responded to this threat by increasing co-operation among national policing and intelligence bodies. The unsuccessful outcomes of military actions against resistance and terrorist organizations such as the IRA and ETA have allowed the EU to formulate a more evolved notion of counter-terrorism. Whether or not this arises from recognition that further aggression will provide further injustice, which appears to be the well-spring of militant Islamic terrorism, or from an inability for the 25 member states to agree on a common approach to the threat remains unclear. While the American military first approach is increasing the threat of terrorist activities<sup>16</sup>, it has also severely undermined the implementation of the American constitution, including basic civil liberties that are taken for granted in most western democracies. The EU has, thus far, chosen not to follow this route, and may perhaps show our allies a constructive approach to dealing with resistance and terrorism without destroying the very fabric of a free society. At the heart of this lies Javier's Solana's insistence that the root causes of Islamic militancy be resolved, including the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the US/UK occupation of Iraq<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> The number of terrorist attacks the US considers «significant» rose to 655 in 2004 from 175 in 2003, according to US State Department figures released by a senior Democrat in congress. (Guardian, April 27, 2005)

<sup>17</sup> Almost every militant Islamic organization in the world-wide *umma* (Islamic community) cites the plight of the Palestinian people as a *raison d'être*.

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# Chapter Seven

## The EU Enlargement Process as a Peace Promotion Instrument: the Kurdish conflict in Turkey

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### Abstract

Among all the European Union (EU) peace promotion mechanisms, the enlargement process seem to present the best results. This is due to the way it links non-member states to the possibility of EU membership, which, in hindsight, is the biggest benefit that an unstable, poorly developed state, on the EU borders can have. As peace and stability are compulsory requisites to join the 'club,' any conflict evolving in that country will have the tendency to be solved, at least in theory. This chapter analyses the degree of influence that the enlargement process has been having in the Kurdish-Turkish conflict, especially up to the re-escalation of the fighting during 2004. It will explain the evolution of the enlargement process, the concrete analysis of the Turkish relation with the EU, and Turkey's Kurdish problem, including its characterization and relation to Turkish security.

### Enlargement as a Peace Promotion Instrument

Despite the permanent enlargement/deepening binomial in the European integration process, only in the eighties has the EU (formerly the European Community) emerged as a regional stabilization instrument. Greece (1981), Portugal and Spain (1986) were among the first candidates to feel its impact. As Larrabee and Lesser explains:

In opening its ranks to the three South European countries, the EC gave priority to political considerations — particularly the desire to stabilize democracy in these countries — over economic concerns (2003: 48-49).

The enlargement process to the East marks a new step in the usefulness of this EU foreign policy mechanism. Besides its integrative (in relation to the more advanced countries which were not part of the EU) and stabilization roles (the enlargement in the eighties), the 2004 enlargement adds a pacification dimension to the process. For example, in Cyprus there was a need to reach a minimum agreement between Greece, Turkey and the two sides of the island<sup>1</sup>; in various Central European countries (mainly in the Baltic region), measures had to be taken in relation to minority rights, one of the political requirements in the Copenhagen criteria (the others are, economic and communitarian), established in 1993, whose fulfilment is a *sine qua non* condition for a state to adhere to the EU.

### *Conditionality and Socialization*

The fulfilment of these criteria constitutes the core of the conditional dimension in the 'europeanization' process of a state vying for EU membership. The further away a state is from these criteria, the more prolonged and difficult is the process. In this context, the other side of the 'europeanization' process — the domestic actors' socialization — becomes even more important. If the conditionality deals with structural changes in the short-term, the socialization of domestic actors is a long-term process. It encompasses the progressive insertion of various actors — elites, civil society, and military — in EU ideas, values and goals. Their socialization will allow the conditionality process to be based on solid supportive foundations. On the contrary, if these foundations are not solid, the fulfilment of conditions will be in jeopardy, and adhesion to the EU out of sight: 'the effectiveness of the conditionality mechanism largely depends on the possibility of Europeanization through socialization' (Noutcheva *et al* 2004: 18).

There is a depoliticized dimension in this process, which imposes political measures as if they were mere technical details. This depoliticization does not match with the political decision that is the approval of a

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<sup>1</sup> Although only the Greek part of Cyprus adhered to the EU, Brussels was very satisfied with the results of the referendum held in the Turkish part of Cyprus. In the December 2004 negotiations, when the EU decided to set October 2005 as the starting date for the Turkish adhesion process, Erdogan's government assumed a tacit compromise to recognise Cyprus as an EU Member and to open its Customs agreement to that country (Bowley 2005). Even the more sceptical cannot deny that the EU has, at least, been able to definitely remove the spectre of a Cypriot civil war.



candidate state adhesion. There is a paradox between the conditionality strictness and the subjectivity of the EU member-states behaviour, which can easily fall into the field of incoherence. In this case, the EU may not only become less attractive, but also loose the confidence of the candidate state, which may even signify the de-socialisation of that country's domestic actors.

When this process is developed in a social pacification context, the consequences of such a setback may be quite harmful, leading to destabilization of the country (Noutcheva *et al* 2004: 16). As such, the introduction of the Copenhagen Criteria has turned the enlargement process into a more sensitive issue than previously. The possible accession of Turkey is profoundly connected to this problem, as it also has its own needs concerning the pacification of its society.

### *The Turkish Process*

This is a complex process, which has been dragging on since the sixties, when Ankara and Brussels signed the Association Agreement (1963). The goal was to create a Customs Union, with accession to the European Community promised in the long-term. The Customs Union was eventually established in 1995, but Ankara wanted more.

Written in the matrix of the Turkish state, is the conception of Europe as a role model (Larrabee and Lesser 2003: 46), a 'club' to which the Turks should belong. During all these years, the difficulties in the Turkish-European relationship were often caused by this one-sided view, not fully understood in Brussels<sup>2</sup>. After being rejected in 1990, the 1997 EU rejection caused even greater irritation for authorities in Ankara when at the Luxembourg Summit, the Council gave the green light for Central and Eastern European countries to begin their accession processes. The consequence of all this was the poor socialisation of Turkish elites, for whom the EU was mainly perceived as an economic club (Kirisci 1998: 73).

This misunderstanding eventually froze Turkish-European relations for two more years. Nevertheless, in 1999, in a clear proof of the politicized dimension of the enlargement process, the EU conceded the status of Candidate State to Turkey. The accession negotiations were, nonetheless, still dependent upon fulfilment of the Copenhagen Cri-

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<sup>2</sup> For Larrabee and Lesser, '[the] perception of Turks as 'other' in Europe is deeply embedded in Europeans' collective memory and colors European views of Turkey today' (2003: 46).

teria. In 2002, at the Copenhagen Summit, it was determined that not until December 2004 would Ankara would receive a definite proposal concerning the opening of negotiations, which in turn would eventually be set for October 2005.

From 1999 onwards, the conditionality, weak until then, and the constantly interrupted socialization were given a new impetus (Bilgin 2004: 37). The Copenhagen Summit decision of setting a date for the negotiations increased pressure on Turkish political actors to accelerate legal reforms (Keyman 2003: 19). Nevertheless, the security discourse was still to be compatible with demands from Brussels for fulfilment of the political criteria.

### **The Kurdish Question at the Core of Turkish Security Concerns**

Kemalism, the ideology created by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founding father of the Turkish state, is based on two assumptions: laicism and unity (Oguzlu 2003: 291). Against the continuous over-lapping between religion and politics during the Ottoman Empire and in order to avoid European domination over its future, Atatürk developed various policies<sup>3</sup> which should guarantee that the two assumptions would be structural to the Turkish state's identity. In spite of the efforts and relative success during his stay in power, the Turkish founding father was not able to completely eradicate the 'threats' to those assumptions — the weight of religion in Turkish society and the secessionist movements.

It is not the aim of this essay to analyse the 'religious threat'. Nevertheless, the November 2003 attacks in Istanbul by Islamist movements<sup>4</sup> and the recent controversy in Turkish society about adultery, raises the question as to whether the laicism assumption is solid in Turkey.

Concerning the separatism problem, it falls, exclusively within Kurdish claims. The largest minority group in Turkey (10 to 12 million people), is spread all over Turkey, with a considerable percentage of Kurds integrated into Turkish society<sup>5</sup>. Nonetheless, it is in the poorly developed

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<sup>3</sup> The only recognized minorities are the Greeks, Jews and Armenians and all their religious symbols are forbidden in State institutions.

<sup>4</sup> There were many Kurds among the captured terrorists (Lesser 2004: 181).

<sup>5</sup> According to Cornell, 'Foreigners are startled by the discovery that a significant portion of Turkey's political and business elite is of Kurdish origin, including three of the country's nine presidents — something unthinkable for Kosovars or Chechens — and the Kurds' representation in the country's parliament is larger than their proportion of the population' (2001: 32).

South-eastern region (Barkey 1993: 52) that the Kurdish people find their ethnic base and heaviest demographic concentration.

Despite never being recognised as such until the early 1990s, the Kurdish problem dates back to the 1920s (Sommer 2002: 85), when the first uprisings took place (Bozarslan 2004: 81). But only in the 1960s did those dynamics acquire some importance in Turkish society, by then marked by a deep social polarisation, a consequence of Eastern migratory movements and of the national increase in educational levels. These phenomena allowed the population to better understand the social disparities in Turkey, a feeling particularly strong among Kurds (Cornell 2001: 39). Throughout the country, various revolutionary movements were created. One of them was a group led by a young Kurd called Abdullah Öcalan — the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK).

The PKK put together a Marxist-Leninist agenda with a Kurdish separatist/autonomy<sup>6</sup> claim. However, the movement's radicalisation came only with the 1980 military coup, which had the aim of eradicating all political activities beyond the 'acceptable' (Barkey and Fuller 1998: 16). This radicalisation was materialised by minor attacks against Turkish security forces in 1984. In time, those actions intensified, marking the beginning of a new era in the Kurdish problem. Until then, considered as a secondary ethno-political problem, it also becomes a violent conflict with visible consequences — more than 35 thousand deaths and hundreds of thousands displaced in 15 years. The Kurdish problem acquired, as such this double dimension: not only an ethno-political dimension but also a violent one — the armed insurrection.

### *The Conflict's Ethno-Political Dimension*

Neglected since the creation of the Turkish state, the Southeast region has a structural standard of living quite inferior to the rest of the country, be it in purchasing power, health or educational conditions (Gokcek 2002). These inequalities, over-lapped with a sense of ethnicity, only helped to exacerbate feelings of difference. The rejection and oppression of Kurdish cultural events helped the PKK to earn legitimacy,

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<sup>6</sup> The PKK's political agenda is not totally clear (Barkey 1993: 53). Besides, according to Cornell, in the 1990s 'the PKK toned down its Marxist rhetoric and instead emphasized Kurdish nationalism in the hopes of attracting a larger following among Turkish Kurds. Marxism-Leninism found little resonance among the population in agricultural, rural southeastern Turkey.' (Cornell 2001: 39).

which due to the complexities of the intra-Kurdish relationships, would never have occurred in another context.

Directly related with this is the Kurdish political problem. As it was never recognised as a minority, the Kurds were never allowed to politically defend their collective rights. As a consequence, the Kurdish political parties have been persistently harassed and frequently closed down by the authorities in Ankara. This situation made the moderate Kurdish parties lose their appeal and legitimacy among Kurdish voters, leaving the radical movements free space to convert themselves into claimants for the Kurdish people's rights. It should be mentioned, nonetheless, that the weakness of the Kurdish nationalist movement, incapable of having a preponderant presence until the 1970s and incapable of surpassing the PKK's radical speech, also derives from a lack of political unity among the Kurds (Cornell 2001: 35).

### *The Conflict's Violent Dimension*

Relatively connected to the ethno-political dimension, is the PKK's armed insurrection. Although its claims usually found feedback<sup>7</sup> in many Kurds affected by economic, political and cultural problems, neither was popular support significant, nor was the PKK dependant on it<sup>8</sup> to fight in the name of the Kurdish people (Koch 2002: 2). In fact, the conflict with the PKK is far from being a mere domestic problem.

Although they waged their war in Turkey, its bases and financial resources are placed outside the Turkish borders. The Kurdish Diaspora, itself a consequence of the poor living conditions in the Turkish South-east (Cornell 2001: 38), was obliged to look for a better future in Western Europe. They provide financial and human resources for the PKK. However, the biggest support came from Damascus. According to Koch, 'Öcalan himself admits that Syrian<sup>9</sup> support was crucial to the organization's survival and development' (2002: 4). This support came as an indirect response from Damascus to the territorial disputes it has with

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<sup>7</sup> For Somer (2002: 90), 'many of the guerrillas reportedly decided to join the PKK as a result of socioeconomic dislocation and experiences that involved excessive use of force, or outright human rights violations, perpetrated by security forces'.

<sup>8</sup> According to Barkey and Fuller, 'it is difficult to ascertain exactly the extent of the PKK's support among Kurds in Turkey' (1998: 43).

<sup>9</sup> This support was both financial and logistic, with the establishment of a training base in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.

Ankara and mainly to Turkey's closeness with Israel (Gokcek 2002). But it is not only Syria, also Iran<sup>10</sup> and Greece<sup>11</sup> that are said to have sponsored PKK activities, which also shows Turkish geopolitical complexity.

In spite of all this support to the PKK, Ankara has managed, after 25 years of fighting, to defeat, or at least, severely wound, the PKK's power. The reasons for this success are diverse, but according to Kocher (2002: 4), they are especially connected with the changing demographic pattern in Southeast Turkey. Whether it was the search for an improvement in their living standards or the consequence of Ankara's<sup>12</sup> strict displacement policy, the truth is that the region's demographic pattern changed in seven years (1990-1997), from a rural population, to a mainly urban one<sup>13</sup>. As guerrillas usually fight in rural environments, this change deprived PKK of its natural habitat. Besides this, Turkish security and military forces learned from their own mistakes, evolving to a higher threshold of efficiency during the nineties — and mainly during the decade's second half (Cornell 2001: 42).

The arrest of Öcalan would dictate PKK's unilateral cease-fire in August 1999 and in 2002 the official abandonment of the armed struggle, placing the conflict in the political sphere (IISS, 2002: 169). The PKK even became the Kurdistan Congress for Freedom and Democracy (KADEK). The cease-fire would, however, end in September 2003, when a PKK faction decided to resume the military struggle, in a low-intensity but still persistent tactic. In the first ten months of 2004, 150 people died, between security forces, civilians and PKK members<sup>14</sup>, consequence of both deadly PKK incursions from Northern Iraq and Ankara's response. In fact, since the Nineties, the Turkish government stationed more than five thousand soldiers in Iraq (IISS 2002: 138).

## The EU Impact on the Kurdish Conflict

The Kurdish question has always been on the Turkey-EU agenda. European public opinion considered that Ankara's accession was impossible

<sup>10</sup> For whom Turkey is an opponent in the fight for influence over Central Asia.

<sup>11</sup> In 1994, Ankara presented proofs that some of its intelligence agents, infiltrated in the PKK had received training in Greece (Barchard 2003: 21).

<sup>12</sup> There is no official figure, but according to some NGOs it could be more than 1 million displaced people.

<sup>13</sup> Between 1990 and 1997, the urban population in Southeast Turkey grew 45% whereas the rural population diminished 11,9% (Koch 2002: 7).

<sup>14</sup> Human Rights Annual Report from the US State Department.

as long as the Kurdish problem remained unsolved, including its violent dimension. The problem was even raised by the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl during the Luxembourg Summit in 1997 (Barchard 1998: 20), as well as by Gunther Verheugen, the European Commissioner responsible for the enlargement process, during his visit to Ankara in March 2000 (Aydinli 2002: 212).

For the Turks, the problem is situated at another level. Besides the chronic fear of Turkey's disintegration, there is an ever present suspicion about the European attitude towards the Kurdish problem (*idem*: 219). This derives from certain concessions, made by certain European countries, concerning the realization of some Kurdish events; the broadcasting of the PKK's television channel; the absence of obstacles to financial activities of European immigrants loyal to the PKK, and finally, the permanent criticism from the European Parliament (Biscop 2002). However, this perception dates back to historical questions — the Sèvres syndrome that still affects the way Turkey looks toward Europe (Kirisci 1998: 76).

This ambiguous EU behaviour reduced its influence in Ankara. Paradoxically, the PKK military defeat made the flourishing of a propitious environment to the implementation of the reforms demanded by Brussels easier (Keyman 2003: 15). This paradox is very uncomfortable for the EU, which has always shown its discontent towards the methods put forth by Ankara (see EC, 1998: 9).

Even after 1999, the tense relationship between Ankara and Brussels has not radically changed where the Kurdish problem is concerned. In its 2000 Report, the European Commission noted that, 'the situation in the Southeast, where the population is predominantly Kurdish, has not substantially changed' (EC 2001: 13). Education in Kurdish and the right to broadcast in that language, for example, continued to be prohibited, despite the critical 2001 Commission report, which highlighted restrictions concerning freedom of expression and minority rights.

Although in August 2002 the Turkish Parliament approved some fundamental changes, such as an end to the death penalty in times of peace or the right to broadcast and learn in languages other than Turkish, the most important change would come with the election, in November, of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). This Muslim-democratic party, has not only broken the centre parties' hegemony, as it also obtained for the first time in the Turkish political system, an absolute majority, guaranteeing sufficient stability to face the measures demanded by Brussels.

The emergency zones created since 1987 to battle the PKK insurrection (emergency zones that would become the principal oppression mechanism against the Kurdish population), would be progressively dismantled

until 2003<sup>15</sup>. After some problems related to its implementation, the August 2002 and 2003 reforms were finally transferred into practice in 2004: the Kurdish language could finally be taught in private schools and broadcasted on television<sup>16</sup>. In parallel, torture, arbitrary imprisonment and persecution cases have drastically diminished; and displaced populations have, slowly, started to return to their lands, supported by a government programme especially conceived for those displaced from the Turkish southeast.

However, numerous problems remain in the still highly militarized South-eastern region. Almost 60 thousand 'village guards' — militias paid and maintained by Ankara — are still active, in spite of the numerous accusations of human rights violations, criminality and corruption. Political problems remain, since members of the Kurdish Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) are still persecuted and frequently harassed by Turkish authorities. The other major Kurdish party, the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) was closed in 2003, on Ankara's order.

In a nutshell, the EU seems to be obtaining visible results in areas concerning Kurdish cultural rights. Nonetheless, its influence in the other two ethno-political dimensions — social-economic and political areas — seems to be developing at a different pace.

## Conclusion

Although a slow process, both Turkish military successes and the measures demanded by the EU seem, twenty years later, capable of drawing the Kurdish conflict to an end. The power of enlargement is evidently a positive peace promotion mechanism. Nevertheless, it also seems quite clear that Brussels lacks the capacity to achieve a more immediate negative peace. In other words, the EU has managed to obtain, in five years, some relative results in one dimension of the Kurdish-Turkish conflict — the recognition of Kurdish minority rights — removing an eventual support base to the dying PKK, divided and hidden in Northern Iraq. It has not managed, however, in a forty year bilateral relationship with Turkey, to prevent the displacement of hundreds of thousands of

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<sup>15</sup> However, according to the IISS (2002: 169), Ankara extended the state of emergency in four provinces, in March 2002, two and a half years after the PKK cease-fire.

<sup>16</sup> According to the 2004 Human Rights' Report from the US State Department, 'while there were improvements during the year, the Government maintained significant restrictions on the use of Kurdish and other minority languages in radio and television broadcasts'.

people and more than 35 thousand casualties. This proves the EU's limited capacity to impose its will outside the enlargement processes.

The EU has never assured Turkey that it would help it to overcome the Kurdish military problem (Aydinli 2002: 222), insisting only in resolution of the ethno-political dimension of the problem. As a consequence, a growing 'europeanized' Turkish society has been sceptical of the EU's approach towards the Kurdish problem. Only this explanation makes it possible to understand why a society with EU approval levels at 75% (Somer 2002: 75), does not have, in an imperfect but still democratic Turkish democracy, a more active voice in the resolution of the Kurdish problem. It seems clear that if Ankara has made the mistake of ignoring the ethno-political dimension of the conflict, Brussels has ignored its violent dimension.

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## Chapter Eight

# The Structural Failure of the Colombian State and a Non-Exclusionary Peacebuilding Initiative

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### Abstract

Violence of several kinds has been occurring in Colombia for many decades. The main actors are 'known' and plausible causes have been identified. The violence of the irregular armies is seen as the main cause, and the weakness of the armed forces are at the core of the analysis of the Colombian quagmire. External involvement and the consequences of drug trade have added extra complexity to the internal conflict, many times described as an internal war by the insurgents against decent Colombians. Despite this, the *barbarie* continues. This article will conjecture that the original actor of the Colombia imbroglio is the Colombian state due to its failure. This has generated exclusionary and fragmentary socio-economic/political practices that have constructed a society that cannot be called civil and thus both the state and the ill-fated society keep failing to recognise their responsibility in the prolongation of the conflict. This article will also propose an alternative conflict transformation initiative by proposing the recognition of the failure of the state and Colombian society and suggesting a model based upon non-exclusionary practices that will generate processes than can form real communities and a civil society.

*Colombia es el país del Diablo porque aquí se cree mas en él y se le teme y ejerce su oficio trascendental, [P]or todas partes, en los pueblos tristes, en los caminos retorcidos, en las selvas y en los puentes se percibe a este ser omnipotente.* (Papacchini, 2001:394)

In a country that is ninety percent Catholic, the presence of evil through the daily exaltation of violence is a tragic paradox. Colombia's violent legacy comes from the fragmented peoples at the time of independ-

ence from Spain, and one could say that in the 1950s a landmark of this legacy took place dividing recent Colombian history. A period of extreme political violence erupted, claiming the lives of thousands. The country has a macabre inheritance, which manifests itself on a daily basis, permeating the psyches of Colombians who have somehow accepted the most atrocious manifestations of violence as any other daily occurrence.

Violence has become a quotidian aspect and is accepted as a mechanism for dealing with conflicts. Most Colombians have little knowledge of peace or why war is always present like a malign omnipotent being, just like the Devil. In addition, they know no other way of dealing with their violent imbroglia other than with violence, and socio-economic and cultural exclusion for those they perceive as the source of the country's calamities.

This chapter will identify the idea of the Colombian state as a failed one, using the conditions set by Buzan 1) the physical characteristic of the state, 2) the institutional expression and 3) the idea of a state (Bagley *et al*, 2001:82-102). Using Colombian examples to show that the fulfilment of each characteristic has not been achieved, one can demonstrate the failure of the Colombian state as such. This failure has generated and promoted exclusionary behaviours which have contributed to the failure of Colombians to form a civil society. Thus, the fragmentation and exclusionary practices of this failed civil society have led to circumstances which have reached *barbarie*.

An alternative conflict transformation initiative will be proposed that can change the current historical dynamic of the conflict. It will suggest a model of peace building based on the opposite of the social malady that affects the country - exclusionism. Basically, incorporating all the affected communities in a non-exclusionary socio-economic project, hoping from it, real peace will emerge and expand thus creating a society that could be called 'civil'.

## The Colombian State

The most common view of Colombians, including politicians, and foreigners' alike is that guerrillas and other illegal violent actors are primarily responsible for the state of the country's chaos. However, the Colombian state has a major share of blame for the current situation, a statement supported by McLean (2002:124). One conjectures the state is the original violent actor in the country. Its historical socio-political fragmentation continues and this is reflected by the duration and protracted characteristics of the quagmire.

With a 'rate of violent deaths of 73.3 per 1000 people', (McLean, 2002:129) the state is unable to provide basic rights for its citizens, many of which are fundamental rights Colombians are entitled to under the constitution, such as the right to life. Therefore, the Colombian government can be characterised as weak, (Bagley *et al*, 2001:103) and engulfing a fragmented and abused society. Some have said the idea of Colombia functioning as a nation is a fiction. A society needs to have its basic fundamental rights respected and fulfilled for it to exist as a civil society; in order to achieve this in Colombia, all institutions must be totally re-invented (Sweig, 2002).

Buzan suggests that three parts compose a state: the 'physical characteristic of the state', 'the institutional expression' and the 'idea of a state' (Bagley *et al*, 2001:87). In Colombia, these three parts are absent as will be further illustrated.

The 'physical characteristic' requires the state have control over its territory, which should be absent of conflict (Bagley *et al*, 2001: 87). Colombia is thriving with conflicts of many kinds and the state does not have control over 100% of its territory. One of the crudest examples of this is the displacement of people within the country due to pressure and violence inflicted by armed actors. The United Nations Refugee agency (UNHCR and UNHCR/ANCUR) insists that there are more than two million internal refugees and more than 100 communities trapped between the violence of opposing factions, including the state<sup>1</sup>. These exert both physical and structural violence on people in order to gain valuable information about the others' actions and positions; a practice that even the state forces opt for, then making the sporadic presence of the government a macabre representation of its absentee nature due to the non-permanent and abusive action of the latter. This reinforces the evidence that not only does it fail to fulfill the physical characteristic but it also further fragments an ill Colombian society.

One would argue that this displacement would not occur, at least on the same scale, if the state controlled the whole of the national territory, whether by military means or through governmental projects that could provide for the needs and rights of the population, thus generating the opportunity to build a social cohesive construct where people can relate without the fear of death. The main reason for the former to happen is the lack of control of the state over its specific territory. Another example is the inability of the state to control the areas of richest natural resources and the loss of billions of dollars from terrorist attacks. This takes away

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR/ANCUR, [http://www.acnur.org/index.php?id\\_pag=566](http://www.acnur.org/index.php?id_pag=566).

the riches of the country from both the state and civilians, who could in theory benefit from opportunities the former could create. The government is currently aiming to gain full control of the areas outside its grasp by deploying its security organisations to all areas of the territory in order to fulfill the 'physical characteristic'. However, some of the methods employed do not address the fundamental structure of the quagmire, which will inexorably lead to more people transforming the structural violence into a physical violence.

The 'institutional expression' consists of the capacity of the state to fulfill its functions, to provide order, security and maintain institutional cohesion (Bagley *et al*, 2001:87). As discussed above, security and order are not something the Colombian government provides. The Colombian 'institutional cohesion' is not inspiring, as its institutions not only suffer from fragmentation but also from abundant corruption<sup>2</sup>. This can only bring more practices that spawn further exclusionary practices. As history would lead one to expect, even democratic processes experience corruption in the form of economic incentives in exchange for votes; each party or local group pulls in its own direction, without consideration for the good for the rest of the country and the consequences for future generations. In Colombia, this is known as *Clientelismo*, which consists in ruling through and by personal loyalties. Distribution of national resources and political relations are based on the completion of personal interests (Bagley *et al*, 2001:108) that overwrite democracy. If the 'institutional cohesion' is non-existent then democracy in the country is a reflection of the fragmented Colombian social-construct, hence the voice of the people is not represented as it was intended, ratifying the idea of a failed society and a failed state and their relationship.

In addition to the internal divisions and violence, fatal for democracy, the drug trade has further corrupted most of the institutions of the country as well as deforming the morals of the nation (Pardo 2000). Drugs have generated a social malady, corroding the sense of humanity in many Colombians who became a part of an industry, where people were killed for a few million Colombian pesos, not counting the numerous assassinated political leaders who have opposed the drug trade and its chain of destruction that eroded the country's social constructs.

The last characteristic of the state is the 'idea of the state.' It is composed of two closely linked concepts. First, vertical legitimacy consists

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<sup>2</sup> Global Corruption Report 2003, Transparency International, a World Bank survey in 2002 found that bribes are paid in fifty percent of state contracts, while another report found that the cost of corruption reaches an impressive US\$ 2.6 billion per year, <http://www.globalcorruptionreport.org/>.

of the principle of the State, giving the government the right to rule. Second, horizontal legitimacy is based on the strength of civil society, its level of cohesion, acceptance and tolerance between different groups within the political community (Bagley *et al*, 2001:87). It is important to note, that the lack of horizontal legitimacy can be created by the weakness of vertical legitimacy. This is represented by a state that fails to have a monopoly over law and order, thus losing its power to form and to maintain a civil society. Civil society is not only a network of co-operation but also of conflicts. It is the obligation of the state to provide balance between them (Bagley *et al*, 2001: 104).

The absence of horizontal legitimacy has the propensity to form fragmented and exclusionary societies (Bagley *et al*, 2001: 87-8). This can lead to violence ascending as a legitimate factor, creating a dysfunctional thinking of community models. 'Community', instead of denoting a socially and economically enriched co-existence, means fear of death, where the links of trust and social identification disappear, as the motives for violence and the actors are unknown (McLean, 2002:130). This fear of the unknown has permeated and affected (Ruiz, 2001:33) the mental spaces and simple daily social relations (Bagley *et al*, 2001: 144), thus increasing the fragmentation of communities, ultimately weakening the legitimacy of the state, awarding legitimacy to violence.

The legitimacy of violence means that democracy is non-existent in the full extent of its purpose and meaning. Eric Lair disagrees. He believes the Colombian state has not disintegrated due to certain democratic practices such as the presidential elections in 1998, when popular participation was at historical levels (Bagley *et al*, 2001: 134). Another example of an attempt to find a solution to the lack of institutional cohesion through democratic processes was the drafting in 1991, of a new and more representative constitution. However, the reformists did not entirely manage to rise above the traditional machinery and two centuries of political exclusionary practices. Thus, the political crisis has worsened (Bagley *et al*, 2001:108-9).

On 24 October 1999, a peace demonstration in which around ten million Colombians begged for an end to the killings and crimes, could have backed up Lair's thinking, however it made no difference. This demonstration of joint will against war did not impact the direction of the negotiations during the presidency of Andres Pastrana (1998-2002). Humberto Velez saw the demonstration as the possible beginning of a civil society (Papacchini, 2001:240). Unfortunately, it was ignored.

Had Colombia had a real civil society, it is possible that the demonstration could have worked as a decisive command for peace, a new

mandate for the government but also to the illegal violent actors. *The Fuerzas Revolucionarias de Colombia* or FARC (National Revolutionary Forces of Colombia) would have had to recognise it as their last chance to make peace. Nonetheless, their leader, *Tirofijo* (Sureshot) knew from decades of fighting and politically outliving many presidents, generals and generations of Colombians, that the effects of this massive demonstration would vanish with time. Just like all Colombians, he knew that violence is part of what being a Colombian means. It is perhaps because of this that peace is so unattainable. It is not an ideal or a dream; war has become a normal part of life to the extent that it is a socially legitimate paradigm. Change is harder than war and the unborn civil society has not realised that they can only create peace by abandoning the social fragmentation and 'othering' imbedded in their culture to become a civil society.

### **Alternative Initiative for Peace**

Many peace efforts in Colombia have resulted in failure and very few have been politically successful (Pardo 2000). The two peace processes (Betancur and Pastrana) that could have done more for peace in the country than others, failed due to opposition by powerful elites and the lack of will of some of the parties involved, characteristic of the entrenched culture of exclusionism and the legitimacy violence has in the country as a political discourse.

The current President, Alvaro Uribe (2002 to present), gained office by promising a hard line against the insurgents<sup>3</sup>, promises that made him extremely popular after the debacle of the Pastrana administration. One of his current strategies is called *Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática*, and has as its main aim to cover all of the Colombian territory through the deployment of the armed forces to all corners of the national territory. The latter is a basic act that should be integral to any state and in Colombia's case a necessity for a future lasting peace.

In addition, Uribe has been negotiating with the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) for the last two years as part of his larger strategy for Colombian peace. The president aims at demobilising the AUC's combatants and to do this he is hoping the legislative will pass a bill,

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<sup>3</sup> President Uribe defined the FARC as a group of 50,000 rich, arrogant and loaded with cash terrorists whose money comes from the drug trade. [www.eltiempo.com](http://www.eltiempo.com). July 7 2005.



*Ley de Justicia y Paz* (The Justice and Peace Law), that will create special judicial and economic conditions for anyone who demobilises. Even before the law is approved, around 5,900 out of 12,500 have demobilized<sup>4</sup>. Nonetheless, this controversial law of Peace and Justice has been highly criticised by international organisations, foreign governments and Non-Governmental Organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), the United States, freezing US100 million in aid<sup>5</sup>, and Human Rights Watch<sup>6</sup>. They see it as a law for impunity, as it does not remove the structural economies and machinery of these armed groups<sup>7</sup>. However, a demobilization law will never be able to remove the underlying structures of these organisations as they are linked to the failure of the state and the proto-civil society, as are the illegal economies typical of internal state conflicts, including drug trafficking. As this is a current process, it is difficult to agree on whether or not it is the right kind of law for the country. However, the government has failed to provide appropriate structures for the demobilised soldiers to reintegrate into society. Thus, there are reports that demobilised members have joined gangs of common criminals. In addition, the strategic spaces left by demobilised AUC groups can be taken back by the guerrillas<sup>8</sup>; this will re-ignite the whole process of exclusion, displacement and annihilation of freedom that the countryside experiences. In turn this could again give rise to new self-defence groups, formed for protection against the guerrillas. Both the international community as well as Colombians should focus more on the implementation of realistic initiatives that could, at least, generate the right conditions for the re-integration of these demobilised soldiers into specific communities, rather than hammering any attempt at peacemaking. An alternative peace building initiative needs to be suggested.

Returning to the *Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática*, the president is employing several tactics he believes will be successful in defeating insurgents. The first is to have military control of as much Colombian territory as possible; a task the government is carrying out through the creation of Special Forces capable of taking control from the guerrillas

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<sup>4</sup> 'Casi la mitad de los miembros de las Autodefensas ya están desmovilizados', *El Tiempo*, [www.eltiempo.com](http://www.eltiempo.com), July 14, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> 'Congreso de E.U. condiciona apoyo económico para respaldar proceso con los paramilitares', *El tiempo*, [www.eltiempo.com](http://www.eltiempo.com), July 6, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> 'Misión de la ONU le pidió al Presidente Uribe objetar la Ley de Justicia y Paz', *El Tiempo*, [www.eltiempo.com](http://www.eltiempo.com), July 14, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> 'Colombia: Demobilization Scheme Ensures Injustice', Human Rights Watch, [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org), July 11, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> International Crisis Group, *Colombia: Presidencial Politics and Peace Prospects*, Latin American Report No.14, 16 June 2005, p. 19. [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)

in areas of strategic importance for the latter<sup>9</sup>. The deployment of specially trained forces has been complemented by the recruitment of *soldados campesinos* (peasant soldiers) that are expected to patrol urban and rural areas<sup>10</sup>. However, this latter initiative is a dangerous one for Colombia's future peace. These young men have achieved little formal education due to the abandonment by the state of their native areas. As the name implies, they are *campesinos*, and have a cultural heritage that is linked to the land that they and their families work on. What Uribe is doing is recruiting these people before the guerrilla or other illegal armed groups do so, in order to guarantee they will not join the enemies of the Colombian army. The disintegration and decline of rural areas is such that joining an illegal armed group is an economic option often considered and in many cases taken, without the necessity of intimidation from the guerrillas or *paramilitares*<sup>11</sup>. These young people will learn to kill, through government sponsorship. Their social construct is composed by the experience of living in war conditions but now they will be able to respond to death with death. With the state legitimising this, one more factor is added to the social model upon which communities are built and perpetuated. Their imbedded perception that the violence they experience can only be destroyed with violence will now become the only relationship and understanding they have with and of the idea of the state. This will create a new dynamic where this kind of violent action will be seen as legal and fair, as well as part of a new social construct. Once again the violence is brought to lend a hand to peace. After decades of abandonment the rule of law from the Leviathan has finally reached out for the poor peasants but with a Machiavellian intention. These minimally trained peasants are becoming another item in the list of disastrous ideas governments have had to solve the armed conflict militarily. The peasants might not join the guerrillas or paramilitary but they will join one of the armed actors, and in doing so they become a form of property. Their destiny will no longer be linked to their patch of land and its socio-cultural model, which works as a cohesive instrument within a community. The peasants relate to the land and have a sense of belonging to it. Now, their destiny will be further

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<sup>9</sup> MARTHA ROJAS SÁNCHEZ, *El Espectador*, 'Donde las águilas se atreven', (Where eagles dare), May 18, 2003. This article describes the creation of five new platoons whose work focuses on expelling the guerrillas from isolated areas high up in the mountains of Colombia.

<sup>10</sup> 'Mas de cinco mil soldados campesinos refuerzan seguridad en todo el país', Ministry of National Defence, [www.mindefensa.gov.co](http://www.mindefensa.gov.co).

<sup>11</sup> MARGARITA RODRIGUEZ, 'Reinsercion, la otra estrategia', *El Pais*, March 23, 2003, p.4B. This article has a testimony from a former guerrillero who narrates why he joined the FARC. He needed money to bring up his newly born baby.

torn away, their relationship with the land will be broken, as will the sense of belonging to their communities. The state wants to use them for war, disregarding the cultural cost this might have on rural communities. In addition to the potential demise of the remains of rural culture, the government is using a socio-economically devastating method to eradicate the illegal crops. By fumigating crops, they destroy the only source of income some *campesinos* have<sup>12</sup>.

The presumption that if the peasants are part of the army the rural areas will be entirely safe does not analyse the conflict in a humanistic and historic way. This will only leave inhabitants of the rural sector confronted by illegal armed groups. Colombian history has proved that this has not worked and on this occasion history will probably be proved right. Pecaute suggests that people, just like territory, are a resource used by the actors of the conflict, (Papacchini, 2001:61) and this is what Uribe is doing by using *soldados campesinos* and demobilised members of illegal groups as a part of a strategy to weaken the guerrillas and some paramilitary groups. This strategy has been criticised as a plan for military gains, not for peace. 'Incentives for the members of the insurgency to become informers, is to follow the logic of war'<sup>13</sup>. A former M-19 member claims that, as long as the reinsertion keeps being a military strategy, having a civilian life will not be successful. It is also interesting that the project is being directed by the Ministry of Defence and not, for example, the Ministry of Development. In addition, the massive military deployment and offensive throughout the country seems to be making little impact on FARC's military activities and capability<sup>14</sup>.

Another strategy that seems to be designed to provide security, thus generating development is the implementation of rehabilitation zones in specific areas, mainly in areas highly affected by the conflict.

The three aims of these zones are to 'fight drug-trafficking and terrorism, to recover the territory and finally to guarantee security for the population'<sup>15</sup>. The basic idea of these zones is not a bad one, but the approach taken by the current government fails to address the structural problems

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<sup>12</sup> *El Tiempo*, 'No basta con fumigar,' March 3, 2003, p.1-14. This article also states that the illegal crops have been reduced by fifteen percent. However, the success in Colombia has caused an increase of twenty eight percent in Bolivia. In addition, little has been done for the peasants that opted for alternative crops, as all the effort has been put into fumigation.

<sup>13</sup> ÁLVARO SIERRA, '? Política de paz o arma de guerra?', *El Tiempo*, May 18, 2003, p. 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Internacional Crisis Group, Colombia: Presidencial Politics and Peace Prospects, p10. [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)

<sup>15</sup> *El Tiempo*, 'El talón de Aquiles de Uribe', March 12, 2003, editorial.

of the conflict. The areas where the zones have been abandoned by the state for many years. There are daily occurrences of killings, disappearances, kidnappings, death threats, misery, lack of opportunities and education. This has caused the decay of these communities and a military approach is not going to work. The state has arrived with force but without investing in the area, and it does not matter 'how many soldiers are sent there, as long as the investment is a daily glass of milk and a "healthy biscuit"', peace will not be reached<sup>16</sup>. The military strategy is designed to provide security, a peacekeeping operation, not to transform the social structures and promote economic development. In Arauca, a department in the east of the country, the rehabilitation zone is far from achieving any social changes. After twenty-five years, the guerrillas have built 'a social thread' and the presence of the government forces in the area has not been able to change the situation for their own gains<sup>17</sup>.

This classical approach of dealing with the conflict will not work as stated by Azar. 'Fragmented, short-term economic and military assistance should be replaced with balanced, redistributive, and participative development strategies that would address long-term needs as well as short-term requirements' (Fisher, 1997:96-97).

## Building Peace Where no Society Exists

Uribe's strategies have made the illegal groups temporarily retreat, and perceptibly lessen their violent activities but do not address the socio-political roots of the conflict. In the Colombian conflict, where violence has perpetuated the social malady, a peace building process ought to be designed through fabricating a mould for social changes that intertwines the policies and aspirations of all parties, including the civilian population, to promote civil society. The state has waited too long to resolve the armed conflict and has been dormant in addressing the inequities, misery and abandonment of the people to the hands of social violence and exclusion. It could commence social changes, not waiting for an end to violence and hostilities, as they might never come<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> *El Tiempo*, 'El talón de Aquiles de Uribe', March 12, 2003, editorial.

<sup>17</sup> ALVARO SIERRA, 'Arauca: entre la guerra y la estigmatización', *El Tiempo*, March 9, 2003, pp. 1-6.

<sup>18</sup> MARIA ALEJANDRA VILLAMIZAR M., '¿Dónde están los políticos de las FARC?' *El Espectador*, May 18, 2003, p. 7A. James LeMoyne states the guerrillas will not negotiate if social reforms are not in place, and urges the government not to wait for negotiations to work on social changes.

The traditional violent and short-term view of forcing security and justice should be abandoned and replaced by a focus on healing societies, nurturing human rights (Darby, 2003:103-104) and introducing economic changes. In Colombia, such changes could be better implemented in demobilisation zones, which seem to be crucial and typical in Colombian peace accords. Instead of trying to make peace through military projection, the state could develop plans based on recovering economic and social elements while 'removing the factors that originated [the] division' within societies experiencing the *barbarie* of Colombian history. This will imply substantial modifications in the political system, including the historical recognition that it has failed in its task as such, reforms to the socio-economic infrastructure, recognition and dialogue with the many ethnic-cultural population, etc. (Gonzales, 1997:120). Paradoxically, for all these changes to succeed, peace needs to become a business while generating cultural changes. Many of the zones where illegal armed groups rule are rich in oil, emeralds, bananas, cattle and hydro-carbon resources. By creating 'peace zones', where demobilised members and local society can benefit from the resources at hand, the richness of the country can be used to heal the history of injustice and violent exclusion. In some of these areas people live in extreme poverty while in the same town or its surrounding, oil companies make billions of dollars and guerrilla or paramilitary movements earn millions from extortion, kidnapping and drug trafficking.

The key feature of this plan should be the creation of new fields of opportunities for devastated communities, benefiting those areas and eventually expanding to other areas that have also suffered, finally creating a domino effect reaching more and more areas of the country. In this case, rural change will expand to urban areas, using rural wealth for its own transformation, which would then positively affect other areas through regenerative economic projects. Such expansion from rural areas to the cities can generate social inclusion, as the deprived for the first time are actively contributing to the elite and not just producing for their benefit. A shift in socio-economic relations could be the element needed for creation of a civil society.

If serious and committed investment is made in rural areas, exploiting the rich natural and human resources, there is great potential for initiating inter-communal linkages based on a quotidian, peaceful, socio-economic inclusion rather than violent exclusion. What might be seen as a common business transaction or an act of co-operation within a job or a social activity, will trigger a new set of responses. One defines this kind of peace building as the complementary nature of the distribution of justice through the creation of new social models in communities torn

apart by violence, and the implementation of alternatives for development with the help of the transforming communities that support these new social models. The ideal result of the new social models should be an awareness of the Other not as less, or more, nor equal, but as he/she who is necessary to complement myself, and thus to exist. Hence, the dependence of the self will lead to justice and justice will lead to peace.

The social task of rebuilding war-torn communities should be done with the participation of the most affected. Their contribution will be enormously valuable as their inclusion in processes affecting them is a new experience, generating trust towards others and the dynamic entrepreneurship necessary to such processes. However, the greatest development can only be achieved with the inclusion of members from outside affected communities (Palacio, 2001:531). The participation of demobilised illegal groups or deserters is necessary for a future and lasting cohesive society. These are also victims of the historical socio-political exclusion. If the dynamic does not change, the historic exclusionism of Colombian societies will continue and so will the *barbarie*. It is difficult to achieve a community composed of victims and perpetrators, this will require many years and even decades, but it is the only way Colombia will have the beginning of a civil society. It minimally requires the fulfillment of these people's basic needs and fundamental rights, most importantly the right to live. If given the opportunity to participate in a social project where there are prospects for social, cultural, economic and political development, the struggle for and against others might not seem such an obvious option as it was in the past. Such attitudes will certainly take a lot of time to become internalised and assimilated but the routine of basic activities such as trade and/or the performing of any job will help cement new perceptions, hopefully positive and not dehumanising ones. This will create a whole new system of links, forging social models that may lead one day to something called a civil society.

Grenier and Daudelin call the 'peacebuilding market-place' in which 'peace' (the cessation of violence) is traded for other commodities such as political opportunity (elections) and economic advantage (land): 'Exchanging resources of violence against other resources is arguably the pivotal type of 'trade' in peacebuilding' (Woodhouse and Ramsbotham, 2000:174). People will adopt this exchange of resources to assemble each other's needs in benefit of the whole community. This pattern of behaviour will become contagious and internalised after many years of daily occurrence; from this, other paths of community building will appear. If there is a common interest, people will seek an opportunity to grasp it and if that requires working with a former enemy, they will do

it to avoid been excluded again while the 'other' benefits and knowing the other option is returning to be a victim of the *barbarie*.

One important aspect for successfully experimenting with 'peace zones' is security for the people within them. Guaranteeing the right of life for whoever is involved in this social experiment is central to its success. Managing the security of these zones could be done by an international organisation like the United Nations (UN). Stedman attributes success towards peace 'where international custodians have created and implemented efficient strategies for protecting peace and managing spoilers, [and failed where] international custodians [could not] develop and implement such strategies' (Darby, 2003:114).

Successful negotiations or peace building initiatives in Colombia will have to confront and address the war-drug economy. The wherewithal the guerrillas and paramilitaries possess and use to wage war is a great incentive to avoid a process of reinsertion as their 'economic ambitions are better secured by the continuation of war'. The state, international community, private industry, Colombian society and illegal armed groups will have to produce an influx of monetary resources. The state and elite share great blame for the violent conflict, so they will have to be tied to the peace project through constant investment in it. It will also be interesting to test the willingness of illegal groups to invest their riches into development programs, something they have not done yet despite their considerable wealth and public concern for social justice. Is it possible the leaders of these groups will keep this money in their personal vaults if a peace agreement is reached? The international community must also invest in such a project, especially the United States and Europe, as they have greater responsibility as the major consumers of drugs (Deas, 2001:35-36). This business has created parallel economies of such power that, trying to fight them is a hopeless task as long as there is high demand for drugs on international markets. Transforming these economies is one of the most fundamental factors for peace. Trying to eradicate drugs without a new social contract will mean these economies will move to other parts of the country. Gairdner speaks of not ending 'criminal activity, but rather to insure it does not pose a fatal threat to' peace initiatives (Gairdner, 2001:19). The international community must understand that the drug business cannot be eliminated from its roots in a matter of months but will take years, as will ending the violence engendered by it. While this happens, 'revenue generated in the illicit economy must be captured by the state to fund its essential activities' (Gairdner, 2001:19). It is probable that neither the international community nor some internal parties will support this initiative, but it is necessary to advance towards subsidising peace and social justice.

Finally, the best strategy to end the drug economies and all the socio-economic maladies it generates is to legalise it. This will considerably reduce the price of drugs, thus leading to a reduction in parallel economies and in criminal and morally reproachable activities associated with the drug trade and drug consumption. The legalisation of drugs will have a severe impact on the revenue of illegal groups and international crime in general; this will translate into fewer professional armies, less capable of economically sustaining their numbers and eventually with less power of spreading *barbarie*. Economically demoralised armies will not fight in the same way as rich ones — remembering that many members joined for economic reasons. If their basic resource for making a living is diminished, their commitment to the war will shift significantly. As long as drug-trafficking keeps making billions of dollars for insurgents, paramilitaries, corrupt national and foreign powers, the country's problems will not disappear (Pardo, 2000). Gabriel Garcia Marquez cannot envisage an end to the Colombian conflict without an end to drug trafficking and the latter will not end if drugs are not legalised<sup>19</sup>.

## Conclusion

This article has proved the structural failure of the Colombian state. Crucial characteristics described above are absent from the state organism, hence the continuation of violence in the country. The necessary conditions required for the state to be an architect of a civil society have been absent and have not been recognised as missing due to the exclusionary practices formed by the violent history and ingrained culture in Colombian entities and peoples. These practices shape Colombians to think of the Other and not of themselves as the source of violence, thus procreating new cycles of *barbarie*, this being a key element for the acceptance of violence within Colombian society.

As stated previously, violence became the only legitimate political voice in Colombia so both the state and the illegal armed groups believe to have certain legitimacy as they kill themselves and others when trying to show through force the legitimacy of their policies. The more they kill and brutalise, the more legitimate the party might be thought to be. The cultural legacy left by *La violencia* has not yet been overcome and it has been fuelled furthermore not only by the illegal armed actors but also by the failed state.

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<sup>19</sup> ANTONIO CABALLERO, 'Sobre los estados Unidos, forman parte del mismo proyecto imperial la guerra contra la droga y contra el llamado 'terrorismo' y las armas masivas', *Semana*, [www.semana.com](http://www.semana.com), May 26, 2003.



Any plan for peacebuilding should separate itself from military aggression and focus on the recovery of humanity for Colombians, regaining their dignity through peace. In addition, economic, security, practical and vital issues should be in place for peace and thus civil society to develop. Nonetheless, the most fundamental part for cultural change is to address the social exclusion in the country.

The failure and exclusionism of the state have stopped the country from developing the type of civil society that could form the social constructs to generate communication channels to resolve the armed conflict and other social conflicts. All Colombians are to blame, and not only the parties perceived as violent. The embryonic civil society is not in a position of forming a strong enough political voice to demand the changes necessary to establish the foundations from which a new cohesive society could emerge. Nor does it recognise what are the main issues that would need to be addressed for it to be peaceful. Colombians believe 'the Other' is the problem, the Other is to blame and should be excluded, killed and forgotten. There is no other way to deal with violence but with the same method as if it was a serum for peace, taking violence to higher levels, which Colombians perceive, internalise and quickly forget as they have been doing effectively for generations.

Civil society in Colombia is an illusion. People are more inclined to adopt the violent exclusionism represented in the many kinds of violence and actors that perpetuate barbaric activities as a quotidian activity. Colombians do not want to see that the 'Other' was once one of 'Us'. The real problem for all the parties in the conflict is that Colombians are all the 'Other'; Colombians see the dead, the poor, the killings, the guilt, the corruption, the suffering, the violence but these do not belong to 'Us', turning themselves into the 'Other'.

They see peace but their social exclusionism does not see it as belonging to 'Us', peace has to do with the '2' so they do not recognise it, embrace it, exploit it and build upon it. 'Us' is violence and war, and until this is accepted, Colombian culture will continue to be violent, thus the conflict will go on.

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## Chapter Nine

# War Journalism: instrumentalizing media in Iraq (2003-2004)

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### Abstract

'War Journalism' emerged and developed following the Second World War — and was facilitated by improvements in communication technologies and the more recent practice of embedding. The US and other governments have been using this as a political strategy in order to justify wars to their citizens, as well as to protect their interests and public image. The media work as a mirror in which war is reflected as a simulacrum: a kind of spectacle without casualties. In this chapter, we analyze the case of the Iraq War (2003), where embedded journalists and fixers were the main actors who reported war as governments wanted it to be reported. One alternative way of reporting wars is what David Lynch defined as 'Peace Journalism,' a fairest mode for journalists to contribute, not only for maintaining an informed population but also for helping understand the roots of a conflict, the actors involved and their interests and finally, the way to peace.

'People never lie so much as after a hunt,  
during a war or before an election'.

Otto von Bismarck.

## Introduction

'(...) While televisual information claims to provide immediate access to real events, in fact what it does is produce informational events which stand in for the real, and which "inform" public opinion which in turn affects the course of subsequent events, both real and informational. As consumers of mass media, we never experience the bare material event but only the informational coating which renders it "sticky and unintelligible" like the oil-soaked sea bird.' (Patton 1995:10)

Mass media are one of the most important sources of information during war time. Audiences satisfy their need to be informed through newspapers, radios and TV broadcasts. Since the end of the Cold War, TV has served as the most technologically evolved media in war. It generates the idea that there is nothing else happening in the battlefield but what is revealed to its public thus confirming the well-known quote from Marshal MacLuhan that the media is the message: a state-controlled message.

The main purpose of this chapter is to analyze the way in which the US government and the Coalition have tried to control journalists and their reporting during conflicts; specifically the instrumentalization of the media in Iraq. Our aim is to link some controversial issues in order to explain how the Pentagon generates strategies with the purpose of convincing Western civil society to legitimize US objectives. Using Baudrillard's (1995) idea of the 'simulacrum' presents a new point of view: when making a simulacrum, reality loses its identity (for instance by showing a clean war without casualties — at least among Allied forces or reporting 'live' from the battlefield). As for mass media, the US government considers recent wars as simulacrum - as spectacles to perform in front of audiences.

## 'Media on Fire': US Government Control

A war being broadcast by the media is a war over interpretation: Korea (1950-1953), Vietnam (1961-1975), Gulf War (1990-1991), Afghanistan (2001-2002) and Iraq (2003-2004) — each conflict featured military censorship and disinformation. The US government has learned from the strategy and outlook of Hitler's Ministry of Propaganda, headed by Goebbels conquering of the masses. How can this influence our politics? How is the created perception traveling all around the world and prompting social changes? And finally: how is the US reinventing censorship?

Depending on the use of the media we could discuss an unknown war, a television war, a virtual war, or a self-censorship war. At present, media wars serve even more US goals.

What matters is to control the production and meaning of information in a given context. In effect, at least two strategies are in play with regard to the control of information in contemporary public life. During the 'live' phase of a significant event such as the Gulf conflict or an election campaign, the strictest control of information is necessary in order to influence future developments. Wherever public opinion can feed back into a political process which includes the event in question, image and interpretation or 'spin' upon current developments is vital (Patton 1995:12-13).

Linking politics with media broadcasts of conflict and public opinion, it is important to consider what Parsons states about civil society<sup>1</sup>; in his opinion, the media plays a critically important role in civil society because of its public influence, identity and solidarity more than as a forum for public information. But in times of conflict it is a forum in which boundaries between the truth-telling medium and instrumental and distorting spheres of economy and state become more and more invisible. An example is the Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) which was created in the US soon after September 11th to publicize the US government's perspective in Islamic countries and to generate support for its 'War on Terror.' It was conceived as a program that could spread disinformation and mislead the public, both at home and abroad.

### **In the Era of the Image: starting the simulacrum**

The Korean War could be referred to as an 'unknown war' since it took place in the early dawn of mass television: black and white photos and films relayed to audiences that journalists were present. In Vietnam, television technology was advanced enough to bring the battlefield into our homes. What makes Vietnam a significant event is that it could be described as a war in which media contributed to the de-escalation of the conflict. However, the state did not yet understand the potential of the media to 'demolish a Third World enemy' (Cumings 1992:1) and so media coverage of the conflict played a key role in turning American public opinion against the war in Vietnam.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Parsons (1971) recognized that civil society is a sphere of influence and commitment, mediated through public opinion' (Liebes and Currain 1998:26).

Television journalism exploited the enormous capacity of the medium to confront the US government and help to turn a generation against its leaders.

Military planning learned a great deal from Vietnam and how to use this technological 'window of opportunity'. As a result, a new kind of sanitized war was born: only pictures of weaponry and few images of human casualties, and none from the Allied forces. This is what occurred in the Gulf War: reporters were confined to pools in order to maintain military security and prevent a massive influx of reporters into the war zone. Representative journalists were included in the press pool, and their reports were made available to the rest of the media. This system did not satisfy the goals of many journalists, since it greatly restricted most reporters' access to events. 'Retired General Sidle, who continues to work as a consultant to the Defense Department, argues that in dealing with the press, security and troop safety must be the military's first concern' (Young 2001). Additionally, 'In America, objectivity connotes a construction in which those within the liberal realm agree to disagree, and the perceived enemies of liberalism are shown to be wrong' (Cumings 1992:138).

It is the first time that a war is a simulacrum of a war, following the ideas of Baudrillard<sup>2</sup> (1995). The Gulf War and the recent War on Terrorism are 'virtual wars', in the sense that 'real events lose their identity when attaining the velocity of real time information, or (...) when they become encrusted with the information which represents them' (Patton 1995:10). The characteristics are quite familiar: embedded journalists and a new concept of war which does not involve two sides in combat shooting at each other - just one side conquering the other. At least this is what we could call a main goal of military forces and an instrumentalization of journalism - a simulacrum in which we trust the camera's eye more than the mind's eye. It is based on misinformation, keeping information out of reach because images of real war adversely affect public sentiment and political goals.

However, the simulacrum framework is not a never-ending strategy. The war in Afghanistan started as a simulacrum but it completely changed when giving identity to the virtual dimension, like broadcasting images of refugees or casualties from the two sides in combat. One of the novelties of the international crisis after the World Trade Center attacks was the emergence of the Qatari television station Al-Jazeera, which challenged CNN's global monopoly and gave a voice to 'the Other'.

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<sup>2</sup> 'This is not a war but a simulacrum of war, a virtual event which is less the representation of real war than a spectacle which serves a variety of political and strategic purposes on all sides' (Patton 1995:10).



## The Role of Mass Media during the Iraq War 2003-2004

### *Introducing Iraq: new Pentagon embedded strategy*

On the eve of the war in Iraq, hundreds of journalists prepared to travel with US and British troops. The media were once again 'on fire'. How was it this time? Following Baudrillard (...), 'we can rest assured that the next soap opera in this genre will enjoy an even fresher and more joyful credulity' (Baudrillard 1995:72).

Embedding is how the Pentagon called its policy of allowing journalists front-line access, as in Vietnam, yielding 'stunning scenes of war and largely sympathetic stories about the Western troops who waged it' (Cooper 2004). However, and as we have seen, the simulacrum has its end and some journalists reported on the war 'unilaterally'.

### *Communication Tactics: definition, context and characteristics*

The 2003 Iraq War featured the consolidation of communication tactics in the Coalition's mode of combat. Although control and manipulation of information is an old practice, used since time immemorial, in the global era, with an increase in access to information, it represents one of the highest priorities in modern warfare strategy.

These procedures consist basically, as evidenced during the Iraq War, of exploiting private communication companies (TV mainly, but also radio, newspapers and internet) and journalists, to report selected information to the public in order to achieve specific and crucial advantages in conflict situations.

There are four main aspects to highlight: the expansion of the influence of media enterprises, the technological improvements, the interests of governments and the interests of media enterprises themselves.

On the one hand, 'the deregulation of media ownership, the privatization of television in lucrative European and Asian markets and new (improvements) communication technologies have made it possible for media giants to establish powerful distribution and production networks, within and among nations' (Robert W. McChesney 1999). In other words, the mass media have the capacity to report whatever happens in any place in the world.

On the other hand, Coalition governments attach great importance and interest to maintaining a healthy public image, not only for the civilian population but also for international institutions. The reason for this is quite obvious: to lend justification and legitimacy to its

unilateral war approach in Iraq. Consequently, mass media were and are the instrument for that purpose. On a tactical level, media communications are an instrument that could, at least for a certain period of time, justify critical and controversial decisions, conquer domestic and/or international public opinion and inject a hopeful 'morale serum' to combatants, as well as confuse and diminish the morale of the opponent.

In the case of media, we can find several motivations for preserving a subjugated position, most of them related to economic reasons and power interests. In American society, patriotism is a good reason for being on the side of government campaigns, even those lacking clear justification.

For O'Hefferman (1994: 240-2; cited by Palmer and Albertazzi 2005), the characteristics of communications tactics include: 'thwarting national media from examining the basis for a policy' and supporting the local stations and newspapers sympathetic with the government's policy directions. They use strong visual images which co-opt the TV screens and provide numerous and insignificant details in order to overwhelm reporters. The flux of information is controlled through governmental communication agencies and 'stonewalling — refusing to provide information through normal press-distribution channels, knowing that only a small percentage of reporters have the time, expertise or funds to dig out a story while it is relevant'.

For example, in the cases of the two Gulf wars, the US administrations filtered the information they wanted to make public through the government itself or through the military. Priorities about what to cover were 'suggested' before the reports. The case study we wish to analyze 'represents an excellent example in which the news media enthusiastically adopted the authority's law and order frame' (Wolfsfeld 1997:170).

Regarding the possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), one of the main elements that justified the occupation, the main media channels referred to the developed system of Saddam's WMD machinery on its most visible reports, while the whole question of Israel's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to the Middle East was passed over with discreet silence (Burchill 2002).

Other communication tactics were used after the 2003 invasion (Plunkett 2003): on November 2004, during the assault on Fallujah by the US army, one of the key goals was the city's main hospital, to prevent it from being used as a source of 'insurgent propaganda' related to civilian casualty rates (Beaumont and Ourdan 2004, cited by Palmer and Albertazzi 2005).

Jerry Palmer and Howard Tumber examine the 'news gathering process' (Tumber and Palmer 2004, cited by Palmer and Albertazzi 2005). These authors focus their approach on the idea that control over what journalists are able to access is clearly part of the management of media profiles of events, these are in turn intended to produce consent (Anderson 2005), executing the utmost control over newsgathering, on a polemic border line related to the framework of democratic accountability. In relation to this, a recent overview of democratic liability and security unequivocally lists embedding as a restrictive way of influencing journalists (Caparini 2004: 15, cited by Palmer and Albertazzi 2005).

### *Reporting From Inside the Theater: embedded journalists*

The issue of embedding has been hotly debated since the end of the Iraq War. Proponents of the practice believe it offers journalists on the front line a greater degree of protection, while critics say it gives the military too much control over what is reported (Johnson 2003). In the Iraq war, journalist access to events (there were more than 500 embedded journalists, 80% being British or American<sup>3</sup>) was conditioned by some measures, clearly defined by the US government and US military forces, and not at all related to their physical protection. They were not, in the majority of cases, free to research, collect or even publish information not selected by the military.

Donald Rumsfeld, US Defense Secretary, summarized the role of the embedded journalists this way: 'The American people were able to see slices of what took place. They could see accurate presentations and representations and written accounts of what the men and women in uniform were doing' (Morahan 2003). In essence, the role of embedded journalists was to transmit objective information directly from the battlefield, joined and protected by US-UK military forces. 'The side benefit, it seems to me — Rumsfeld continues —, is there's now a new generation of journalists who have had a chance to see first-hand what kind of people volunteered to put their lives at risk, and that's a good thing' (Morahan 2003). To this comment, General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, added: 'We're going to come out of this with journalists having another impression of our armed forces, and it's going to be the one you've been seeing

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<sup>3</sup> In the Iraq invasion, some 3000 journalists were assigned to the region by outside media; of these, 500 were embedded with US or UK military units (Tumber and Palmer 2004:1); this was substantially less than the 920 places the Pentagon had offered (Leiner, 2002).

on all of those little snippets on TV, and it's one of professionals, of dedication, of great character' (Morahan 2003).

The most important characteristic of embedded reporters is that they work in extremely dangerous conditions, in the middle of the battlefield in many cases. They can transmit, as Rumsfeld stated, accurately and in a short space of time, information related to what is going on at every moment. Their questions and means are determined by military staff, where every journalist must sign a contract, giving the military control over their output. Their neutrality is brought into question, since reporters are side by side, constantly dependent on the military. (In some cases, the US military was accused of using the embedded system to improve the credibility and visibility of some of the propaganda pieces of their personnel).

Yet, at least, 23 journalists died in Iraq in 2004, compared to 15 victims in 2003, states Larry Kilman, Director of Communications for the World Association of Newspapers. Other sources, including *The Guardian*, pointed out that more than 30 journalists were killed. Proportionately, far more journalists than US soldiers were killed in Iraq during the war, making it the deadliest campaign for journalists in modern history. Stuart Hughes, a BBC journalist who was working outside Kirkuk in northern Iraq at the time of the accident that injured his foot, accused the media of being blinkered to the dangers of reporting from war zones (Anderson 2005).

274 journalists have been killed in war zones around the globe since 1990, according to the International Federation of Journalists. It is, however, less common for foreign journalists to be killed in war zones. Most media casualties over the past 13 years were working in their country of origin. For example, many of the 62 journalists killed during the Bosnian conflict came from the former Yugoslav Republic, while all of the 49 journalists killed in the war in Rwanda were Rwandan. Of 23 journalists killed in the Kosovar conflict in 1999, 16 were Serbian, three Chinese, two German and two others were of unidentified nationality. Compared with the first Gulf War in 1991, where only four journalists lost their lives, including three team members from a British agency that was working for the BBC and one German photographer (Byrne 2003).

## **Fixer's Role and their Risky Business**

Helping embedded journalists or others who are not embedded, 'fixers' have for a long time worked with foreign correspondents, doing everything from booking hotel rooms to scheduling interviews with top officials. While the term is sometimes broadly applied to include drivers and travel guides, established fixers are generally local hires, many of

whom are well-respected journalists in their own countries. They work on a short term basis providing expertise, translation, contacts, and research (Witched 2004).

Andrew Maykuth (Witched 2004), foreign correspondent for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, considers that 'fixer' is the wrong term. They are really journalists, as their work demands the same ethical standards of reporting. Though fixers traditionally worked behind the scenes, political conditions in today's hot spots are pushing them to the front lines. For Kathy Gannon, until recently the Islamabad Bureau Chief for The Associated Press, 'fixers and stringers are used more and more to go into areas that, as a Westerner, it is difficult to penetrate, such as the tribal areas of Pakistan' (Witched 2004).

According to Palmer (2004), fixers interpret in interviews and translate local media as few Western journalists who have worked in Iraq speak Arabic. They arrange interviews, including — within limits — selecting the interviewee and give background briefings about the identities of potential interviewees. They do some reporting, especially summaries of events to which the European journalists cannot have access and deliver security assessments, due to the level of danger caused by the degradation of the security situation. Finally they provide access to their networks and local connections.

According to Elisabeth Witched (2004), 'fixing has always been a risky business, even before the Iraq war and the struggle against terrorism.' Sometimes, fixers are subject to local retaliation more than Western journalists are. 'Fixers are also more vulnerable because they may not necessarily be viewed as legitimate journalists, due to the informal hiring process, which usually does not include a contract. According to Pakistani journalist Iqbal Khattak, before September 11th, the term 'fixer' was unknown in Pakistan and even now is viewed with suspicion by intelligence agents and police there (Witched 2004).

Finally, it must be taken into account that fixers are developing professional journalism skills, a direct consequence of the role they have played for some time and because of the financial benefits that they can earn as well. Maykuth recalls that, during his many trips to Afghanistan in the Fall 2001, he saw the daily rate of fixers rise from US\$30 to US\$300 (Witched 2004).

## **An Alternative way of Broadcasting: Peace Journalism**

'The ongoing Middle East crisis has clearly been exacerbated by much of the reporting, with frequent and furious claims of bias from both

sides. In practical terms, how else might reporters approach this complex story?' What alternatives do we have to this model of war journalism we see during the Iraq War? Jake Lynch<sup>4</sup>, an experienced international TV and newspaper correspondent, has helped to answer this question with the development of a method that he terms 'Peace Journalism' (Lynch and McGoldrick 1999).

Peace journalism can be defined as a 'program or pattern of journalistic news coverage that contributes to the journalists' 'snaking' when covering and seeking sources, and coverage which promotes peace. This implies that peace journalism does not just simply mean the outcome of journalistic work, but also refers to how journalists act and perceive their roles in reporting conflicts' (Miller 2002).

The following ten practical suggestions for peace journalists are quoted from Johan Galtung and Richard C. Vincent (Miller 2002), drawing on the coverage of the Gulf War in 1991: cover both sides; push to get access to locations, people and topics; don't stick to elites as news sources; avoid glorifying warfare technology; don't cut out 'blood and guts' stories since they show the real horrors of war; publish accounts on 'ordinary' people; provide background information; be aware of spin-doctors who try to manipulate you; accounts on how media or journalists cover conflicts should not push the actual conflict aside and communicate and support peace initiatives. Another suggestion could be the promotion of decision center monitoring, namely through the creation of Monitoring Agencies, as was done in Bosnia and Kosovo.

## Conclusions

Sitting comfortably in front of the 'magic little box' or at a desk, connected to the internet, anyone can witness images of atrocities committed in diverse international settings — be it the terrorist attacks of 9-11 in New York, of 3-11 in Atocha or the more recent attack on the London underground system, all suspected to have connections with Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda. Hundreds or probably thousands of reporters, cameramen and other brave journalists risk their lives by being in a certain

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<sup>4</sup> JAKE LYNCH is a correspondent for Sky News and The Independent, based in London and Sydney. He is a consultant to the POIESIS Conflict and Peace Forums and co-author of *The Peace Journalism Option* and *What Are Journalists For?* Available in [www.mediachannel.org](http://www.mediachannel.org)

place and at a certain time, in order to inform people worldwide of remarkable events, no matter how dangerous it may turn out to be.

War journalists, embedded or not, are those who are trying to transmit to audiences what is happening in the battlefields. As we analyzed above, this kind of reporting emerged in the first half of the twentieth century, when radio reporting was the main source of public information. Since the Second World War, especially following Vietnam, television became the most important media in terms of news broadcasting. Recently, the Internet has penetrated our lives, consolidating its role as the main door to the world of news reporting. This was particularly visible in the hours following the terrorist attack on London's underground, by making use of this media, news rapidly spread all over the globe.

The role of embedded journalists in Iraq and the news transmitted by the companies in which they work has generated hot debate regarding the reliability of their reporting. Especially significant were some of the US TV channels, including Fox which portrayed a heightened sense of patriotism when reporting on the Iraq War. At the same time, we have the role of the US administration and the Coalition governments in using war journalism to their own benefit, through embedded reporters and through the promotion of unbalanced broadcasting, sometimes forcing channels to focus public attention on information that governments want to have broadcasted.

Western societies might have the major responsibility for maintaining these kinds of dynamics. In general terms, reaction against tactics to manipulate information has not been strong, this despite visible protests aimed at transforming the quality of war journalism.

Peace Journalism represents one of the most solid alternatives to the actual model of war journalism, and has already succeeded on many occasions, like during Indonesia's Poso conflict in 2000. 'Similar to the concept of 'development journalism', peace journalism emerged from a normative view on what the media should do' (Miller 2002) in relation to neutral reporting — and even conflict resolution and promotion of a culture of peace. For us, this type of reporting is not a choice. Rather, it is a stepping stone in the path towards a more peaceful world.

Conflict resolution also depends on what is transmitted to or hidden from the public, and the way in which this is done. In a transparent good governance system, there exist fewer reasons to either start or maintain a conflict, because the costs for hiding or manipulating information will be much higher than the overall benefits to international society.

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Peace and Conflict Studies is an increasingly observed discipline, as researchers seek to investigate complex issues and to aid in the building of knowledge which can be used towards transforming conflict. Analyzing case studies from Europe and beyond, this edited volume seeks to provide theoretical tools and alternative approaches for examining the root causes of violence, and to extrapolate possibilities for transcending peace through conflict transformation. The reader is presented with specific case studies from the Middle East, South Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean rim and South America. What differentiates this work is that more than just analyzing the conflicts, contributors offer either methodological or theoretical alternatives for their transformation. While not discarding the value of traditional approaches to conflict resolution a new generation of peace workers is emerging and proposing that a certain level of conflict is a natural and sometimes necessary aspect of human relations. There is a growing recognition that it would be almost impossible to rid society of conflict altogether. A view that is gaining increasing currency is one which promotes the idea of conflict transformation. This approach entails transforming levels of conflict in order to alleviate discord, avoid violence and create circumstances for future peace-building.



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