Centre for Nonviolent Action
Belgrade | Sarajevo

RECONCILIATION?!

Training Handbook for Dealing with the Past

Ivana Franović · Nenad Vukosavljević · Tamara Šmidling

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Not even storks come here any more;
Our bottles no longer do the trick,
The Balkan seems to make them sick.
'Cause babies don't cry where the bullets fly.
...
But no worries at all, don't mind,
Soon the elections will steal the eye,
The smell of campaign barbecue in this village of mine,
Forget your bruises, your empty wallet, account,
They'll hand out sausage, lamb and pork to dine,
So feed instead on that juicy lie.
...
'Cause babies don't cry where the bullets fly,
Fools, yet again, are in the lead,
My storks are gone this time as well,
But I love our storks, you see,
They like the quiet,
And meadows and rivers – like me;
They only bring babies to lands of no blood,
Pure rivers, no sound of the gun;
And I would love me a daughter, or a son.

Edo Maajka
(Hip hop musician)

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Foreword to the English Edition

Diana Francis

The Centre for Nonviolent Action has a remarkable history. It is perhaps still not widely known that the former Yugoslavia, before its dissolution, already had a vigorous culture of civil society activism, of which the Centre for Nonviolent Action remains a particularly principled and tenacious example. From my earliest contacts with the region about twenty years ago, I have learned a great deal from the activists I have met there and been inspired by their courage, determination and persistence, their habits of disciplined clarity of thought, and their inventiveness and sense of fun.

CNA began its life in 1997, in Sarajevo, and in 2001 opened a second office in Belgrade. That very fact illustrates its determination to resist the division of people by place and ethnicity, and its multi-ethnic teams give it credibility and win trust in a region divided by war and its aftermath. As its name makes clear, it was founded on the principles of nonviolence – those of equality and unconditional respect – and it has steadfastly held to those values through all the violence, anger and despair of the wars, and the hopes and disappointments of the years that have followed.

Its work is focussed on the education of individuals and their preparation for action. 'Education' in this case has the word's original meaning of starting from what is already in an individual, drawing it out, and helping it to develop and change. This means starting with personal experience and responses to it. It involves self-scrutiny and self-challenge, and those who work for CNA practise what they teach (as anyone reading their annual reports will see). It is this practice of honest and painstaking self-scrutiny, in a context of collective reflection, that has made them the experts that they have become. It has also kept their feet firmly on the ground: witness the simple humility of their introduction to this handbook.

The handbook's focus – dealing with the past – is a brave and necessary one, in a region that has suffered more than its share of violence since CNA's beginning. To focus on dealing with the multiple realities and experiences of that violence, and its impact on the present, is extremely difficult. The hurt, anger and hostility remain, but most people would rather draw a veil over them than explore them in sufficient depth to understand and begin to transform

them. The handbook's authors make it clear that they as the facilitators of this kind of training, which is focussed mainly on dialogue and reflection rather than on direct input, must also be participants, and invest as much of themselves in the process as they expect of other participants. They must also work sensitively and always with the group's consent.

This insight into their role as trainers role is one of many shared in a handbook that is extraordinarily rounded, being far more than a collection of useful things to do in workshops. It speaks of the authors' own deep and inspiring commitment of themselves to change, which shines out of the introduction and all that follows.

The three important essays that precede the exercises give a powerful sense of the context and character of CNA's work. Nenad Vukosavljević's discussion of Dealing with the Past in Former Yugoslavia not only conveys the specifics of that situation but raises profound questions of universal relevance, and will be illuminating and thought-provoking for all readers, not only those who live in the region.

Similarly, Ivana Franovic's account of the CNA Approach to Dealing with the Past provides insights and points of comparison for activists and trainers everywhere. Her definition of peacebuilding is characteristically down to earth and direct, involving action on many fronts, and she explains compellingly why in Former Yugoslavia it must involve dealing with the past. This discussion will be important for many who live in countries burdened by the legacy of violence.

Tamara Šmidling's discussion of CNA Training gives a very clear account of the rigorous way in which this collective of trainers, from different ethnic backgrounds in what has become an ethnically divided region, have thought together about their work, its conceptual underpinnings, organisation and rationale. Again, the approach to training that she describes and the important practical considerations she raises, in relation to their organisation, are universally relevant.

These opening discussions are as important as the exercises that comprise the next, hands-on part of the handbook, which itself constitutes a treasure-trove of tried and tested ways of facilitating conversations of depth and honesty. The organisation of these exercises is designed for ease of use. The first two sections, focussed on enabling participants to get to know each other and then to explore the context in which they find themselves, offer processes necessary to any training workshop with a new group of participants, while the next two are related to a workshop's specific training focus, whether that is peacebuilding or dealing with the past or both. Each exercise in the different sections is clearly labelled and some, such as 'the big barometer', appear in different places, since they are useful tools for exploring a wide variety of topics.

What makes this handbook so special is not only the rich array of options in each group of exercises but also the wealth of experience and thought on which the selection is based. This is evident in the clarity with which the exercises are described, the practical observations that accompany them (such as the time needed for each), and the other considerations and insights that accompany them. Importantly, the authors are clear that this is not a recipe book but rather is written 'to inspire, to provide an idea of how something might be done'. The trainers who draw on its contents are expected to do so with imagination and sensitivity, creating their own trainings individually for each group they work with, responding flexibly to the process of a workshop's unfolding and the dynamics within a particular group.

The core purpose of all the exercises is to enable participants to explore, together and in

depth, the tough questions and related feelings that lie at the heart of social relationships, and the possibilities for translating new insights into action. That translation is vital, as the authors insist: 'Training is a means, a tool to initiate change, not an end in itself.' But the training begins the process of change in the individual, and the whole section of exercises has the feel of an orderly, high quality conversation between colleagues. I see the handbook's creation as an act of great generosity and solidarity, borne of commitment to the painstaking work of transformation.

The final Glossary that completes it would richly deserve publication in its own right. Some of the terms are defined with succinct elegance, in a single paragraph, while others, such as broad concepts like 'reconciliation' are discussed in short essays – as they need to be – capturing some of the deep and challenging questions that they raise.

Altogether, this is a work of huge importance, since it addresses issues that are urgent, complex and acutely relevant to many parts of the world. It does so with great care and honesty and the personal, intimate way in which they write gives the book a freshness and authenticity that will engage readers and enable them to trust its wisdom and use what it offers in their own way, applying and adapting it to their own situation. It will, above all, inspire activists at home and abroad, encouraging them to join with those who

'age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.'

(Adrienne Rich. *The Fact of a Doorframe*.)

Introduction

Last month marked the fifteenth anniversary since the establishment of the Centre for Nonviolent Action. It has been thirteen years since we published the training handbook *Nonviolence?*[1] Since then, the focus of our peace education programmes has changed in accordance with the fluctuating socio-political context. As the years have passed since the end of the wars of the 1990s, and wounds have started to heal, if only superficially, space has emerged for tackling the issues that are more politically and emotionally demanding.

At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium, a meeting of people from different parts of former Yugoslavia signified more than just an event. At the time it was almost impossible to discuss the subject of 'national identity' (not to mention ethnic prejudice), so we dealt with the topic under the wider banner of 'identities'. Indeed, even with the possibility of participants not disclosing their nationality should they so choose, the mere mention of it would elevate the stress levels in the room, and, as if a dark cloud had floated in, fear showed on people's faces. Looked at from today's perspective, the training sessions were relatively easy-going, because they tackled demanding issues in a mindful and calm fashion (issues that today would not be even considered demanding). However, I knew we pushed back the boundaries even then. Exchanges between participants grew more and more emotional, and often half of the group would be in tears, including the training team, because someone's story would have such a strong impact – or we just had a hard time dealing with the issue. Even today we are not immune to these outbursts of emotion but I cannot even remember the last time I experienced half the people in the group crying, or having a dilemma about whether we should ask the people to group by ethnicity for the duration of the exercise without being afraid of some people standing up and going home instantly.

As years passed, the focus of the training sessions shifted. Sometimes nonviolent conflict would be a key issue and, within it, as far as possible, we would tackle the issues of conflict in society, our attitude towards conflicts, the responsibility for them, and so on. Today, our main focus is peacebuilding and dealing with the past, and we are able to discuss notions such as

1 Nenad Vukosavljević. *Nenasilje? Priručnik za treninge iz nenasilne razrade konflikata za rad s odraslima* (Sarajevo: CNA, 2000).

war crimes, ethnic cleansing, Serbs, Croats, Albanians, personal and collective responsibility, and reconciliation, without anyone storming out of the premises because of them being merely mentioned. At some point, we even decided to change the name of the peace education programme from *Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation* to *Training in Peacebuilding*, as it more closely describes the focus of the training.

During that time we have learned a great deal. This handbook is just an attempt to systematise some of that knowledge and experience, and make it accessible to others. When we started to engage with the issue of dealing with the past it would happen that, on some of the nights during the training, we would ponder on what it would be wise to do the next day. Without any resources to inspire us, we relied solely on previous knowledge and experience, the assessment of where people were in the process, and how far they could go. We did not have any handbooks or manuals on the subject available, and they certainly would have come in handy in those situations. In fact, we learned through direct work with people. Sometimes we were not sure if it would be appropriate to do something or not, wondering whether a task would be too difficult or not (because we always tried to go as far as possible) but then we would check with the participants of the training – how willing were they to engage with a demanding task. It is from them that we learned the most.

The idea for this handbook came about from the desire to share the experience we have gathered. We feel that there is a lack of constructive approaches to dealing with the past in our region, and we hope that this will encourage people to engage in this important work. Since its publication twelve years ago, and up until last year, the training handbook *Nonviolence?* has been downloaded from our website over 30 000 times (mostly in Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian languages, but also Hungarian, Macedonian and Albanian versions). This demonstrates how rewarding and valuable it was to invest our energy in working on this handbook, in its translation and publication. Amongst other things, it encouraged us to publish new insights we have gained and knowledge we have accumulated.

We hope that this handbook will serve as an inspiration for concrete work on these issues. We also hope that at least some people in other parts of the world, who are just starting to work on these issues, or thinking about it, will be encouraged, no matter how difficult it seems.

The handbook consists of three parts. The first part is a series of introductory essays in which we attempt to describe the context in which we work (or as we experience it), to clarify the approach that we have and provide a picture of how training sessions work. The mid section contains four sub-chapters with exercises that we use in workshops, and many of them are accompanied with practical insights gained during training sessions. The publication is concluded with a *Glossary*, that is conceived as a collection of short essays which define concepts relevant to the theoretical and practical field of dealing with the past.

Most of these exercises are designed in the 'CNA kitchen'. We feel that the most effective ones are those developed and tweaked for some groups of participants who inspired us to work further. This is something we realised very early on; therefore, in recent years our practice has been only to set the basic blueprint for the training in advance, and then, guided by the identified needs and inhibitions in the group itself, develop sessions for issues that are a priority in the given composition of the group. We hope to clearly convey the following lesson: the handbook should not be used as a cookbook, with a selection of recipes for an appetiser, main course and dessert. Rather, it should inspire and provide an idea how something might be done but it would be best if the users of the handbook formulated their own priority issues, depending on the needs of the group they are working with.

We had a great dilemma about citing sources for some exercises, because we cannot determine their authorship with certainty. In large part, we have used our experiences described in detail in our numerous training documentations, compiled after each training session, as well as our previously published training handbook. Of course we did not come up with the key methods ourselves (such as the so called 'Big barometer' and other types of barometers, fishbowl, hot seats, etc.), but we've learned about them in many places, and from many people. In the beginning, a great inspiration for us was our sister organization *Kurve Wustrow* and the pool of trainers and practitioners it gathered. Among existing handbooks, the most useful one for us was *Community Conflict Skills* by Mari Fitzduff, a booklet simply packed with inspiration. We have learned much and received support from: Goran Božičević, Diana Francis, Ana and Otto Raffai, Cara Gibney, Vesna Teršelič, Boro Kitanoski, Randy and Amela Puljek-Shank, Annemarie Müller and many others. However, the most intense learning experience came from the participants in the training, who invested in the process of exchange as much as we did. We thank them all for their contribution.

Many thanks to Martina Fischer from the *Berghof Foundation*, who has been by our side through the years, for her support and useful advice. We thank those who have supported us financially, especially the German Ministry for Development (BMZ) and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who were flexible enough and provided support for us to try to walk this previously untrodden path. Thank you to all those who have joined our training team for contributing your experience, and special thanks to current and former members of CNA.

Finally, I must admit that we have had the privilege of getting help from three very dear friends who carefully read the first draft of this handbook, and provided invaluable suggestions, insights and questions: Marijana Stojčić, Davorka Turk and Katarina Milićević, thank you very much!

Ivana Franović

October 2012

Dealing with the Past in Former Yugoslavia

Nenad Vukosavljević

The following article will try to analyse the processes of Dealing with the Past after the wars, of the societies of former Yugoslavia. What is the role of social remembrance and how it relates to collective identities? What is the meaning of Dealing with the Past? Which practices are peace-degrading and why? What does it take to heal the society from hatred, alleviate sufferings, restore justice?

The Purpose/Meaning

Processing a difficult experience brought on by war and learning to live with it means to ascribe meaning to a collectively and individually traumatizing experience, one of uncertainty, loss, fear and hate. Our societies stretching across the territory of ex-Yugoslavia have often been confronted with the challenge of finding a purpose to war and sacrifice in their past, and have developed mechanisms of instilling and celebrating collective memory that emphasises our identities. Collective identities understood as criteria for martyrdom have slowly erased the grief for the loss of loved ones, and offered a 'purpose' of justified sacrifice for the collective. Collectivization of sacrifice and victimhood meant that grief was being dispersed over the collective as well. United in this collective, we all felt sad and proud, honourable and righteous. Most of all, we felt united.

After the Second World War, the collective memory of its victims served to create support for the new socialist regime. The notion of freedom grew equivalent to the socialist revolution, and resistance to the oppressor came to be framed within the narrative of brotherhood and unity of our nations and nationalities. Instead of sorrow and despair, memories of war entailed a celebration of epic deeds of known and unknown heroes, offered hope for the better tomorrow, and fuelled the feelings of collective pride.

The overall culture of remembrance existed under the banner of the *politics* of remembrance, in service of a collectivist project and constructed within the authoritarian paradigm.

The past was articulated effortlessly, often embellished, or at least maliciously interpreted through a particular lens, in order to better fit with 'our' righteous collective, as opposed to the "outside enemy and the traitors among us". The black-and-white portrayal of 'us' versus 'them', the history and the reality, could never be questioned. Dissonant voices were immediately labelled as signs of enemy activity, and faced with the righteous anger of "workers and peasants" fomented by the censors of a one-party state – would disappear all too quickly. Our 'victim' identity would be meaningless without the enemy collective, and foregoing the 'enemy' discourse would imply the generosity of 'our' collective. This was the way it was in the past, and it is still largely so today. The radical, but smooth transformation of the "socialist working people" into Greater Serbs, Greater Croats etc. during the 1990s did not bring about the deconstruction of the authoritarian collectivist narrative. It did just the opposite. And instead of the similarities, the differences between former "brother nations" were often exaggerated to absurdity.

The ones in charge of establishing the new politics of remembrance (under different ethnic and ideological banners) were presumably "the best sons" of the authoritarian communist regime, drawing from the same school of thought and perpetuating it, applying the same methods of altering history to fit the mould, the better to appeal to us and be consumed as such. Any resistance to the allure of new history was rare, because what is familiar better serves our need for security, and we know how to celebrate, implement and defend it.

Nationalism is the ideology of the first person plural, that tells *us* who we *are*; and simultaneously the ideology of the third person, because it points to the *they who we are not*[1]. National myths feed on history, personal sacrifice, individual virtues of righteousness, honesty, love of freedom, and pride. Wars are their best source, and the political misuse of religion is their best ally. Everything the collective needs to face is already encompassed by this project. Herein possibly lies the reason for the general discontent with the notion of *dealing with the past*, because it instils the fear that the previously offered/planted purpose-of-it-all will be taken away, no matter how deprived of meaning or clumsily constructed it is. In order for the process of dealing with the past to be successful, it needs to offer and communicate clear and distinct answers that address the purpose of this process: it needs to replace simplified imagery utilised from the war onwards; it needs to build bridges and mobilise, avoid the traps of righteousness and it needs either to speak to the broadest public or indeed fail. Otherwise we are condemned to repeat the same history.

Fact-finding pertaining to events during the war needs to be a joint effort and collaborative, not conflicted and biased, if we are to constructively face the past. This is essential for the establishment of truth which cannot then be twisted and manipulated at a later stage, and in line with the political agenda. It is also exceptionally important for the people who lost their loved ones under unclear circumstances. In this way they gain a sense of certainty and relief and the situation of conflict transforms into one of cooperation. Respect for the victims belonging to the 'other' side becomes understandable, possible and preferred and opens the space for re-examination of collective narratives. At the end or at the start of this process, but certainly during and within it, the community that is in the forefront of it disassociates itself from the wrongdoings done in its common name, assuming the responsibility for the past and thus creating a safer and a more predictable future.

This process is, in a way, a bitter medicine, because it entails facing one's own misconcep-

1 Michael Billig. *Banalni nacionalizam* (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2009), p 145 & pp 288-290.

tions. It requires many individuals to change their perception, become aware of their misconceptions, re-examine their myths and beliefs and overcome a sense of shame, in order to move towards change – of both the individual and the public. Whoever thinks that change comes about through slaps on the wrist (figuratively or not[2]) as a means of punishment for being wrong (unlike them – *the ever so honourable, smart, and righteous doers of good*), had better stay away from any social change agenda – until further notice.

It is far worse to erode and obliterate a good idea than to not have it at all.

Who Will Make The First Move?

Since the war, the process of dealing with the past in the countries of former Yugoslavia did not share the same intensity of attention as other agendas. The competition is seen in the area of accession to the money-spewing pump of the European Union, pardon my language, the adoption of European standards of organization and governance that would make our particular state 'the most European one' thus indirectly proving the 'non-European-ness', of the ones stalled or stopped on their road to accession. However, such competition is missing in the area of peacebuilding.

Every country and even parts of certain countries have their specificities, stemming either from having directly experienced warfare on their territory, or a different level of intensity in the process of dealing with the past and different measures implemented in the hope that this process would take root. Alternatively the process of purportedly dealing with the past would be distorted by channelling it in the same ideological fashion that preceded the wars in the 1990s. While in the period before the war the process was in the service of an authoritarian quasi-socialist regime, this time it was utilised for the national myths agenda, and adapted to the needs of ethnic homogenization i.e. segregation.

What Kind of Dealing with the Past?

It seems easier to describe the overall situation by looking at countries and regions, even though it does not really apply in the context of intending a successful and constructive process of dealing with the past. I emphasise the word 'constructive' because the wartime past continually gets re-appropriated as an object of nationalist manipulation and is subject to biased and simplified interpretation. The wartime past is constantly used in public discourse and it is continuously present in our lives. A simplified interpretation submits that 'we' have always merely defended ourselves, that the crimes done against our own people are barbaric, while those done in our own name either minimised or justified. People prefer simple truths[3], and it seems easy to understand why such narratives are so widely accepted, given that they fit the mould of increasing the historical significance of our nation and belittling that of others, ones so different from us that it strikes *us* as unbelievable that we both belong to the human species.

2 Through belittling, judging or putting down.

3 I am fond of them myself, as they require less effort for understanding, they are clear and simple, black-and-white, easily adopted and transferred, and enhancements can be applied easily.

This emphasis on the constructive and destructive approach to the wartime past has the objective of explaining and underlining that our societies have been involved in forging history from the very beginning, and that what we habitually call 'dealing with the past' is merely an attempt to introduce neglected or ignored dimensions and facts into an already existing mainstream perspective. Dealing with the past which is in the service of peacebuilding is necessarily opposed to the interpretations of the past stemming from an ideological agenda of aggressive nationalism. *Addressing this conflict/opposition is usually not the strong suit of peace activists, and so peacebuilding discourse often exists in the framework that human rights defenders would place under the banner of relativism.* Truth be told, dealing with the past can indeed avoid the traps of relativism (for the sake of instant reconciliation), and not deepen existing wounds and lack of trust in the process. The art of moving along that particular edge (in a constructive manner and yet without the fear of confrontation) lies in consistent anchoring in the principles of nonviolence while being devoted to dialogue, cooperation, reflection and self-reflection in terms of process.

The Context and Actors

The context of dealing with the past and peacebuilding in the countries of former Yugoslavia is firmly conditioned by, among other things, the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, Netherlands. In addition to this institution, the national courts have to a greater or lesser extent (but certainly insufficiently) been in charge of the prosecution and indictment of those responsible for war crimes and violations of the laws and customs of war. The main objective of court prosecution for the war crimes should be the establishment of (some kind of) justice and the conditions for the process of reconciliation. Still, the families of the victims, or the victims of torture themselves, have largely been discontented with the verdicts, and the need for admitting guilt for injustice done has often gone unfulfilled. The prosecutions of the members of 'our side' have often been regarded as unjust, and the willingness of national courts to prosecute high ranking officers and politicians was almost absent. Court processes were not followed with disengagement from the politics of nationalism, and cultural matrices that perpetuate and justify violence and discrimination based on ethnic and any other type of difference. Under such circumstances, a number of determined and decisive civil society organizations made numerous court proceedings[4] possible through their work on documenting the facts and the number of victims[5]. This contributed in part to the change of awareness of our societies regarding the events of the wars. The atmosphere of animosity that existed among our societies and was sustained after the war needs much longer than ten or fifteen years in order to be transformed and necessitates a much wider spectrum of measures in addition to court processes and prosecution of perpetrators. Besides, the deaths of soldiers resulting from 'the standard' war operations are not subject to investigations regarding responsibility. This loss and its social consequences are crucial for the process of dealing with the past, and the societal establishment of a culture of remembrance that would be in the service of peacebuilding, and not glorification, of war.

In addition, the process of dealing with the past as a means of peacebuilding would have

4 E.g. the Humanitarian Law Centre.

5 E.g. the Research and Documentation Centre Sarajevo, through its extensive project *Human losses in BIH 1991-1995.*

to encompass significantly wider social strata than it has done. It should not be limited to the work of civil society organizations and war victims' associations. It is about the healing of a society. We are dealing with the past in order to have a different and better future for all citizens. The processing of injustices done, from murder, abuse, and larceny to the expulsion of people, is a necessary task in order for the society to heal. But even then we have to ponder the purpose of punishment, as well as our expectations of the gains from it. Instead of the word *processing*, I wish to use the expression *correcting injustices*, but I know this is not possible. There is no gratification; there is no correction of injustices, there can only be social condemnation of the perpetrator and the public confession of crimes – and, therefore, there cannot be a general and genuine social outcry against the evil done. I am afraid that there will be no justice for the past, and no such thing is possible because we cannot bring the dead back to life or relive the years lost. We can only try to stop it all from happening again, and the reach of the judiciary is very limited in that respect.

If the social fabric continues to be impregnated with self-glorifying myths and narratives, and our sensitivity to evil doing and suffering of others does not become equal to our sensitivity to our own suffering (irrespective of who 'we' are), then we cannot hope that the history will not repeat itself, with the same or different casting[6] of roles. If we foster the stereotype that there are good and bad ethnic groups, that some nations are our friends while others are our enemies, we will not get too far. And in order to overcome the gap and build trust, we need a lot of dialogue, communication, cooperation, support, patience and time. A lot of encounters, education, movies, books, articles, testimonies, visions, tears, joy, lives lived in basic safety and an unlimited number of crossings of borders, on and on – until we have drained the stereotypes of their content, both in our heads and on the border crossings.

Injustices – the State of Human Rights

The heritage of the authoritarian regime, the sustained and systematically induced xenophobia and the hostility targeting any kind of difference (be it another nation, religion, race, sexual orientation etc.) are among the factors that largely determine the perception of identity as exclusion ('either-or' identity) which then becomes a basis for further conflict.

In such circumstances, invoking democracy and respect for human rights does not enhance an understanding of how exactly this translates to citizens' everyday lives. Or worse still, the question of human rights is understood as an abstract issue of humanitarianism, something that is still to come (because the 'bigger and more important problems' are pending); or, in the worst case scenario, it is understood as an imported and manipulative – an oppressive discourse implanted by the West.

Human Casualties

During the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia, around 150 000 people lost their lives, approximately four million people have been temporarily or permanently displaced, and today (2012) 13 000 persons are listed as missing. The number of

6 Of the actors that claim they are in service of the nation.

people who took part in the armed conflict has been estimated at around 3 million, and the effect of these wars has been felt by all living in the region.

Property Repossession

Abandoned and seized houses have mostly been returned to their rightful owners, apart from different obstacles prejudicially imposed by the authorities in order to hamper the return of minority groups, ranging from impositions of communal service and denial of documentation, to physical assault and assassination. Still, it can be said that the vast percentage of people have by now fulfilled their right to property repossession, which of course does not entail the reimbursement of damages.

The Return of the Refugees and Displaced People

It needs to be said that, unlike in some other places around the world, the physical return of refugees is allowed in all the countries of the region, but is rarely materially sustainable (due to the lack of infrastructure, employment opportunities etc.), and its lack is partly tied to the risk of assault and continuing personal danger, which is one of the principal reasons behind a large number of people deciding not to return. For years after the war, the authorities employed the strategy of stalling and posing obstacles in the issuing of documents, making people frustrated and reluctant, and leading to people organizing and anchoring their lives in their places of exile, reluctant to move back to a life of uncertainty. The obverse of the politics of segregation was encouraging refugees to stay[7] in order to alter the ethnic profile of the area, deepen the general segregation, and prove the impossibility of co-existence. Hatred and hostility between the neighbours were expected, but they have subsided in time (apart from in Kosovo, where progress is still slow). Facts testify to vast territories being ethnically 'cleansed' either through the use of force and armed threat (e.g. Eastern Bosnia, Posavina, Herzegovina, Croatian Krajina), or simply fear, discrimination and uncertainty (Albanians in Belgrade, migrations within Macedonia and Kosovo).

The Real and Bogus War Crimes Indictments

The number of war crimes perpetrators who were never legally prosecuted and indicted is enormous and this fact alone creates a sense of fear, indecision and distrust amongst victims and their families and impacts negatively on the process of return of refugees and displaced people. Those responsible for the crimes have often managed to maintain their positions within the system and very few have been brought to justice.

There are a number of cases involving purposeful false accusations. For a while after the war, Croatia saw court processes conducted *in absentia*, against individuals who fought on the Serb side in the war and rulings were made without the suspects ever having a court hearing. Such practice spread fear among the refugee population, because if they returned they would be put in prison and have to prove their innocence from behind bars. This practice was stopped a few years back when the Croatian and Serbian judiciaries started their cooperation. The last case in Serbia dates two years back, when a former Croatian soldier got arrested un-

7 Foregoing return to the place of residence prior to the war.

der war crimes charges and after several months in custody it turned out that *he* was indeed imprisoned and tortured by the army forces in Serbia, and forced to sign a forged testimony. Instead of bringing the ones that tortured him and made him sign the false testimony to justice, he was then made to spend several months in a prison in Serbia, fifteen years after the crime that he was a victim of. I am personally aware of a case involving a man from Brčko, who was on a war crimes list issued by the Government of Republika Srpska, while actually being held captive in a detention camp by Bosnian Serb forces, during the time of the alleged crime.

After the war, Kosovo saw multiple cases of individuals falsely accusing Serb returnees of crimes. As a rule, these were people mobilised by the Serbian army and police forces during the war, but had not committed any of the crimes they were charged with. The presence of international judges in the judicial system of Kosovo prevented the conviction of people in cases where the lack of evidence was apparent.

Lustration

Unlike criminal liability for war crimes, that hundreds of perpetrators evaded and only a few have not, accountability for the public incitement of war crimes and hatred has not been vigorously pursued. Moreover, instead of facing lustration, numerous individuals who excelled at hate speech whether in their capacity as politicians or journalists or intellectuals, are still in positions of power, modifying their rhetoric to fit the present moment. This has made it possible for a *chetnik* leader, in close alliance with a man charged with war crimes, and an individual notorious for his public proclamations about not feeling sorry for the victims of political assassinations, such as the journalist Slavko Ćuruvija or the Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić – to become the President of Serbia. Numerous journalists excelling in war propaganda have built their subsequent careers with impunity, presenting themselves as authorities in professional journalism and media ethics. Even though the influence of these people on public opinion is much less destructive, and at times even constructive, there is a need to admit injustices done. It is not sufficient to stay silent about the things that they said and did, and just act differently in the present; it leaves us pondering if reverse change can come about in different times and under different circumstances.

The Consequences

The consequences of all these listed injustices are fear, hatred, the collectivization of guilt and victimhood, self-victimization[8], integrating the hatred for others into national identities, accompanied by the subjective limiting of the freedom of movement, of opinion, and of living, and, last but not least, increasing material and spiritual poverty. If the generation that lived through the war had not felt these consequences, it would perhaps have been easy to forget about them and wait for their effects to disappear. Sadly, it is not that simple. These consequences will have their effect on the generations to come, because they are passed on from generation to generation through powerful narratives and education, and they are re-affirmed and perpetuated by the experience of our own prejudices and the prejudices of others. The educational system successfully lends itself to their further absorption and replication.

8 E.g. the statements such as: “They have slaughtered us” that does not imply that the subject in question personally survived a massacre.

Dominant Discourses

The Monuments

Monuments are a reflection of a dominant discourse of the politics and the culture of remembrance in which they are created. They signify a materialization of a collective memory, and are a part of *identity politics*, or thought-out activities aimed at development and establishment of collective identities. The position a society takes regarding past wars is visible through the monuments that date back to the wars, but also through the changes that such monuments undergo with time. In other words, even though erecting monuments aims at establishing a permanent mark, we see various interventions modifying old monuments. These interventions range from decapitating marble statues in the parks and destroying monumental partisan monuments with explosive devices to gradual and discreet changes involving erasing discriminatory texts, or respectful removal of the statues that are offensive to particular groups of people. In the last years all of these interventions have taken place in our countries. From the last wars onwards a large number of monuments have been erected, predominantly those that mark the victimhood of people dominating the territory where the monument has been built. Dominance is conferred by a simple majority at the level of the municipality in charge of issuing permissions for monuments, which by extension means having control in the Commission for Monuments.

Monuments usually serve to send a message that we need to remember the victims in order to persist, meaning that we should not forget who our enemies are and that we must stand united as a collective, because 'that is the only way to persevere'. I have seen dozens of graves with identical headstones on a well maintained, nicely fenced in cemetery marked with flags, in Eastern Kosovo. Each one had a portrait engraving of the deceased person. They were younger and older men, women and children. Each portrait represented the person in a camouflage uniform, with the UCK[9] coat of arms engraved in the corner – even the children. I have never seen a more extreme example of collectivizing and militarizing victims, although I know the blueprint well, as it applies everywhere.

The Specificity of the Winners of War

The dominant discourse in Croatia and Kosovo constructs the war as an imposed conflict that necessitated self-defence, which was justified, inevitable and glorious, because of the ideals that they fought for. The victory against Serbian forces was evident and the control over the territory complete[10]. The war is celebrated the same way WWII was celebrated in SFR Yugoslavia: heroes are commemorated, streets, schools and market squares are named after them, demonstrations in their honour involve uniforms and gun salutes, documentaries are made about the military units and their successful actions, the soldiers that fought in the war enjoy their privileges. Portraits of war heroes find their way into restaurants, squares, billboards, sugar sachets in the coffee shops; hats and badges are sold during village fairs and on the city streets. Every attempt to de-mythologise the war and problematise myth-fabricating

9 KLA – Kosovo Liberation Army. TN.

10 Apart from Northern Kosovo.

blueprints of good-against-evil is quickly opposed by the public. The implication goes; *'These are genuine heroes without any fault, and the enemy is invisible, he is the dark force that goes against our very identity and freedom, with the aim to take, enslave, kill, expel, destroy and poison'*. An important part of this blueprint, one that feeds the tension, is the underlying notion that *'the enemy never sleeps, he is just being dormant for a while, and we need to stay vigilant: even though we are stronger we cannot allow ourselves to be off guard'.* The mainstream discourse is still framed this way. Understanding history through multiple perspectives is not even an option; complex perspectives simply do not exist. Interpretation is everything; facts become relative, because the interpretation offers all the answers so that people don't need to burden themselves with thinking. Instant truth is readily available in small doses, consumed through TV shows, newspapers, family gatherings. Everything is ready for the next war "God willing". If only it weren't for a few peace organizations such as Documenta and the Centre for Peace Studies, everything would be just perfect.

The Specificity of the Losers of War

In the context of those war affected societies not euphoric with victory, but rather happy that the hardships have ended, though with sadness due to enormous losses – as is the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina for instance – it is much easier to articulate an oppositional discourse, because the very profile of the community is mixed, despite the efforts to destroy its diversity. Instead of one dominant discourse, there are at least three[11] parallel and opposing ones, pervasive to the extent that they are not considered a problem anymore. Simply, it functions as a routine to have Bosniaks, Croatians and Serbs, or Albanians and Macedonians, who waged war against each other, provide conflicting explanations for the causes, unfolding and the consequences of the war. Minimizing and disrespect for victims on opposing sides goes without saying, and is a constant source of resentment, but one that can be felt – which amounts to a positive thing. Even when the conflicted narratives are very similar in their construction, it is good that neither of them stands out as singular, as is the case elsewhere. However, disagreement about who is accountable for the past brings with it pain, re-traumatizing and spreading of fear and uncertainty – especially if the respect for the victims on the other side is missing, or when the events or their scale is negated (e.g. the genocide in Srebrenica is often contested). Hurting and re-living old trauma is often brought about with constant attempts to mark the pogroms (committed against those no longer dominant in a particular territory), through anniversary commemorations, placing of memorial stones etc. On the other hand, those now dominant in a certain territory strive to mark the losses on their side in a manner appropriate to a 'self-respectful' state. The most extreme of groups try to depict the deaths of others as deserved.

In fact, all three communities having territories on which they dominate essentially behave as if they are the winners of the war, and the only owners of the land they live on. Empathy for the others in such a setting becomes a subversion contrasted with the capacity of the collective to fight for its existence. If truth be told, the silent majority still supports those human feelings of sympathy, regardless of who the victims are, but they remain quiet in the public sphere.

Still, in addition to everything stated above, the narratives the others nurture are at least

11 In order to simplify, I omit the analysis of the conflict in Western Bosnia, involving the Army of BIH (Bihać) and Cazinska Krajina, which had Bosniaks as two opposing sides.

well known and cannot be stifled by force, and mutual interdependence is strong, even if it is often contested.

The Specificity of the Active Observer

Adopting the role of the active observer can only be ascribed to Serbia, which in fact participated in and instigated the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The position Serbia takes on the wars in BIH and Croatia is one of disinterest and denying responsibility. The war in Kosovo, on the other hand, is understood as one of historically based martyrdom. Monuments marking the events of the wars in BIH and Croatia are seldom seen and the state authorities behave as if Serbia never took part in those events. It feels as if the active process of forgetting through relativising of responsibility and erasure of state accountability is unfolding before our eyes. The recent wars in Croatia and BIH are often examined as a 'continuation' of the Second World War; the numbers are manipulated, added and subtracted, in search of the 'result' that would gloss over the responsibility of Serbia and Serbs in the last wars. The *enemy* narrative about Bosniaks and Croats is less apparent, and it only resurfaces in sporadic commemorative ceremonies and is not the subject of monuments.

The state institutions of Serbia have indeed taken some steps that can be viewed as progressive, but the feeling remains that they were done merely for their declarative value[12]. The media and the educational system do not examine the recent past with the same intensity our neighbours do. When they do however, *victim* discourse is the dominant one, involving the notions of centuries old threats, righteousness and defence of the *national entity*.

The ideology of Serbian nationalism, even though faded, is still embodied in numerous political parties, and threatens to re-emerge in times of crisis.

How to Move Forward?

The culture of remembrance within any present day context emerges and is shaped by political action, cultural activity, and the work of civil society through actions and campaigns. In the same way, it is possible to influence the kind of change that would lead to the establishment of a less dominant and less state-building-focused, and a more reflective and civil society-oriented politics and culture of remembrance.

The awareness developed through education about the importance of the *process*, and the obstacles that can emerge within it (stemming from the best of intentions, but paving the road to hell), truthful analysis and learning from previous experiences offer a solid starting point, and pave the way to optimism.

A constructive process of dealing with the past needs to include and cannot go without, crossing borders, learning from others, changing oneself and others through development of empathy, cooperation, respect. Understanding the meaning and the significance of multiple perspectives in interpretations of history is crucial. To focus only on the state that we live in is futile in current circumstances and will surely fail.

12 Such as, for instance, the Resolution of the Parliament of Serbia, condemning the crimes (instead of the word "genocide") that were committed in Srebrenica, as well as the visits of the President of Serbia to the Potočari memorial site.

The beginning and the end of every move and every action, every campaign and every program, needs to be an accurate analysis and evaluation of what has been done, learning from our mistakes instead of embellishing them. If we cannot face our own faults, we can hardly inspire others to do the same.

On CNA Approach to Dealing with the Past

Ivana Franović

More than ten years ago during a small international gathering of peace activists, my colleague Adnan started a presentation of the work we do by saying: "We are doing a difficult job..." which won him the sympathies of the people present. Back then we had no idea of how accurate this description actually was or the extent of the difficulty involved.

The Centre for Nonviolent Action (CNA) works on peacebuilding, primarily in the region of former Yugoslavia. We are committed to the values of nonviolence, solidarity, social justice, human rights and freedoms. This might give an impression of an altogether too nice and easy occupation in a region so devastated as the Balkans. Perhaps that would still hold true had we decided to stick only with non-violent communication, affirmation of human potential and motivating people to spread the idea of nonviolence. But we deal with difficult issues as well. That's not because we are particularly fond of them, or because we are moved by pain and suffering, but because we have come to understand that without dealing with the past and confronting the hard issues in our societies there can be no genuine change.

In this section, I will attempt to explain and clarify our approach to peacebuilding, and make our starting premises and the things we strive for more familiar. But I'll also showcase our particular understanding of peacebuilding, why we link it to dealing with the past and why we feel that dealing with the past is integral to peace education.

What Does Peacebuilding Represent to Us

By peacebuilding we mean not only the efforts that go into preventing new wars and larger scale violence but also all efforts directed at decreasing the level of violence in society, starting from the most obvious one, *direct* violence, to *structural* and *cultural* violence that surrounds us. Peacebuilding is made up of all the efforts that contribute to living in peace with oneself and one's surroundings, especially one's neighbours and those belonging to minority and marginalised groups. I say especially because they suffer the most in the absence of peace.

Peacebuilding necessitates the deconstruction of the pattern that conditions how we relate to the *Other, the Different* (regardless of how it is defined: through gender, religion, ethnicity etc.). It does not imply passivity, acceptance of injustice done or a lack of reaction. Peacebuilding encompasses nonviolent action/reaction and active engagement against social injustice. It means to make the conflict visible and point out the problem and, if we have enough sensitivity, prudence or even creativity, it means proposing the solution. It also means building trust, developing solidarity among citizens and establishing a society in which any kind of discrimination is unacceptable – the society of equal opportunities – that does not exploit the enemy imagery and instil fear in its neighbours. This would be a society in which we would be free and without fears.

The work on peacebuilding inevitably creates conflict with those social strata/groups who are wary of social change. It is essential not to accept the *status quo* and to continue working on those conflicts; but it is equally important to maintain the approach of nonviolence, in order to strive toward peacebuilding, instead of the degradation of peace. This entails understanding the opposing party – their needs, motivations and fears; but also re-examining oneself: perhaps *I/we* are in the wrong, perhaps *we* are heightening the fear, not exuding trust, and overlooking someone's basic needs, thus making the other side feel threatened. It is a type of work that requires a lot of imagination and ideas as to what can be done under specific circumstances but also a lot of awareness and self-criticism. It requires optimism and the belief that things can change for the better. It also necessitates a degree of personal courage and willingness to raise our awareness of our own prejudices, dilemmas and fears.

Why is Dealing with the Past Linked to Peacebuilding?

In our post-Yugoslav context it seems impossible to work on peacebuilding without dealing with the past. We don't start from scratch because we already have all the elements in the burden of a war-torn society. We have hostilities and enemy images, opposing dominant narratives on the wars, recurring discrimination based on ethnicity, glorification of war criminals and ideologists, glorification of the war itself as a defensive homeland war, lack of recognition of the victims on the other sides – because *we* are supposed to be the biggest victims – deeply embedded hate speech that goes unrecognised or still remains socially acceptable, and lastly of course, fear of the other. These are all ideal conditions for starting the next war (the moment there is sufficient interest to start one).

In the aftermath of a war affecting millions of people, countless fleeing their homes, hundreds of thousands being killed and many more losing their loved ones, we cannot merely turn a new page and say: Let us start peacebuilding now, let us all advocate reconciliation. War terrors that have marked people's lives and caused losses cannot be forgotten or put behind us easily. It also is not sufficient to just arrest several hundred criminals and put them on trial for war crimes. We need to heal the wounds that are still bleeding many years after the war. They certainly cannot heal when the suffering of others is not being acknowledged and the enemy narratives and biased interpretations of war still permeate the public space. This contributes to secondary victimization of survivors on the one hand and lowers the threshold for accepted levels of violence on the other – even making the violence desirable.

Another aspect of this complex landscape is the widespread identification with 'our' victims (with regard to ethnicity), and the horror experienced by some individuals in the group

quickly becomes a marker of the whole group: all of us have experienced this, we imagine ourselves the victims of *those others* (sometimes including events dating as far back as the previous century, or even before).[1]

Whatever the case, our societies will never make significant contributions in peacebuilding and prevention of some future armed conflict, unless we start dealing with our past marked with war and the injustices done in our name in an honest and direct way. I believe there can be no lasting peace in our region until people regain their sense of security and their belief that justice can be fulfilled.

If we want to build sustainable peace, it is essential to start changing the things that made war possible in the first place. We also need to examine our own responsibility for the wars – what have we done, and what not, what could have been done differently, and **especially** what can be done at the present moment in order to contribute to building lasting peace. After that we need to truthfully examine the accountability of the society we live in and what needs to be improved and worked on. It is exceptionally important to distinguish between responsibility and blame. I am not *to blame* for what the state (or the governing powers) did in my name, because the liability can only be individual. However, I am *responsible*, even though I have been consistently and profoundly opposed to what my state has been doing.

We have to learn lessons from our past.

Peace Education and Dealing with the Past

Sadly, both globally and in our particular societies, peace education is not very common. Still the world is in great need of peace education; it could be one of the carriers of social change, if not its initiator. Programmes of formal and informal peace education are few and far between and they rarely encompass the topic of dealing with the past. Dealing with the past is mostly tied to so-called *transitional justice* and is studied within the fields of international law and political science. The areas of peacebuilding and dealing with the past increasingly overlap and it is necessary to include the topic of dealing with the past and study it within the programme of a *values-based* peace education that strives to engage with present day challenges at a deeper level, as well as promote peacebuilding.

Since its establishment in 1997 CNA has developed and implemented a spectrum of activities and programmes such as public forums, seminars, promotions, production of documentary films and publications, programmes of exchange and so forth. However, our core activity throughout the years, the one that has generated new ideas, collaborators and the drive for all

1 This identification is done opportunistically: when it is for some reason necessary to relieve oneself of responsibility and present yourself as the victim, when it is necessary to show belonging to a particular group (which is always marked with victimhood, because "we" certainly don't think of ourselves as the villains), or create a sense of belonging by underlining the existence of a common enemy, when we are desperate because of current conditions and we need a scapegoat, when we need an excuse for something that we should have done but didn't, and an array of politically motivated reasons as well, having to do with the interests of certain elites in the region. This identification is not constant, but rather sporadic, and mainly emerging due to the lack of empathy with the victims, because they continue to be out of the focus of our societies – we think of them when it is convenient, mainly during anniversaries and commemorations. We still have not developed ways to assist them in overcoming their loss and continuing their lives nor have we occupied ourselves with securing their access to justice and normal lives, which is a precondition for the whole society to have access to justice. Whenever we don't need them for a specific reason, we treat the victims as actually a burden to society, because they threaten the pervasive conformism.

other programmes, is the programme of peace education, or as we call it – training in peacebuilding. While assessing the needs in different periods, and reflecting on the experience gained, we have developed different programmes of peace education which, as a rule, engage with dealing with the past as a process fundamental to peacebuilding. These programmes are focused on different groups, and have most frequently been tailored to:

a) Heterogeneous groups comprised of participants from different countries of former Yugoslavia, coming from different professions and of different ages;

b) War veterans from the so-called "Dayton triangle" (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia).

There are two principle reasons why we tackle the issue of dealing with the past through peace education:

1. In the current situation it is impossible to work on building lasting peace without dealing with the past.
2. Our societies lack peace education, the one subject that would actively contribute to peacebuilding and provide a constructive approach to dealing with the past.

Integrating the topic of dealing with the past into the field of peace education (at least if it is to be relevant to the training approach we apply at CNA[2]) is highly productive. It is simple: the effort pays off because the topic can be examined critically and in a committed manner and peace education provides a basis for trust-building among the participants. Subsequently, and through careful work, conditions are made for an effective deconstruction of enemy images, understanding of other narratives and re-examination of dominant ones, as well as the role of 'our side'; for examining one's own position. It motivates people to become active in peacebuilding and dealing with the past, and for advancement toward the model of active citizen participation, in which accountability for one's actions and society as a whole exists.

Such an approach offers an important condition for better understanding of social mechanisms and improved awareness of one's own role and interpretation of the past: by learning about dealing with the past, we effectively deal with the past. These processes can be emotionally difficult, especially once the focus is shifted from the political to the personal level and when we try to hear and understand others when they speak – but also when we truly share our own experience. This inevitably leads to a better understanding of one other. It can ultimately lead to empathy.

Some Characteristics of Our Approach

Dedication to ***cross-border and regional*** work is an important aspect of the peacebuilding approach. We find that it is irreplaceable and we believe that a lasting peace can only be built *across boundaries and borders*, no matter how they materialise, and we are particularly

2 More on CNA training approaches is available in the following chapter "On CNA Training". Also, see Nenad Vukosavljević. *Nenasilje? Priručnik za treninge iz nenasilne razrade konflikata za rad s odraslima* (Sarajevo: CNA, 2000).

interested in those of an ethnic, national and political nature. Peace cannot be built within one group alone, and we need to work with(in) opposed group/s in parallel, while the lived experience of the encounter and the exchange between people from different sides are especially important. In addition, the work on peacebuilding in 'mixed' groups does not happen frequently, and we often lack constructive exchange, which can have cathartic effects. This is why we work with people from the countries of former Yugoslavia.

We understand the process of dealing with the past as one *intrinsic* to peacebuilding, in other words – we try to maintain a constructive approach to dealing with the past, while limiting possible negative effects and their consequences.

We do not focus on war criminals and not even on war crimes and victims. What is central to our work is our societies and how they relate to the issues of the recent wars. It would probably be more accurate to say that we work on reconciliation, even though we initially resisted the use of the term.[3]

One of our main objectives is ***trust-building***; between us and the people we work with, people of different backgrounds and lastly the transfer of this trust from the personal to the social level (which amounts to lowering the existing distrust). Trust is an important element because it opens the space for dealing with difficult issues in a constructive manner and helps avoid the pitfalls of blaming each other when we are hurt by transferring the responsibility of individual crimes to the whole group and then go on to project it from the group onto the individual participants in the room.

One important element that facilitates the building of trust and is also relevant to our general approach is the ***composition of the CNA team***, which is quite diverse – we come from different regions and different states. Some of us have pronounced national and religious identities, while others do not. But regardless of that we are effectively perceived as belonging to different ethnic groups. We have different life experiences and different interests and inclinations, simply put – we are all very different. Such a composition is important for us as well, because of the need for further awareness-raising regarding the issues of reconciliation and better understanding of existing fears and needs throughout the region. We pride ourselves with great mutual trust and closeness and our relationships go beyond a working affiliation. The people we work with recognise and sense this and it is certainly one of the elements facilitating the opening of doors and creating space for dealing with difficult issues. Another important aspect of our approach is our very high *personal investment* in the work of peacebuilding and social change in our societies and such engagement cannot be considered 'just work'. We care deeply for the way our societies function, because we are a part of them and have a civic responsibility to influence our societies becoming more just, decent, safe and open for all.

One of the main objectives of our work is the ***deconstruction of enemy images*** through *personalizing* of 'the enemy' and developing empathy for his/her destiny. Instructively, the deconstruction of enemy images is an exercise more easily done with war veterans than the younger population, who declare themselves anti-nationalist and liberal. While working with war veterans, it is very evident that these images exist and that they are problematic. In our work with the other group, we often encounter a denial of prejudices and existing stereotypes, and a downplaying of problems.

Another important objective is the ***change of dominant narratives*** on war and the past

3 One of the main reasons for the avoidance of the term is that a large number of people understand it as forgiveness, or feel that it is farcical and superficial.

(and they are usually conflicted) adopted by individuals, through creating conditions for re-examination, challenging, and entirely changing the narratives that people adopt. It is, of course, essential that this is preceded by acknowledging and accepting the difference in the narratives of *Others*,[4] which creates a space for a better understanding.

Contrary to the deep-rooted approach of dealing with the past 'and cleaning up only in your own back yard,' we allow ourselves to engage in a critique of all post-Yugoslav societies and we often encounter resistance. As individuals, we certainly need to start with our 'own yard' (given that we have a right and an obligation to engage critically with the state in which we vote, and the opposite would erode the established trust) but we don't need to stop there. We are affected by everything taking place in the region. Even if we did not have personal ties throughout the region, we ought to be aware of the situation in the region, because it effectively shapes the social-political landscape 'at home'. We feel that in the present constellation we need to apply an equal measure to all and create a balanced understanding of what constitutes injustice, discrimination, human rights violation and a crime – and keep it neutral with regard to ethnicity – both ours and also those of the perpetrator and of the victim.

To tell the truth, we sometimes feel as if we are stepping on eggshells because we don't want to create more harm. However, we do not fear trying and failing and learning from our mistakes. Sometimes we sink into sorrow while trying to make sense of things. Every monument, every story, every photograph and poem, every time a blind eye is turned, every teardrop and every embrace constitutes a step in processing the experience of war and loss. So that the loss was not in vain. The meaning and purpose are sometimes so hard to identify, but if we – as a society – continue to spread hatred, prejudice, and collective self-victimization, we will surely become everything that we once despised, and we will make future generations repeat our transgressions. The only thing that we don't know is if the roles will be reversed next time around, as they have changed so many times before. We believe that the burden of our past obliges us to look for the meaning together, by creating societies free of injustice, fear and hate. We are not righteous warriors clearing our path with a blade; we are a small group of people seeking allies among those already close to us, and those who think differently.

In the movie *War-veterans Visits*[5], Nenad, a disabled war veteran from Doboj speaks of an organised visit to the memorial grounds and paying respect to the fallen victims belonging to the former enemy side. He says: "It is hard to visit memorial grounds. It is very hard. But it is necessary. It is important for me to feel their suffering in this war, and that they too feel our suffering, our demise". Dealing with the past is not easy. We deal with it for the sake of our future, because we believe it needs to be done, it is necessary for us to start healing as a collective and in order to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. It requires a lot of honesty and strength to examine our own actions and then be able to look people in the eye. Nenad goes on to explain the importance of more people joining peacebuilding efforts and says. "It is more for the future…I am more interested in the future of my children and their children, so that they do not relive what happened to us".

4 Bar-On, Dan. *Tell Your Life Story. Creating Dialogue among Jews and Germans, Israelis and Palestinians.* Budapest: CEU Press, 2006, pp 26.

5 Nedžad Horozović. *War-veterans Visits.* Belgrade, Sarajevo: CNA, 2009. DVD. Available on http://kino.nenasilje.org/posjete_veterana_2009/ [Accessed on 5/23/2013]

On CNA Training

Tamara Šmidling

During the fifteen years of working on peacebuilding projects in the region of former Yugoslavia, the members of CNA have developed a unique training design for peacebuilding and nonviolent conflict transformation, tailored to the specific needs and communication patterns characterizing the countries in the region of former Yugoslavia. An important element of each training session is a segment on dealing with the past.

Why Training?

Programmes of informal peace education through training and workshops are just some of many possible ways to be active in the field of peacebuilding. Their effectiveness is achieved only in combination with other types of actions, which involves working with all three levels of the social pyramid *(grassroots, middle and top level)*, the way it was defined by John Paul Lederach.[1] This includes institutional reform, public policy, improved legislative frameworks, lobbying and advocating for constructive approaches to solving pertinent social issues, but also nonviolent, direct actions in local communities as well as those focused on cross-border cooperation. These actions span across a broad spectrum, ranging from local communal problems to activities aimed at building inter-ethnic trust, and micro-processes of reconciliation on the local level.

In this wide spectrum of possible actions, the importance of peace education in the context of peacebuilding remains fundamental and key. This statement is supported by the belief that true, profound, and sustainable social transformation cannot be possible without well articulated and effective peace education; a transformation from a community that chooses violence as a dominant response to problems to a community that is based on the values of peace

1 Lederach, John Paul. Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1997.

and nonviolence. Such peace education needs to motivate, empower, provoke, and inspire a *continuous, sustainable and socially responsible action* within the community.

For this reason, it is important to emphasise that the training is merely a means, a tool that is used to initiate social change. Training is not an end in itself; it is not value-neutral. As our colleague Ivana Franović says: "By peace education I mean education that is unequivocally biased – education that studies, trains, supports, encourages, finds, teaches, works – for peace and against violence. And it mustn't be merely 'informative', but rather based on *experience* and *value*-oriented (not neutral) – to encourage changes within a society and changes within ourselves as parts of this society and to move us towards working on those changes; to criticise, re-examine and have the following question as crucial: Where are we in all of that?; What is our responsibility?; and What can we do?"[2]

Peacebuilding training offers its participants the possibility of:

- Being familiarised with and sensitised about a host of social issues that are often marginalised by state institutions, the educational system etc.
- Re-examining their own attitudes and beliefs, and better analysing their own position within society.
- Gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for the work on positive social change, and the fight to eradicate social injustice.
- Getting empowerment and support for a direct social engagement on the local, state or regional level.
- Networking with other people from the region who work on the same or similar issues.
- Building alliances and coalitions in order to mobilise for a sustainable and lasting peace.

The Types of Training

During our many years of conducting training, we have developed different programmes of peace education, some of which are:

- *Basic training in peacebuilding*, a ten-day programme organised 2-3 times per year. So far, we have organised and implemented 38 sessions of basic training.[3]

- *Training for war veterans*, organised approximately once per year.

- *Advanced training in peacebuilding*, a programme tailored for the most engaged participants of the basic training.

- *Training for trainers*, a six month or one year programme. We have implemented five such extensive programmes and the last one was delivered in 2004. (The next programme is tentatively scheduled for 2014).

2 Ivana Franović. "Peace Education as an Initiator of Social Change". In Rill, Šmidling, Bitoljanu (eds.), *20 Pieces of Encouragement for Awakening and Change* (Beograd-Sarajevo: Centar za nenasilnu akciju, 2007), pp. 111-112.

3 By July 2013.

Whom is CNA Training developed for?

Basic training in peacebuilding is open to individuals of all ages, professions, gender, ethnicity and religion. It includes people active in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), educational institutions, political party activists, journalists, war veterans, members of survivors' and victims' associations, public servants, social workers etc. In other words, all individuals interested in peace work and accountability for their community and society at large are free to apply.

The design of the training calls for the intensive participation and personal engagement of every participant, so the minimum age for applying is 21, while a maximum age is not set.

Groups are heterogeneous with regard to region and ethnicity and composed of people coming from all parts of former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, BIH, Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro), with the exception of specific training events designed for certain micro-regions. The selection criteria are also based on the estimated potential for implementation of learned content as well as its replication.

The *Training for war veterans* is organised for people who served in the armed forces (for the time being, those coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia), and the *Advanced Training* is intended for the most active participants of the *Basic Training*.

A Typical CNA Training

Duration. A training event designed and implemented by CNA would typically last between three and ten days, depending on the type and module, the topic and the composition of the group.

Team of trainers. We maintain that the design, implementation and evaluation of the training are a *team process*. Therefore each training session is prepared by teams comprising of two to four persons coming from different parts of former Yugoslavia. During the team's establishment we strive to maintain gender, regional and ethnic balance. The only exception to this rule is the *Training for war veterans*, in which both the trainer's team and the groups are composed solely of men.[4]

All CNA trainers are well equipped for work with diverse participants' groups and have long-standing background as trainers. Additionally, teams are often accompanied by less experienced colleagues or more experienced ones coming from different partner organisations.

In our experience a well balanced trainer team is crucial in establishing trust between the team and the group. This is particularly important for work with groups expected to be more sensitive and demanding such as war veterans, for instance. This is why special attention is given to the process of team formation while working with such groups, as experience shows that it is a key factor in trust-building.

4 Our experience has shown that during the training for war veterans the process of building trust and creating a safe space can be impeded by the presence of women. That is why we have made a decision not to insist on this specific aspect of gender representation within peacebuilding. This will be further explained on some other occasion (Editor's note).

Methodology. Our training work is based on interaction and active participation that draws on the model of the workshop. It is largely based on experiential learning and always includes the personal experiences of participants. It involves plenary sessions, small group sessions, and sometimes independent work: discussions in larger or smaller groups, barometers, presentation preparation and/or delivery, wall collages and brainstorming, role-plays and simulations of real situations, exchange of experience, story telling, brief theory inputs, occasional print media analysis, documentary films, relevant essays and literature etc. The team of trainers strives to build a safe place together with the group, a space of *listening and conversation, exchange and joint reflection*.

Trainers do not position themselves as lecturers and the participants are not merely passive consumers of knowledge and information passed on by them. Workshops have their full impact only through interaction, exchange of experiences, reflection and examination within the group – in other words space is created for *shared responsibility* in which each individual takes part according to his/her capacity.

The responsibility of the trainers' team consists of setting up the design and conceptual framework of the training format, and vigilant monitoring of the group's needs during the training event itself. Trainers set the thematic and methodological blueprint, and the responsibility for the content and discussion is expected to be shared with the participants.

The trainers benefit from having as much information on the group's composition as possible beforehand. In case of an event that lasts several days, the initial, introductory workshops are assets in and of themselves, as they provide a picture of the participants' experiences and what can represent an obstacle or a hindrance, or a resource in the further constructive work with the group. During work with different groups special care is given to a suitable, adequate and diverse pool of methods and working techniques. For instance, work with veterans and young people both require creativity and flexibility in terms of selection of topics and the way they are dealt with. Indeed, the final design of the particular event usually differs owing to the specificity of the groups and individual needs, interests, and the level of openness for any specific method of work. The optimal methodology for work with any given group should include those methodological tools that enable the participants to feel safe and free to express themselves to the greatest extent possible.

We should not forget:

- No matter how motivated the participants are, they need time out and breaks from dealing with difficult subject matter.
- No matter how fruitful and interesting the discussions are, they are not the point in themselves, and we should not overdo their length and intensity.

The Training Venue. A carefully selected training venue is key in successful group-building. During the selection of the venue we strive to find one that meets the following criteria:

- A sense of safety for all participants;
- Easy access and transport to the chosen location;
- Avoiding locations that are too isolated;
- Avoiding the central zones of large cities, or tourist destinations that are in season.

In regions still afflicted with the lack of trust and numerous prejudices, it is particularly important to choose an environment in which all the participants can feel safe and secure in their identities, to the greatest extent possible.

Whether the location is a hotel (which is most often the case while working in this region) or a house equipped for training and seminars, it is of the utmost importance to provide suitable working premises, large enough and bright enough, that can also serve as a space for evening gatherings and leisure time activities, in case there is no suitable alternative.

The Training Concept

A typical working day during a training module includes two blocks or working sessions, morning and afternoon, each lasting approximately 3.5 hours, with one break for refreshments in each block. A three hour break for rest and relaxation is scheduled in between blocks.

The agenda is designed in such a way as to allow an introduction to the topic at the beginning of the day, while the end of the afternoon session remains reserved for closing topics that have been opened up, a wrap-up session and an evaluation.

In the case of the *Basic training in peacebuilding*, themes are arranged in such a way that we move from easier subjects (communication and team work) towards more complex and demanding ones (understanding conflict, violence, prejudices, peacebuilding and dealing with the past) and the circle is completed with a set of topics focused on action-oriented planning for the local community and beyond (conflict transformation, nonviolence and nonviolent action).

With the *war veterans training*, we strive to open a sincere dialogue as a means of developing empathy. In order to achieve it, we work on listening and understanding but in a way that does not exclude difficult issues but rather examines them without blaming and generalizing. The atmosphere of dialogue, understanding and trust, once created, forms a basis for joint peace actions, the ideas for which are often conceived during the training. With an already established group that has undergone the creation of dialogue and started to cooperate, we have often conducted training in advancing skills and knowledge, focusing on topics such as action-oriented planning and the culture of remembrance.

The content of every training session is designed in a way that allows the possibility of work on two parallel tracks:

- **Personal**, that includes examination of our own processes and behavioural patterns in the situations of team work; conflict; situations in which we encounter direct, structural and cultural violence;
- **Social and political**, that offers the possibility of understanding the societies in which we live and phenomena that surround us – examination of which is required for an active engagement in peacebuilding.

Training in peacebuilding constitutes an opportunity for personal change, growth and advancement. However, it also represents an explicit act of political engagement and as such reinforces the notion that we can and must engage with politics in various constructive ways and on various levels.

Accountability for the process and the content is shared. By sharing specific responsibilities with the group, we want to send the message that the quality of joint work depends on everyone in the group and their individual contribution. One of the main things we wish to contribute to is promoting the model of active citizens who are responsible for the society in which they live. In this respect, the training situation lends itself to exercising responsible individual action, articulation of problems and alternative solutions, providing support as well as readiness to critically examine the group process.

The trainers' team has specific responsibilities. Trainers have a whole range of specific responsibilities, from setting the training design, facilitating the training and moderating discussions, to monitoring the needs of individuals in the group, in order to address them in the process of implementation. This does not mean that the team's mission is to fulfil all wishes and satisfy all the needs that are expressed during the training. It does mean, however, that there needs to be awareness about the fact that we are working in a particular region, on sensitive issues, with people whose life stories are packed with war and post-war trauma. This is why, in order to deliver quality work, we need to persistently follow the processes in the group and monitor boundaries and, depending on that, assess how far we can go in the elaboration of certain topics. The selection of suitable exercises, keeping an eye on the diversity of methodologies used, assessing group dynamics, facilitating discussion and closing it when necessary – it all falls within the range of the specific trainer's responsibility. It is very important to keep in mind that these training skills are not mastered overnight and especially not during a two-day intensive training event. It is about work with people, for people, and it requires long-term education, a formulated ethical code and clear integration of the objectives and possibilities that the training and workshops potentially offer.

Trainers are not merely moderators and facilitators of the process. They often participate in discussions through sharing of personal experiences, opinions, and stories. In this way we continue to create the safe space within the groups, as well as trust between the groups and the team and the team avoids being seen as observers and judges. It is necessary, of course, always to keep in mind the specificity and responsibility of the role of the trainer and therefore prevent the space of sharing and learning from becoming a stage for giving vent to the trainer's opinions exclusively. It is also important to keep in mind that the team's opinions have a specific impact and it is crucial to find a good balance, and recognise the limits of our own role.

Differences in opinion are encouraged and supported. Different ways in which we see, experience and understand things are a normal part of our lives. Differences in opinion are particularly valuable and enriching in the context of training. That is why the trainers' team encourages participants to freely share their opinions that might differ from the dominant public opinion (whether in society, or in the training setting itself). We do not perceive training as a site of general consent where joint conclusions are reached but rather as a chance for all of us to practise understanding diverse opinions and engage constructively with them.

Sensitive issues and questions that could be a source of disagreement are not avoided. One of the flagship features of CNA training is our readiness to examine the most painful issues of our societies as well as the ones with most conflict potential (i.e. the ones that are a constant source of disagreement and debate in our societies). Trainers' teams strive to properly assess the potential of a particular group to examine and handle these issues in a constructive manner. We do not practise the 'head first' approach, but we also do not succumb to the ex-

pectation of avoiding these topics for the sake of group harmony. What we strive to promote with our work is the belief that true progress can only be made once a common space is created for us to openly talk about sensitive issues. Our experience shows that this approach creates a deeper and more profound trust between people, even though it can sometimes appear as directly opposed to team-building.

Flexible concepts, instead of pre-designed and rigid presumptions. Years of experience have taught us that the key to a successful training event lies in careful assessment of the needs of the group as well as vigilant monitoring of the potential and boundaries within the group. A pre-designed training schedule can be a hindrance once we establish that a particular group requires a whole new route or an engagement with other issues and omission of the pre-designed ones. That is why we attempt to set a working framework that includes items we *will* cover, for every training session. The way we go about this is usually determined once we meet and get a 'feel' for the group and the workshops are then prepared the day before, after the evening evaluation. Meeting and responding to the needs of the group with such short notice, instead of following a pre-designed workshop blueprint, requires a great deal of effort and substantial experience in the trainers.

Priority is given to concrete experience and practice, rather than theoretical models and concepts. Training organised by CNA is not an academic programme and the focus is placed on exchange of experiences and the practice of participants. Therefore, methodologically speaking, exercises, discussions and group exchange have a priority over the analysis and presentation of theoretical models. Granted, existing relevant theoretical concepts are taken into consideration, not as an end in itself, but only when they reflect the problems of our societies and help understand certain phenomena (such as violence, conflict, identity and how it is construction etc.).

Examples of Workshop Exercises

Introduction & Getting to Know Each Other

The objective of this group of exercises:

Each training event, regardless of its thematic focus, duration and intensity, requires the participants and members of the training team to get to know each other. A well-designed introductory session is crucial for creating a stimulating working atmosphere and a safe space within the group, which quickly becomes apparent when delivering a workshop.

Introductory exercises aim to provide basic information about each of the participants, forming the basis not only for factual, but also for future experiential and emotional exchange; they serve to facilitate recognition of the things that they have in common, and to recognise and take into account the existing differences in experiences, values and attitudes. It is essential to choose introductory exercises that are well-suited for the group so that participants do not become too exhausted or understand them as a mere formality that precedes the 'real' subjects of the training session.

Experience shows that members of the training team should be active participants in the introductory session and exercises.

Introduction and group building sessions: methodology used

Suggested exercises utilise different methods of interactive work: work in a large group, working in pairs and working in small groups. It is important to keep in mind a few facts when choosing exercises:

• Different exercises suit different aspects of introduction. We need a good estimate of the desired level of introduction in the group, as well as how far we want to go in the initial workshops in terms of intensity.

• Different people respond to different means of expression. Some participants will feel at home with verbal self-presentation, some will favour writing and others will prefer a variety of visual representation through drawing, painting and other appropriate tools. It is desirable to have these differences in mind and try to ensure a good balance between the various expressive techniques.

Concentric Circles of Introduction

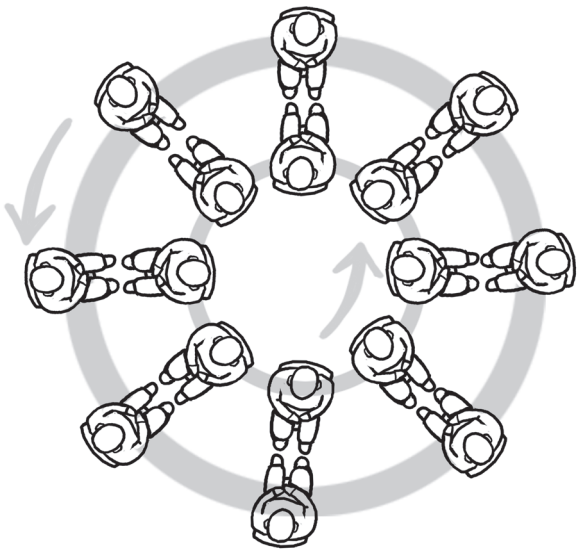
Participants sit down on chairs that are placed in two concentric circles so that everyone from one circle sits across a person in the second ring. They talk in pairs with the person opposite and, after 3 to 5 minutes of conversation, participants in the inner circle shift one position to the right, each receiving a new interlocutor for the next question. After a short discussion the participants in the outer circle take their turn rotating one position to the right.

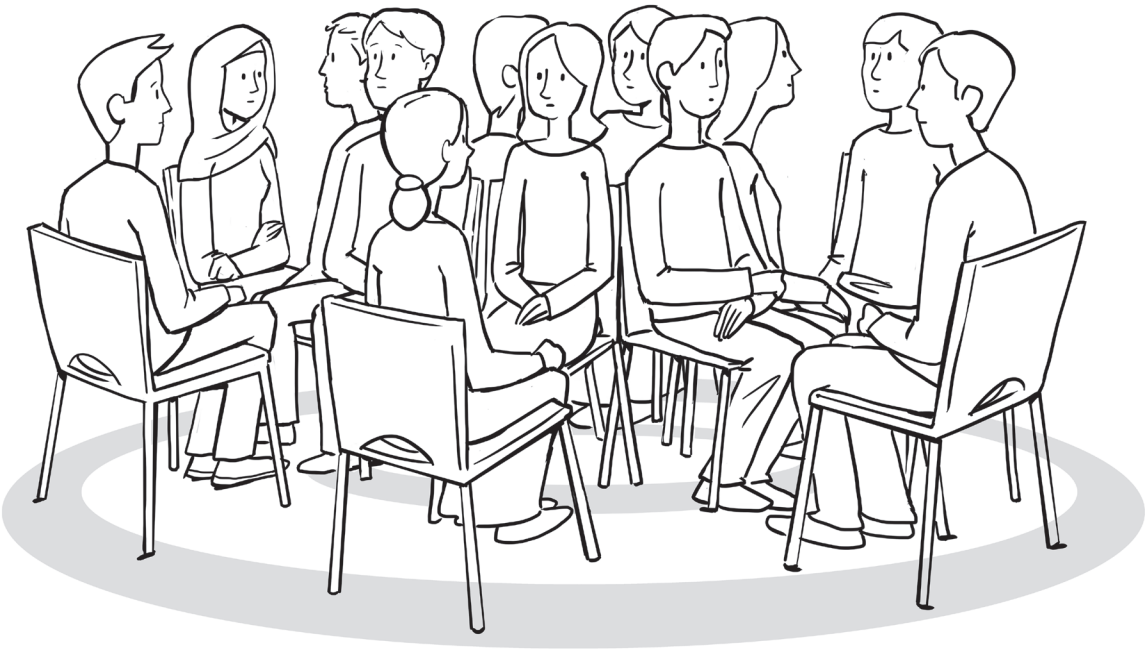
Some of the tentative questions for discussion:

- What do I do?
- Where do I live?
- My family...
- An event in my life that affected me the most.
- What person has strongly influenced my life?
- How did I get here?
- How do politics affect my life?
- What would I like to change?
- Visible and 'invisible' effects of the war, in the place where I live?
- Some things I care about in life
- What do I need to achieve?
- What provides encouragement to me?
- What do I really enjoy?
- I am very frustrated when...
- I want to ask you this...

Duration: 20-60 minutes (depending on the number of participants and the desired pace of exchange)

***Note**: The structure of this exercise does not enable each participant to talk to everyone, but it is a good choice for people who find it easier to talk with one person on a particular topic at the beginning of training, rather than share their thoughts in front of the whole group. It is important to bear in mind that the selection of questions for discussion needs to be adapted to the profile of people in the group. It is necessary to deliver clear guidance on the time frame, so that in each rotation the two interlocutors can have a chance to introduce themselves.*





My Name

One by one, participants in the circle have the task of stating their name, and telling a story about it: what it means, how was it given to them, who gave it to them etc.

Venn Diagrams

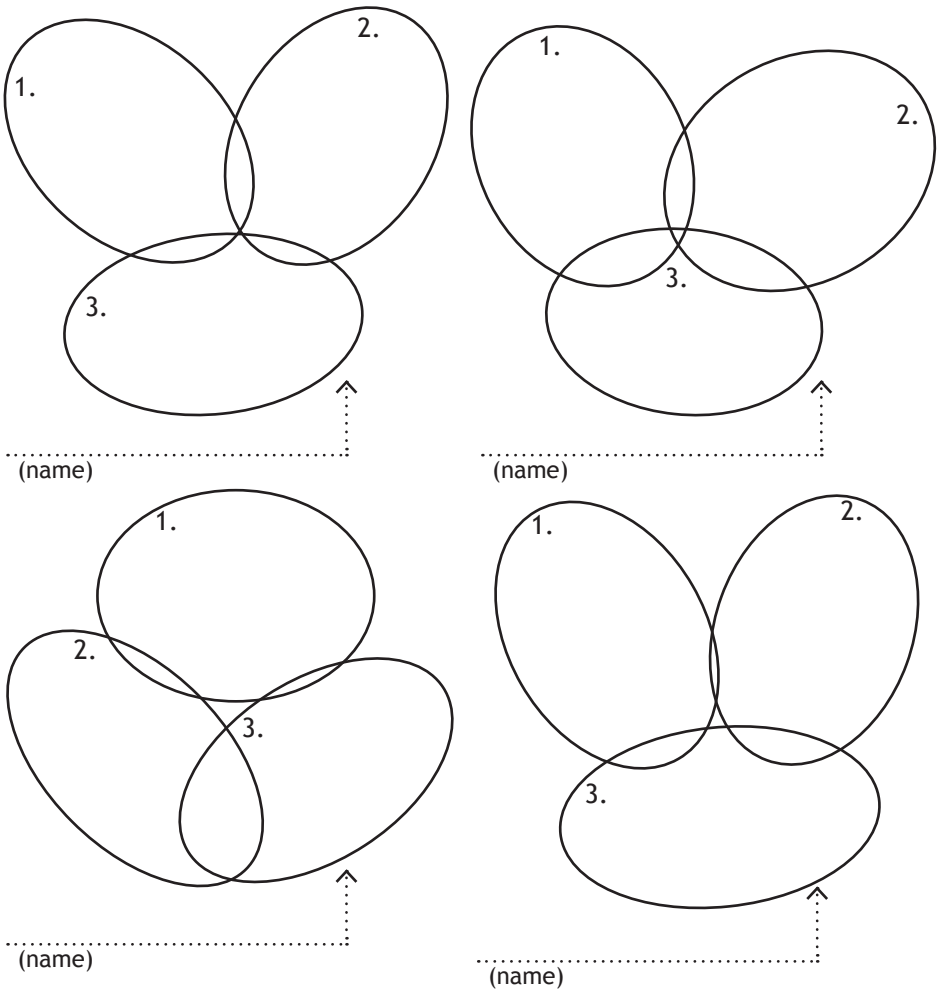
Everyone gets a sheet of paper containing a drawing of a Venn diagram (three circles/ ellipses that intersect, see picture) that features a number of sets corresponding to the number of participants present. One Venn diagram is reserved for each person, and participants are required to write their names at the designated place. Each of the circles of the diagram must contain a specific piece of information about the person. For example:

1. Where do you live?
2. What do you enjoy?
3. One of your culinary specialities.

Participants rise from their seats and approach each person in the group, ask her/him questions from the diagram and write the answers down on their paper.

Duration: 30 minutes

***Note**: This activity helps the participants remember each other's names more easily, it is a good icebreaker for the beginning of the seminar, as it puts people in a situation of establishing contact. An added benefit is that people can move around the room and this significantly contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere. Of course the papers filled with diagrams stay with participants (they very often serve as a reminder, when trying to remember someone's name). We seldom formulate the third question but ask the participants to come up with a question that can be posed to everyone. This version of the exercise is more fun because the questions tend to be very diverse and even humorous (e.g. "Do you like your president?" or "Tell me a joke."). It should be borne in mind that the duration of the exercise can be prolonged if people are having fun, so it may be useful to limit the time if you are running on a tighter schedule.*



Expectations Regarding the Training

Three panels are set up (either on the wall or on the floor), each containing one of the following questions:

- What do I expect from this training?
- What do I expect of myself in this training?
- What do I expect from others in this training?

Everyone jots down their answers on separate post-it notes. After this, participants approach the panels one by one, read out loud their answers and stick their notes to the appropriate panel.

My Path Up to Here

On a blank sheet of paper, everyone draws for themselves one arrow that illustrates the flow of life, 'my path up to here', and marks on it the 'stepping stones', the turning points in their lives (up to 5 minutes). Then, in the plenary session, anyone can opt freely to present their 'arrow'.

Duration: 90 minutes

***Note**: It is crucial for this activity that it takes place in silence and that there are no whispers or comments from the group or external noises that interfere – in other words full attention has to be paid to the person who speaks. This exercise encourages building of trust within the group, though some individuals can find it too overwhelming, if it takes place in the introductory session of the training. It is recommended that trainers themselves participate in this exercise and hence engage in a process of introduction and it is even better if someone from the training team begins their story and thereby sets an example for others. This exercise provides an opportunity for a more thoughtful introduction to the group and encourages empathy, listening and mutual acknowledgement. Often during delivery of this exercise we review the time slot set for it, which can be very hard for the first day of training, especially if people are not accustomed to actively listening to twenty people speaking (which is usually the case), because it indeed consumes a lot of energy and people eventually get tired. It is therefore of utmost importance that the exercise be skilfully managed, listening attentively to people and their stories (not interrupting, but perhaps signalling discreetly that the time provided has run out), and also keep an eye on the time-line and the dynamics in the group. In the course of the introductions it is useful to emphasise what the time frame provided per person is, what is the total time available and agree on a (discrete) signal that will be used when the time has elapsed.*

The Place Where I Live (City Where I Come From)

A paper sheet is placed on the floor, large enough for participants to gather around it and for everyone to have enough space (for example, you can use a few flip-chart sheets stuck together). Participants are asked to individually sketch something they do not particularly like about life in their city (place, region, state) on this large sheet of paper. If they feel they do not have a talent for drawing, they can draw symbols and diagrams. When the drawings are complete, everyone explains their drawing to the group.

A new large sheet of paper is placed on the floor and participants are this time asked to sketch something they particularly like about life in their place, country and region. This is also followed by each participant providing explanations to the group.

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: If the group members come from different places, this exercise can be used for better understanding of the different contexts from which participants come. It is also used to facilitate participants becoming more familiar with each other as well as to exchange and share what is important to us in the society in which we live. These exercises can also be used as an introduction when we need to move from personal to the social level, providing an opportunity for participants silently to reflect on the society in which they live. Also, the exercise can provide insights to the trainers' team and inform the course of the training event: what individuals or the group as a whole easily articulate, in what way do they interpret social phenomena, what is not mentioned and remains unspoken etc.*

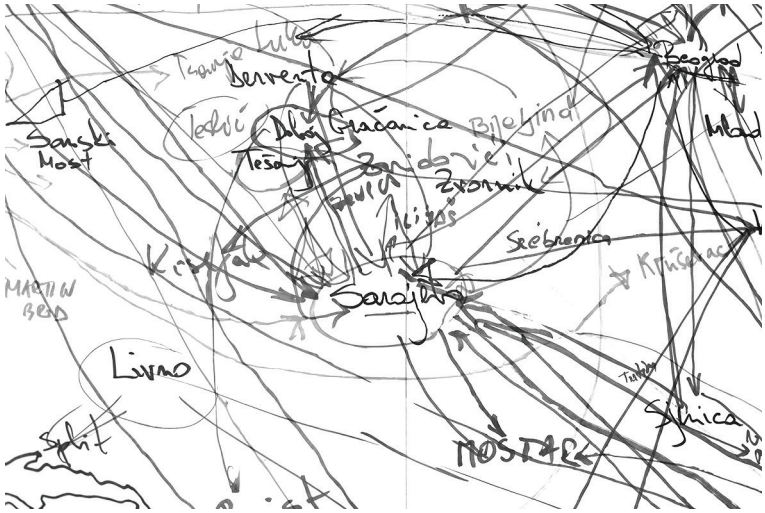
Places that are Important to Me (The Map)

A map of the former Yugoslavia, Europe or the world is placed on the wall, (it is best if you are using contour maps, i.e. without political boundaries). One by one participants approach the map, and using a magic marker pin the places that are important to them, of which they have certain memories and experiences. They briefly explain their relationships to these places to others in the group.

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: In the context of CNA training, which brings together people from different parts of former Yugoslavia, this activity can have special significance. It contributes to the understanding of different*

Another version of the exercise: The previously arranged map features all the places where participants come from. The task of the participants is to approach and mark all the places they have connections with, and clarify in what way (so that all of their places are connected through zigzag lines).



life experiences in the group, of differing perspectives concerning both the common former homeland and today's region dotted with borders of emerging countries. It works equally well with newly formed groups, as well as with groups that are already familiarised, and can be done at the beginning or in any other part of the training session. It is particularly useful when you need to bring people back to their own personal experiences and personal connections or contribute to a better mutual understanding.

The Place Where I Come From

Everyone in the circle indicates the place where they come from, and three things they love in connection with this place.

Duration: 20-25 minutes

Talking in Pairs

Everyone stands in a circle. For each of the topics, participants form pairs and find an interlocutor – starting with those participants they think are the most similar to them – and then go on to the ones most different from them, those which are most mysterious etc.

Some of the possible topics for discussion:

- How did I get here?
- What do I want from my life?
- An event in my life that most influenced me?
- What I really enjoy?
- What is most painful about the environment in which I live?

Duration: 25-30 minutes

I (Will) Represent You

Participants will be split into pairs. Each participant says a few words about themselves. Another person listens carefully, trying to remember. Then roles change. Participants are instructed about the time allotted for the exercise (maximum 10 minutes).

Everybody returns to the large group and has to introduce their partner to other participants in the group.

Duration: 40 minutes.

***Note**: If the group is not generally composed of people who know each other and if the atmosphere is tense, people can find this exercise demanding and it is helpful to instruct them in advance that they will have to introduce another participant to the group. This activity should not be done at the beginning of the introductory workshop. But if some of the people in the group already know each other it can turn into a very enjoyable exercise.*

Three Events That Have Informed my Activist Engagement

A time-line is drawn on the wallpaper that represents three periods: before the war, during the war and after the war. Everyone should write one thing / event from each of the three periods that has informed their current engagement in peacebuilding. Then, one by one, each participant gets up and, standing in front of the wallpaper, briefly presents to the group what they wrote.

***Note**: This exercise is appropriate for groups in which at least some of the people have been active in the area of peace work / social change activism.*

This Picture Speaks of Me

A number of different pictures / postcards are aligned in the middle of the circle. Participants have five minutes to look around and inspect them and then opt for a picture that would somehow represent them but do not take it until they are instructed to. After five minutes pass they each take a picture, explain why it was their choice and what it says about them.

Duration: 35-40 minutes

Three of My Identities

Working alone, everyone writes down their three chosen identities. Then one by one each person stands up and reads his/her identities. When they read out one identity, they pause, so that all of the participants that share that same identity can briefly stand up. Then the next person takes a turn in reading his/her identities and so on.

Duration: 20-25 minutes

***Note**: It can happen in some groups that the instruction is not clear enough. A simpler form of exercise involves an instruction that can read like this: write three sentences about yourself that begin with "I am..."*

Two Truths and a Lie

This exercise can be done both in smaller and bigger groups. Ask everyone to write down three sentences/statements about themselves, including one false statement. Then, participants take their turn in reading the statements, while the rest of the group tries to guess which one is false. (For example: "I studied art history", "I train kick-boxing", "My dad is a great cook.")

Duration: 20-30 minutes

***Note**: This exercise can be helpful for people in the group to get to know each other better, but also serves as an exercise in active listening skills. It may be done in a group where the participants know each other as well as in a group where they don't. This exercise is enjoyable and often amusing, which contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere.*

In What Way Are We Interconnected?

One person stands in the middle of the room, invites someone from the group and briefly explains what connects them. Both individuals remain in the middle of the room, now the second person calls out to the next, along with a brief explanation of what connects the two of them. Third person calls the forth one and so on – until all participants are connected through a single chain in the middle of the room. The entire process can be repeated several times, if there is a need for it. Each new chain reveals unexpected connections between people who have perhaps met for the first time in their lives.

Duration: 15-30 minutes

***Note**: This exercise is based on the assumption that all people in the world are connected in at least one way, and it provides a fun opportunity for people in the group to identify mutual links. The exercise works equally well with people who know each other from before, as well as with those who have met for the first time. It is useful for encouraging participants, while making 'chains' to look for those connections that are not immediately visible and are perhaps inadvertently neglected.*

Representing Myself

Everyone takes a sheet of paper, and writes their name in the middle. Then they enter:

- In the upper left corner: I feel... at the moment
- In the upper right hand corner: two things I love to do
- In the lower left corner: a book that I recently read – or a movie I watched
- In the lower right corner: where I'd love to be right now.

After filling out the paper, everyone pins it to their chest, walks around the room, reads what others have written and talks about it.

Duration: 20-25 minutes

***Note**: This exercise is especially suitable for working with youth groups, and provides introductory workshop with a positive dynamic, with a dose of laughter and relaxation.*

North-South, East-West

Everyone in the group is asked to stand up and be positioned relative to the centre of the room, so that their position depicts the place where they are from on an imagined geographical map. When everyone has picked an appropriate spot, the facilitator moves around the room, from person to person and asks questions about where people are from, how they got there, what is specific to this place, etc.

This is followed by a new instruction – now find a place where you would like to live. The facilitator will again make a 'tour' around the room and give a chance to all those present to introduce places where they would prefer to live.

Duration: 30 minutes

Exercises for Understanding the Social and Political Context We Live in

The objective of this group of exercises:

The *Basic CNA training* features the following exercises as a part of different themes generally preceding the topics of peacebuilding and dealing with the past, topics such as team work and decision making, understanding conflict, violence, prejudice, etc. Before intensive work on peacebuilding and dealing with the past can commence, it is important to map and articulate awareness of those social phenomena and processes that undermine peace. The following set of exercises serves to meet this objective. The exercises aim to:

- Map social phenomena and processes relevant to the work of peacebuilding;
- Raise awareness on prejudice and enemy imagery;
- Sensitise participants to discrimination and other forms of violence, with emphasis on structural and cultural violence;
- Increase understanding of the socio-political situation in neighbouring countries and map out common and interrelated problems.

Some of the exercises have the added benefit of facilitating closer interactions between participants and building trust within the group but also leading to the development of empathy with others who are different.

The methodology we use:

In this group of exercises most work is done in the plenary sessions but individual work and work in small groups also play a role. The most common methods used are those that encourage experiential learning, those that create experience, such as role-play, simulations, and discussion/exchange in small groups complete with joint presentations on a given topic followed by a continuation of the discussion or reflection in large group. Also barometers can be a very useful method, especially when the goal of the exercise is an exchange of different opinions.

Big barometer: Violence

A larger number of papers are placed on the floor (at least one for each person in the group) featuring one of the statements listed below. Each participant takes at least one statement and puts it into the barometer between the poles Violence and Not violence based on their understanding of these statements, and their assessment of whether this act constitutes violence or not. After all the statements are set, discussion ensues on some of the statements: Would some participants change the position of one of the statements in the barometer? Why? How do others perceive this?

One by one, the statements are examined.

Additional rules for discussion:

- We only elaborate why we would change the position of a particular statement on the barometer but we cannot physically change the position of a statement/paper that someone else has placed on it.
- Our objective is not to agree on an ideal placement for a particular statement but to exchange opinions.

Some of the statements on the barometer:

- The Balkan countries are racist.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country of all Bosnians and Herzegovinians.
- Diasporas should be banned from voting.
- Reconstruction of a thirteenth century mosque in Prilep, which was burned down in 2001, should be allowed provided it only serves as a cultural monument – without hosting religious services.
- Fundamentalism represents a major threat to peace in the world.
- Citizens complain about relocating Roma groups to their village, afraid it would be turned into a garbage landfill.
- The ICTY has contributed greatly to peace and reconciliation in the region.
- HIV-positive children should not attend school with other children.
- One of the priorities in post-war reconstruction should be the reconstruction of religious sites that have been destroyed.
- Euro-Atlantic integration is the only way forward for Balkan countries.
- Minority languages should be compulsory in school curricula.
- Those who want to work will always be able to find a job.
- Those who do not like the country they live in are free to leave.
- People should be allowed to raise any flag they want on their house.
- Macedonia is a country of all Macedonians.
- Positive discrimination in the job market should be applied to minority groups and people with disabilities.
- McDonald's, Nike, Coca-Cola, Nestle.
- The international community is establishing a democracy in Libya.
- The easiest way to find a job is to be a member of the ruling party.
- Tuition fees are necessary for a better quality of education.
- NATO countries participated in the bombing of Yugoslavia in order to prevent a humanitarian disaster.
- Unemployed refugees had their electricity cut because they did not pay the bill.
- The German people started World War II.
- He is a loyal citizen of this country.
- Police officers are standing by doing nothing while a group of young men are beating up the participants of the Gay Pride parade.
- Those who came first to the territory have a right to claim it.
- In order to maintain peace in BIH, a third, Croatian, entity should be established.

***Note**: This exercise can be used when we want an efficient way to open and cover a number of key points in a short time. In addition to being excellent for the process of awareness raising about violence, it contributes to a better understanding of the social context and the wide spread of structural and cultural forms of violence. It can also be a very useful resource to the training team as it enables quick mapping of the priority topics for a specific group of participants. It is important to keep statements up-to-date and relevant to different social groups and various forms of violence. We revise the list of statements for every training session.*

The 'Big barometer' method can be used for a variety of topics, with the adaptation of statements to keep them topic-appropriate.

- Republic of Srpska should be abolished.
- Roma people are carefree.
- Sexual orientation is a private matter and should be kept within the confines of one's home.
- Everyone should know the official language of the country in which they live.
- All people who served in the military during the war were in favour of the war.
- We should help Africa to become civilised.
- In war, all sides are always to blame.
- In the army, one becomes a man.
- Great Serbia.
- Great Albania.
- Great Britain.
- A member of the clergy is running for president of the state.
- Women are more peace-loving than men.

Duration: 90-120 minutes

Associations

The facilitator reads out a list of notions, and participants have twenty seconds to write down their associations they draw from each notion on a post-it note. After each word, co-facilitators help collect the notes and put them up, while the facilitator reads the next term. Up to ten notions should suffice for the purpose of the exercise.

Examples of notions: journalists, homosexuals, feminists, politicians, atheists, believers, policemen, Europeans, Americans, managers, NGOs.

A small exhibition of associations is made, so that everyone gets the opportunity to read. An evaluation of the exercise follows: How does it look? Are you surprised by what you wrote? Did you censor yourself? Where do these associations come from?

***Note**: During this seemingly easy exercise it is possible that people feel hurt because of what has been written. The aim of the exercise is to become aware of existing stereotypes and their relation to discrimination in the society. It provides an opportunity for the group to articulate the feeling of injustice related to existing stereotypes in a non-confrontational way. For this reason the selection of notions is adapted to the specific group profile and combined with those notions which we assume no one will be identified with, so there is a greater sense of freedom to point out prevailing stereotypes or prejudice. By comparing the two cases in the evaluation exercise, we reveal the mechanism we use when we apply prejudice.*

Prejudices Against Ethnic Groups

First step: Participants are divided into groups by ethnicity. Each group is given the task of writing up statements they have heard about their ethnic group on a flipchart – in other words to answer the question: What are Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Albanians, Macedonians, Montenegrins etc. like?

Second step: Participants choose one of the ethnic groups they do not belong to (ethnic groups on offer are those to which at least one person from the group belongs to). It is important that each group has an approximately equal number of participants. They are tasked with writing down all they have heard about that particular ethnic group on a flip-chart.

After this, presentations take place, starting from the first step, then the second step and followed by a discussion: What do you make of this, how do you feel when you see all of this? How often in your daily life do you encounter these prejudices? What is to be done with them?

Duration: 1.5 hours

***Note**: It is very important to introduce this exercise carefully and give very precise instructions. The task is to capture information that we know exists (i.e. common opinion), rather than the personal opinions of participants. Often there are people in the group who do not want to define themselves through ethnic identity and therefore do not want to participate in an exercise which puts them in such a situation. This, along with other things, makes it very important to clarify the reason for this exercise. In our context we often do not even ask anyone to which ethnic (or other) group they belong to, we are all simply classified whether we like it or not, feel that way or not. For those who do not want to define themselves in terms of ethnic belonging, we may offer them the possibility of joining the group with which they are usually classified. It is possible that in protest a participant may decide to form a new group and call it 'aliens' or 'cosmopolitan' and this of course should be allowed, even though it diverts from the theme. Sometimes self-censorship takes place, because a participant may feel "it is not nice to write something like that about someone". It should be clear that the intention is to map existing prejudices (which need not necessarily be ours but the ones that we have heard in our environment), and then consider how to deal with them. One approach is to deny that they exist but denying it will hardly work to stop them. It should be noted that this exercise is often difficult for people, as it entails being in a situation to telling 'the other' what prejudices exist in relation to their ethnicity. But if we tread carefully with this exercise the effect will be precisely the building of mutual trust.*

Enemy images

Participants will be divided by the countries / regions from which they come.

Step One: Participants have the task of producing a list that features all groups that were presented as enemies by the people in their environment (during their childhood, during the course of their education, through the media, at work etc.), and put it up on the wall.

Step Two: Then they opt for one of these groups and describe the images that have been affiliated with that group (What are they like? Why should we be afraid of them, or wary of them?).

The plenary presentations and discussion follow: To what extent do these images permeate our society? What purpose do they (enemy images) serve? Who creates them and why?

Duration: 60-90 minutes

Enemy images (2)

Participants are divided into three small groups. They discuss the following topics: Who are the enemies of our societies, people who represent the Other? What are the images of the enemy? Who creates the image and why? Their task is to prepare presentation about what was discussed. Presentations in large group, comments and discussion follow.

Duration: 60 minutes

Denial

Participants are divided into smaller groups (randomly or by country / region). The task is to discuss and prepare a presentation on the topic: What is being denied in our societies? How? List some examples of denial. Why does this happen? Try to include examples of all three forms of denial: literal ("It did not happen", for instance, there was no crime), interpretative ("Not exactly", for example, "It was not ethnic cleansing, they left by themselves.") and implicatory denial ("It happened, but it has nothing to do with me, I cannot influence what happens.")[1]

***Note**: In order for the task not to be over-difficult, you can use the previous short theoretical input about denial. Also participants can benefit from further practical examples.*

Plenary presentations and discussions follow.

Duration: 45-60 minutes

1 These common forms of denial are introduced by Cohen in his *States of Denial*. Stanley Cohen. *Stanje poricanja: Znati za zlodela i patnje*. Translation: Glišić, S. (Belgrade: Samizdat B92, 2003), pp. 30-33.

Another View

Step 1: Isolate two seats and invite two people who are not of ethnicity A, but rather belong to the 'opposite' ethnic group B, to sit down. Their job is to put themselves in the role of persons who belong to ethnicity A, to virtually walk a mile in their shoes and try to answer the following questions:

- What are the problems and difficulties you are facing (because of your nationality)?
- What fears do you have?
- What are the injustices that affect you?
- What are your needs?
- What are your hopes?

As a reminder, the notions that are the cornerstones of the exercise are written down on four sheets of paper: fear, injustice, needs and hope.

Subsequently, people of ethnicity A are given space to add to what has been said, but it is stressed that there should not be corrections of what has already been said, but they should rather focus on additions only.

Step 2: The exercise is repeated, but this time the two chairs are reserved for people who do not belong to the opposing ethnic group B. They have the task of putting themselves into the role of nationality B and attempting to answer the same questions. Then people who belong to ethnicity B can supplement what is being said.

If necessary, after these steps, we can review the entire exercise in the plenary session: How was it? What are your impressions?

***Note**: If you estimate that this exercise could be difficult for the group, you can 'break the ice' by having a briefing session with the most motivated participants (and most proficient in dialogue) the day before, and check if they are interested in and willing to participate in this exercise, so that they have enough time to think about it and prepare themselves. It is important to have two people from both opposing ethnic groups who would willingly take the task upon themselves. It is crucial, when introducing the exercise, to be transparent and tell everyone that the individual participants agreed in advance to try to take a certain role, but that the space is also open for anyone interested in trying, should they desire to.*

Working with groups composed of people from several countries of former Yugoslavia (where there were at least 5-6 ethnic groups in the group), we decided to examine the relationship between two groups, so the exercises focused, for instance, on Albanians and Serbs from Kosovo. However, in a group represented by three ethnic groups, such as Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, we would examine all three: first those who were not Croatian tried to get into the role of the Croats, and those who were not Serbian tried to enter the part of the Serbs, or those who are not Bosniaks tried to get into the Bosniak role.

It should be noted that this exercise takes a long time, and that it should not be done to quickly. For example, a version of the three ethnic groups may take longer than two hours.

This exercise is very difficult emotionally because people are put in a position they have never experienced, and they have probably never examined the issue in such a way. The very fact of how little they know about the others, and how they find it difficult to say anything meaningful about them, exposes at least some proportion of the problem that they encounter.

The exercise is demanding in terms of facilitation and should be carried out in an atmosphere of peace and mutual listening. It implies a certain degree of knowledge and actual communication in the group. Introducing short breaks between enacting the steps of the process is quite common, because of the need to relax and breathe.

Step Ahead

Participants are randomly given cards with the roles they will assume in the exercise. The cards must not be shown to anyone else. They are asked to be as authentic in the role as possible, to think about the lifestyle and daily routine as well as the problems which that person encounters.

They are then asked to stand in line next to each other (as they would on a starting line).

The facilitator reads aloud a list of situations and events, one after another. Every time a statement can be answered with 'yes' by a participant, they should take a step forward. After all the statements have been read, the participants look around at how they are spread around the room and then convey their roles to others.

After that, they have the opportunity to look at who is where once again. We return to the large group and talk about the exercise: How has it been for you? Have you looked around? Parallels with everyday life are discussed.

Role Cards:

- You're an unemployed single mother.
- You're a daughter of a local bank manager.
- You're a Muslim woman who lives with her parents who are very religious.
- You're a middle aged Serb who lives in Priština.
- You're a young man who uses a wheelchair.
- You're a 17-year-old Roma woman who never finished elementary school.
- You're a HIV-positive woman.
- You're an unemployed teacher in a county whose new official language you do not speak fluently.
- You're the president of an influential NGO in a small town.
- You're a war veteran who lives on welfare.
- You're the president of the youth branch of the political party that is currently in power.
- You're an illegal Chinese immigrant.
- You're the daughter of the U.S. ambassador in the country where you currently live.
- You're the owner of a successful import-export company.
- You're a pensioner.
- You're a 22-year-old gay man.
- You're a female anchor on the most popular TV station.
- You're homeless.
- You're a 19-year-old from a very remote mountain village.
- You're a Macedonian woman who has been living in a collective centre for eleven years.

Statements to be read out:

- You have never encountered any serious financial difficulties.
- You have a decent home with a phone line and TV.
- You feel that your language, religion and culture are respected in the society where you live.
- You feel that your opinion on social and political issues is relevant and that your views are listened to.
- Other people can consult with you on various issues.
- You're not afraid that the police will stop you.
- You know where to seek advice and help if needed.
- You've never felt discrimination based on where you come from.
- You have adequate social and health care according to your needs.

***Note**: This exercise is very good as an incentive to reflect on the existence of social inequality, different possibilities and consequences that they can have on the lives of people who belong to a minority and / or vulnerable groups. (It should be kept in mind to keep the representation of more vulnerable and underprivileged groups in the role cards at a very high level.) The exercise vividly portrays the concepts of structural and cultural violence and provides an opportunity for participants to walk a mile in other's shoes. It is very useful in shedding light on the unequal starting positions that people have in society and how difficult it is to change them when they are unfavourable. This exercise can be used as a basis for reflection on stereotypes and prejudices.*

- You can go on vacation once a year.
- You can invite friends home for dinner.
- You have an interesting life and you are positive towards your future.
- You can study and choose a profession of your choice.
- You are not afraid that you will be harassed or attacked on the street or in the media.
- You can vote in state or local elections.
- You can celebrate most important holidays of your religion with your family and friends.
- You can take part in international seminars abroad.
- You can go to the cinema or theatre at least once a week.
- You're not afraid for the future of your children.
- You can buy new clothes at least once in three months.
- You can fall in love with anyone you want.
- You feel that your abilities are valued and respected in the society in which you live.
- You can use the Internet.

Duration: 45-60 minutes

The Squares / Dots

Each participant gets a square (or dot) sticker in a particular colour on their forehead, so that they cannot see what they have. For example, seven of them are given a red sticker, five – blue, two – green, two – yellow, one person gets a black sticker and one a white one. Additionally, some can get a colour combination, for example, one person gets a red-and-blue sticker, and the other a yellow-red one.

Instructions: Divide into groups by colour without any verbal communication.

Evaluation: What went on during the exercise?

***Note**: The exercise simulates the imposition of identity and classification according to a compulsory criterion, as is often the case in our societies with ethnic, gender or other forms of discrimination. Participants are often led to solve the task using the immediate logic of the exercise, and classify themselves only on the basis of the paper (or rather colour) they received. Understanding the processes they are subjected to can be painful, when people recognise themselves in the role of someone discriminated against or as a discriminator. It is important to give precise instructions and not influence the way participants classify, otherwise the facilitator steps into the role of a manipulator.*

The Island

Participants are divided into three small groups. They are told that they are stranded on a desert island and there is no way to leave. In order to organise their community life, they should agree and establish a common set of rules to make their life on the island more pleasant. Each small working group has 10 minutes to make this agreement and to write it down on paper. They return briefly to plenary session, where the groups present their rules.

The next step is to choose a volunteer from each group. Volunteers are then brought out of the room and told that they will not return to the group from which they came, but will go to another group instead. Their task is to act contrary to the rules on the island or attempt to change as many agreements as possible.

After a 10-minute stay of this new person on the island, the exercise comes to a close and is evaluated.

Evaluation questions: What went on during the exercise? (Those participants who did not move between islands provide the feedback first and are followed by those that had the special assignment). How did the newcomers feel as rule breakers and how did the ones on the island feel about the non-observance of their system? Who was in the role of a victim, and who was is in the role of a bully? What does this have to do with real life?

Duration: 60-90 minutes

The Bus

This is a short simulation – the scene takes place on a public bus. Four volunteers have a piece of paper with a specific role attached to their chest: a Roma woman with a small child, a young man in a T-shirt that says “Gay is OK”; a peasant woman who is going to market; a covered woman who only has her eyes exposed. Six more passengers participate in this scene and the task is to act towards the labelled passengers in line with how society generally treats them, with no censorship or inhibition.

Evaluation of the exercise follows: What have the observers of the scene noticed? What are the participants in the scene conveying?

Mapping of Patriarchy and Militarism in our Societies

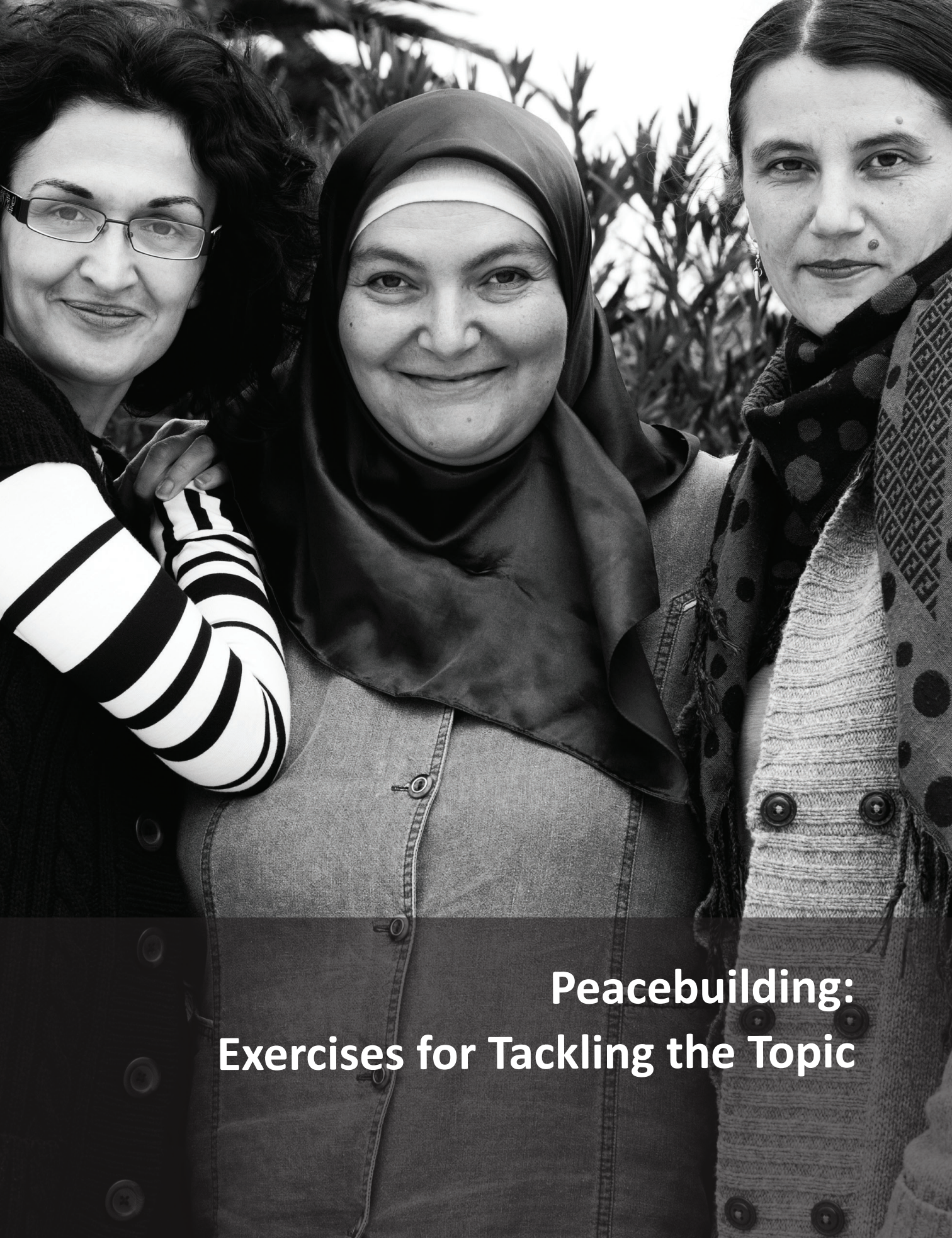
This exercise is performed with the participants divided into two groups. One group creates wall charts with the task of mapping patriarchy and the other one is mapping militarism in our societies. They need to collect as many examples of where and how these two phenomena exist in society, who supports them, what their forms are, etc. This is followed by short presentations which include time for questions and clarification. Discussion in plenary follows: What are the similarities between patriarchy and militarism? Where and how do they intertwine?

Duration: 60-90 minutes

My Community

Everyone in the group is given a large paper, markers, pencils, etc. and told they have half an hour to prepare a presentation that would describe what they consider their community. Each participant has a time slot for a presentation.

Variations can be made: experiences related to my belonging to a particular community, experiences related to the development of the community, etc.



Peacebuilding: Exercises for Tackling the Topic

The objective of this group of exercises:

The goals of this group of exercises are numerous and varied and, bearing in mind that we rarely have sufficient time to process all the sub-themes, it is important to assess priorities properly: e.g. what is the most important topic to cover in a specific group of participants and which needs have to be meet. Good priority assessment is based on sound knowledge of the audience/participants, insights from the previous two sets of exercises, experiences of the trainers' team and their knowledge of the socio-political situation across the region. Some of the objectives are:

- Better understanding of the basic concepts relevant to peacebuilding;
- Mapping of notions that peacebuilding entails, but also awareness of what each of us can do in our daily life to contribute to peacebuilding but do not recognise as such;
- Empower and inspire participants for a more active participation in civic life and taking more responsibility for social processes;
- Exchange of experiences, learning from good practices, but also learning from the mistakes that we or others have made;
- Developing a culture of criticism (and self-criticism);
- Developing a culture of dialogue with opponents;
- Promotion of nonviolence.

Peacebuilding: The Methodology Used

We use standard workshop methods. For this group of exercises plenary work is an asset, as it is most informative and inspiring. But it is very important for the work in small groups to also have a place in this methodology because it provides the necessary space for sharing, reflection, examination and analysis and these processes are fruitful when people in a smaller group work together. We should not forget that it is also important to provide a space for self-reflection and thinking, in silence.

Peace River

Everyone in the group writes their definition of peace on single sheets of coloured paper. Then everyone reads aloud what they have written and all papers are placed on the floor in the middle of the room.

Duration: 30 minutes

My Contribution to Peacebuilding / Reconciliation

One by one, all participants in the circle explain what they see as their own contribution to peacebuilding / reconciliation.

Duration: 30-45 minutes

What Can we Do ('Situations')

A life situation scenario is read aloud (which simply begs for a reaction) and the question is asked: What do you do? The participants share their ideas about the reaction. The goal is not to determine the most appropriate reaction, or the best response, but to collect a spectrum of possible responses that would inform participants' behaviour in certain situations.

Some of the ideas for the situation scenario:

- You return from a seminar where there were people from former Yugoslavia. You meet with your acquaintances who ask you how it went. One of them comments: "You've been hanging out with the *Shqiptars*[1] again?" What do you do?
- You are at a mono-ethnic family gathering. However, one person of different nationality is present. One of the family members provokes them and cracks inappropriate jokes (e.g., "What's up *Šokica*[2]?"). You notice that the person is having a difficult time. What do you do?
- At a family celebration your cousin declares, "All the Serbs left Kosovo voluntarily." What do you do?
- Graffiti "Croats to the reservation" appears on a neighbouring building (Or: "Serbs should be hanged", "Bosnians belong in chains" etc.)[3] What do you do?
- At work your colleague complains: "Look at these Albanians, all the rights we gave them and this is the thanks we get." What do you do?
- You are at a peace conference. A representative of an association of missing persons' families says that only the victims should have a right to work on the issue of peacebuilding. What do you do?
- You are in a taxi. When the taxi driver learns you're from Bosnia, he asks: "How the hell are you coping with those Muslims?" What do you do?
- Your friend gets fired from work because of his sexual orientation. What do you do?
- Your district is planning a construction of housing for the Roma community. One of the neighbours is asking you to sign a petition against the construction. What do you do?

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: The exercise is suitable for introductory sessions focusing on peacebuilding and peace activism because it serves as a reminder that peace activism should be a part of everyone's daily life – not only when you have the logistics and financial support in the form of resources and donations. It is important to choose/create situations that feel familiar and realistic to workshop participants. There should be at least 4-5 situation scenarios. The first few take about 10-15 minutes per scenario, and the others generally go a bit faster. It is recommended to keep the entire exercise under 60 minutes because people become tired of the monotonous dynamics, just listening and sitting in one place.*

1 The Albanian endonym for the noun *Albanians*, used in a derogatory manner in former Yugoslavia.

2 A derogatory term for Croats.

3 Slogans (that even appear in rhyme) often used by football hooligans.

Situations No 2 (A version for war veterans)

The exercise unfolds the same way as the previous one, but this one is specifically tailored to groups of war veterans.

- You get a call from an association of veterans of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina to come to the annual commemoration in Srebrenica, with the other members of this group. What do you do?
- The association of families of those killed in the *Tuzla Colon* is inviting you to the commemoration of events that took place in Brčanska Malta. What do you do?
- A joint visit is planned to battle sites in Eastern Slavonia. The host association of veterans receives threats from other veterans' associations and informs you of this the day before the trip. What do you do?
- A political party takes credit for your work and states that this is yet another confirmation of their political program with the following: "This is proof that the entities should be abolished!" What do you do?
- You are planning a gathering of veterans from the region at the hotel Vilina Vlas in Višegrad. Everything is confirmed, but a few days before the gathering is scheduled to begin, you receive credible information from an NGO that during the war that ho-

tel was the site of an organised camp for imprisoning women and that many women were raped there. What do you do?

- A representative of the families of victims association asks for your permission to address veterans who fought for the other side, and who are coming to visit. What do you do?
- You are planning a gathering and a press conference. You just learned that one of the guests in your group has just been indicted for war crimes. What do you do?
- Together you (veterans from all three sides) visit the memorial site of the HVO[1] and, among other things, see pictures of Tudjman and Pavelić exhibited. What do you do?
- During the visit to an atrocity site in a small town, a meeting is planned with local authorities. A guest appearance of the deputy mayor, who just returned from serving a several months long sentence for war crimes, is announced. What do you do?
- The association HVIDR[2] from Županja wishes to join the action you are planning, provided that the association of veterans from Serbia excludes the word 'liberating' from their name. What do you do?

A review of these situations follows in the plenary.

1 Croatian Defense Council. TN.

2 Croatian Disabled Homeland War Veterans Association. TN.

Big barometer: Peacebuilding – Not peacebuilding

The method *Big barometer* has already been described on p. 59.

Social phenomena explored in the exercise include:

- The return of refugees
- Better to deal with KFOR tanks than Serbian police
- Religious institutions have contributed to development of peace in the Balkans
- Religious institutions
- Emphasizing one's national identity
- Capital punishment
- NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro
- Hague Tribunal
- KFOR
- Feminism
- Civil service
- The trial for war criminals in their countries
- Abortion
- Legalization of soft drugs

- Censorship of the media
- Gay / lesbian marriages
- Adoption of children by gay / lesbian couples
- Peace Activism
- 51% of women in political office
- Arming for defence purposes
- The international community
- Patriotism
- Humanitarian aid
- Dayton Accords
- Privatization – a step towards Europe
- Woman pilot, woman psychologist, woman judge, woman president, woman miner, woman Minister, woman locksmith, woman Mayor etc.
- Introducing religious education into schools
- Building Ferhadija in Banja Luka
- State Flag at the top of the church
- Improved living standards
- Positive discrimination
- Non-governmental organizations – NGOs
- Globalization
- Tradition
- The Chinese
- The Americans
- Equality for women in the army

Duration: 1-1.5 h

What Contributes to Peacebuilding?

Participants are asked to write down three things in their societies they recognise as contributing to peacebuilding, clearly and in block letters, on three separate sheets of paper. All papers are spread out on the floor and then a plenary discussion on the topic follows: participants' thoughts on what has been written; what are the priorities and which things do not contribute to peacebuilding in their opinion?

Duration: 1-1.5 h

Variation: the filled-in papers can be used for a 'Big barometer' (see description of the previous exercise) instead of those prepared in advance by the trainers' team.

Living or Not Living in Peace: Indicators

A wall chart is created by the whole group with the topic: What tells us that we live in peace?

Then, a new chart is created with the topic: What tells us that we do not live in peace?

Duration: 20 minutes

What Might Lead to War in the Future?

Brainstorming in the plenary, with the topic: What could lead to war in the future?

A discussion follows on how we can prevent this.

***Note**: This exercise provides an opportunity to exchange different perceptions and understandings of the causes of war; and to recognise the roots of injustice that can escalate into violence in the long run.*

What are the Biggest Challenges to Peacebuilding?

Work in small groups. Exchange in the group with the topic: What are the biggest challenges to peacebuilding? Presentations and discussion in plenary follow.

Alternatives

First step. Brainstorming in the plenary: How would you describe the situation in your societies? Highlight those ideas that describe what we are discontented with.

Second step. Discussion in the plenary: What is the alternative to the current state of affairs (the ones we are not satisfied with in our societies)? What can peace activists offer as an alternative? The facilitator is writing down the alternatives/ideas on a flipchart, asking questions for clarification. The goal is to try to find as many ideas for alternative solutions as possible.

The Priorities of Peacebuilding by Region and Country

Participants are divided according to the regions from which they come and they are asked to define priorities for peacebuilding in these regions.

Presentations and a short review follow in large group.

Peacebuilding and I

Everyone contemplates the following issues by themselves: Things related to peacebuilding that make me confused and frustrated. What is unclear to me related to this process? What matters most to me in peacebuilding? What are my fears and doubts about it? Participants jot down their thoughts and answers on big sheets of paper that are placed on the floor, and titled:

- "I get annoyed when..."
- "What puzzles me is the..."
- "The challenge for me is the..."
- "Do I... "
- "My fears…"
- "The most important thing for me..."

Once all the papers are on the floor and everyone has written down their thoughts, a discussion follows focusing on: Out of everything that is written, what stands out the most, what would we like to discuss in large group?

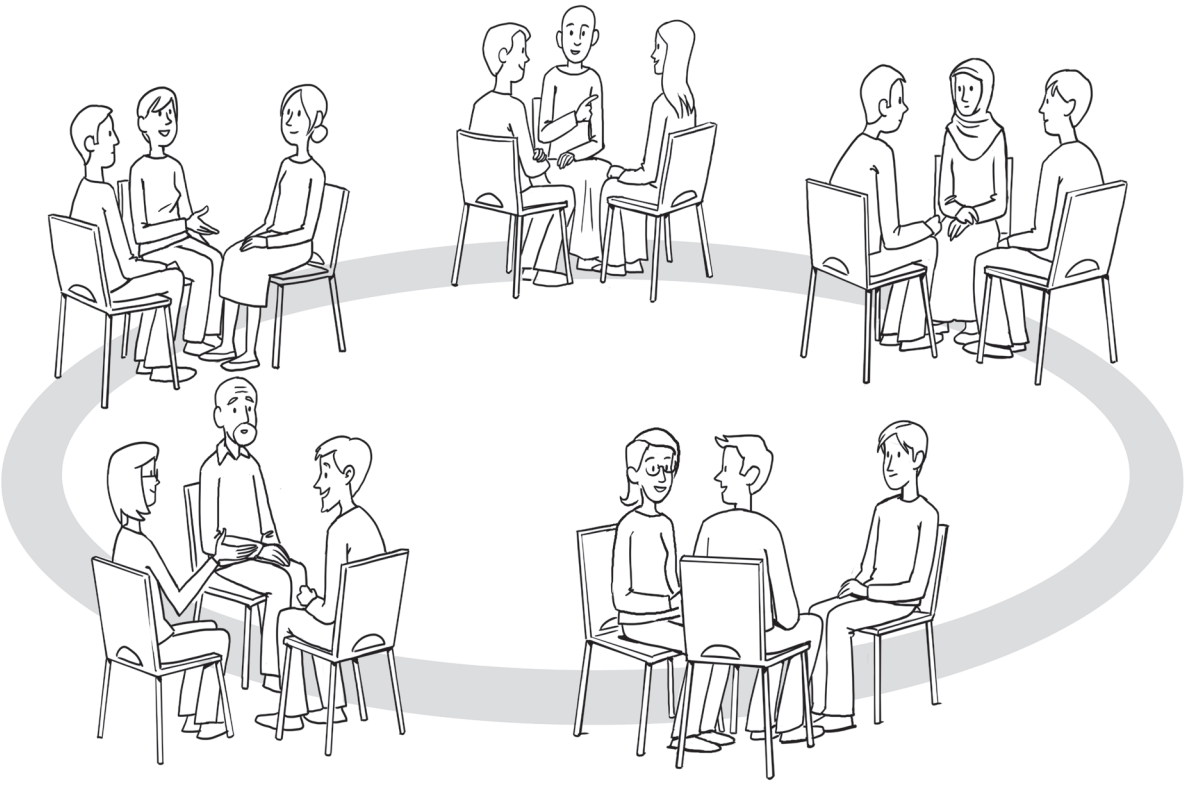
Rotating Triplets of Peace Activism

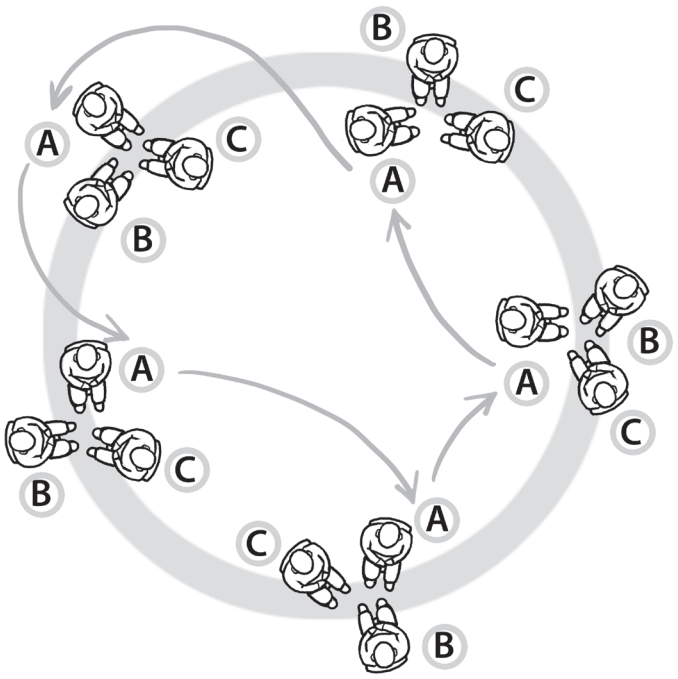
Three chairs are grouped and placed so as to form a circle (see illustration). Participants comprising a group / trio (sitting in three grouped chairs) are dubbed person A, person B and person C. The task is to give a response to a given question to the rest of their small group. After time out is called, people switch seats: person A goes one place to the left, and person B one place to the right, thus forming a new trio for an interview. This happens before each new question.

Possible questions:

- How would you describe the work in your organization to your neighbour (someone who does not know anything about it)?
- What is the motivation behind what I do?
- In what way does my work inform social change?

Duration: 30 minutes





How Do I Understand Peacebuilding?

Division into smaller groups. Exchange and presentations prepared on the basis of questions:

- What is peacebuilding to me?
- The values that are usually connected to peacebuilding.
- Reasons why peacebuilding is relevant/necessary in the environment in which I live.
- Who are the stakeholders / allies?

A presentation in the plenary follows.

Why Reconciliation?

Participants have to imagine that they are in a situation where they need to explain to someone why we need reconciliation and find enough solid arguments to convey it. One person from the trainers' team assumes a sceptical attitude towards reconciliation and asks for each and every argument to be fully elaborated until it is completely clear and acceptable. These arguments are then written on a flipchart.

Duration: 20-25 minutes

Who Needs to be Reconciled with Whom, or What?

There is a large piece of paper on the floor (large enough to accommodate more participants writing simultaneously on it). Participants silently record their responses to the question: Who needs to be reconciled with whom, or what? After they have finished, we have a chance to review everything that is written. A discussion in plenary follows.

Duration: 30-45 minutes

Working in Local Communities

First step. Three participants with diverse backgrounds are given the task of preparing a presentation in order to make other participants more familiar with the issues in their communities (those relevant to the work of peacebuilding). The task is given in advance (a few days earlier). After they have presented what they prepared beforehand, the others have the opportunity to ask questions and get clarification.

Second step. Participants choose one of the presented communities. Three working groups are formed according to chosen local communities (it would be good if they were composed of a roughly equal number of participants in each group). They need to imagine that they live in the chosen community/area. The task is to choose

one specific issue relevant to the work of peacebuilding and develop an approach relating to the issue. Each group is given a paper outlining the task and a series of questions that can help in the course of the work:

"Your task is to define the issue you are going to focus on and to develop an approach relevant to this issue."

Additional questions:

- How do you decide on what is the issue? (Why this specifically?)
- What are your goals?
- Define the principles of your action.
- What are your strengths / weaknesses? Which capacities are missing?
- What resources do you use in order to get to know the environment?
- With whom is it important to establish cooperation? In what way are you doing that? (Who are your potential allies?)
- How do you want the community to perceive you? (What kind of image do you want to have?)
- What are the possible side effects?
- What concrete steps are you able to carry out? Why these?
- Three issues that matter to you and are not on the list.

Third step. After completing the work, groups take their place in the 'hot seat' one by one, and present what they did, while the rest of the group asks questions and provides feedback.

Fourth step. Everyone has the opportunity to reflect and write down on post-it notes: What was difficult for you in this task? What dilemmas do you have? Questions that are left unanswered. A brief discussion in plenary follows.

Fifth step. Brainstorming in plenary: What insights did you gain about the work in the local community?

Duration: 2-3 working blocks

Criteria for Activists ('Dub' Island)

First step. Division into three groups. The task is for the participants to determine which criteria people involved with peacebuilding should meet, and what abilities/qualities they should have, and to write them down on a shared piece of paper. A short presentation in the plenary follows.

***Note**: This exercise is useful when you need to home in on teamwork and conflict and at the same time examine peacebuilding work itself.*

Second step. After this, 1 volunteer leaves the first group, 2 volunteers leave the second group and 3 volunteers leave the third. The group which was left by three volunteers is joined by three new people with the special duty of attempting to change some of the criteria and the group that was left by one person receives a new person with the same task. The second group is joined by two new people, one of whom is 'against', and the other 'for' the established criteria.

Evaluation (focusing on the process, the content is to be discussed in the next exercise): What went on during the exercise?

Duration: 1-1.5 h

Evaluation group by group enables more focused work. An interesting version is when the evaluation starts with the group that was joined by one new person. First, members of the group are asked to tell everyone what has happened, and then the 'new person' has the opportunity to explain what went on and how they experienced it. At that point they are asked to say what their role was and what was the special task given to them. An important question, of course, is how many criteria they managed to change. Following evaluation of that group, we can proceed with the evaluation of the group that was joined by three new people. Is there a difference in the dynamics between the first group and this group? Why is this so? Lastly, we evaluate the group that was joined by two new people, but with different tasks. Were they perceived and treated differently by other members in the group? Why? If it has not already been underlined during the course of evaluation, make a reference to similarities with everyday life at the end.

Expectations From Peace Activists

This exercise may be carried out together with the exercise Criteria for Activists ('Dub' Island), or independently from it.

Version 1: A piece of paper with the criteria for peace activists from the previous exercise is placed in a visible place. Discussion in the plenary follows: What is realistic to expect from people committed to peacebuilding? What applies to you personally? Which criteria do you personally meet? Which ones can you admit to not having and / or to not wanting to have?

***Note**: Very often the expectations of peace activists are quite excessive and preconceived criteria seem to be tailored for super-humans, perfect and faultless, so that no one would actually engage in peacebuilding because they feel they would certainly fail*

Version 2: After the exercise Criteria for Activists ('Dub' Island), the brainstormed criteria are put on paper (one criterion per sheet of paper). Facilitators can add a few that they consider important for the discussion. Participants take one or several papers/concepts, and place them in a barometer with the poles: *excessive expectations* and *realistic expectations.* These are followed by a discussion: Would somebody change the position of a particular concept in the barometer? Why? (For more information on the method *Big barometer* see p. 57)

Version 3: This is done independently of the exercise Criteria for activists (Island 'Dub'). The task is for each participant is to write down criteria that peace activists would have to comply with, on several sheets of paper (one criterion per sheet of paper). After that, the exercise unfolds as in version No 2.

all the criteria. It is important to empower people and give these peace workers a human face, with flaws and shortcomings, and create a picture in which all individuals can work on peacebuilding if they want to.

Big barometer: What is, and Is Not Ethical?

Issues with one of the situations / approaches stated below are put out on display (there are two copies of the same situation). Each participant takes a piece of paper with a situation scenario and puts it in a barometer with the poles *ethical* and *not ethical.* After all the papers have been placed, a discussion follows: Would somebody change the position of some of the situations in the barometer and why? How do others see it?

Situations / approaches:

- Creating a donor-driven program.
- Omitting difficulties and problems from activity reports.
- Making a living out of peacebuilding work.
- Cooperation with folk stars in the promotion of your ideas.
- Public criticism of other NGOs.
- Cooperation with associations of war veterans.
- Payment of allowances/per diems to participants in peacebuilding training.
- Organizing seminars for young people in the most expensive hotel in the country.
- Acting as if you have a copyright to peacebuilding.

Obstacles in Work: Situations

Division into three groups. Each small group is given two situation scenarios (of the three described below), which they need to examine and then respond to the questions: How to react and position yourself in this situation? What questions and dilemmas do you have?

After this, groups present the kind of approach they opted for, and a brief discussion follows.

Situation 1: You get an invitation for a guest appearance on a neighbouring country's national television. The theme of the programme is the process of reconciliation in the region of former Yugoslavia. You accept the invitation and then receive a suggestion from the editors of the show asking you to focus solely on the criticism of your own country during the TV appearance.

Situation 2: You are local CNA partners in organizing public presentations of peace work with ex-combatants. You prepare a public forum in your town. A few days before the forum you receive a request from an association of war victims, explicitly demanding that you list them as the speakers in the forum.

Situation 3: Long-term partners from abroad invite you to be part of a large international project (with organizations from Germany, Palestine, Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). The project is especially important to them because of the money and the future survival of the organization. You have doubts about the feasibility of the project, but accept in order to support the partner organization. After a year you are the only ones completing your part of the work. The project is now long over and the main joint product of your work (a manual) was never received, nor is it printed, to the best of your knowledge.

Peacebuilding: Exercise with Tasks[1]

Participants get envelopes containing instructions for the tasks. Each participant gets one task and they vary. They are asked to fulfil the tasks within a limited period of time (about 1 hour). The exercise is followed by an evaluation.

1 Goran Božičević developed this exercise for the *Advanced training in peacebuilding* CNA, more precisely its first phase delivered August 8-18. 2008, during which he took part as a guest trainer, and delivered a workshop focusing on peacebuilding.

Tasks:

1. Find a person who has the instructions for finding a book by J.P. Lederach. Complete your task together with them.
2. Find who's got the book by J.P. Lederach about peacebuilding. Your task instructions are in that book. If you do not speak English, exchange the task with someone who knows English.
3. You're the only person who knows that the book J.P. Lederach in fact contains no task instruction. You know where the task is: With a person born on June 22. You have to tell the other team members. (Date of birth of one of the participants, or, better yet someone from the training team.)
4. Find the section in which J.P. Lederach speaks of the time dimension of peacebuilding. Prepare a concise presentation of the most important segments of this chapter. Present at least one chart.
5. Conduct a survey with at least 5 people in the group: What do they think about the relationship between nonviolence and peacebuilding? Briefly and using block letters, present the outcomes of your mini-research. Where are there most similarities? Where are the differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for this presentation. Make it interesting. Make sure your sample is as representative as possible.
6. Conduct a survey with at least 5 people in the group: What do they think about the relationship between humanitarian work and peacebuilding? Briefly and using block letters, present the outcomes of your mini-research. Where are there most similarities? Where are the differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for this presentation. Make it interesting. Make sure your sample is as representative as possible.
7. Conduct a survey with at least 5 people in the group: What do they think about the role of NGOs in peacebuilding? Briefly and using block letters, present the outcomes of your mini-research. Where are there similarities? Where are the differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for this presentation. Make it interesting. Make sure your sample is as representative as possible.
8. Conduct a survey with at least 10 people in the group: What do they think about the relationship between civil (civic) initiatives and peacebuilding? Briefly and using block letters, present the outcomes of your mini-research. Where are there most similarities? Where are the differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for this presentation. Make it interesting. Make sure your sample is as representative as possible.
9. Conduct a survey with members of the team and 5 people of your choice: What do they think about the relationship between peace work and peacebuilding? Briefly and using block letters, present the outcomes of your mini research. Where are most similarities present? Where are the differences in the

statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for this presentation. Make it interesting.

10. Find a person with the task number 4. Do this task together.
11. Find a person with the task number 5. Do this task together.
12. Find a person with the task number 6. Do this task together.
13. Find a person with the task number 7. Do this task together.
14. Find a person with the task number 8. Do this task together.
15. Monitor the work of the group in an unobtrusive way. Find ways to ease the work for those who have difficulties. Support them in the most appropriate manner.
16. Make sure that groups that have the task to prepare a presentation do so in an interesting way. Be unobtrusive in your work. The aim is for the presentations to be really interesting, short and clear. Try not to reveal your task.
17. Find as many persons in the hotel who are not participants in this training event as you can (at least 5) and make a survey: How do they see life in Bosnia in 10 years? What can be done to make life as close to their dreams as possible? Who should do it? Prepare a short presentation with an overview of: How was it to conduct the survey? What are the results? Before interviewing people, be prepared – how will you approach them?
18. Find a person with task number 16 and help them complete the task well.
19. Find as many people in the hotel who are not participants in this training as you can (at least 5) and make a survey: What in their opinion should be done to prevent a future war? What would help them / what should they do in these or similar matters? Prepare a short presentation with an overview of: How was it to conduct the survey? What are the results? Before interviewing people, be prepared – how will you approach them?
20. Find a person with task 18 and help them complete the task well.
21. Follow the process of this exercise. You are the observer. What did you notice? What do you like about the way your colleagues did this exercise? What do you dislike? Prepare recommendations as to how this exercise could be improved next time around. Be discreet.
22. Follow the process of this exercise. You are the observer. What did you notice? What do you like about the way your colleagues did this exercise? What do you dislike? Prepare recommendations as to how this exercise could be improved next time around. Be discreet.
23. Follow the process of this exercise. You are the observer. What did you notice? What do you like about the way your colleagues did this exercise? What do you dislike? Prepare recommendations as to how this exercise could be improved next time around. Be discreet.

Duration: 90 minutes

Peacebuilding: Exercise with Tasks (2)

The workspace contains 18 tasks, the same number as the number of participants. Participants need to find their task and perform it. Time is limited to 50 (or 60) minutes.

We return to the large group and do a short evaluation: How was it for everyone?

Prepared presentations follow.

Tasks:

1. Find the text 'Open Letter to Peacebuilders'. Your task is to make a short description of the differing concepts of the technical and transformative approaches to peacebuilding described in the book, as well as the chapter 'Creating political change'. You have a maximum of 5 minutes for your presentation. Make it interesting.
2. Find a person born on July 6th and together do the task for which the person has instructions.
3. Search the Internet for at least two short video-clips with examples of nonviolent actions or campaigns that you liked. Look for clips that last a maximum of 5 minutes.
4. Find a person who... (fill in personal characteristics / detail) and complete the task with them.
5. Design or find a game that will end the morning session.
6. Find a person who _____ (fill in) and complete the task with him/her.
7. Conduct a survey with at least 5 people in the training on the topic 'What is reconciliation?' Summarise and using large, readable block letters, present the findings of the survey. Where do you find most similarities/agreements? In what areas are there differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for your presentation. Make it interesting.
8. Find a person who has the task of doing a poll on 'What is reconciliation?' and complete the task together.
9. Conduct a survey with at least 5 people in the training. The main question is 'Basic ethical principles in peacebuilding'. Summarise and using large, readable block letters, present the findings of the survey. Where do you find most similarities/agreements? In what areas are there differences in the statements? You have a maximum of 5 minutes for your presentation. Make it interesting.
10. Find a person who has to conduct a survey on the topic 'Basic ethical principles in peacebuilding' and complete the task together.
11. Search the Internet for at least three examples of civil disobedi-

ence and nonviolent action. You have a maximum of 5 minutes for the presentation. Make it interesting.

12. Find a person who _____ (fill in) and complete the task with him/her.
13. Monitor the work of the group in an unobtrusive way. Find ways to ease the work for those who have difficulties. Support them in the most appropriate manner.
14. Make sure that groups that have the task to prepare a presentation do so in an interesting way. Be unobtrusive in your work. The aim is for the presentations to be really interesting, short and clear.
15. Choose three books and three films that inspire you to social action. Prepare a short presentation of each of them, which will last up to 5 minutes.
16. Find a person who _____ (fill in) and together perform the task that s/he received.
17. Find and present at least three activities that are aimed at bringing divided ethnic communities in Macedonia together. The presentation should not last more than 5 minutes.
18. Find a person who _____ (fill in) and together perform the task that s/he received.Presentations and a short review follow in large group.

The Past – The Future

Choose a pair. 1. Recall at least 3-5 important moments in your previous engagement with peacebuilding. Write every note on a separate piece of paper. 2. Consider / set at least three goals you want to achieve in the next few years (personally). Write every note on a separate piece of paper. A conversation/exchange in small groups follows. After returning to the plenary, papers are placed on the spots marked on the floor, 'the past' (moments) and 'the future' (goals). Briefly review what has been written.

Powerful Chair

One chair is turned to face the whole group. One by one participants take their seat and call out several sentences that start with "I have the power to..." Take your time!

Duration: 20 minutes

***Note**: This exercise has an empowering effect on participants.*

Dealing With the Past: Exercises for Tackling the Topic

The objective of this group of exercises:

The aim of these exercises is to shed light on the mechanisms used by our societies when it comes to violence perpetrated during the recent wars. These exercises aim to contribute to the examination of our roles and responsibilities, both in the past, and for the future of our societies, and to an even greater extent, of the entire region. A prerequisite for work on this topic is the knowledge and awareness gained of issues such as violence, identities, prejudice, and discrimination.

The group should be already formed, well prepared and/or strongly motivated (as is usually the case with groups of ex-combatants) for intensive work on the topic of dealing with the past (DWP), with the explicit motivation to work on these issues. It is important to bear in mind that this issue is not at all popular in our societies, and that the need to 'look to the future and leave the past behind' is often (erroneously) emphasised. The implication of the work in this field is to provide a future that will not be overshadowed by the past, and suggested exercises are designed to act on several levels – to:

- Insist on understanding the importance and relevance of DWP process for our society;
- Provide space for understanding the basic concepts and processes within a broader process of DWP;
- Encourage self-reflection – questioning and processing of personal experiences from the past;
- Raise questions of personal, civil liability for the past, present and future;
- Open the prospects for the future – what we should do if we want to live in a peaceful environment with full appreciation of our identity that was freely chosen.

Dealing with the Past: the Methodology Used

Suggested exercises generally use a common methodology of interactive work – a combination of plenary discussions, work in small groups and individual work. The following methods are usually applied: barometer, discussion / dialogue in small and large groups, preparing presentations on a specific topic and delivering them, storytelling, exchange of personal experiences, short theoretical inputs, etc. These methods involve a lot of talking and listening to others, which is often accompanied by heightened emotions. Even without the emotional charge, long stories, and especially attentive listening can exhaust people, so it is recommended, especially in the case of training events lasting several days, occasionally to introduce another method: role play or simulation, analysis of printed newspapers and magazines, watching documentaries and analysing them, or have a discussion based on them; and even theatre, drawing, making collages etc. (Of course, one should take into account that not everyone prefers expressing themselves through art forms – in the same way that long-winded and explicitly articulated verbal expression is not everyone's strong suit). The choice of methods is definitely dependent on the composition of the group and the profiles of people in it, whether or not they have an activist background, how much they relate to the topic, their personal experience of war, etc.

It should be borne in mind that the topic of dealing with the past is certainly one of the most challenging aspects of this work, because it delves deeply into the field of personal identity, values, and trauma from the past. It is therefore of the utmost importance to be well prepared to handle these issues, with a clear idea of what we are doing, and a clear picture of how the idea should be implemented.

Choosing the appropriate methodology, which is in line with the needs and achievements of the group, shapes the working atmosphere and this aspect of the work should be approached carefully and with good preparation.

Introductory Brainstorming

The question how to deal with the past often begins with a brief inquiry as to what the participants understand by the term, or what they associate with it, or what kind of attitudes they have towards the notion. It can provide very useful feedback to the trainers' team as to where the group stands with the idea and the various processes related to it, what the participants are overcoming, and what it would be important to do. An easy and quick way to do this brainstorming: with a flipchart displaying the central topic, the participants randomly (without any sequence) give their answers, one of the facilitators writes the answers down on the flipchart and sometimes asks questions of clarification (questions that do not open the discussion but serve to better clarify what someone wanted to say). Examples of topics for brainstorming:

- When I hear the phrase *dealing with the past* I think of...
- Why deal with the past?

Colourful Barometer (*aka* 'Multicoloured Eyes')

In several turns, participants should be divided into groups, based on them approaching a paper which displays one of the statements about the process of dealing with the past in the region of former Yugoslavia listed below. After each classification, several questions are posed to individuals in order to explain their choice to the group. A brief evaluation of the exercise follows, with comments and reviews coming from participants, related to things that were heard during the delivery of the exercises.

Statements:

- "I lived in the midst of war", "The war only touched me incidentally", "War never influenced my life directly", "I followed the events of the war(s) on TV."
- "Dealing with the past is the highest priority for our societies", "Dealing with the past is something you do not understand", "Dealing with the past is important, but there are many more significant things", "Dealing with the past is a concept imposed by the West."
- "Dealing with the past is a job for non-governmental organizations", "Dealing with the past is a job for the state", "Dealing with the past is not my job", "Dealing with the past is the job for the victims."

***Note**: This is useful exercise to get started on the topic. It is a relatively quick and easy way to come to the exchange, by providing a better picture of the different experiences that exist in the group and for later it provides information as to what positions we have already taken on the topic and to what extent. This kind of exchange contributes to a better mutual understanding, which is essential for a constructive approach to more demanding issues in this field. If a solid level of exchange in the group is not already achieved (or if the exercise is delivered on the first or second day of the meeting), it should be borne*

- "The most important thing is to condemn the criminals", "The most important thing is to establish the truth", "The most important thing is to give compensation to the victims", "The most important thing is that we are alive and well", "The most important thing is that my side recognises that they have committed crimes."
- "My society is well advanced in the process of dealing with the past", "My society has not even begun the process", "My society has made small steps", "My society is dealing with the past on a daily basis."

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Some other possible statements:

- "Reconciliation is the highest priority for our societies", "Reconciliation is something you do not understand", "Reconciliation is important, but there are many more significant things", "Reconciliation is a concept imposed by the West", "Reconciliation is a concept imposed by different religions."
- "Victims should reconcile", "War veterans should reconcile", "States should reconcile", "I should reconcile", "Serbs and Croats should reconcile."

in mind that this can be a demanding exercise for some people because it requires transparent positioning in relation to a still troubling issue.

Dealing with the Past: Destructive and Constructive Approaches

Work in small groups (of 5-7 persons). The task is to talk about what they consider to be a destructive dealing with the past and to write wall sheets (flip-charts) on the subject. After a while (15-20 minutes) they receive an addition to the task, the question: What does it mean to deal constructively with the past?

A presentation follows along with questions for clarification.

Big Barometer: What Does (Not) Contribute to Dealing with the Past

An imagined barometer is in the middle of the working room, with the poles 'contributes to dealing with the past' and 'does not contribute to dealing with the past'.

The method *Big barometer* has already been described on p. 59.

Suggestions of issues:

- Economic cooperation in the region.
- Memorial stones on execution grounds and in concentration camps.
- Memorials to fallen soldiers.
- Celebrating the anniversary of the military operation 'Storm'.
- De-victimization.
- The influence of religious communities.
- The Hague Tribunal.
- The apologies of statesmen.
- War crime trials before domestic courts.
- Documentary films about the war(s).
- Work on trauma.
- Interethnic youth camps.
- The rulings of the International Hague Tribunal.
- Collective responsibility.
- Individualization of guilt.
- To ban nationalist parties.
- Amnesty in exchange for recognition.
- A ban on segregation in schools.
- Common soccer leagues.
- The Centre for Nonviolent Communication in Srebrenica.
- Pressure from the international community.
- Determining the exact number of victims.

Duration: 90-120 minutes

‘Hotels’

The task: “You play the role of participants in a peacebuilding training programme. You need to decide where the next phase of the training will be held. The trainers’ team will not facilitate this process.”

The trainers’ team offers three specific (existing) locations/ hotels and informs the participants about the specifics of each. There is a problem in connection to each place, for example, explicit interethnic tensions with occasional physical harassment, a previous unpleasant experience with local people due to the mixed composition of the participants’ group, the space served as a detention camp during the war, which is not even marked as such, etc. All three sites are in different parts of the former Yugoslavia and there is at least one person in the group coming from those areas.

Time for decision: 60 minutes. Evaluation and discussion in the plenary follow (with facilitation from the trainers’ team).

Duration: 90 minutes

***Note**: This exercise is designed for a training programme consisting of at least two phases, i.e. when it is evident that the group will meet again in the same composition. This makes the situation very real, and gives weight to the exercises, as participants are aware that this is not “just an exercise”, and that their decisions can have certain consequences, so they are less likely to resort to tactics of abstaining from criticism and avoiding difficult issues. It is quite a demanding exercise, which can cause a high emotional charge within the group, because people are often faced with their fears and have a responsibility to others to explain why they do not want to go to some places.*

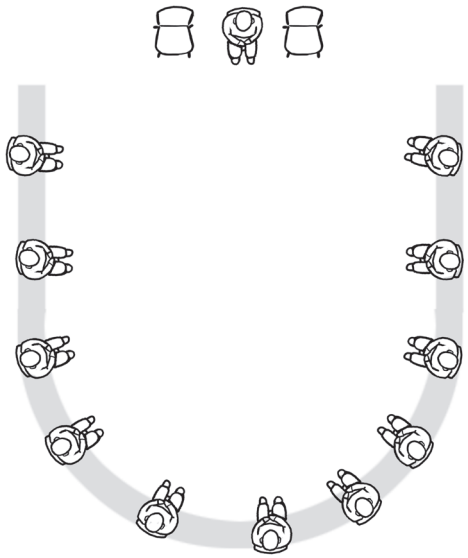
During the advanced training this exercise is generally done within the theme of ‘teamwork and decision-making’, with the aim of tackling the issues relevant to dealing with the past at the beginning of the training. But it can also function with the objective to introduce the social and political context in which we live, and the theme of peacebuilding and dealing with the past – but then the evaluation exercise does not focus on its decision-making dimension. However, it is very important to give people space for emotional evaluation after the exercise is done, or review how they experienced it, what affected them or what made them feel awkward. It is important that the space for de-briefing is secured immediately after the exercise, however short, and not to give in to the need to go immediately for a break (especially common with smokers).

Hot Seats: War and I

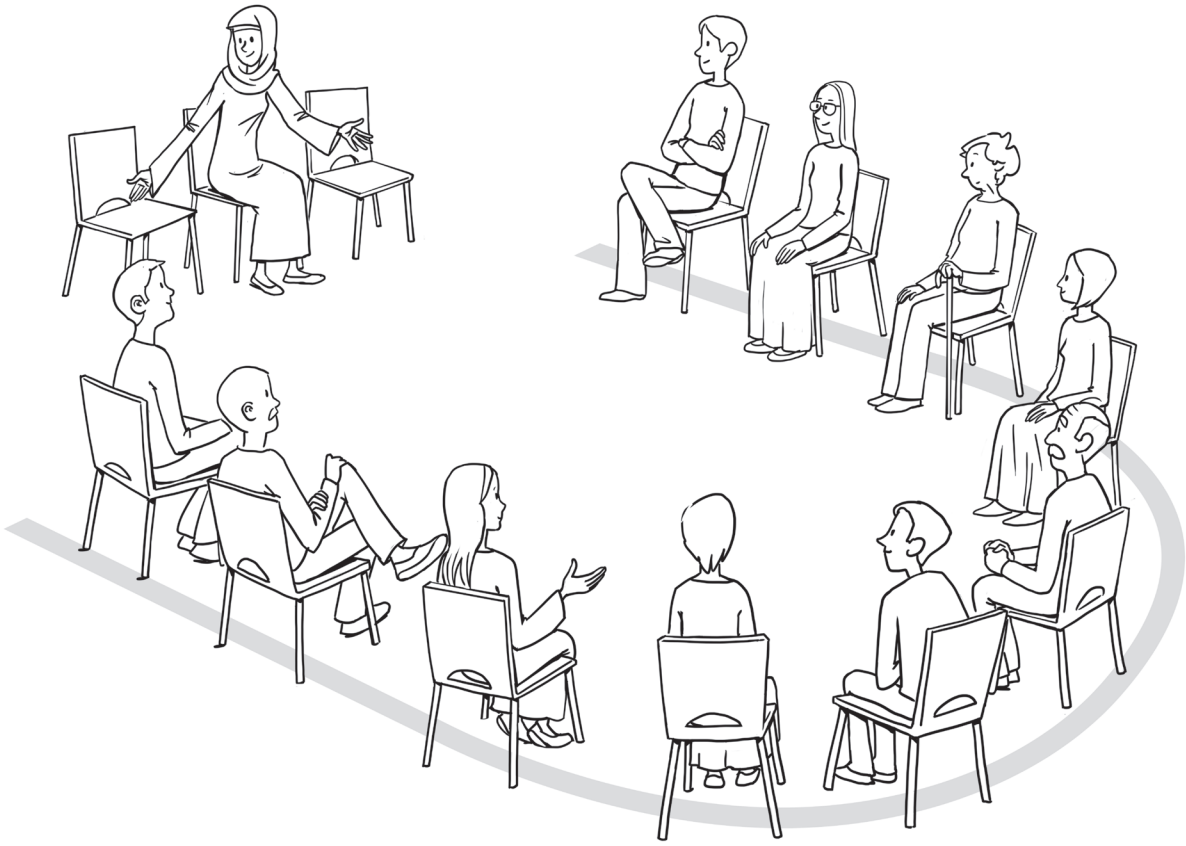
Everyone in the group gets a chance to share their story with the whole group, focusing on the subject: How has the war affected my life and me personally?

The *Hot seats* method is used: three chairs are separated from the others. Trainees sit in chairs, which are lined in the shape of a 'horseshoe' against the three chairs separated in front, so that the eye-line is direct. A volunteer takes a place in the central chair (it's the only chair intended for speaking to the group) and invites two people from the group to sit down on each side. Their role is just to sit there next to the person speaking, and to give them support through their physical presence. When a volunteer finishes his/her story on a given topic, s/he returns to his/her place in the group, and the centre seat should now be occupied by one of the people whose previous role was to provide support. Before they begin their story, s/he calls one particular person in the group to be his/her support and sit on the vacant place in the 'hot seats'. The process continues until all (including the training team) have had the opportunity of sharing their story with the others.

Duration: 90-120 minutes



***Note**: Participating in this exercise provides a unique opportunity to reflect on a story from the past and look at it from a very personal point of view. Sharing personal stories and listening to other people's stories requires a lot of energy and patience so it is very important to choose the right moment during the training for this activity; and it is good to introduce and encourage people to come forward with their stories. It may be helpful if the first person to tell their story is a member of the trainers' team or someone who has already had experience with this kind of exercise. In certain cases, this exercise can last a really long time. The 'hot seat' exercise usually has an amazing impact on people's sense of connection, and on their development of mutual understanding and empathy.*



Hot Seats: I'm sorry...

Everyone gets a chance to share their story with the whole

***Note**: If the training methods already included the 'hot seat' exercise, it may be better not to do this activity and if you judge that the issue is really important for this group of participants try to find some other method of tackling it.*

group, with the subject: “I’m sorry...” (It has to do with recent wars and the current state of affairs in terms of DWP).

Description of the *Hot seats* method is available in the previous exercise.

Stories About the War: What Bothers Me? What is Missing?

Participants are divided into small groups and talk about what bothers them in stories about the war, and what they find lacking in them. After an exchange in small groups, an exchange in the large group follows.

Denial – Justification – the Search for Truth

Participants are divided into three smaller groups, each working on a wall-sheet (flip-chart) examining one of the following types of behaviour in dealing with the past: denial, justification and the search for truth. While working in small groups, participants should give answers to the following questions: Who are the main actors in this process? Why are people using such an approach? What are the consequences of such an approach to society?

Upon completion of the work in small groups, flip-charts are presented for all three processes and the session is concluded in discussion in large group.

Duration: 45-60 minutes

How Our Societies Treat the Past

Talking in small groups (4-5 people) that have a regional, national, and age balance, focusing on the topic: How does your community refer to the past? What is talked about/ whispered about/kept silent? How do people react to stories of the past? How do you feel about all of this? What bothers you / what is lacking / what hurts?

Duration: 45-60 minutes

***Note**: This is one of the most convenient introductory exercises for the topic of dealing with the past. Participants get a chance to reflect on the situation in their own societies but also get acquainted with dominant processes in other environments when it comes to dealing with the past.*

What Would Constitute a Fair Dealing with the Past?

The group is divided into smaller groups according to national (or regional) origin. Each group is tasked with making presentations (wall-sheets, flip-charts) with the following topic: What is it that needs to be changed in the community where my people represent the majority and what would constitute a fair way of relating to the past, and a step towards reconciliation? Presentations follow.

Afterwards, all the presentations are made available and are approached by people who did not participate in preparing them (i.e. people from other countries). A new set of small groups is formed for the next part of the exercise. They add important notions that they think are left out from some of the papers, but in a different colour. Specifically, their task is to complement presentations with actions they consider necessary for those communities.

Then the completed presentations are displayed in the large group, along with a discussion of the key issues that have been raised. Comparison of the work done by both groups can also be very stimulating.

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: It is important to introduce this activity carefully, in particular the second part where instructions are given on how to further add to the presentations. Sometimes people can be uncomfortable commenting on presentations created by others, (often because they worry about disrupting relationships). So it is important to emphasise that the purpose of these exercises is to get feedback or constructive criticism from people from other regions because we have different notions of what it would be useful to do, based on different experiences and perceptions.*

Collective Narratives and the Recent Wars

Participants are divided into smaller groups, according to the countries they come from. The task is to write on flip-charts basic elements of the dominant collective narrative with regard to the wars of the 1990s.

A presentation in the plenary follows, with questions for clarification.

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: Prior to this exercise, it is necessary to clarify the concept of collective/historical narratives and how they relate to dealing with the past. This exercise can be a good way to get to know different contexts, as well as the ways in which our national collectives construct and describe themselves in relation to the hostile 'other'.*

Family Narratives

Everyone has 10 minutes to think about and write down as a reminder narratives that are commonly heard in their family about the Second World War and the recent wars of the 1990s. Additional questions: What has been your family's way of talking about the Second World War and recent wars? From whom did you hear the stories? Were there any differences between the narratives you heard and what were they? Who were the people of 'our side', and who were the 'others'? What are the images that existed about the latter?

Second step is exchange in small groups (of around 4-5 participants).

The plenary discussion that follows should begin with a kind of emotional evaluation, and then explore the real links between the dominant collective narrative and narratives of our families. Issues for discussion: Is there a connection between the narratives of the Second World War and recent wars? What was the relationship between family narratives and dominant narratives in society?

***Note**: As with previous exercises, there needs to be some theoretical input on the concept and importance of collective narratives. Both exercises can be done one after the other, or separately, depending on the needs.*

Duration: 60-90 minutes

When is a War Justified?

Participants work by themselves; they ponder and write their answers on a piece of paper. After some time, one by one, they

approach the board and read what they have written, placing their paper on the board.

A discussion in the plenary follows.

What Should We, As a Society, Remember?

Exercise starts with a division into smaller groups.

First Step: Making a presentation with the topic "What do we, as a society, remember (about the recent past)?"

Second Step: Making a presentation with the topic "What do we, as a society, need to remember?"

After presentations the exercise is followed by discussions in the plenary.

***Note**: The exercise may be extended by adding a question: In what way/How?*

Dealing with the Past: *Barometer Exercise*

Determine where the two poles in the room are. For example, one wall stands for a full agreement with a given statement and the opposite wall full disagreement with the statement. When the facilitator reads the statement, participants assume positions in the barometer, positioning themselves in line with how they feel about the statement – are they in agreement or disagreement (or possibly somewhere between the two extremes, as any position could be taken). Then, some participants get invited to explain why they have taken a particular position. We move from one end of the barometer to another. Then, an important instruction is given, and that is to not be influenced by what others have said, but to try to articulate their own views, without reference to the agreement or disagreement with others in the barometer.

Some possible statements:

- There is no such thing as collective responsibility.
- It would be best if international courts prosecuted war crimes.
- We must not forget our victims.
- One needs to forgive.
- There is only one truth.

Duration: 30-40 minutes

***Note**: If a participant begins to express their agreement or disagreement with something that was said during the barometer exercise, they need to be politely stopped and reminded of the rule that we can only express our opinions, without reference to other people's'. Barometer is not a moderated exercise and speakers are not asked additional questions.*

One should not go overboard with the number of statements, and even the number of people who give feedback for a single statement – the exercise should not take longer than 30-40 minutes, so that people do not become weary from standing up too long and stop listening to each other.

Dealing with the Past: *Aquarium Exercise*

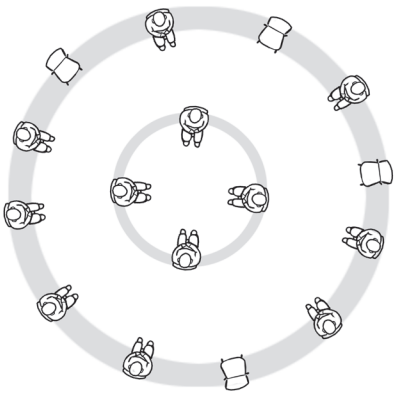
Four chairs are placed in the centre of the room, forming an imaginary aquarium. People who want to discuss the topic given occupy three of them and the fourth chair is reserved for those summoned into the aquarium by the other three. During the exercise, only those who are sitting in the 'aquarium' can speak. When someone else wants to talk, they approach the chairs and touch the shoulder of the person they wish to replace in the aquarium. The person can finish their sentence but has an obligation to stand up and give the seat to the new person.

Once a topic is specified, participants interested in discussing this topic can take a place in the aquarium. Generally speaking, three to five topics are discussed, but are considered one at a time. When one topic is wrapped up (or at the end of a designated time slot), the people who participated in the aquarium return to their seats and then a new topic is announced.

Some topics for the aquarium exercise:

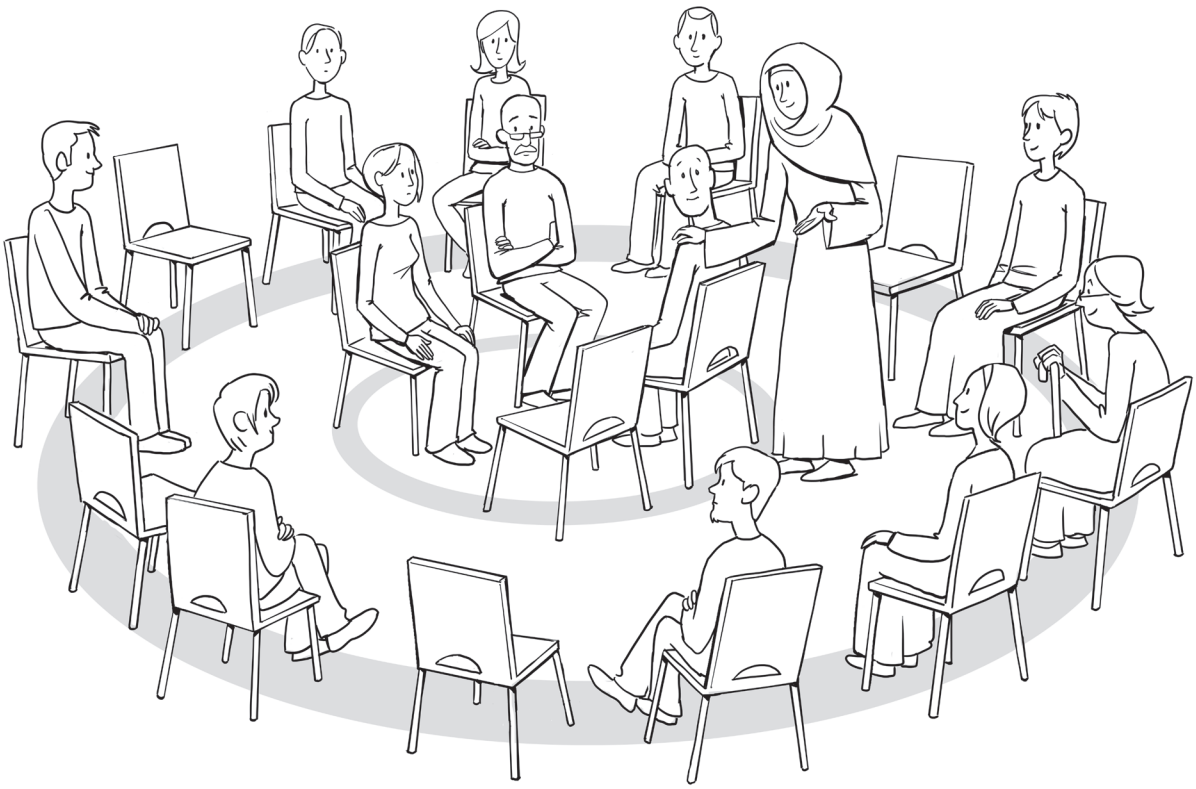
- The truth is more important than reconciliation.
- Dealing with the past should focus on your own community ('done in our own backyard').
- I feel responsible for what was done in the name of my people.
- Reconciliation is a matter of personal choice.
- National identities are an obstacle to reconciliation.
- The most important task of the process of dealing with the past is to condemn war criminals.
- Ones national identity determines one's attitude towards the past.
- If people were asked about it, this war would never have happen.
- People should criticise only their own side.
- Who is to blame for the war?
- I'm more affected by the suffering of my people.

Duration: 45 minutes



***Note**: The aquarium method is very good for encouraging open discussions during which participants express different views on certain issues. If the trainers' team judge that the group have a lot of conflicting views that are not clearly articulated, the aquarium could be very useful in bringing out of different positions within the group. It should be borne in mind that some groups are not comfortable with this method, and the timing of the exercise within the overall design of the training should be carefully considered.*

Each topic should be examined for at least 10 minutes. Since this discussion is not moderated, it may be useful to warn participants in advance and make an agreement that after 10 or 15 minutes have passed discussions will come to an end. In order for this restriction not to cause frustration, it is important to make it clear that the purpose of this exercise is to exchange and understand different opinions and not to define the correct answer or determine who is right and who is wrong.



Pros and Cons

The exercise starts with a division into three small groups.

First step. Question: What would people who are against meetings such as this one tell us? Listing and writing on large sheets of paper without discussion.

Second step. Each group is given a topic, and they write the pros and cons with relating to it. The topics are:

- Forgive but never forget.
- People are to blame for the war.
- Those who fought in the 90s, now work on reconciliation.

A presentation of wall-sheets created in step one follows and then of the wall-sheets created in step two of the exercise. These presentations inform the discussion in large group.

Duration: 120 minutes

***Note**: This exercise was designed during a training event for war veterans, who find the question "What would people who are against meetings such as this one tell us?" very relevant. The reason behind it is that these meetings are often not viewed favourably. At the end of the training it is useful and inspiring to ask the question: What would you say to those who are against such events?*

Dealing with the Past: the Society in Which I Live

Participants are divided into groups according to the countries from which they come. The task is to prepare a presentation on dealing with the past and the state of this process in the societies in which they live, by responding to one of the following questions relevant to the society.

Additional questions:

- The dominant narrative about the last war (recent wars) in five sentences.
- Your attitude towards the dominant narrative.
- What is the purpose of the process of dealing with the past in your society?
- What are the outcomes of this process?
- Who 'leads' the process (who takes the initiative)?
- Who is opposed? Why?
- The most important processes of DWP and the events that have had a significant impact.
- What was painful in this process for society as a whole?
- Is there a connection between DWP and the reconciliation process? (Who is supposed to reconcile with whom?)
- What, in your opinion, is lacking in the process of DWP?
- Are there lessons to be learned from the way DWP unfolds in your society?

Presentations in the plenary and questions for clarification follow.

Reconciliation and Me

Several large papers/ flipcharts are placed on the floor, each with one of the following questions:

- What is my biggest challenge in the reconciliation process?
- With whom and with what do I need to reconcile / build a relationship?
- Who needs to be reconciled and with whom?
- What and who do I need to/want to/can I forgive?
- From whom do I want and need forgiveness?

Participants approach the flipcharts and simultaneously write their answers and read what is written. After that a few moments are taken by everyone to look at what has been written on the papers.

***Note**: This exercise is especially useful for self-reflection, and for participants to examine their role in society, especially if the group is too eager to discuss socio-political processes but not to reflect on their own role and responsibility within them. Of course, these issues can be discussed in the plenary or in the smaller groups but it is sometimes useful to close the space for discussion and open it up for self-reflection.*

What Can I Do?

Several flipcharts on the floor, each with one of the following questions/captions:

- What can I do to contribute to DWP?
- What are my dilemmas and fears?
- Who are my opponents?
- Where is my support?

Participants approach the flipcharts and simultaneously write their answers and read what is written. After that a few moments are taken by everyone to look at what has been written.

The Heroes

Participants are asked to form small groups on the basis of their ethnicity: Albanians, Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Macedonians etc. Each group should list the national heroes of their communities (regardless of whether they personally see them as heroes or not). After finishing the work in small groups, each group reads out 'their' heroes, provides clarifications about insufficiently known names if needed and we complete the exercise with a plenary discussion.

***Note**: This exercise is very useful in understanding the dominant attitude towards history, national history and collective memory in our region, and provides an image of what is valued in a given society. It may be very useful in tackling the topic of 'national identity.'*

Some possible questions for discussion:

- How do you react to your list and the lists of other groups?
- How do you feel about these names; to what extent are they your personal 'heroes'?
- Is there a pattern according to which people become national heroes in our region?
- How is this related to the way in which our societies relate to the past?
- Why are there so few women on these lists?

Duration: 45 minutes

Another version of the exercise:

1. Personal heroes. Participants work by themselves, everyone thinks and writes down who their heroes were during childhood, and who are they now.
2. Going into smaller groups (consisting of people from various regions). A discussion takes place about the heroes that they have listed.

3. In small groups, participants list those considered to be heroes in our societies, on a large paper (flipchart).
4. Discussion in the plenary, impressions, comments.

Taboos

The whole group makes a brainstorming together, with the topic: What are the taboos that exist in our societies concerning the violent past.

After a comprehensive list is made a discussion in large group follows, with questions: Why are we silent about these things? Why are they difficult to talk about? Who or what makes them a taboo?

Variation: an exercise based on the same principle can be carried out in small groups, preceded by individual work, where every participant first considers the issues and writes down their answers on post-it notes, and then they form small groups for discussion.

Duration: 45 minutes

Memorialisation: the Monuments

First step. Brainstorming in the large group: What are monuments for, what purposes do they serve? Who do we make them for?

Second step. The board contains photographs of different monuments from the recent war. A short exhibition is staged, and everyone has a chance to look at the display.

Third step. Discussion in the plenary: How do you conceive these monuments and others that you know exist? What message is being sent? What kind of symbols do they contain? To what extent do they contribute to the memory of the victims? To what extent do they contribute to reconciliation – or not?

***Note**: If the inscriptions on the monuments cannot be seen well on the photos, they can be printed on the papers or indicated in other ways.*

Duration: 60 minutes

Another version of the exercise:

First step. In small groups discuss the function of the existing forms of memorialisation. Make wallpapers with the topic: What needs are met through this process? For whom ('us', 'them', sol-

diers, families of victims etc.) is the message intended? A presentation and discussions in large group follow.

Second step. The board features the photographs of monuments from recent wars. A short exhibition is staged, so that everyone has a chance to look at the display.

Third step. A discussion and writing on flipchart: problems we have with the existing methods of memorial placement and creation? Why? Then: What do you like about the existing monuments? Why?

Culture of Memory Before and After the Nineties

The exercise starts with a discussion in large group about the features of the culture of remembrance, before the nineties and after the wars respectively. One person from the trainers' team records the key features on a flipchart. Then we exchange possible dilemmas that we might have about them.

News from the Future

The following three news items dubbed 'news from the future' are read out:

1. An association of war veterans of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomed the ruling issued by the BIH Court for War Crimes which found the commander of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina guilty of war crimes. The association also condemned the statement of the Croatian member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina who commented: "This judgment is a punishment for the victims and a reward for the aggressors."

2. Today in Belgrade a delegation of war veterans from *Vojska Republike Srpke*[1] and the association *Udruženje boraca rata* from Serbia paid respects and laid wreaths on the monument to the victims of the genocide in Srebrenica and Prijedor, and then urged the authorities to support the programs of cross-border exchange of young people and the peace camp organised by the Veterans' Organization, the Organization for Human Rights and United historians of the Western Balkans. The invitation was hailed by numerous celebrities from the world of culture and sports, such as AD, Dejan Stanković, Edin Džeko, Novak Đoković, Danis Tanović, Jasmila

***Note**: The News must be compiled in such a way as to resonate with the group of participants. (This exercise was prepared for a particular and very specific group of war veterans). The aim is to rethink the obstacles to the processes that could contribute to reconciliation and peacebuilding in the region, and perhaps try to look at what can we do for such news to become more plausible and certain.*

1 The Army of Republika Srpska.

Žbanić, AD, Ljubiša Samardžić and AH. (Instead of the initials put the names of several people in the group and / or training team.)

3. The association HVIDR from Mostar issued a statement announcing that they, along with the Association of Detainees of Mostar, successfully completed a fundraising campaign to equip a memorial room preserving the memory of the prisoners in the Heliodrom camp, erected on the site of the former camp.

After reading the news, discussion in the plenary follows: How did you experience these news items? How do they sound, and why?

Duration: 30-45 minutes

Justice – Forgiveness – Truth – Reconciliation[1]

Participants are divided into four small groups: justice – forgiveness – truth – reconciliation. The task is to talk in groups and prepare a presentation with the topic: Why are you, as justice (truth, forgiveness or reconciliation), the most important component for the process of dealing with the past? Then one group presents its reasons and visions in plenary, and the rest of the group has the opportunity to ask questions that relate to their presentation. After completing the exercise, we find that the plenary discussion and review of each of these individual concepts, and their relationship to our social contexts, is very helpful.

Duration: 60 minutes

1 Amela and Randy Puljek-Shank taught us this exercise.

Justice – Forgiveness – Truth – Peace

Two participants in the group form a pair and are instructed to advocate one of the concepts: justice, forgiveness (or mercy), truth and peace. These are the four elements of the reconciliation process according to Lederach. They have ten minutes to prepare and find arguments why their concept (justice, forgiveness, truth and peace) is important for reconciliation.

Then one volunteer from the group gets the task of aligning one representative of each concept in their order of significance and placing them in the centre of the room. (The volunteer needs to assess priorities and determine their relevance based on their own estimate.) When comparing them, they have to explain to everyone why they chose a particular sequence. Afterwards, the representatives of the elements of reconciliation have a chance to say how they see their position, what place they think they should be in and why.

If you have sufficient time, it may be interesting to bring in another volunteer and provide them with a chance to make their own sequence or, more precisely, repeat the process, this time with other representatives of these concepts.

At the end, a brief discussion takes place in large group, and we steer the discussion towards examining our contexts (what is the status of these processes in our cultures, what is missing, what is emphasised etc.)

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: This exercise can contribute to a better understanding of these concepts, their meaning and importance, which is especially useful in political contexts such as ours, where these concepts are misunderstood, seen as identical, or even seen as contradictory. As the concepts are utilised on an abstract, conceptual level during the exercise, it is useful to leave time for discussion in the plenary session and review our context, because contextualization provides a better understanding of these concepts.*

It is recommended that two people represent one element because it is easier for them to prepare for the exercise in the process of reciprocal exchange (in some groups the task may be too overwhelming for one person). It may be useful to provide some insight into theoretical frameworks (e.g. a brief input on Lederach's understanding of these elements and his interpretation of their role in social processes), especially if we deal with a group where there is a lot of confusion about these terms.

Collage of the Past

The group is divided into three smaller groups. Each one receives several copies of different newspapers and political magazines from the countries in the region. The task is to find the headlines, articles and photos that deal with the wartime past in some way. Additional questions could be: What are the issues related to the past and how do we talk about them (the Hague tribunal, war crimes, commemorations etc.)? What kinds of attitudes are present? What is the image of the 'other'?

After working in small groups, participants present collages and a plenary discussion on the media landscape in former Yugoslavia follows.

Duration: 60 minutes

***Note**: The exercise is ideal when you specifically want to tackle the role and responsibility of the media in the process of dealing with the past but it may serve as a preliminary exercise to map the state of our society in this regard. This exercise has different dynamics and uses a different method than other exercises on this topic, so it may be particularly useful for work with younger groups. It is also helpful in moments when you need to change the 'rhythm' of the training for example due to exhaustion caused by overwhelming discussions and emotions.*

Declare That[1]

The facilitator asks the participants to sit down in a circle. When everyone is comfortable, procedures for the exercise and rules for discussion are set. The facilitator then reads the first question and gives his/her answer to it (no longer than 2 minutes). Then this question needs to be answered by the following person, and so on. Everyone has the right to 'pass' i.e. not answer the question.

Basic rules:

a) Speak on the basis of your own feelings and experiences, not on the basis of theories and attitudes.
b) The answers should be given in strict sequence, no random volunteering of answers.
c) The decision not to respond to a question is respected.
d) There is no discussion about something someone said – just listen.

***Note**: The goal is to provide a safe space for the participants, so that they can exchange some of their feelings and past experiences related to life in former Yugoslavia. It is important to take care of the time allotted when performing this exercise – leave participants with enough space to express themselves but make sure that the exercise does not escalate and go over the time scheduled.*

1 Based on the exercise "Telling it" in Mari Fitzduff. *Community Conflict Skills. A Handbook for Group Work in Northern Ireland*, third edition, 1997, p. 20.

e) Everything that is said is confidential.

Possible questions (in most cases it only takes three or four questions in one session, depending on the number of participants, the composition of the group, etc.):

1. When did you first become aware that there are is a difference between peoples who lived in former Yugoslavia?
2. What did your parents say in order to explain the problems surrounding this?
3. How did you feel during the dissolution of Yugoslavia?
4. When did you become aware that the war had started?
5. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your religious or national identity?
6. Have you ever felt ashamed or guilty because of your national or religious identity?

Questions for discussion:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- How hard was it just to listen without the right to interrupt or respond?
- Did some statements anger or confuse you?
- How hard was it to be truthful when answering? Why?

Variations: This exercise can work in pairs (participants get a list of questions and respond to them in pairs, for 10 minutes). Then new pairs are formed and talk to each other for the next 10 minutes. Also a completely new list of questions can be proposed by the participants and used for the group dialogue.

Duration: 90 minutes

Role Play – Stakeholders in Dealing With the Past

With the help of the trainers' team the group lists all the social groups that are relevant in public and political life (politicians, journalists, youth, NGOs, religious groups, veterans, teachers, etc.). As many social groups should be listed as possible, so that each one is represented by one or two participants. Then participants choose the group they want to represent during the exercise, with the name of the group they 'represent' placed on their chest.

The participants then position themselves in the room, in relation to its centre, with the centre being the nucleus of dealing with the past in our societies. Participants need to take a position in relation to the centre, depending on how much they think that 'their'

group engages and contributes to the process of dealing with the past.

Participants briefly explain why they occupy a particular position and then a discussion follows about who has (or should have) which role in the process.

Duration: 45 – 60 minutes

Glossary

An attempt to further explain some of the commonly used concepts in the theoretical and practical field of dealing with the past

Amnesty

Amnesty (from the Greek word *amnestia*, meaning forgetfulness) is a legal act by which a state exempts offenders from further liability and prosecution, and grants them the legal status of innocent people. Most often it collectively refers to a specific group of people. In the context of dealing with the past, it is a mechanism that is very disputed, particularly by victims and human rights activists. This standpoint is not surprising, given that this entails the state guaranteeing that those who have committed crimes will not be held liable before the courts and they are in some way forgiven for the crimes they committed.

Amnesty is usually granted in situations where it is necessary to stop armed violence that has been disrupting society for an extended period of time, in the case of a very large number of people being involved (in which case it is neither possible nor wise to prosecute because a good part of the society would have to face court charges); or in situations where society is in a grave need to leave the past behind and focus on a peaceful future.[1] Amnesty is a common pre-condition in peace negotiations, and often in the recent history we have seen examples of dictatorships granting amnesty prior to their departure from power, in order to avoid future legal prosecutions. Such are the cases of Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

In South Africa, a specific form of amnesty was introduced, that was not collective, but applied conditionally to individuals – it was granted to those who would come forward with information they had about crimes they were a part of, i.e. crimes that were proven to be politically motivated. The body in charge of amnesty was the ***Truth and Reconciliation Commission***; which was a unique example of a committee having such extensive jurisdiction. The state prosecutor's office, which investigated the atrocities, functioned in parallel with the Commission. Many offenders who were under intense investigation, resorted to applying for amnesty in order to save themselves from criminal prosecution. Unless the offender put forward the

1 In addition, amnesty is granted when there is a need to correct judicial violence occurring in the past. Pertaining to the region of the former Yugoslavia, Serbia has repeatedly granted amnesty for deserters and conscientious objectors (1996-2010). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia participants in the war have been amnestied but the amnesty did not include war crimes.

full truth before the Commission they would not be granted full amnesty but would still stand trial for the wrongdoing they did not initially disclose. Although this approach was highly criticised, and on many occasions understood as an unfair way of granting amnesty, it managed to reveal the truth about what happened and how, and gave an opportunity to many families to finally learn about how their loved ones died. In some cases families were even able to obtain information about the mortal remains of their loved ones.

After sixteen years of war in Mozambique, marked by horrible torture and other atrocities, such as the abuse of children who ended up as warriors, a general amnesty was declared for all those who committed inhumane acts during the war. The possibility of war crime trials was not even considered. It seems that the amnesty can be more widely accepted in a country where people were severely injured by war and that it becomes more important to commit to a new future. One religious leader explained this treatment of perpetrators who were scheduled to return to the community where they committed crimes:

> *Pointing fingers won't help. Perpetrators are a part of us. We believe they didn't want to go to war. They are our sons, and we want them back. To accuse them would mean that they would continue to be bandits.*[2]

Granting amnesty for crimes committed is not a popular practice, especially among those working for human rights, while the principle of punishing the perpetrators has very broad support. But there are voices like that of Helena Cobban, who argue that the long-term interests of these vulnerable societies are often better served by the established policies of amnesty, reconciliation and the reintegration of offenders.[3]

T.Š. & I.F.

Collective Memory and National Narratives

Memory of individuals is not isolated: it is always influenced by the environment/society in which the individual lives[4], and the 'collective memory'. Maurice Halbwachs even states that individual memory is not possible without words and ideas, as tools borrowed from society.[5] In other words, if there were no environment, or the society, there would be no individual memory. Also, memory is part of the personal, as well as collective identity.

Collective memory is a version of the past: how it is remembered by the members of society. It must contain symbols, narratives and myths. Some parts of collective memory have a limited lifespan – they change or even disappear through a simple change of generations. But this is not the case with the ***national memory***: it lasts longer and it is "anchored in the political institutions, which influences the society 'top down'. "[6]

2 Afiado Zunguza, cited by Helena Cobban. *Amnesty After Atrocity. Healing Nations After Genocide and War Crime* (Boulder, London: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), p. 218.

3 Helena Cobban. *Amnesty After Atrocity. Healing Nations After Genocide and War Crimes* (Boulder, London: Paradigm Publishers, 2007).

4 See Maurice Halbwachs. *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

5 Maurice Halbwachs. "Kolektivno i istorijsko pamćenje". In: *Reč: časopis za književnost i kulturu, i društvena pitanja*, no. 56.2, p. 63.

6 Aleida Assmann. *Duga senka prošlosti: Kultura sećanja i politika povesti* (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2011), p. 40.

Contrary to the popular notion of the nation as something natural, organic, given, and primordial, nations are, in fact, a modern socio-cultural and political phenomenon. For instance, Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an "imagined community."[7] Anthony D. Smith considers it to be a complex construct consisting of interconnected components: ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic, legal and political. The connection with the past, especially the ethnic past, is crucial to the nation – solidarity between the members of a nation is determined by common memories, myths and traditions, regardless of whether they have, or do not have, their 'own' state.[8] Ideological consciousness of belonging to the nation includes "... a complex set of themes about 'us', 'our country', 'nations' ('ours' and 'theirs'), the world, and the ethics of duty and honour."[9] Currently, the public education system and participation in rituals have a leading role in spreading the feeling of belonging to a nation.[10] Following the example of the "growing together" of the German nation after nearly fifty years of division into two states, Peter Sloterdijk claims that nations as we know them today are nothing but the effects of a collective psycho-acoustic drama, through which everything that is collectively listened to is fused into one, just as what is collectively read, collectively watched on TV, collectively informed and collectively feel excited.[11]

As for the former Yugoslavia, it should be noted that the term *nation* is used primarily for *an ethnic group*, not for the citizens of a country who have the same passport; parts of this group may actually live in different states.

In his famous lecture "What is a Nation?" given in 1882 Ernest Renan defined the nation as a spiritual principle represented by the rich heritage of shared memories, and a present-day agreement and desire to live together – the will to maintain the value of heritage. According to Renan, the national idea is based on the heroic past, great people and glory. He considers the nation is "a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future," and that the national memory thrives more on grieves than triumphs, because they impose duties, and require a common effort.[12] Dubravka Ugrešić points out that terror of memory is the method of national identity creation, which does not shy away from national megalomania, worshiping, myth-fabrication and absurd – therefore, it does not shy away from lies.[13]

Through narration memories take on a shape and structure that make them more stable.[14] So, the national memory consists of many national narratives, stories that are ever-present, which are usually familiar to most of the members of the nation, that are transmitted from generation to generation, changed over time if needed (and even forgotten if necessary), de-

7 See Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso 1983). Anderson argues that the political community is imagined for the following reason: even in case of the smallest nation its members will never meet, have never met, or will never even hear of most of the other members of the community, p. 5-7.

8 Anthony D. Smith. *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 15-16.

9 Michael Billig. *Banalni nacionalizam* (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2009), p. 19.

10 Assmann argues that the national memory is acquired by participating in rituals. Assmann. *A long shadow of the past*, p. 268-269.

11 Peter Sloterdijk. *Der starke Grund zusammen zu sein Sonderdruck: Erinnerungen an die Erfindung des Volkes*, 2 Auflage (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998), p. 27.

12 Ernest Renan. "What is a nation?" In: Homi Bhabha, ed. *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 19.

13 Dubravka Ugrešić. *Kultura laži: antipolitički eseji* (Beograd: Fabrika knjiga, 2008), p. 114.

14 Assmann. *A long shadow of the past*, p. 24.

scribing the nation, its relation to an important historical event, and even the emotions involved. These are stories that act as the connective tissue for countless individuals who are interrelated but will probably never meet. Or, as Sabrina Ramet says:

> *The common historical narrative, which covers common myths, common characters, a common cause and a common hatred, is what binds a community. It is, moreover, a prerequisite for the condition of national unity.*[15]

Each group has its own narratives that promote a sense of uniqueness and the special destiny of the group. National identity and national narratives together form an unbreakable bond, because identity is constructed, approximated and maintained through the narrative, and their link helps to define the boundaries and differences between members of one ethnic group and the 'others' who are often perceived as a foreign, hostile threat to the entire group. Narratives are focused on national suffering, national heroes, and defining core values and standards with which the nation is identified and which are therefore promoted.

Knowing national and ethnic narratives may be essential for understanding the causes of a violent past but also in working to build a peaceful future. In periods of protracted conflicts, nations tend to teach their children their own narratives as the only proper ones. Enemy's narratives are completely ignored or represented as flawed and unfair.[16]

Conflicting narratives are particularly problematic and potentially dangerous in societies recovering from a war-torn past. The tension between the narratives seriously jeopardises efforts to deal with the past and build a lasting peace. As far as the situation in the Balkans goes, Assmann is quite right when she says that, as long as the asymmetry of painful memories continues, and two sides have opposing perspectives – the war continues.[17] Or, to quote Ramet:

> *This* does not *mean that in a multi-ethnic state, narratives of constituent nationalities must be brought to the point of becoming virtually identical. This means that, to make a long-term multi-ethnic state stable, it is necessary that the historical narratives of constituent peoples have to be free from mutual hatred, recrimination and blame, so that people do not adopt narratives, in which each is defined as an enemy.*[18]

I.F. & T.Š.

15 Sabrina P. Ramet. "Srpska i hrvatska povijesna naracija". In: *Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva*, Vol. 3, br. 1, svibanj 2007, p. 300.

16 Julie Chaitin. "Narratives and Storytelling." In: Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess (eds.) *Beyond Intractability.*Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: July 2003 www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/narratives [Last access August 5, 2013].

17 Assmann. *A long shadow of the past*, p. 85.

18 Sabrina P. Ramet. "Srpska i hrvatska povijesna naracija". In: *Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva*, Vol. 3, br. 1, svibanj 2007, p. 302.

Denial

According to Stanley Cohen, author of the book *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering*, the most common use of the term denial refers to the preservation of the social worlds in which an undesirable situation (an event, situation, phenomenon) is not recognised, ignored or presented as normal.[19] Other authors, such as Eviatar Zerubavel, use terms like 'conspiracy of silence' to describe a situation in which people collectively ignore something that everyone is aware of individually.[20] The silence, particularly one after mass atrocities has different actors and interests at work. Both victims and perpetrators may wish to normalise their lives after massive crimes, for very different reasons. The perpetrators deliberately support, create and maintain silence in order, on the one hand, to avoid the consequences (legal and any other) and, on the other, save their human face despite the brutality of what they have done. Victims want to preserve their humanity in spite of the suffering, humiliation and dehumanization that they have survived. Silent witnesses keep quiet because it frees them from uncomfortable questions about their responsibility for their own inaction in the preparation and implementation of the crime.[21]

Individuals, groups, society as a whole, and the state are in denial when they are given information that is so unpleasant, threatening or anomalous that they find it impossible to embrace it fully and openly acknowledge it as true. Because of this, the information is in some way suppressed, denied, pushed aside or re-interpreted. Sometimes most of the information is registered merely as fact but the implications – cognitive, emotional, and moral – are avoided, neutralised or rationalised.[22] If we are at the same time aware and unaware of some things, this implies a certain amount of denial,[23] and individuals and whole societies can be found in the state "in which we simultaneously know and do not know".[24]

Depending on what is denied, Cohen defines three types of denial. *Literal* denial is what you do when you do not acknowledge a fact – when we say that something did not happen, regardless of whether we really do not know anything about the incident, deliberately lie, or use unconscious defence mechanisms. *Interpretative* denial is when we accept certain facts, but assign a different meaning, or use euphemisms. For instance, claiming that 'there was no ethnic cleansing', instead people left by themselves, nobody forced them, or when the civilian casualties are dubbed 'collateral damage'. *Implicatory* denial is when we accept certain facts that something had happened, and even the interpretation of what happened, but we refuse to accept that it has anything to do with us. We use excuses such as "Ordinary people cannot influence that", "Someone else will take care of it" etc. For example, when we know that children are being exploited in the production of shoes we buy and wear, that they have inhuman working hours, inadequate health insurance, and do not get the opportunity to be educated

19 Stanley Cohen. *Stanje poricanja: Znati za zlodela i patnje* (Beograd: Samizdat B92, 2003), p. 89.

20 Eviatar Zerubavel. "The social sound of silence: Toward a sociology of denial." In: Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Ruth Ginio and Jay Winter, eds. *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011), p. 32.

21 See: Dan Bar-On. *The Indescribable and the Indiscussable. Reconstructing Human Discourse After Trauma* (Central European University Press, Budapest, 1999)

22 Cohen, p. 23.

23 Zerubavel p. 32.

24 Cohen, p. 27.

yet we continue to buy these shoes and support the company because we imply that it has nothing to do with us or that we simply cannot influence it to change things.[25]

It is important to understand that collective denial is always *socially constructed*. Acceptance of collective silence has generated widespread feelings of shame, pain or fear and the group pressure that arises from a situation of joint participation in a 'conspiracy of silence' is a very effective tool in combating undesirable and inconvenient questions. Paradoxically, the more people are involved in the conspiracy of silence (or pretend not to know something that is common knowledge), the more likely it will be that the silence becomes 'more resilient' and the state of denial persists longer. Cohen argues that the intervention, or disturbance of the state of denial, is less likely if: accountability is dispersed (or a lot of people testify to an event directly or indirectly, and the responsibility for reacting shifts from one person to another); we are not able to identify with the victim (because they belong to a different ethnicity, race, religion – namely, the victim is perceived as less worthy, or has lost its humanity in the process of dehumanization) and when we cannot conceive of successful intervention (i.e. when every effort we can make seems futile and pointless).[26]

However, according to Jay Winter, silence about an event never lasts forever, and the "unspeakable and unspoken rarely remain fixed".[27] Collective silence inevitably disintegrates due to various factors, such as the passage of time, changes in socio-political relations, and action of so-called 'agents of memory' in the public sphere, who insist on tackling difficult issues, and persist in it, sometimes for decades.

T.Š.

Ethnic Cleansing

Ethnic cleansing is a term that entered the political and public discourse in the 1990s, more precisely, during and in connection with the wars in former Yugoslavia. The most frequently cited definition of ethnic cleansing states that it is a policy of one ethnic or religious group designed to remove another ethnic or religious group from a given area in a violent or intimidating manner. Another meaning is: rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by force or intimidation in order to eliminate members of other groups from the area.[28] Balkan aggressors directed ethnic cleansing by means of mass killing of civilians, rape and sexual abuse, torture, bombing of cities, persecution, destruction of mosques and churches, the confiscation of property, imprisonment of people in camps, and other crimes.

In literature one can find that the term *ethnic cleansing* even has its origin in the Serbo-Croatian language. However, the Balkan aggressors are not the creators of this practice. It has, unfortunately, been around for centuries: there are claims that it dates back to the pre-Christian era. In the 19th century the main actor behind these kinds of atrocities appears to be the state. The following statistics on ethnic cleansing are illustrative: in the years between the two world

25 *Ibid*, p. 30-33.

26 See: Cohen, p. 40.

27 Jay Winter. "Thinking About Silence." In: Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Ruth Ginio and Jay Winter, eds. *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011), p. 23.

28 Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts Established pursuant to security Council Resolution 780 (1992), S/1994/674, p. 33.

wars, and this only in Europe, 1.5 million Greeks were 'cleansed' from Turkey, 400 000 Turks and 100 000 Bulgarians from Greece, 35 000 Greeks and 67 000 Turks from Bulgaria. During the Second World War and after 6 million Jews were 'cleansed' from Europe, 110 000 Romanians from Bulgaria, 62 000 Bulgarians in Romania, 1.2 million Poles from the region under the control of the German Reich, 600 000 people of 'suspicious' ethnicity from the regions of the Soviet Union, between 14 and 15 million Germans from Eastern Europe (including Yugoslavia), 140 000 Italians from Yugoslavia, 31 000 Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, 33 000 Slovaks from Hungary, 45 000 Turkish Cypriots from the Greek part of Cyprus, 160 000 Greek Cypriots from the Turkish part of the Cyprus, more than 300 000 Bulgarians from Turkey.[29] And this list is not exhaustive.

Jennifer Jackson Preece argues that the aim of ethnic cleansing is the creation of a homogeneous or 'pure' mono-ethnic state.[30] The process of 'cleaning' is, in fact, a process of liberation from filth. To that end, it corresponds with the very understanding that other ethnic and/or religious groups are something dirty and polluting: this pollution and filthiness are so deep and definitional of 'the whole tribe' that they cannot be remedied by mere washing but only by forcibly removing or murdering them.

I.F.

Enemy Images

Enemy images are all those traits, characteristics, behaviours, and even jokes and anecdotes attributed to 'the other', the collective – our common enemy. These images become necessary in order to experience someone (or some group) as an enemy, and they underpin the creation and maintenance of hostility. Hostility, and therefore the enemy, are creations, they are a social construct that can later develop into a real threat. As Sam Keen says, "In the beginning we create the enemy. Before the weapon, comes the image."[31] The enemy would not be an enemy if he didn't instil some kind of fear in us, and because of that, traits and behaviours need to be attributed to him, that are frightening and socially unacceptable in our cultural context. It is necessary to dehumanise the enemy, see him as being inhumane. The war is never waged against the people, but 'the enemy' who is the personification of evil. It is often enough that the feelings of danger and fear escalate for one of the sides to attack first out of the need to defend itself – and the cycle of violence starts to gain momentum.

War propaganda engages in a hyper-production of enemy images. However, these images have a role only in times of war. For many leaders, but also the ideologies of conflict, it is useful to cultivate a collective enemy, because it facilitates the work of the government, and mass manipulation. The script can be the following: "No, we can not think about the bad social conditions (unemployment/poverty/hunger) now that the enemy is about to attack or threaten our order/identity/liberty etc.", "now is the time to be united", "the homeland is calling us" and so on.

29 Jennifer Jackson Preece. "Ethnic Cleansing as an Instrument of Nation-State Creation: Changing State Practices and Evolving Legal Norms." In: *Human Rights Quarterly* 20, 1998, p. 818-819.

30 *Ibid*.

31 Sam Keen. Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination (Cambridge: Harper & Row, 1986), p. 10.

Many enemy images emerge from a tragic experience, conflict, and war. We cannot say these experiences are invented or constructed. The construct is 'the enemy', created and nurtured through images: attribution of threatening behaviour and characteristics to an entire group (or groups of people) who may have only one connection with real criminals – and that is belonging to a group, ethnic, national, or political. Such images are particularly difficult to deconstruct because they are based on a real, painful experience, regardless of the fact that they are projected onto people who are not part of that experience.

Investing effort in deconstruction and rendering enemy images meaningless is by definition peacebuilding. Keen would say that our efforts to understand the archetypes of the images of the enemy and the psychology of enmity might protect us from countless illusions and from painful mistakes. "It can save us from dehumanizing ourselves by dehumanizing our enemies."[32]

I.F.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the concept that has probably stirred most controversy, especially when it comes to large-scale violence, or even genocide. At the very least it is a concept about which there is no consensus among scholars – on what exactly it means and what it involves. It is often equated with reconciliation. Some argue that there is no forgiveness without reconciliation and lasting peace, others that it is immoral, or even impossible, to expect forgiveness from those that have endured great suffering, while others regard it as purely a religious concept that is applicable to a religious community, and so on.

We cannot say that forgiveness as a concept has been clearly defined, though it exists in many religions with centuries-old traditions. Some even view it as one of the fundamental values, at least in the monotheistic religions: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. There is an understanding of God as merciful and forgiving. In the Qur'an, forgiveness is mentioned in many verses; in Christianity there is an understanding that to forgive makes us closer to God; and in Judaism the ability to forgive is one of the divine qualities. Therefore these religions have great potential for the promotion of the concept of forgiveness. However, it might seem that the undoubtedly present concept of forgiveness is often selectively applied when it comes to those who are perceived as enemies, non-believers or infidels. Another criticism of the religious concept of forgiveness is, on the other hand, that it can easily become a means to calm and pacify believers who could revolt against a particular injustice[33].

The search for forgiveness and apology are often equated and considered identical. Johan Galtung describes the difference in his own simple way:

32 *Ibid*, p. 181.

33 See Marc Gopin. "Forgiveness as an Element of Conflict Resolution in Religious Cultures: Walking the Tightrope of Reconciliation and Justice." In Mohammed Abu-Nimer, ed. *Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence: Theory and Practice* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2001), p. 87-99

"I apologize" = "I wish what I did undone and promise, no more"

"I accept your apology" = "I believe what you say, let's go on"

"Please forgive me" = "Please release me from my guilt to you"

"I forgive you" = "I hereby release you from your guilt to me"[34]

Galtung argues that the accused must in some way deserve to be forgiven. Minow believes that forgiveness without good reason means accepting the violation and devaluation of the self.[35] Often true repentance is seen as a prerequisite for absolution. It's probably hard to forgive someone who does not repent for his or her evil deeds, while forgiveness seems very conceivable if the offender repents. This applies when the situation is black-and-white and when we perceive it as black-and-white: the victim is the victim, and the offender is the offender (such a division would make life and reasoning easier). However, the context is often a bit (or much more) complex and it may happen that the offender has previously been a victim of the current victim, or he has a perception that he was a victim because members of the group he belongs to were victims, or he was forced to commit a transgression, or he was not aware that his particular act would have such consequences, that he did not intend to do harm but it was a coincidence, etc. Even in these situations, when it comes to horrific violence and/or great loss, it may be understandable that the victim cannot forgive.

Many understand forgiveness as a process that takes place between the victim and the perpetrator. However, Andrew Rigby argues it is a personal process that does not even require the participation of those who have committed evil deeds and the perpetrators do not even have to know about the process.[36] Rigby's understanding of forgiveness is a bit 'vague'; for him it is a process that happens when people find a way to deal with their loss for the sake of peace, when they are ready to continue life, to let go of the past and forget the desire for revenge. He believes that it is necessary to allow some time to pass, so that people can begin to develop the capacity for forgiveness: first to "forgive the past" in order to overcome the old hatred and the desire to "settle scores," then, as the capacity increases, to forgive the 'other' by discovering signs of humanity in those who are hated and despised. Rigby argues:

> *At the core of such a difficult process is the capacity to distinguish between the perpetrator and their deeds, and this in turn requires some recognition of the humanity of the other, however difficult this might be. But it is in this acknowledgement of our common humanity that the seeds of a shared future lie.*[37]

Forgiveness is a process that goes hand in hand with reconciliation, and partly overlaps with it. Ugo Vlaisavljević says: "Reconciliation does not mean anything other than giving a human face to a brute."[38]

I.F.

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34 Johan Galtung. "After Violence, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, and Resolution: Coping with Visible and Invisible Effects of War and Violence." In Mohammed Abu-Nimer, ed. Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence, p.7.

35 Martha Minow. *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History After Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), p. 17.

36 Andrew Rigby. "Forgiving the Past: Paths Towards a Culture of Reconciliation." Paper presented at the *IPRA Conference*. Tampere, Finland: August, 2000

37 *Ibid*.

38 Ugo Vlaisavljević. "Pomirenje kao najveća potreba i najveća opasnost." Lecture delivered at Blagaj, Bosnia and Herzegovina on June 19th 2011, as part of the "Step further in Peacebuilding. Values and Practices" program. See the documentation for the module "Do we need a reconciliation? Opportunities, challenges and obstacles." Center for Nonviolent Action, 2011.

Genocide

Genocide is an offence or a crime committed against an entire group of people (ethnic, religious, racial or national) with the aim of destroying it. *The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9th December 1948 as General Assembly Resolution 260 and entered into force on 12th January 1951. The Convention[39] provides an international legal definition of genocide, according to which the act of genocide encompasses the atrocities listed below, committed with the intent to completely or partially destroy a national, ethnic, racial or a religious group: a) Killing members of the group; b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; c) Deliberately inflicting living conditions on the group calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Parties to this Convention undertake to prevent and punish genocide.

The official text of the Convention does not include political groups among the defined groups that may be the victims of genocide, although there was a proposal to include those as well.

Genocide is primarily a crime that is planned, organised and coordinated; it is never unexpected or spontaneous. It is characterised by a pronounced asymmetry of power and the distinct helplessness of the victims. An important determinant for an act to be classified as genocide is the existence of genocidal intent, which is, at the same time, difficult to prove legally. As a form of extreme destruction, it is the last step in a continuous process of devastation. According to Gregory Stanton, genocide is a process that develops in eight stages: classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, persecution, extermination and denial.[40] The stages are predictable, but not inevitable – and by using preventive measures, the process can be stopped. The process is not lineal, although later stages necessarily come after the initial ones. All stages continue to operate throughout the process. The very act of annihilation is preceded with hate propaganda, which dehumanises certain groups, mobilises the general public against the 'common enemy' and justifies drastic measures such as deprivation of civil rights, persecution and murder. Its function is to label future victims of extermination as social outcasts who do not come under the scope of the common moral norms, to present them as inferior beings who do not need to be shown any consideration and to deprive them of their fundamental determinant – their human nature.

Examples of genocide in human history are numerous, from the genocide of Armenians in the early 20th century, through to the most infamous of them, the Holocaust, then the colonial crimes, to genocide at the end of the twentieth century, in Rwanda and Srebrenica.

While the term ***cultural genocide*** has not been legally adopted; it is used to describe an attempt to destroy the culture of an entire group of people. There are many examples of cultural genocide throughout history, when the traces of a culture in a certain area were systematically

39 General Assembly of the United Nations. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. Resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December in 1948. Available at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/genocide.htm [Last access August 4, 2013].

40 Stanton, Gregory H. "The 8 Stages of Genocide". *Genocide Watch*, in 1998. Available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/genocide/8stagesofgenocide.html [Last access August 4, 2013].

destroyed. This term is not mentioned in the 1948 UN Convention, although it is included in the definition where it refers to forceful transfer of children to another group. In recent years, this term has often been associated with Tibet and the systematic policy of colonization and oppression of the local population by the Chinese government and in South-Eastern Turkey where the Kurdish majority is still being denied collective rights, starting from the use of their language. An example very familiar to us is from the war in Bosnia: during the war on the territory controlled by the army of Republic of Srpska, Bosniak culture was systematically destroyed by blowing up mosques, even in localities outside the theatre of war. It is evidenced by the fact that, at the end of the war, only a single mosque remained intact.[41]

N.V.

Guilt and Responsibility

Guilt and responsibility are terms that are, at least in the post-Yugoslav region, often equated: in part because people are often confused but also because the blurring of the meaning of these terms is very useful for a number of nationalist narratives and myths. We have often seen instances of accusing the whole nation for war and war crimes, but also instances of hiding behind the whole nation. The most telling example is the slogan "We are all Ratko Mladić", in the Serbian version, or "We are all Mirko Norac" in Croatia, where certain groups of people show solidarity with generals accused of war crimes before the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. This expression of solidarity and celebration goes hand in hand with the defendant denying that crimes were committed, or their justification. Such an approach contributes to the continuation and further fuelling of prejudice, and proliferation of enemies on all sides, as well as the atmosphere of mistrust and fear. It also most certainly contributes to the implicit attitude described by Hannah Arendt: "If we are all to blame, then no one is to blame."[42]

Reflecting on the question of guilt and personal responsibility for the Nazi regime and its crimes after the Second World War, German philosopher Karl Jaspers argued that we should distinguish between four concepts of guilt:[43]

1. *Criminal liability*, to which the perpetrators of the crime are subject.
2. *Political guilt*, resting on the citizens of the state, because "every citizen bears some responsibility for their own government,"[44] and because they have allowed such a regime to exist.
3. *Moral guilt* by resting on every individual for his or her actions, even in the case of following executive orders. It depends on the existence of conscience and repentance. Jaspers argues that individuals are morally guilty "if they are capable of repentance, if they knew, or had reason to know and yet took the road that was misguided – whether they easily turned a blind eye, or have allowed themselves to be seduced

41 The mosque in the village of Baljvine, Mrkonjić Grad.

42 Hannah Arendt. "Kolektivna odgovornost" In: Daša Duhaček, and Obrad Savić (eds.), *Zatočenici zla: Zaveštanje Hane Arent* (Beograd: Beogradski krug, 2002), p. 19.

43 See Karl Japers. *Pitanje krivice* (Beograd: SamizdatFreeB92, 1999).

44 *Ibid*, p. 21.

and intoxicated, or they were bought with the privileges it brought them: whether they succumbed to fear."[45]

4. *Metaphysical guilt*, which is based on the existence of solidarity among people due to their joint accountability for the existence of injustice in the world. Jaspers argues: "If I don't do everything within my power to prevent them, I am in part to blame."[46]

In the field of peacebuilding, the term guilt usually refers only to Jaspers' first category: only the one who has committed crimes may be guilty (including the order to commit the crime, complicity, the offender's cover-up, and other offences defined by law.) There is no collective guilt. But there is a collective responsibility – the responsibility of the society or community for events in the society. Or, as the Israeli writer Amos Oz wrote:

> *I never believed in collective guilt which I regard as a monstrous concept, but I do believe in collective responsibility. Guilt and responsibility are, of course, totally different concepts. Guilt calls for atonement and sometimes for punishment. Responsibility means the need to mend, amend or compensate the victims for the crimes committed by the group or the collective as such.*[47]

As individuals, we are responsible for who our political representatives are, what kind of laws we have, what values are represented, what is the treatment of minorities and marginalised groups like whether education is available, and so on. And of course we bear the responsibility for the war (what did we do to stop it?) and peace (what do we do to secure a life in peace, for ourselves and our neighbours?).

I.F.

Lustration

This word comes from the Latin word *lustratio*, which means purification. The modern political meaning of lustration is related to one of the ways in which societies that have undergone brutal and prolonged human rights violations, mass atrocities, etc. may deal with their past and overcome its difficult legacy. It is a widely accepted definition that lustration involves denial of the civil right to be elected as political representative and/or hold a state office, to those who have supported crimes and human rights violations, or enabled them through their actions. As examples of countries that have implemented lustration in order to break with the previous regime, the so-called countries of the Eastern Bloc are often referred to: the Democratic Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland.

Professor of Law Stevan Lilić believes that lustration is an "ethical category, and refers to one's accountability for supporting the repressive policies of a particular regime. It neither implies, nor excludes other forms of accountability."[48] According to Žarko Puhovski:

45 *Ibid*, p. 50.

46 *Ibid*, p. 22.

47 Amos Oz. "Guilt and responsibility". In: *Reč*, June 9th 1999. Available at: www.b92.net/casopis_rec/arhiva/ozeng.html [Last access August 4, 2013].

48 Stevan Lilić. "Lustracija da ili ne?", *Danas*, 06.11.2001

Lustration is not punishment in the judicial sense, because that must be done elsewhere. Lustration should mean a public and moral disqualification of people who supported evil regimes, while at the same time not being having their life endangered.[49]

Lustration has an ethical and psychological dimension that helps to create a demarcation line from the previous historical period marked by severe human rights violations, and this is most often stated as its advantage. It can help the new government gain credibility and legitimacy and make a clear distance from the previous regime, thus commencing a new period based on the rule of law and democracy.

The most important objection to the process of lustration refers to the inability to establish and implement clear criteria[50] on the basis of which someone should be subjected to lustration. One difficulty in the implementation of lustration is the need to rely on data collected during the totalitarian regime, whose authenticity and accuracy is difficult to determine unambiguously. As a mechanism of collective demand for accountability, it can be a means of retaliation based on unverified or unverifiable information, it can encompass innocent people and widen the gap between antagonistic groups, which can be fatal for the future of a particular society or community.

T.Š.

Places of Memory and Memorialization

Places of remembrance include the sites of atrocities and those places that have been erected and/or maintained in order to preserve the memory of terrible events of the past.

Memorialization, in the strict sense of the word, is a marking of public space with tangible reminders (monuments, museums, memorial plates, etc.) of important events of the past, central historical events, or personalities relevant to the context of the geographic area in which they are located. In a broader sense, it includes other forms of materialization of public memory: cultural productions (literature, film, visual arts, music, etc.), establishment of a Memorial Day, commemoration, etc. which all aim to preserve the memory in a particular, politically determined, way. Memorialization aims to materialise the collective memory of the time in which it is created and to construct a permanent future collective memory of a historical event and period.

Memorialization is an institutionalised form of memory which is reflected in the dominant historical discourse and its form determines how the culture of memory is owned or perpetuated within the region and period to which it belongs.

Monuments constitute a material trace, the outcome of the politics of memory; they are the result of the dominant discourse and exist thanks to political will, engaging and/ or consulting witnesses, victims, artists, politicians and the general public who participated in the process of design.

49 Quoted in Sabina Čabaravdić. "Lustracija izostala na Balkanu", *Radio Slobodna Evropa*, 23.05.2010, available at: www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/tema_sedmice_lustracija/2050239.html [Last access August 4, 2013].

50 There is a law in Serbia, that was never used because of this fact.

In contrast to our language, the German language features different terms: one for the monuments that were erected in the memory of specific achievements and/or deserving individuals – *Denkmal*[51]; and monuments whose role is to remind and warn of dire events – *Mahnmal* (monuments of warning).

N.V.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is one of the fundamental concepts used in the context of dealing with the past. It is also a term that causes disagreement and controversy, both among theorists and among practitioners, i.e. activists around the world who work in societies recovering from mass human rights violations in the past. As noted by David Bloomfield, the importance of this concept is generally recognised, while at the same time there is great disagreement about what reconciliation really means and how it is related to other concepts and processes, such as justice, peacebuilding, democratization and political development.[52]

The initial dilemma concerns the very essence of the concept of reconciliation – is it a process, or the final outcome of various processes in society? If reconciliation is understood as a process, the next question is what does the process involve and what is the timeframe? Understood as the outcome, and as a final state after several processes, the issue of reconciliation opens up new dilemmas about what a 'reconciled society' is and what it looks like, how do we know we have achieved this goal, how can we measure the level of reconciliation, and how realistic is it to set such an agenda as a goal?

The second set of issues is related to the values tied up with the concept and the process of reconciliation – is it really a necessary precondition for political recovery and democratic development of divided societies? Can the same results apply to the inter-personal and collective levels? Must it include as an inherent, mandatory element the controversial notion of ***forgiveness***? Does reconciliation happen at the expense of knowing the truth and achieving a satisfactory degree of justice for the victims of various forms of violence in the past?

Understanding the concept of reconciliation as juxtaposed with the context of peace puts an emphasis on building relationships in a society that is harshly divided. John Paul Lederach sees such reconciliation as a process that aims to build and heal "the torn fabric of interpersonal and community lives and relationships."[53] The reconciliation process is focused on the future. According to Lederach, the main task and the main contribution of reconciliation is "to seek innovative ways to create a time and place, within various levels of the affected population, to address, integrate, and embrace the painful past and the necessary shared future as a means of dealing with the present."[54] He also argues that the reconciliation process has four basic elements that are interrelated and influence each other: peace, justice, truth and mercy.[55]

51 Literally *Denk-mal*, would mean "think!" (*Denken* = to think).

52 David Bloomfield, "On Good Terms: Clarifying Reconciliation." In: *Berghof Report* no. 14, October 2006, p. 3.

53 John Paul Lederach. "Civil Society and Reconciliation." In: CA Crocker *et al*. (eds.). *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict* (Washington DC: USIP, 2001), p. 842.

54 John Paul Lederach. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1997), p. 35.

55 See Lederach. "Civil Society and Reconciliation".

Reconciliation is often understood as a complex process involving four interconnected main instruments: the process of healing for survivors, some form of *retributive* or *restorative justice*, truth-seeking and its public recognition, and ***reparations***[56]. The prevailing opinion in the examination and conceptualization of the concept of reconciliation is that it is necessary for these elements to be well connected and in line with each other and that the reconciliation which promotes the position, 'whatever happened – belongs in the past' cannot be a good approach for severely anguished societies. However, practical examples from different parts of the world show that there are constant tensions between these elements. In many societies, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, the public space is a site of lively debate about whether a given society is in greater need of truth or reconciliation, whether justice or peace should have the primacy, whether the reconciliation should be initiated by the State and its institutions (called a 'top-down' approach), or whether it should start from the citizens as the main actors in this process (the *so-called* 'bottom-up' approach). A public proclamation of reconciliation as a process that seeks to instil harmony between opposing groups, and that insists on forgiveness as the prerequisite for peaceful coexistence in the future, elicits particularly strong reactions, especially among some of the victims.

Aptly noting that such settings are actually a burden on this very important process, Bloomfield suggests differentiation of reconciliation as "a *process of rebuilding the relationships* that occur on an interpersonal level and that involves complex psychological processes of *political reconciliation*, which he determines as a more pragmatic and less ambitious process that includes development of effective working relations."[57] According to him, political reconciliation does not require forgiveness, or any kind of mutual love between the former enemies but rather starts with a minimum of co-existence and "gradually nurturing basic respect both for new institutions and for former enemies, aims to develop the habits of operating the shared processes and institutions of society and of politics."[58]

According to Dan Bar-On, the concept of reconciliation is based on the belief that in addition to the legal and political agreement that come top-down, it is necessary to have the educational and social-psychological processes that emerge bottom-up, during which former enemies will let go of hatred, desire for revenge, mistrust and pain, as well as the identity that was created during the conflict. It is expected that new identities be created, along with new relationships between former enemies, and that they will return to the roots of the conflict, and not just its unfortunate outcome. This also reduces the risk of renewed violence. Bar-On also notes that each conflict has its own biography, and it is very difficult to translate post-conflict experience from one context to another. This implies the need constantly to re-examine the extent to which something relevant to one context can also be relevant to another.[59]

T.Š.

56 See David Bloomfield, Teresa Barnes and Luc Huyse (eds.). *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict: A Handbook* (Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2003).

57 David Bloomfield. "On Good Terms: Clarifying Reconciliation," p. 29.

58 *Ibid*.

59 See Dan Bar-On. "Reconciliation revisited: For more empirical and conceptual clarity". Lecture held at the Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University of Sarajevo, 2005. Available at: www.war-crimes-genocide-memories.org/fajlovi/lectures/02_lectures__danBarOn.pdf [Last access August 4, 2013].

Reparations

In the context of transitional justice and dealing with the past, reparations are a mechanism for compensation to civilian victims whose human rights were seriously violated by the government. The goal is to achieve a kind of justice for the victims.

In our region, this mechanism has not taken root. For example, in Serbia, where there is no reparations program, the victims tried to access right to redress in court proceedings against the Republic of Serbia, by "referring to the state's liability for the acts of members of its armed forces."[60] These procedures are typically initiated by human rights organizations on behalf of the victims and the victims alone rarely engage in action "out of fear, lack of confidence in the courts, and because of the high legal fees for lawyers."[61]

The UN Resolution 60/147, which, among other things, defines forms of compensation, determines the victim's right to compensation but also defines the term 'victim' as the subject entitled to reparation. According to it, victims are persons who

> *Individually or collectively suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that constitute gross violations of international human rights law, or serious violations of international humanitarian law. Where appropriate, and in accordance with domestic law, the term 'victim' also includes the immediate family or dependants of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization.*[62]

This Resolution also stipulates forms of reparation to victims:

- *Restitution* refers to measures which "restore the victim to the original situation before the gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law occurred" (principle 19). Examples of restitution include: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one's place of residence, restoration of employment and return of property.
- *Compensation*: "should be provided for any economically assessable damage, as appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation and the circumstances of each case" (principle 20). The damage giving rise to compensation may result from physical or mental harm; lost opportunities, including employment, education and social benefits; moral damage; costs required for legal or expert assistance, medicine and medical services, and psychological and social services.
- *Rehabilitation* includes medical and psychological care, as well as legal and social services (principle 21).
- *Satisfaction* includes a broad range of measures, from those aiming at cessation of violations to truth seeking, the search for the disappeared, the recovery and the reburial of remains, public apologies, judicial and administrative sanctions, commemoration, and human rights training (principle 22).

60 Nataša Kandić (ed.). *Materijalne reparacije za povrede ljudskih prava u prošlosti: Praksa sudova u Republici Srbiji* (Beograd: Fond za humanitarno pravo, 2011), p. 3.

61 *Ibid.*

62 *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law.* UN General Assembly Resolution 60/147 of 16 December 2005

- *Guarantees of non-repetition* comprise broad structural measures of a policy nature such as institutional reforms aiming at civilian control over military and security forces, strengthening judicial independence, the protection of human rights defenders, the promotion of human rights standards in public service, law enforcement, the media, industry and psychological and social services (principle 23).

I.F.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a concept of justice within the criminal justice system which started developing rapidly from the 1970s. It is based on the traditions of tribal and indigenous communities of Africa, North America, Australia and New Zealand and the elements of restorative justice are probably as old as the first human socio-political communities. The concept is based on a critique of the classical model of ***retributive justice*** according to which an offence is primarily a violation of a particular legal norm and the state and its criminal justice system are tasked with protecting the norm by punishing the offenders. By contrast, the process of restorative justice is based on the belief that the crime violates not only the legislation, but primarily the basic rights of the victim and the values of the community or society. Therefore great attention is placed on the victim actively engaging in processing the crime, a more compassionate treatment of the perpetrators and a chance for the community to participate in the process of repairing the damage, rehabilitation and re-socialization of offenders and their victims.

The concept of restorative justice is understood in a number of different ways, so there are multiple definitions of the term. For instance, Tony Marshall accepts that restorative justice is "a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future."[63]

Restorative justice is based on four basic principles: "1) the principle of personalism, i.e. understanding crime primarily as a violation of people and interpersonal relationships, 2) the principle of repairing damage caused by a crime, 3) the principle of participation (perpetrators, victims and the wider community), and 4) the principle of reintegration."[64]

Today, the principles of restorative justice are applied in a number of countries around the world, in different contexts and with a somewhat different understanding of the priorities within this concept (whether the restorative process is more important, or whether attention should be paid to the outcomes of the process). Both the UN and other international organizations recommend the practical deployment of this concept, which can be utilised in a wide range of social problems – from dealing with the problem of juvenile delinquency to recovery and peacebuilding in divided societies that have experienced war, mass atrocities and genocide. In the context of such societies, the application of restorative justice can be of very great importance, especially when we have in mind that this concept does not advocate the establishment or rejection of accountability, but rather its acceptance by the defendant

63 Tony Marshall. *Restorative Justice: An Overview* (London: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate, 1999), p. 5.

64 Sanja Ćopić. "Pojam i osnovni principi restorativne pravde". In: *Temida*, May 2007, p. 31.

for the crimes he or she committed and an attempt to repair the damage done to the victims and the community at large. Restorative justice also increases the opportunity for the active participation of all stakeholders, and mutual understanding between victims and perpetrators.

Deploying this concept in practice is often criticised as a process that actually leads to the avoidance of punishment for misdeeds committed. Advocates of restorative justice dismiss this criticism, arguing that it has a positive impact on the communities in which some forms of restorative justice have been applied. One such model, frequently mentioned in the literature, are the *Gacaca* courts in Rwanda, which played an important role in the process of transitional justice in that country that survived genocide.

T.Š.

Retributive Justice

Retributive justice is a concept based on the belief that individuals responsible for breaking the law should get what they deserve and be punished for their crimes. The logic of punishment, which is at the root of this concept, implies that punishment restores balance in the legal and moral order, which is disrupted by the crime committed.

In the context of dealing with the past, retributive justice involves identification, arrest, organizing lawsuits, judgments and sentences for those responsible for committing, designing or abetting the crimes and serious violations of human rights. Certainly the most famous and most studied example of retributive justice in recent history, is the famous Nuremberg trials conducted in 1945 and 1946, during which the most responsible officials of the German Nazi regime were on trial for crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes against peace. The last two decades have seen the establishment of two international courts that prosecute war crimes, one in the former Yugoslavia (the Tribunal in the Hague was founded in 1993), and the other in Rwanda (a court based in Arusha, Tanzania was founded in late 1994).

Advocates of restorative justice often cite the following reasons in support of putting those responsible for war crimes on trial: a) deterring future potential offenders from committing crimes, b) individualization of guilt c) deterrence and prevention of possible acts of revenge and taking justice into one's own hands; d) undermining the culture of impunity and supporting the re-establishment of moral and legal order. According to Martha Minow, the emphasis on personal responsibility offers a way to avoid the cycle of blame that leads to reprisals, recriminations, and ethnic and national conflicts.[65]

Criticisms of this approach are also numerous and varied, ranging from criticism of the core values of retributive justice, to how trials are organised, to critical analysis of their impact on the wider community and the broader process of facing the past, truth-seeking and reconciliation. Some of the most frequently cited objections are: blurred boundaries between the trial and resorting to acts of revenge that can affect other innocent people; politicization of the judicial process and entire court systems (i.e. their exposure to political influence and pressure, particularly from the most powerful and richest countries that are often the main sponsors of the courts); selectivity in choosing which offenders should be tried (and the fact that a large percentage of perpetrators remain beyond the reach of this kind of justice); and

65 Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness.*

the retroactive nature of the process (the accused can be tried on the basis of norms and procedures that previously did not exist). In addition, there is criticism concerning the very high costs of litigation, problematic treatment of victims and survivors during court proceedings; and limited options for re-creating the whole truth about the events of the past. Criticism of this approach, especially by those who take issue with too much focus on the perpetrators, thus losing sight of the victim's perspective, has led to the development of the concept and practice of ***restorative justice***.

Despite many shortcomings, war crime trials are an important contribution to dealing with the past. Although trials do not focus on restoration of relationships, nor attempt to heal an individual or a collective, because reconciliation is not their primary purpose, they can at least provide identification of facts. For other processes it is necessary to resort to other available mechanisms and instruments.

T.Š.

The Culture and the Politics of Memory

The politics of memory sets the ideological and value framework for collective memory. It is usually the product of a dominant position within a particular group's discourse of collective memory, which is a "hegemonic view of the past imposed by the ruling group."[66] In our region, there are rare examples of the establishment of an alternative politics of memory, which are mainly in conflict with the dominant value system. Politics of memory aims to chart the horizons of memory, to identify and appoint its own central historical events of the epoch, and to define them in terms of value; therefore it articulates a lesson for the future that the society needs to remember. To that extent, it is not unusual that there exist different politics of memory: in a society of free expression, there are different ideological and value orientations expressed publicly. By contrast, authoritarian regimes cannot tolerate the existence of different discourses. "The past is a means of governing, because stories reinforce the authority and create a social meaning."[67]

There are at least two possible ways of understanding the culture of memory. The first is the one that assumes that culture memory is imbued, and defined with ideological content, and categorised according to it. The same interests that guide the groups who are the stakeholders of remembrance also guide the way memory is used to create the present. This idea of cultural memory is quite close to the concept of an 'official politics of memory'.

Another way of understanding the politics of memory involves a greater shift away from the *content*, and describes *the ways* in which we, as a society, a collective – remember. Different groups have different dominant narratives, existing as a simplified and generalised content of memory and therefore constitute a different kind of politics of memory, although they belong to the same cultural pattern, i.e. the same culture of remembrance. These forms can even be uncritically taken from the ideology of domination that was defeated in the past and is defined as malicious and hostile in the present. The culture of memory is largely independent

66 Todor Kuljić. *Kultura sećanja: Teorijska objašnjenja upotrebe prošlosti* (Beograd: Čigoja štampa, 2006), p. 9.

67 *Ibid*, p. 10.

from the politics of memory; it is a collection of forms through which the politics of memory is implemented and that can be a focus of conflicting content. One example of this would be monuments to the national heroes who took part in the wars of the 1990s, where different parties celebrate individuals who are perceived as criminals by the other side. The form is the same, the cultural pattern is identical, the folklore environment is prepared in the same way and only the content is a bit altered – by replacing a criminal of one ethnic origin with another of a different ethnic background. In these terms we could say that in the former Yugoslavia memory culture is a machine owned by the state and that by pressing different buttons the card can emerge from the machine printed with different motifs, by a variety of authors, but authors trained in the same place, the cards printed with the same technique, on the same type of material, with the same size, the same duration and meant to be consumed in the same way.

The culture of memory in itself has only a limited impact on the politics of memory, so alternative cultural models that differ from the dominant, for example commemorations held at prohibited locations[68] or poetry that engages with the sufferings of the war, may be hijacked by those who promote hatred. Neither the particular form used, nor its content, in themselves determine the use to which they are put.

N.V.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

In 1993 the United Nations Security Council established the ICTY in response to the massive human rights violations and mass atrocities that occurred during the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The seat of the Court is in the Netherlands (Hague), and it was established as an *ad hoc* tribunal whose activity should come to close in 2014.

The jurisdiction of the court extends to those individuals most responsible for the design, ordering and committing of war crimes between 1991-2001 in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Indictments were filed against more than 160 people, and the main focus was on the prosecution of people who had the highest military and government positions. To date more than 60 people have been convicted of crimes that they committed and 30 individuals are still facing judicial procedures that are at different stages of completion.[69] Indictments against the so-called mid-level perpetrators will be dispatched to the state courts for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia once the tribunal ceases its activities.

Since its establishment, the Tribunal has provoked a variety of contrary reactions from the publics in the countries of former Yugoslavia. Support for its work coming from top government officials has been weak, or at least not sufficiently direct and transparent. Criticism, on the other hand, came from a variety of sources – from the nationalists, who saw the court as a threat to their own people, by those in legal circles and other experts who felt that the ICTY has made a number of drastic, even unforgivable oversights, mistakes and bad decisions.

68 Places where local authorities do not allow the placement of memorials for victims.

69 Data pulled from the official website of the ICTY: www.icty.org/sections/OMKSJ [Last access August 4, 2013].

The Tribunal sees its own accomplishments as: calling the leaders to account (and ending the tradition of impunity for war crimes); its insistence on pursuing justice for the victims, facilitating the voices of victims to be heard, gathering facts about the crimes, the development of international law and strengthening the rule of law.[70] The fact that all the arrest warrants ever issued by the ICTY have been carried through is also often cited as a success. The Tribunal has certainly made a step forward and contributed to international law in terms of recognizing rape and sexual violence in war as a form of torture and a war crime.

Criticism of the tribunal includes: perceived political bias on the basis of alleged ethnic prejudice, belated and insufficient communication with the publics in post-Yugoslav states, dissatisfaction with the sentencing policy (especially pronounced among the survivors of the war who find many sentences inadequate and too short), lack of contribution to the democratic transformation of the societies in the region of former Yugoslavia, as well as sluggish work and susceptibility to a variety of political influences.

T.Š.

Transitional Justice

The term transitional justice[71] encompasses a set of instruments and mechanisms (judicial and extra-judicial) by which societies affected by armed conflict, severe and persistent human rights violations, and crimes organised by a former regime, try to cope with a difficult past legacy, achieve democratic rule of law, and prevent further cases of violence. Two basic principles of this approach are the individual responsibility for atrocities, and compensation for victims of these crimes. The definition of transitional justice given by the *International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)* emphasises that "the victims have a full right to: see the criminals punished, know the truth, and obtain redress."[72]

The origins of the concept of transitional justice can be traced back to the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the first international war crimes courts (courts established at Nuremberg and Tokyo). The concept stared its rapid development in the 1970s, and by the 1990s a full recognition of this approach was achieved, and different models can be found in many countries across South America, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Balkans, etc.

The legal framework of transitional justice stipulates five fundamental obligations of the state, in order to ensure the fight against impunity and protection of human rights:

1. The state is obliged to take all necessary measures to prevent human rights violations.
2. If a failure to protect human rights occurs, the state has an obligation to effectively investigate all allegations of crimes.
3. The state is obliged to identify who the victims and the perpetrators are.

70 According to the website of the ICTY, www.icty.org/sid/324 [Last access August 4, 2013].

71 In this case, the term transition refers to the process of transition and transformation of the social system from the time of authoritarian rule or time of war, to a democratic system.

72 The International Center for Transitional Justice, www.ictj.org/about/transitional-justice [Last access August 4, 2013].

4. The state is obliged to prosecute all those who are suspected to have ordered and personally committed the crimes and to organise an efficient and fair judicial process.
5. The state is required to develop programmes of reparations for victims, for the suffering they endured, in order to limit the consequences of the crime and to grant all aspects of justice.[73]

The traditional definition of transitional justice distinguishes four basic mechanisms by which the state seeks to fulfil the aforementioned obligations:

- Criminal prosecution for crimes
- Reparations/compensations to victims
- Institutional reforms
- Truth-seeking and identification of evidence (coming forward with it and/or publicising)

However, the development of transitional justice over the past half-century indicates that overcoming the consequences of authoritarian and/or totalitarian regimes requires what might be called the socialization of legal proceedings.[74] Some measures have a wider social context, such as public apologies by legitimate political representatives, the establishment of memorial institutions, the introduction of gender justice, the establishment of Commissions for Truth and Reconciliation, etc. They require a concerted action from not only legal institutions but also the rest of society; the media, educational institutions and academic structures, including official public statements from the political elite and the like.

Most advocates of transitional justice highlight the importance of a holistic approach to this multi-disciplinary concept, emphasizing that no mechanism "can achieve the objectives of transitional justice independently. All stated mechanisms have their advantages and disadvantages, and none by itself is sufficient to erase the consequences of the crime completely, or to achieve all the goals. We need to establish an integrated approach and ensure that activities are carried out simultaneously."[75]

T.Š.

Truth Commission

Truth Commissions are bodies set up by the governments of countries, which have, in their distant or recent past, been faced with repressive and dictatorial regimes; armed conflicts, civil wars and other cases of serious and massive violations of human rights. The first truth commissions were established during the 1980s in Latin America, while the best known and most influential Commission is believed to be South Africa's *Truth and Reconciliation Commission – TRC*, established in July 1995. In the last few decades more than 20 truth commissions

73 Dragan M. Popović. *Vodič kroz tranzicijsku pravdu u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: UNDP BiH, 2009), p. 16.

74 Videti: Vesna Rakić-Vodinelić. "Uvod u tranzicionu pravdu: osnovni pojmovi." In: *Genero: Časopis za feminističku teoriju*, No. 10/11, 2007

75 Dragan M. Popović. *Vodič kroz tranzicijsku pravdu*, p. 16.

have been established all over the world, with different objectives, mandates and social influence. Ideally Truth Commissions should enjoy the full support of the executive, legislative and judicial powers, so to be able to fulfil its mandate smoothly. In reality, however, the Commissions are subject to various types of pressure and adverse social and political circumstances that hinder their work and often annihilate the essential contribution of the Commission – which is its work of *seeking* and *recognizing* the truth about the violence of the past.

Truth commissions are considered one of the main mechanisms of ***transitional justice***, and their objectives are multiple and complex. Priscilla B. Hayner has outlined five key tasks/objectives of Truth Commissions: a) to identify, clarify and formally recognise violations in the past, b) to respond to the special needs of victims, c) to contribute to justice and accountability, d) to outline present institutional responsibility and recommend reforms and, e) to promote reconciliation and reduce disputes over the past.

Martha Minow, on the other hand, lists a number of objectives that different Truth Commissions have sought to fulfil, to a greater or lesser extent: overcoming denial and gaining public recognition of crimes, collection of facts and ensuring minimum visibility and accountability of perpetrators of crimes; stopping, prevention and transformation of violence, strengthening the basis for a democratic system; supporting the legitimacy and stability of the new regime; promoting reconciliation along the lines of division; promoting psychological healing; restoring the dignity of victims, punishment, exclusion, shaming of the perpetrators; ensuring that the escalation of violence is never repeated; contribution to the establishment of international efforts that should prevent and respond to aggression, torture and crimes.[76]

Very often, the establishment of Truth Commissions is seen in terms of the features and scope of ***retributive justice*** in a particular socio-political context, and their scope and validity are compared and evaluated in relation to the achievements that retributive justice mechanisms have (or could have) in that society. Therefore it is important to emphasise that Truth Commissions have a different focus, mechanisms, methodologies and procedures from those used in judicial prosecution of suspects of crimes and violence in the past. In the work of a Truth Commission, the most important difference is the focus on the victim (as opposed to trials that focus on the alleged perpetrator), and his or her testimony. A Commission generally takes the testimonies of a large number of victims and survivors, which are then analysed in order to discover the basic patterns in how the crimes were planned, ordered, carried out and concealed. A very important element of their work consists in publishing the collected facts, either by publishing extensive reports, as was the case in Brazil and Argentina or through public hearings, as in the case of South Africa. In such a way victims receive public recognition for the suffering they have endured, and further atrocities and denial of the past are discouraged. In some cases, a Commission serves as a stimulus to initiate legal proceedings against those responsible for the crimes.

Like all other mechanisms of dealing with the past, the establishment and operations of Truth Commissions incorporate a number of dilemmas and controversies of which the most common is – what is the relationship between truth finding and reconciliation, that is, does the truth lead to reconciliation? How grounded is the assumption that digging for the truth and providing opportunities for victims to speak brings about healing, or 'cathartic' experience?[77] Certainly, the biggest controversy that has followed the work of many Truth Commis-

76 Martha Minow. *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, p. 88.

77 Pricilla B. Hayner. *Neizrecive istine: Suočavanje sa državnim terorom i zverstvima* (Beograd: Samizdat B92, 2003), p. 21.

sions is the connection of these bodies to ***amnesty*** granted to those responsible for crimes and other violence in the past.

In the region of the former Yugoslavia, there is an initiative to institute a regional commission that would aim to establish the facts about war crimes and other serious human rights violations committed in the period 1991 to 2001. A coalition comprised of a large number of civil society organizations across the region is behind this initiative.[78] At the moment, it seems very unlikely that the states in the region will support it and establish such a commission, but time will tell.

T.Š.

Victimization

The basic meaning of the term *victimization* refers to the process in which individuals or groups are victims of direct or structural violence (discrimination, humiliation or violation of basic human rights). These are examples of *primary* victimization. *Secondary* victimization occurs if the victim continues to suffer abuse and stigmatization within his or her environment, after already experiencing violence: for example from the police and the court system, after they report a crime or from their own family and peers. Then there are *direct* and *indirect* victims. Direct victims are those individuals who suffered violence, while the indirect victims may be their family members or friends, witnesses of the events, even the family of perpetrators who carry trauma, or suffer other consequences of the violence.

In the aftermath of war and large-scale violence, identification of victims, acknowledgment of their suffering and loss, and the possibility of compensation or reparation for the pain they suffered is essential for the process of dealing with a violent past and building lasting peace. It is especially important to individualise the victims and provide the necessary psychological and social rehabilitation.

The second meaning of the term victimization refers to the process in which an entire group takes on the identity of the victims of the violence; even though the violence was experienced by some of the members and not the whole group. This process is called *collective victimization* or *collective self-victimization*. This phenomenon is a common consequence of prolonged violent conflict or widespread violence. When the group focus on the evil, injustice, suffering and atrocities committed by the enemy, they see themselves as righteous, moral and humane and easily reach the conclusion that they themselves are the victims. This understanding entails the belief that the conflict was imposed by the opponent, "who not only fights for unjust goals, but also uses immoral means to achieve these goals".[79] As a rule taking on the role of the victim shifts the responsibility for the conflict and retaliation against the enemy puts us on a moral high ground and provides justification for continuing the fight against the enemy. There are many functions and effects of assuming the role of a victim.[80] An increase in nationalist and

78 For more information see the website of the Coalition for RECOM www.zarekom.org [Last access August 4, 2013].

79 Daniel Bar-Tal. "Societal beliefs in times of intractable conflict: The Israeli case." In: *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 9, 1998: 22-50.

80 See Daniel Bar-Tal *et al*. "A sense of self-perceived collective victimhood in intractable conflicts." In: *International Red Cross Review*, Vol. 91, No. 877, June 2009: 229-277.

patriotic feelings, the growth of potential for mobilization and readiness to sacrifice for the sake of a higher goal, 'preventive' attacks on opponents, and even crimes against those who are perceived as enemies are just some of the items on the list. These are ideal conditions for those who are perceived as victims to become perpetrators. When people are convinced that they are morally superior, or righteous, they are able to commit incredible crimes.[81]

The role of the victim becomes an integral part of the group identity, and as Ian Buruma states, identity is increasingly based on a "pseudoreligion of victimhood".[82] It becomes the connective tissue of the community. Another consequence of this self-image based on the "mythically hyperbolised role of the victim" is that the group becomes insensitive to the suffering of others.[83] Collective victimization is often coupled with the process of competition among the victims for the status of 'the biggest' victim. This is especially true of societies where enemy divisions, geographical and mental, continue to permeate the society even after the war. In our post-Yugoslav post-war context, it is evident that there is a considerable lack of sensitivity for the direct victims, unless they are needed for some reason. Diane Enns aptly points out: "where all are victims no one is a victim."[84] Thus, the insistence on collective victimization may result in not recognizing or minimizing the suffering of the direct victims of violence, which may lead to their further victimization (secondary victimization), or as Kenan Efendic says:

> *It is clear that the most painful product of war is the victim and their trauma, but the trauma is always individual and the victim is always an individual, however ethno-nationalist centres of power elevate trauma to the level of the community/collective, where the individual victim becomes depersonalised and disenfranchised, because it is precisely the victim who needs psychological and existential rehabilitation, as well as legal and equitable redress. In parallel with the process of elevating trauma and pain of the individual to the collective, the responsibility for the crime also rises from the level of the individual and the political and military complex onto the other level, their collective, which is in fact a continuation of the war in what is formally peacetime.*[85]

This collective victimization embedded in the identity of the group can be transmitted from generation to generation. That is, the group could harbour trauma not due to difficult experiences that the whole group or some of its members had but due to traumatic events experienced by its ancestors. Vamik Volkan dubs this phenomenon as *chosen trauma*.[86] This phenomenon does not entail merely remembering the suffering from the past but is in fact a common mental representation of a past tragic event, which includes realistic information about the event, as well as very intense feelings.[87] The feeling of great humiliation and injustice that a group can share is dangerous, because it prevents individuals and the whole group

81 Diane Enns. *The Violence of victimhood* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), p. 37-62.

82 Ian Buruma. "The Joys and Perils of victimhood." In *The New York Review*, Vol. 46, No. 6, 1999, p. 6.

83 Assmann. *A long shadow of the past*, p. 97.

84 Diane Enns. "Identity and victimhood. Questions for Conflict Management Practice" in *Berghof Occasional Paper* No. 28, May 2007, p. 3.

85 Kenan Efendić. "Tri skice za tekući Potop." In: *(sic!) časopis za po-etička istraživanja i djelovanja*, 25.06.2010, p. 54.

86 See, for instance, Vamik Volkan. *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997).

87 One of the most famous examples of chosen trauma refers to the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, and the importance of the Kosovo myth in the construction of the national identity of the Serbs.

from grieving their losses in a constructive way or transforming conflicts that are associated with the trauma. At the individual level, the traumatised person becomes obsessed with his or her own victimization, without any catharsis or overcoming of past experience. When victimization in the past becomes a focus of chauvinistic narrative of national martyrdom and past victimization, it can serve as a justification for violence in the present, against the group that is seen as responsible for the victimization in the past, and can therefore perpetuate the circle of victimization, fear, and 'righteous' vengeance.

Volkan notes that leaders intuitively know how to reactivate particular trauma, especially when groups are in conflict or if there has been a drastic change and there is a need to re-affirm and strengthen group identity.[88]

In conclusion, collective victimization is a ticking time bomb if it is used for manipulation, if its effect is underestimated and neglected or if we do not engage in deconstructing it. This is definitely one of the priority tasks in the work of peacebuilding.

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88 Vamik Volkan. "Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity." In: *Group Analysis*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2001, p. 88.

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