



Repatriation as a Part of Reconstructive Process in Torture Survivors (Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Process)

Commissioned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency



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Made in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency



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Background

The International Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims - IRCT, Zagreb was founded in 1993 as a non-profit multicultural NGO under auspices of IRCT Copenhagen and since 1997 it is functioning independently as non-profit NGO. The war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina brought a need for organized psychosocial and medical care for refugees and displaced persons, which was answered by foundation of IRCT Zagreb. Among the 3000 refugees and their families about 20% victims of torture. The victims of torture and their families became the Centre's primary focus in rehabilitation efforts, including concern for psychological and medical care and treatment as well as in helping the refugees establish an immediate and positive social milieu. The rehabilitation activities of the Centre have taken place in Zagreb and the surrounding area. Approximately 1,500 clients, themselves victims of torture and their family members, have benefited from the services each year.

Introduction

There are some ideas that turn to be fruitful and make all participants richer in certain way. That is exactly what happened with dr. Gorana Tocilj-Šimunković idea - to accompany our client on their visits to their home towns at the end of their treatment. And all our clients were torture victims and refugees from Bosnia and Hercegovina accommodated in Croatia.

The idea to visit even places of our clients' sufferings grew up spontaneously and seemed to be just a natural part of our work and done right on time. We decided to make it happen without giving much thought about the theoretical background. We just started our visits whenever we had opportunity to do so. We were there to give our clients support and strength, to meet their needs there.

We visited places we knew through their stories. We knew sufferings they went through there and we knew their longings for life they once had there. Being confronted with these places, changed and different, changed their picture of themselves and of others; it changed their picture of their own previous lives, about their experiences, good and traumatic ones. It made new future possible. It made some decisions easier to reach.

Every trip resulted with new experiences; it was full of mixed feelings and past and present was brought together.

In individual and group meetings our clients shared all these experiences with those who were not strong enough to make some moves and become active. It helped them all because we could see that there was the atmosphere of co-operation, of encouragement and common feeling that it was possible to cross some imaginary borders in oneself with help of others.

These group visits and work with clients in our Center as we came back made precious feeling of them being a community of returnees. It was easier for them to think about return as they felt supported by one another.

We, the therapists, developed the language of our own as we tried to put together pieces of broken souls of our clients. For example, the term "on the road company" came into use to denote everything that happened during one trip to all passengers and their therapist. We tried to understand better that precious

experience discussing it on supervision groups with dr. Eugenija Cividini Stranić, during educational seminars and international meetings.

We have developed our own model of repatriation. Very big part of it has been following up clients who resettled for years. It gave us clear insight into complexity of repatriation and its effects on returnees, their families and whole community, especially if they were torture victims or their family members.

Materials you will find here have been written for different purposes and in different periods of our work. Therefore they are not standardized. They are here to illustrate out experiences.

In Part II clients in their own words testified about importance of authentic relations we had with them. That made us part of their world and that gave us the possibility to regain trust in themselves and in others, to rebuild autonomy, to recollect initiative, feeling of self-competence, identity, possibility to love again.

This handbook will be printed just in time when we search for some other answers connected to reconciliation and repatriation - for way to work in community of returnees.

Selected materials you will find in this handbook are the result of co-operation with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, which has supported our efforts in rehabilitation, reconciliation and repatriation of torture victims and their families for years.

As the whole life is a process, our group in the Center has not remained the same.

What remains is what we have done together. We ask you kindly to read this handbook under these mild lights.

Zagreb, December 2002

Zdenka Pantić

Part I.

Repatriation and Reconciliation Process

Some Issues in Psychotherapy of Tortured Persons

Vedran Bilić

Abstract

Physical and mental torture causes psycho trauma to its victims. In his therapeutic experience with tortured persons, the author observed ego regression and partial disintegration of traumatized persons with revival of the archaic defense mechanisms. In the context of object relations, bad internal objects become prevalent. These psychological changes result in weakening of the control of drives and behavior. Tortured persons become for a long time incapable of creating and sustaining stable and lasting object relations.

The primary goal in psychotherapy of tortured persons is ego strengthening and building up its capacity for establishing and maintaining the enduring object relations. Only after that is accomplished in the therapy, it is possible to explore traumatic events without undue patient's exposure to trauma. As a result, former victim is liberated from internal prison of his traumatic events. The renewed capacity for enduring object relationships enables one to return to objects in external reality.

Introduction

Freud (1) explains that ego is traumatized by highly intensive stimuli, which penetrate the anti-stimulating shield. Freud's hypothesis is confirmed in recent researches. In majority of recent studies that have examined the etiology and phenomenology of posttraumatic stress disorder, a significant connection between exposure to abusive violence or atrocities and the etiology and phenomenology of posttraumatic stress disorder has been found (2). It was found that the level and severity of stressors exposure is a best predictor of stress related psychopathology (3). It was observed that the posttraumatic stress disorder may be especially severe or long lasting when the stressor is of human design (e.g. torture, rape) (4).

In psychotherapy of traumatized persons, we have the impression that most of their psychopathological changes occur on pre-Oedipus and preverbal levels of mental functioning. A deeper level of regression can be guessed by intense fears, along with a sense of being completely lost, isolated, and existentially

endangered. In some victims, defenses are near complete collapse. Anxiety overflows the ego. Bad objects prevail in victim's inner world. A traumatized ego defends against overflowing fear by mobilization of archaic defense mechanisms, such as intense projection. Bad objects are projected into the environment. Many traumatized persons experience reality in projective way, and their behavior is paranoid. Rigid and marked projection is also a defense against depression.

Sometimes, reactivation of bad persecuting objects and their externalization is irreversible, and suicide, or homicide, is being realized. We are witnesses of many tragedies described in the newspapers.

Clinical vignette

The female patient, sixty years old housewife, after occupation of her town spent several months in prison, where she was subjected to interrogations. After the war, she frequently experiences pseudo-hallucinations, hypnoid hallucinations, and from time to time auditory hallucinations. For example, in the sound of a tram, she hears airplanes in sweeping flight and she throws herself on the floor. At night she sees her investigators, hears them calling her name.

That patient has a reduced capacity of differentiating between their internal and external perceptions, which points at deep regression to the very beginnings of mental functioning, i.e. to the time before reality testing was established as an ego function. As she experienced her hallucinations at full consciousness we can speak of psychotic regression of her ego. Such a situation has a better prognosis if hallucinations, or loss of reality testing, appear in hypnoid states.

M. Klein (5) writes that in paranoid-schizoid position, a person's inner world is full of bad, persecuting objects and Fairbairn (6) writes that traumatic situations urge freeing of bad objects from the unconscious.

In relations between ego and internalized and external objects, as well as in fantasies about the objects characteristic of paranoid-schizoid position, we have recognized considerable similarities with reality of torture. For a victim of torture the perpetrator torturing him has been present in actual reality and was actually threatening him with mortal danger. Torture is a severe traumatic experience that happened in outer reality but it influenced and changed victim's inner reality. Torture largely facilitates screening of fantasies of paranoid-schizoid position. One could say that the reality of torture is psychotic. As a victim's psychological functioning regresses to paranoid-schizoid position, his bad internal objects become re-actualized. Primary psychotic fears from destruction and mutilation are being reactivated, as well as Oedipus castration fears. The realization of such fears in outer reality becomes quite possible.

Victim's ego externalizes bad objects into the perpetrator who is real bad object but becomes also the carrier of victim's projections. As much as the person tries to destroy and neutralize bad objects in outer reality, a person's ego in inner reality tries to get rid of bad objects. However, after the period of violence is over, psychological consequences of trauma remain. A victim's ego is still traumatized, regardless of environmental changes. Because of massive projection, a person experiences his new environment also as threatening and full of bad, persecuting objects. The problem in psychotherapy of traumatized persons is that even a therapist is easily experienced as a bad object. Our first meetings with torture victims showed us that many traumatized persons had difficulties in creating basic trust in the therapist and therapy, which is the foundation of therapeutic efficacy (7).

The most indicative problems we met and had to resolve in psychotherapy of traumatized persons were: a) establishment of basic trust, b) creating victim's capacity for enduring object relations, c) transformation of destructiveness, d) analysis of archaic defenses: massive projection and idealization.

First experiences

A traumatized person tries at any cost to keep his/her traumatic experiences apart from the conscious part of his personality. It is known that a good deal of symptoms of traumatized persons result just from avoiding everything that might remind them of their traumatic experiences (8). If we insist on exploration of the trauma in the initial phase of the therapy, or if we try to reconstruct an isolated traumatic event, we risk to re-traumatize the patient (9).

Such phenomena we met in our work with traumatized people. When asked about his/her traumatic experience, often the patient was not able to verbalize his/her trauma. He would not remember consciously, instead his defenses would increase. The consequence was clinical aggravation with acting-outs, both in therapeutic setting (getting up, shouting, leaving the room) and out of therapy (breaking things at home, beating children and wife, self-injuring).

Before establishment of a stable object relation between the patient and his therapist, there exists a real danger of abreacting destruction in the form of suicide or homicide. The usual peacetime sublimations, after destruction of the world of inner objects and the structures of mental apparatus, have become ineffective in mastering anxiety and neutralizing the aggression.

The other significant obstacle in establishing constant transference in a traumatized person is his feeling of incompleteness of the object. That is, we have often experienced that our patients do not recognize us as whole objects. The therapist is either good or bad, idealized or demonized, or split as the patient's self.

In fact, we can say that a good deal of therapy with a traumatized person, which

may last even for several years, proceeds in preparations for analytic psychotherapy. The therapist creates preconditions for development of transference relationship between complete persons. He tries to establish a relationship of basic trust with the patient and a feeling of confidence in himself and the therapy. After checking the therapist and therapeutic constancy, the patient begins to experience him as a good object, not a potentially persecuting one. In order to be accepted as good object, the therapist had to engage also in reality in resolving the patient's problems. The therapist's ability of containing, reliability and constancy are crucial for the patient to begin to experience him as a good object (10).

Only a good object can neutralize the patient's aggression and destructiveness. It takes long time to create a good internal object. The process is subjected to great oscillations. Over a longer period, the patient must be in contact with the external good enough objects.

The essence of victim's therapy is in persistent transformation of bad internal objects, or in building up a good internal object. The therapist, when he becomes a good object in the inner world of the patient, succeeds to neutralize a good deal of aggression. The most important in the process are listening, containing, holding, and constancy of the therapist and therapy.

The therapist strengthens the patient's self-respect and reduces his feeling of being abandoned (by external representatives of superego, or the holder of ideals). He tries to reduce isolation of the patient through connections with the figures from his close family. Integration of the familial into the experience of the self has favorable effects in reducing the patient's feeling of isolation. When the patient succeeds to verbalize spontaneously the experienced trauma and to integrate the split parts of himself into the conscious experience of the self, significant therapeutic success has been achieved.

Conclusion

Psychotherapeutic treatment of traumatized persons has some specific qualities. The capacity of a traumatized ego to create a permanent transference relationship with an integral object has been impaired. Therefore, the first phase of treating the traumatized, which may take several years, proceeds in establishing the object relation between the patient and the therapist. One of the preconditions is establishment of the basic trust in the therapist and the therapy. If the patient achieves internalization of the good object - the therapist, a good deal of his destructiveness is being neutralized. Establishment of a lasting transference enables, within the transference relationship, the analysis and transformation of the archaic defenses. The split-off traumatic experiences are reconstructed, with the least possible trauma for the patient. The patient achieves integrity of the self and the object, and his mental functioning becomes more mature.

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A Hollow return

Radojka Kraljević, Zdenka Pantić

The war events have resulted in large number of expatriates and refugees-victims of torture. Many of them are our clients. The dream of every expatriate is to return to his/her home and to proceed with his/her life at the very point it was violently broken. So they long for return and it has become their focusing point. At the same time it is also the goal of various rehabilitation programs and professional activity,

In the course of rehabilitation work at the Center we did our best to meet the needs of our clients in that respect. What did we do to make them fit for return? We tried to reach our goal through direct confrontation with their destroyed homes and flats occupied by other persons, through changes in their attitudes towards their next-door neighbors who were the very perpetrators. We monitored growing of their confidence and followed their new lives once they returned. They all wanted eagerly to restart their lives at the point of breaking, but we wondered whether that was possible.

Introduction

This paper describes some of the work we did with torture victims and members of their families. They mostly came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, were temporarily settled in Zagreb, Croatia, and later repatriated.

The decision to return home marks the beginning of the end of refugee cycle. When a refugee decides to return, he/she makes a step towards being strong again. But that decision is a complex process for a refugee and it must involve large number of factors on both sides - the home area and the settlement area.

Work Description

Time spent in exile (refugee camps, private accommodation, placement with family) was characterized by inability to make decisions or delay in decision-making, by feelings of uncertainty, material deprivation, poor accommodations, loss of social network, by being dependent upon others, social stigmatization and marginalization, problem of acculturation including language (especially in children).

It became clear that prolonged displacement and uncertainty about the future, in addition to the initial trauma, was harmful to torture victims and to members of their families. Therefore preparation for the return was not easy. Vulnerability of torture victims and their families required facing number of prominent problems prior to their return. Fear of possible violence from dominant ethnic group, destruction of homes, property and infrastructure, lack of jobs, human rights issues, facing former perpetrators are just some of them. In the course of the therapeutic work the desire to return to prewar residences was evident. It made us understand the special attention should be paid to the process of repatriation and reconciliation.

Pre-repatriation Home Visits

Most of our clients, when first arrived at the Center, were not ready to visit their prewar homes, not even the area they used to live in. Majority of them were unable to decide if they wanted to return or not. After the rehabilitation process and preparation for the repatriation at the Center, they were confronted with the reality - they visited the place of their torture.

Long period of living as refugees resulted with some gap between them and the reality. Therefore, we decided to make it possible, for those who wanted to, to visit their pre-war homes before the final repatriation accompanied by their therapists. But that required waiting for political and safety situation to be improved.

Visiting places of torture was demanding for both the clients and the professionals. However, clients benefited greatly from being accompanied by their therapists. It was the important element that made it possible for them to create the link between their lives in exile, pre-war living conditions and their future. We named this phase "trip to the reality".

It turned out that the traveling in a group was evidently a group process and thus an important part of healing process.

Here are some of the highlights of their experience:

Before departure of every group, memories of earlier and mostly happy life were discussed, as well as anxieties and fears when approaching the place and confronting the reality.

Upon arrival at their destinations, in the area they used to live, they found their homes to be either totally destroyed or occupied by other families, some of the possibly refugees themselves. This way they often faced multiple damages.

The part of the program included visiting local government offices where they inquired upon legal and practical possibilities for repatriation. Standing in line with others, for various applications, relieved them to equal footing in acquiring their rights.

While being there they encountered their old neighbors, some former friends. Some of them saw their neighbors walking around and identified places they were kept and tortured (often it was local jail or factory they used to work at). At the end of the day the group returned to Zagreb and the group process revealed new material. Although they were tired from the trip and all strong emotions, our clients felt relieved, content, they felt sorrow and hope at the same time, but they had the feeling they had achieved some success.. The trip set the stage for them to examine their ambivalence of where they belonged. Confronting the reality of destroyed homes is also a reminder of trauma. Fear of former neighbors, idealization of former life, first contacts with neighbors and officials caused our clients additional trauma. However, that journey, they took accompanied by their therapists, enhanced the prospects of their repatriation and reconciliation processes. That was unique, intensive, and exciting experience for both clients and professionals.

Repatriation

Although repatriation was connected with political objectives and circumstances, the significant part of the decision was up to the individual. Regardless of the preparation, repatriation was source of stress and new trauma for our clients. Resettlement needs to be regarded as a slow and painful process within the larger framework of social reconstruction that will last for many years. To make it more clear, we could say that repatriation reminds of the first stage of the adaptation period in refugee camps. Nevertheless, repatriation is connected to reconciliation; therefore, when preparing our clients for repatriation, we tried to address their capability to forgive, but not necessarily to forget. Staying in contact with our clients after their repatriation we felt that our work was not finished. Each phase in life of the refugee is potentially critical and traumatic. Once uprooted by the trauma, refugees find themselves re-rooted. In order to improve the repatriation process we address both positive and negative implications of their repatriation. And, of course, we follow up our clients. This allowed us to see their progress or lack of it. While it was important for professionals to assess former client's adjustment process and learn from their experiences, it was even more profound for the clients to see their former psychologists because they perceived these contacts as safe place and confirmation of their decision to return.

Conclusion

We tried to contribute to repatriation - reconciliation process by helping our clients to make the most adequate decision regarding their future life after rehabilitation process and support in our Center. Traveling as their therapists

An example: Ema and Mijo

We visited Ema and Mijo, our former clients, living now in their new home. Elderly couple, in poor health, both torture; they lost two adult sons in the conflict. Their house was destroyed, the surrounding areas devastated, social network broken. They look after their grandson. War prevented him to complete his education and now he is unemployed. They live on Miro's small pension and they both need drugs but because of non-compatible medical security system throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina (due to ethnically divided country) they have to pay for it.

Here are Ema's words: We wanted to return and looked forward to it. But it was a great shock for us. We feel that nothing here really belongs to us (a new house, furniture, . . .). We do not have money to pay to be connected to electric power plant, which we once had. Although we were afraid at the beginning, soon we learned there is no danger here and there have been no incidents whatsoever. However, we do not have clear understanding of our rights. We have contacts with the family whose son murdered our son. We can see how hard it is for them and how sorry they are because of the murder (their son serving sentence). There is that man who is a friend of our dead son and he comes regularly to console us.

I am very much surprised by your coming here. I feel little bit confused and am deeply deeply moved. I did not expect this. How did you ever manage to find us? . . .

The decision to repatriate is a complex decision to be made and must include many elements. These are: safety, possibility to find some job or to work on the land, food and fuel supply, health care and other social services. Once home, refugees can begin working on equally complex task of rebuilding their lives.

to their previous places of living and visiting them after they re-settled was a part of that process and a kind of support we felt we owed them.

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How we Understood the Repatriation Process: Story about Return told through Several Pictures Done by Children

Zdenka Pantić, Radojka Kraljević

War and post-war period has exposed children and their families to different kind of traumatic and stressful experience.

In those circumstances family could not be a protective shield for children even if it was intact; parents and caregivers might have been so overburdened with their own losses, adjustment to refugee status, attending to the basic survival needs of the family, that they were unable to address emotional needs of their children.

It is well known that children develop psychological difficulties after traumatic experience. Refugee experience may as well develop certain psychological stages identified for adults (Ben-Porath, 1987).

Children and their families were faced with another massive loss - the loss of world as they knew it, loss of future they expected; their nurturing, caring feeling of being rooted in their culture was threatened too. And we know that children are especially vulnerable to loss of their roots in the period of developing their identities.

The manner of coping with those losses and its success depends on traumatic event itself, the age at which child experiences the treat (relating to which developmental tasks are threatened or interrupted by the trauma - Ericsson, 1976), and the support the child receives from the family and wider social group (Pantić, 1998).

For children who were torture victims themselves and for those who came from families of torture survivors assistance was provided in IRCT Zagreb (starting in 1994).

It is a long process to heal trauma and losses and to adjust to a new community. At the same time returning home demanded new adjustment and we could see our clients and their families being in conflict with those issues. Therefore we

Table 1. Socio-demographic data (children) <i>Source: IRCT Zagreb, N = 64</i>		
Sex	Female	52,0%
	Male	48,0%
Age	6 - 11	52,0%
	12 - 17	48,0%
Accommodation	Private	77,0%
	Collective center	23,0%
Number of children in families	One child	7,0%
	Two	42,0%
	Three	35,0%
	Four	12,0%
	Five	4,0%
Family	Complete	53,0%
	Incomplete	47,0%
Relationships in family	Very good	29,4%
	Satisfying regarding the situation	54,9%
	Problematic	13,7%
	With unsolved problems and situation	2,0%
Country of origin	Croatia	19,0%
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	76,5%
	Other	4,5%

Table 2. Traumatic events and symptoms, Source: IRCT Zagreb, N = 64		
Traumatic events	Lack of food or water	49,2%
	Ill without medical care	77,0%
	Lack of shelter	63,8%
	Serious injury	5,5%
	Combat situation	4,7%
	Forced isolation from other	6,2%
	Being close to death	71,8%
	Murder of family or friend	35,0%
	Witnessed	31,0%
Symptoms	Sleep disorders	67,2%
	Attention deficit	72,3%
	Phobia	7,2%
	Somatisation	57,8%
	Attachment and behaviour disorder	6,5%
Treatment	Individual	22,0%
	Group	78,0%
Duration of treatment		1994 - 1996

focused our work on children. That kind of work can prevent risks of maladjustment and help meet developmental tasks.

The group work combined Integrative therapy approach (developed by Petzold) and the STOP model (Montgomery, 1993: structure, talking and time, organized play, parent support). Additional efforts were done to increase sensitivity of the school to refugee children and their cultural characteristics.

A group for mothers was organized as a parallel to the group for children. We were able to monitor improvements and worsening of their conditions depending on parents' reactions concerning political situation in BiH, between BiH and Croatia, and life conditions in the place of exile. It is known that prolonged displacement and uncertainty about future could be harmful to refugees and torture victims.

Despite their wish to return to their places of origin and improved political situation, repatriation might be the source of threat and stress, of new trauma. For parents of children who attended school was very difficult to make decision about return to pre-war places of residence.

To help them make the most appropriate decision concerning their future life we decided to accompany our clients to their pre-war settlements (at the same time places of their suffering). We paid special attention to families with school children. What did they gain living in exile, and what would they gain by return? To decide was again process for every individual, every family, and every community in exile. We observed parents who hesitated to confront children with the reality before they (parents) became ready to take responsibility and decide about return. We observed children's process through drawings (see the cover).

(1.Memory of the house in Bosnia; 2.My first visit to our former home; 3.How I want to rebuild our house)

Visiting their former homes allowed our clients to confront idealizing pictures of former life; for some of them it brought new energy.

To understand repatriation better, we made a survey including 33 children with whom we had worked before.

What did we find while monitoring children-returnees?

The joy of meeting again was mutual. Seeing their former therapist meant for children the continuation of the contact which had been established in rehabilitation process. It meant going on. They could demonstrate that they were more mature, confronted with different developmental tasks; they bragged about their successes and talked about their difficulties. For us it was rewarding meeting with growing-up children who were important for us as we were

Table 3. Follow-up <i>Source: IRCT Zagreb, N = 33</i>		
Age	6 - 11	35,02%
	12 - 17.....	45,16%
	under 18	19,82%
Symptoms	Sleep disorders	47,10%
	Attention deficit	54,50%
	Phobia	1,20%
	Somatisation	47,40%
	Attachment and behaviour disorder	10,20%

important for them.

We were informed by their mothers about transitory return of symptoms after return which was expected (Table 3.).

Illustrations:

1. After three years of separation from parents return was stressful for girl, 17 at the time, as she had well (although not easily) adjusted to a family with two children; she had lived through an intense period of her early youth. After return to her own family she lost weight and was transitorily depressed, having slight learning difficulties.
2. Three originally highly traumatized children from the countryside now live in a city with their widow mother. There is still no return to their place, depressive mother is even not sure about her wishes. The older daughter has taken over parental role. They live on the outskirts of the city in a deserted house. They are still in a state of expecting something, just like during trauma.
3. A boy has returned to his former home. Although he belongs to the ethnic majority, he is not accepted by his peers because he did not stay with them during the war. At school he gets beaten up; the school authorities take no actions, because there is the same ethnic division among teachers.
4. Two sisters, now adolescents, are separated because of return: the older one attends the high school in the nearby town; she is the one of the two Moslem pupils in the class. Her father was decisive and in spite of being condemned by his group he sent his child to a school in "inimical" surroundings. The fact that the school programs for two entities are different does not bother him. Younger sister remained in the place to which they originally returned after they had left Zagreb, since she did not want to attend school where she was imprisoned as a little girl.

We have come to conclusion that:

- Return must be observed having in mind the child, its family, community and the society.
- It is more difficult to make a decision about return for parents with school age children. Longer they live in exile, more difficult is to return
- The reconstruction of infrastructure is important for return. People once had good living conditions. With school age children it is difficult to begin anything by the candlelight;

- Traumatized widows with children are a high-risk group due to massive losses, traumas, change of traditional roles and need to confront with the market economy.
- A family can again be under stress because of the fight for basic life conditions and can neglect children' emotional needs.
- Nevertheless, children have surprising ability to use their potentials even when life conditions are not stimulating.
- It is important to work with returnee children and their families, peers, teachers, medical staff, the community they return to. They all need the knowledge regarding theoretical and experience-related work from the area of psycho-trauma, adaptation process, reconciliation, and repatriation.
- Return is a process, a new beginning in a number of ways. It should be monitored in order to identify weaknesses and correct them on time, before they become sources of problems and conflicts. It is of special importance for children in order to help them accomplish their developmental tasks.

We believe that traumatic experience does not necessarily entail the development of pathological behavior, but we are aware of the fact that children exposed to war related trauma are at risk and their development should be monitored.

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Repatriation - the Importance of Comprehending Culture

Silvija Vidošić

Almost a decade has passed since the tragic war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This has been a long period of disaster, but also it seems too short a time for repatriation.

The process of repatriation has begun, but it is questionable if it will ever be completed, having in mind all the brutal invasions into the socio-cultural context of the area, fragmentation of the cultural code, weakening of the primary families as well as the secondary social groups. The protecting influence of the well-defined culture is getting weaker and weaker over the time and distance of separation, and the new interactions are leading to the future acculturation. What helps in exile is a collective cultural background, which is rooted in every member of some culture and which thus becomes a part of one's self, reflecting itself continuously in all the members of the same culture, functioning through the simultaneous reactions.

The awareness of the incorporated culture becomes more pronounced when it's reflecting is thwarted by living in some other culture.

The importance of understanding some culture lies also in better understanding of the transpersonal processes it allows. Processes such as incorporation of the unconscious reactions by the individuals and the trans-generational transmission processes, which encompasses different family secrets, family traumas, altered behavior, psychopathology etc. it is especially important to be acquainted with the "therapeutic techniques" accepted in some culture. These can inform us of some beliefs, which are often enhanced by a pharmacological effect of some preparation, but also amulets and charms.

Understanding the socio-cultural background of the refugees helped us in the initial contacts and in designing the psychological assistance and therapy models. Let us just remember that all refugees had a life that they had left, that they lost their family members, their neighbors, friends, places of life, homeland, their possessions, jobs, cultural surrounding. Before they reached their exile in Croatia many of them had stayed in arks, concentration camps, had been tortured, and had experienced other perilous situations. That they had been denied even basic life necessities.

They have been through all generic dimensions of the traumatic stressor as defined by Green.

Cultural factors in the therapeutic process

The standard therapeutic techniques and technical setting we employed were, initially, not applicable because of the collective cultural background of the refugees. The variations of adaptations followed, considering the importance of the collective cultural background. What we found especially important was a trend of social communications encompassing close relationships and togetherness. At the beginning the group therapy seemed much more as a repetition of the informal groups, these people used to have in their lives, than the strict therapy.

All the members would speak at the same time, telling their thoughts, they would gesticulate a lot, they would leave the group to take care of something important for them, and any intervention by the therapist was fruitless. The therapists, eventually, started paying attention to their religious material, their customs, beliefs, the powers they believed their khoja (the religious leader) had, amulets, charms, and even traditional food. The confusion eventually declined, showing that the testing-of-the-group period was about to end and that the anxiety was being reduced through continuous affirmation of the familiar socio-cultural material.

In the group, over the time, two different models of reaction could be recognized. Some members developed coping mechanisms, they managed to take care of their accommodation and managed to find jobs, while the others became passive and waited. The relationship towards the traumatic experiences also differed, as well as the model of faith - there were the magical and the secondary model, where the later one was characterized by an adequate reality testing.

Religion becomes more important in exile than before. It brings people together and nurtures, sustains the usual social communication, which allows greater feeling of security. It bears an important influence on the therapeutic process, as it helps diminishing negative emotions and accentuates the importance of forgiveness and renouncing of hatred. It helps attain a conciliatory attitude towards the traumatic experience.

Understanding the cultural code was very important in understanding the interactions between the domicile population and the refugees. The domicile population was also traumatized. The war has brought many and profound changes to everybody. People suffered different losses; there was a great decline in the general economic situation followed by an inflation of existential strivings and new social differentiations. The domicile population has also had its own life circle and rhythm with some manifestations of alienated behavior.

In distinction from the domicile population refugees were generally used to more moderate, slower day rhythm, to more open social interactions, more closeness, and more communication and had much more expressed need for an emotional support.

They would often state that they had no problems with the domicile population, but that they just could not understand the rapid life-style rhythm.

These things would start up fantasies in the group. The people fantasized about the reverse situation if they were the host, and what would the situation be like then. Fantasy idealized the traditional hospitality, and they would say things like: "We would carry them as the drops of water on a palm. We would not charge them a single thing, because it is the hardest to pay the rent for nothing." In this way they managed to open the problems, they confronted the two socio-cultural contexts, which was very important in the process of adaptation and later on in the process of repatriation, when they were faced with other refugees occupying their own homes after they returned.

The several-years long separation finally weakened the cultural code in these people and some superficial signs of acculturation started to show. These started with the outer manifestations, such as clothes, which they started to adapt to the new surroundings. But the more substantial changes soon followed, especially those concerning the position of the women in the family and society. There were changes in behavior and speech. The ways of manifesting emotions, very strongly expressed in the beginning, such as loud sounds, deep sighs and panting and vehement gesticulation gradually became more and more restrained. Verbalization and mimics became sufficient, replacing the traditional, more passionate attributes.

Culture helps the Repatriation Process

The cultural factors that can be important for the therapeutic process have only superficially been explored. Only a thorough analysis, carried out over a several-year period, could yield a more substantial insight in the influence, positive or negative, the cultural factors have on the course of the therapy. This would make a kind of cultural mapping, which could help in future provision of psychological help and in the process of repatriation.

In therapeutic process these factors are important in working through the traumatic experience, which can be influenced by adequate accentuation of the patient's collective cultural background. Also they are important in the initial evaluation of the patients, and appropriate appreciation of these factors might be useful in preventing acculturation. These factors are also important for the future co-existence. The elements of cultural overlapping, and recognizing them, are crucial for successful repatriation of refugees. This is the same with the capacity to tolerate other peoples' differences.

After they spent several years in exile the political situation in Bosnia became more favorable. Many of them recognized and used that to re-establish communication, with the people in Bosnia, first through the mail and telephone, and later even through the personal contacts. The personal contacts required

going to Bosnia, and were always accompanied by the sense of high risk. This inspired us to organize supported-group visits to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This program offered refugees the manifest emotional support of the group and the therapists, but also the unconscious support through the fantasized ideas of powerful and protective institution (repetition of a strong parent's role), which allowed reduction of the anxiety and the feelings of endangerment and risk, manifesting in huge reduction of psychosomatic problems in our patients. Among a number of collective and individual moments these group visits provided, going for a collective lunch at some restaurant the clients had chosen themselves was obligatory. These were usually places that reconnected them with their earlier good experiences of traditional food, which had a strong symbolic meaning in the sense of revitalizing.

Such visits had a meaning of "a group session on the wheels" and they enabled working through the re-traumas. Their natural social communication, openness, spontaneity, need for togetherness, and other characteristic immanent to their collective cultural background, helped to reduce negative feelings, to rationalize their thinking, to bring them closer together and to enhance empathic reactions toward the earlier negative attributes.

The culture can insert a positive influence, while the lack of understanding for the socio-cultural specifics can diminish the success of the therapeutic process.

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Groups Squeezed between great Cultures of East and West

Dragan Pavelić

"Anxiety, fear, love and hate, all of it, exist, as I have already mentioned, in every group functioning according to the basic postulate. The fusion of all these feelings is different in each and every group, because the "cement" that binds them together is always different. It is guilt and depressiveness in an addicted group, expecting the prophet in a group pairs, and rage and hatred in a 'fight-or-flight' group."

W. R. Bion: Experiences from the group work, p. 144 (1)

Perhaps only in war times do the psychoanalysts dare to think loudly about the psychology of nations. They are very much aware of danger of generalization on one side and the unintelligibility of the large groups on the other. They know how non-transparent the masses are even though they have some understanding, being experts, of the issue of drives in large human groups.

In reality of a group there are group culture and group mentality, presenting a reservoir of projective identifications. The group mentality is something quite objective; it is a product of the same ego ideal, a compulsion of some specific collective ethics (2).

Methodological pitfalls

What should a researcher do to understand the world? Could logic of large numbers be of any help there? If he starts with the climate zones or the customs he might never reach the individual level or the level of the group inhabiting the area of his interest. How can one understand reasons for some group to come together, the motives of the defenses it utilizes and recognize all the manifestations the group produces?

When such a group becomes a victim of outer aggression the situation gets even more complex; numerous difficulties in understanding what is going on can arise and the introspection becomes blurred. The empathy reduces the room for pity. If the observer is a refugee himself, everyone feels entitled to reproach his partiality, to doubt his truth and his understanding.

When treating the torture victims some therapists disobey the rule of neutrality,

which presents one of the basic principles of any psychotherapy. David Becker (1989) confirms this saying that he believes that in the situation of extreme traumatic experiences of the victim the neutrality presents a lie and thus a mistake. Faced with the real suffering one should not pretend that it is the product of imagination. Suffering has to be called by its true name. The therapist must not get into the act with perpetrators (the torturer) and the introspected muteness that they wish to achieve. (3)

Such experience can be helpful to both - the therapist and the victim, as it can disclose some important obstacles in their work - transference, counter transference and reality based obstacles.

External manifestations do not disclose the true nature of the group. Hospitality, suspiciousness, contempt, hypocrisy, falseness, curiosity, xenophobia - all these outer manifestations tell little about the genuine group culture. Group analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the fundamental psychodynamics of the groups, which make no difference between the groups, except those relating to the maturity level of the group. I believe that, having all this in mind, one should address different inner cultures of different groups, if wanting to be objective. There were few interesting attempts to analyze the psychology of different cultures (and there will be some more, no doubt). They were all done in good spirits and trying to reduce the issue to a unique simple concept, a unique and usable material. Most of those took up with the ancient cultures of long gone civilizations, peoples and their, sometimes bloody, undertakings. And even today, when nobody suffers from those events any more and nobody celebrates the victory, it is hard, I believe, for the modern researches to stay neutral. Even more, the material that is at disposal for the analysis is so heavily polluted by tradition, myths and other folklore artifacts that it allows only questionably reliable scrutiny. The conclusions derived in such circumstances might serve best the purpose of some ideology and be used to influence the actual situation. Some researchers could not resist the temptation to analyze characters of dead or fictional persons. They would, although not invited to do so, analyze their dreams, and wonder about their inner beings without dreamers being present (4). But all these attempts are nothing but assumptions and doubts, as it is impossible to analyze a dream without analyzing the person who has dreamt it. There are also the collective dreams. Such that are dreamt during vigils, during rests between two battles, that precede collective conspiracies or putsches. These are the historical dreams.

W.R. Bion has noticed that each small group develops several group cultures and that these can alternate and intertwine continuously, depending on the situation in the group. It is for these reasons that the same group can, and I dare say this is true for the large groups as well, at one time manifest a great dependency towards its leader, and at yet another moment assume the fight or flight position. It also can, soon after, break down into subgroups and pairs not

interested in destiny of the large group. Interest in preservation of the species nevertheless, still remains.

Non-the less, in his analysis one should never rely too much on the mentality, as lingering as it might be. Not until one gets to know some group in the action one cannot really understand it. Because, from time to time, a group can fiercely cast off its own mentality, or on the other hand, fiercely clutch to it in order to escape disillusion, feelings of guilt or some punishment.

Just how obnoxious the misuse of group psychology and psychopathology can be is presented by the case of one ideologist of the Serbian aggression against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In his book from 1991, presenting himself as an ethno-psychoanalyst, he used the psychoanalytical theory of characterology in his concept of national psychology. This "study" immortalized his dreadful ideas that motivated later extremely cruel atrocities performed in wars in former Yugoslavia.

Having in mind this and similar misuses and misinterpretations it should be stressed that the psychoanalytical approach to social issues requires a special scrutiny. A contemporary ethno-psychoanalyst Tobie Nathan says in this respect that the goal of ethno-psychoanalysis should be only to reach the psychodynamic material and not to deal with the cultural material (5). He sets a golden rule of ethno-psychoanalysis saying that one should never analyze the cultural material because it presents only the container not the content, something that provides the words but does not make them (6).

From psychodynamics to sociodynamics and back

Large groups develop on the basis of different myths - archaic stereotypes of the society they belong to. The trans-generational transmission and the role of legends in transmission of the emotional legacy in the family, conscious and unconscious, have been much discussed lately.

The interplay of different external reality factors can cause that the special way mother handles her baby becomes a forming element of the collective pre-history of some large group (8). It becomes a mark of "how the mother used to carry the baby", says T. Nathan, which can then become important in understanding the situation of the individuals in some group. Because it might reflect the history of early relations between individual and outer world, as well as the history of his/her early conflicts, which are always defined in the realm of differentiating between what is inside and what is outside. And exactly this can be different in the situation where the analyst and his client come from different cultural backgrounds.

The area of Balkans is populated by small nations. Their histories are often intertwined in mutual appetencies and repugnancies, mutual alliances and betrayals. These relations reflect sometimes more and sometimes less successful,

neutralization of the aggression that is released in conflicts and strivings between the great cultures of East and West. These processes have a picturesque designation in the historiography - that is so-called, Eastern issue.

From this population, which has constantly been pulled together or pulled apart by the similarities and differences caused by the area of life, mentality, religion or economical factors (agricultural, cattle-bringing or hunter type of economy) several large, more or less stabile, groups have derived, and they have tried to preserve their special strivings in their special ways (group narcissism). It is usually exactly the magnitude of differences that determines the magnitude of distance between two groups.

In the 1991-1995 war some new groups emerged within the peoples of former Yugoslavia: refugees, displaced people, wounded persons, members of broken families, prisoners of war, torture victims, individuals who lost everything and even those who were starving. Then again, there were those who attacked and those who defended their homes and families; there were observers, humanitarian workers, war profiteers, the unconcerned people, etc. Interests of various humanitarian organizations were inadequately psychologically elaborated. Some of them were motivated by altruism, but would lose interest in victims as soon as they leave the area of unconscious suffering.

In order to survive each group must have a sense of its self-worth, a kind of self-concept. Groups in areas where large cultural differences meet have to make extra effort in order to survive regardless of the sense of togetherness and mutual inner dependence their members share. In such groups pairs of opposites (love-hate, dependence-independence) can be tolerated only exceptionally. These are pre-conditions for any group growth and development. In order to survive and prosper, every group must in itself be opposed to the next one; to the one across the road, across the river or some hill. This is the only way the group can grow and procreate. That growth rules out borderline compromises, such as the social mimetism, false adjustments and dissimulations. Such groups are devoted to uniform, anachronic models of behavior and often prone to amnesia of traumatic experiences. There are some group members that have never actually learned to know their legends or heroes in their real truth. Sometimes they even disclaim of their heroes and legends in order to defend themselves from some other, more aggressive group that tries to press on its own values or to win some territory. The history of various nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been so much blurred up, sometimes even falsified, that even well educated local people did not know some of the basic facts relating their national history.

When in 12th century on its way from the Black Sea to the south of France the Catar Heresy movement reached Balkan peninsula, it left strong-hold in Bosnia and it lasted for centuries. It was the "Bogumil" religion that stood in difference

to both East and West. The "Bogumil" group searched for its own identity and finally found it. Such tendencies were re-established in modern history through the attempt to create a unique Bosnian nation.

Many wars have shown just how easy can the groups of blusterers, allegedly famous for their heroism and nobleness, turn into groups of robbers and bandits, while the groups famous for their tolerance can become fierce defenders and heroes. The groups where the blood-revenge had strong tradition gave up the revenge on many occasions. Every individual and every group has its own East and West. There are always groups that run away. Consumed with need to escape, such groups of refugees and torture victims, for example, become very regressive. Their members start to believe that they can survive in their own group. Consumed with the urge to survive, these groups cannot spare time for mourning and nostalgia. To find one's own group becomes the most prominent issue for the people in such running-away groups. Of course, the protective role of the group is always only temporary one, but allows time for its members to survive and provide for his or her basic needs. Soon enough refugees start to feel ashamed of their basic groups, perceiving them as weak, incapable and living in memory world. Group-based differentiation between that what is inside and what is outside, what belongs to the group and what does not, what is different from other similar groups brings every group member to confront his/her decision to belong to one or to another group. At the beginning refugee groups look only to make alliances with the similar groups - twin groups. As hard as they might accept any differences, these groups eventually cease looking for their twin group. Maturing, they finally reach the level where they can drop the narcissistic conditions to affiliate, and start binding with groups that are different. Affirmation does not have to be based on negation no longer. With termination of domination of negation and denial, new positions open up, allowing a way out from the previous position incarcerated between bordering larger groups and the requests they press on to the smaller groups located in the area of convergence - the demarcation line or the sanitary cordon as it sometimes is called.

The cultural marks of small nations - what is specific and what is common? So-called "in-between" group

Big differences between great cultures of East and West become smaller in the smaller nation-groups living in the area of convergence of these cultures. The danger of conflict between such smaller nation-groups can never be completely eliminated, although only the co-existence allows the existence for them all. In spite all the mixing up that is so natural for the situation, all the complex inter-connections between these groups, they still preserved their specifics. The

culture of order and penitence, as influenced by the spirit of the Eastern Sin, which is immanent for the group following the models of western Christianity, necessitates the perpetual redemption, renunciation and compliance. Frustrated with such ideals this culture is destined for the chronic discontent. The group of eastern Christians is characterized by markedly pronounced folkloric attributes. Even their faith in God is strongly defined by their folklore. Over-convinced in its superiority ("The Divine People"), this group is easy to avoid responsibility, to find vindications and redemptions. The Muslim group in Bosnia is strongly characterized by the sense for compassion, awareness of the meaning of sin, but most of all treasures leniency and indifference. This should make its members more at ease in dealing with the sense of guilt. As a faith of adaptation, Islam promotes opportunistic tendencies and produces groups which are capable of abandoning dogmas when having good enough reason to do so.

Singled out this way, particularities of culture groups in former Yugoslavia show, except for the obvious differences, a unique similarity and that is the "favor" of the "in-between" groups. All this, of course, precludes the discussion on "virtues" and "flaws". Cultural models, even when they are stronger imbedded in one culture than in the other, cannot be the issue of a moral scrutiny.

To know the meaning of different cultural models can be helpful in bordering of therapeutic insight in some mental processes mediated by those models. Many misunderstandings could have been avoided, many lies discovered, and number of war victims prevented from getting so high if the indicative group dynamics had been recognized on time. The dynamics of closing up into exclusive models of archaic group ideals (digging up the bones of the national saints and martyrs) and of annihilation of the constituent elements of the inter-group cohesion (isolation, dissociation, fragmentation, negation, un-doing) were rather transparent.

In 1990s the Balkans proved to be a metaphor for inevitable conflict-prone nature of small societies. And the rest of Europe proved to be a body characterized by its hard prejudices and partiality. Of course, to get the full picture one must take into account the global political interests. But they are not the subject of this discussion.

Conclusion

I have presented some socio-dynamic and psychodynamic patterns immanent to the torture victim groups that originate from this area, situated at the border between great cultures of East and West.

To be aware of these patterns can help therapist in his/her attitudes towards torture victims and their rehabilitation. Further on, his/her capacities and skills to move the group communication field towards its deeper emotional levels can be enhanced by this knowledge.

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Social Aspects of Repatriation

Milka Kvakić

Being social process repatriation has its political, legal and social aspects. To discuss the issue of repatriation and leave out its social modality would produce an extremely reduced concept of the problem.

Having no pretensions to compass this problem in its whole complexity, I will try to present some insight into the social aspect of the process as based on my working experience. Specifically, on my work with the refugees who are about to return to their homeland. Social welfare, in some societies, relies almost completely on the legislative, which makes the problem of repatriation even more complicated as the coordination of different relevant instances is mostly not adequate.

At the beginning one should, nevertheless, try to define the notion of repatriation. It originates from a Latin word *patria* meaning the homeland. Its meaning is usually interpreted as return of prisoners of war or civilian prisoners, fugitives, displaced people, refugees, etc. to their homeland (1).

The very definition of the term repatriation implies the process with immanent social meaning. In this respect the repatriation does not only represent a process of physical return, but also the re-institution of all civil and social rights that some state allows to its citizens, encompassing welfare, state health insurance, accommodation and pension rights.

Concerning the complexity of problems repatriating refugees face (psychological, medical, economical, housing, etc) this category should be protected by a special law on obligatory relationships between the domicile and the exile country.

Every country that is a member of United Nations is obliged to do so by the General Declaration on Human Rights passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948. The Declaration in Article 13 says that every human being has right to leave any country including his/her domicile country and to return to it; and in Article 14 it states that everybody has right to seek and be provided a shelter from persecution in other countries (2).

The beginnings of repatriation

Due to complexity of relationships and turbulent war situation, some categories of population were left without social protection by the liable mechanisms of state institutions.

The members of the International Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims in Zagreb (IRCT) tried to provide socio-psychological assistance to exactly those categories - to refugees, who found their shelter from the persecution in their homeland in Croatia.

This predominantly refers to refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Center has provided assistance for them since it was established in 1993. The beginning of the repatriation for these people can actually be equated with the onset of Center's operations, as it provided psychophysical support for them working on torture consequences that many of them had suffered before exile. All of them came to Croatia believing that their exile would be a temporary one, not long, and that they would eventually return home and resume their previous lives.

After they came to Croatia the majority of them were given accommodation in construction-workers' hotels, some of them knew these venues as they used to work in Croatia before the war. But many of them had no knowledge of Zagreb nor did they ever visit it - they just lived their quiet lives in their small villages in Bosnia. A smaller percentage of refugees managed to find accommodation with their relatives in Croatia. But they all learned, very soon, how short lasting the benevolence and help were, both private and institutional. Gradually the institutions exploited their resources, so the restrictions grew as the assistance decreased. The immediate surroundings of the refugees were additionally burdened with emotional problems, as they provoked different emotional reactions in the domicile people. People would feel guilty or react with anger to the refugees' mere being around, to their different customs, habits and ways of life. Refugees did disrupt the normal life rhythm of their hosts in that respect. Our IRCT team has provided psychosocial assistance to refugees through the different forms of individual and group psychotherapy, welfare and medical help since the very beginning of its foundation. For refugees who decided to stay in Croatia and wait here for their return, we tried to work-out concrete conditions for that to happen. In this respect we organized probationary visits to Bosnia, so some of these people visited their homes in Bosnia (or what was left of them) for the first time after 5 or 7 years of exile. In spite of all preparations this was a new traumatic experience for most of them. For some of them it replaced the dream of returning replaced by doubts, but for some it opened new possibilities for finding future life-meaning.

Repatriation in the opposite direction

The repatriation in Croatia has one additional element. Namely, Croatian citizens of Serbian nationality, who have flown away from Croatia and became refugee in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia, now come back to their original state - Croatia. Just as repatriation of refugees brings alleviation to the host community,

"newcomers", previous neighbors and now returnees to it bring problems to the community. In collective-emotional sense and in the practical social sense. Recently, the team members visited several Serbian returnee-families. They have returned from the neighboring countries through UNHCR's assistance and live for the moment in a settlement close to Bosnian border. There are some families of Bosnian Croats, refugees themselves, living in the same settlement. All of them are elderly people, mostly ill and living alone, with no sources of their own, but depending on the support from UNHCR. They have returned because life they had in exile was not living-worth. They wait here to move into their own homes, to houses they used to live before the war. For the moment these houses are either under reconstruction (as they were destroyed in the war) or occupied by refugees from other areas. These people suffer from very mixed feelings. The majority of them feel that the exile in other countries was disappointing experience, that it did not match their expectations. On the other hand they have feeling of not being welcomed in Croatia. But they still feel they do have right to return to their homes, in spite of everything that has happened. All these feelings make them feel even more anxious.

Conclusion

Any society, as democratic as it might be, provides only the minimum of social support and security for refugees. This support is generally inverse to duration of the exile. This makes repatriation necessary, as soon as it is objectively feasible. How successful will the process of repatriation be depends largely on the dominant value-systems prevailing in the society where refugees return to. This primarily concerns ethical and spiritual values, which reflect in the social and legislative factors determining the repatriation.

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Holding instead of Handling Position of Medical Doctor in the Process of Repatriation

Suzana Danić

As defined by the World Health Organization health is not only the absence of disease but also a state of complete bodily, psychological and social well-being. This perspective emphasizes the importance of the psychological component in a patient, both in diagnosis and treatment. The recent war in our regions has drastically increased specifically the demand for the psychological assistance.

Patients with mental problem usually first turn for help to primary care practitioners. The crucial role of a physician here is early recognition, diagnosis and treatment of such and related conditions (psychosomatic e.g.). Also a warm, nurturing and accepting attitude of a practitioner will help establish more positive patient-doctor relation. Patients with psychological problems usually primarily present complex array of symptoms. It is usually a combination of different somatic, psychological and behavioral problems such as depressiveness, panic, aggressiveness, working incapability, dependency problems and family problems.

The role of physician in our center is multifaceted. Except for being a first-contact person and primary care provider for our patients he has substantially greater duties. He has to be a family doctor (determines the health situation of the whole family through anamnesis and heteroanamnesis, introduces treatment, organizes better quality of medical care, etc) and a field-team member (collects information and supports the team members regarding medical issues), he participates in planning of Center activities, in education and supervision of the personnel.

For last two years I've been working as a physician for the IRCT Zagreb. Our patients are mostly Bosnian refugees settled in Croatia, who are either victims of different kinds of torture themselves or relatives of torture victims. They all are heavily burdened by tragic experiences of torture.

Many of them were prisoners in concentration camps where they were exposed to different types of physical and psychological maltreatment. They still suffer

the consequences and they probably will for the rest of their lives. Some of our clients did not have immediate torture experience, but their close relatives had, because they were concentration camp prisoners, killed or disappeared in the war.

It is not easy to say whose trauma is worse - that one of a person who tells us his/her experiences in reluctant words, full of feelings and meanings, or that of somebody who has locked everything inside, not letting his/her trauma to come out. Is it harder for a mother to watch her child, ex concentration camp prisoner, in its daily suffering or for a child to watch tormented father?

Is it harder for a mother who says that she agrees not to see her child again if only she knew it was alive? Or, perhaps, for a mother who attends every exhumation hoping to find remains of some close person to be finally able to mourn and to bury him/her properly? Or yet for somebody who also attends one exhumation after other hoping not to find anybody there so she could go on hoping? Examples and questions like these could go on indefinitely.

Because of all these traumatic experiences it has become necessary for our Center to employ a physician who would provide medical attendance for our clients apart from psychological assistance. It is known that these trauma cause all kinds of psychosomatic disorders, and majority of them are unfortunately malignant. Some of our clients were victims of physical torture too, and it has left serious health consequences. Many of them suffer from developed hypertension, uncompensated forms of diabetes mellitus, different allergies and malignant tumors. All these illnesses seem to be trauma related.

For some of them it is just a regular-basis check-up and friendly word that will bring them comfort and relief, showing them that they are not alone and forgotten. For the others, unfortunately, thorough medical attendance and help, sometimes even hospitalization, surgery and similar, is required.

Our Center is a place where clients can come and share their problems, where they are listened to and helped. Here they can also meet others who come from the same area in Bosnia, and have been through the same or similar tragic experiences, so they can share mutual pain. Traumatized persons often feel that those who have no experiences of that kind cannot understand them and are not able to imagine how they feel. When they meet persons with similar experiences they find it easier to talk about it and let their traumatic memories out. Trust is more easily built between individuals who have shared similar traumatic experiences.

We in the Center try to help our clients to return to the locations of their traumatic memories, to win over their fears and to return to their homes. Some

were just not able to do this, as their fear was too great. For some, on the other hand, this brought a relief and for some it even triggered the idea of permanent return. Unfortunately, some refugees will never be able to return to their homes either because their houses were destroyed or because the authorities would not allow them to return. We believe though it has done them some good to accompany others while visiting their homes in Bosnia.

Nevertheless, to be able to visit their homes they all needed reassurance—they needed to feel secure. And it was our duty to provide the security, so we went to Bosnia with them and shared their fears. I believe that my being there with a first aid kit on me, has been one of elements of security. Fortunately we never had any life-threatening health problems on these trips. The majority of interventions consisted of giving some anxiolytic drug, helping with dizziness etc.

These visits had diverse affect on our clients. Some of them decided to return for good; they found new strength and reassurance when they saw that life was coming back to those areas. Some of them who up till then had serious health problems got much better and found new vitality. But for some this was new traumatic experience and they decided not to return. Fortunately only a small number reacted that way. These were clients still disturbed by their traumas and still suffering serious post-traumatic symptoms.

The further process of return will necessitate further and additional medical attendance for returnees, as it is connected with new traumatic experiences, which bring new mental and health risks.

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Evaluation of Psychotherapy through Monitoring System-Basic Terms and Problems

Damir Ljubotina

1. What is evaluation ?

According to generally accepted terminology, continuous routine observation of health and related conditions in population is called *surveillance*. If data of intervention are included, the term *monitoring* is used (Vesti, Somnier & Kastrup, 1992). Generally, the aim of monitoring is to establish sufficient knowledge about what actually goes on in a program, so that it can be managed to optimize goal achievement. To fulfill this, monitoring must be systematically and continuously concerned with program input, process, and outcome.

Evaluation of therapeutic activities, as part of monitoring system, represents set of different activities assigned to testing quality and efficiency of the whole treatment, or some of its aspects, and all that in accordance with earlier defined goals.

The term *treatment* implies any kind of activity assigned to client's improvement. The basic question is: *Did our treatment improve our clients' state.*

The process of evaluation implies different procedures and activities which have been organized for period longer than treatment itself. Evaluation is multidisciplinary area and therefore involves different professionals (psychiatrist, psychologist, psychotherapists, social workers and others).

Ever since the 1950's, Eysenck's criticism on the low success rate of psychotherapy has persuaded clinicians worldwide to ignore the question is psychotherapy efficient and concentrate on the question how efficient it is and what is actually changing within the psychotherapeutic setting (Kazdin, 1994).

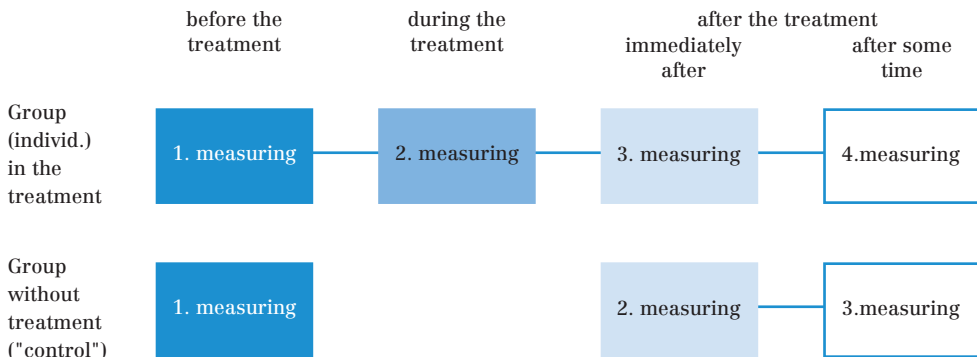
One needs to define what kinds of changes may be expected and with what frequency within a certain time frame for particularly diagnosed patients. Therapy goals and efficiency criteria could be related to specific theoretical approach and therapist's orientation. It should be pointed out that every kind of treatment is subjected to evaluation regardless of the fact whether it is psychodynamic, behavioristic, cognitive or some other.

2. The basic elements of the evaluation process

We will here present some of very important elements in process of treatment evaluation. There are various valuable methods for evaluating psychotherapy, but there is no consensus about the best one. The basic methodological problem is to find if there is causal relation between the used treatment and observed changes (outcomes) in client's state.

Methodological problems in evaluation area can be considered as standard problems of experimental research (experimental paradigm), as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Design for implementation of group therapy evaluation using control group and multiple change measurements



The goal of control group, that is not included in treatment, is to show what changes are achieved spontaneously, without intentional therapeutic interventions. That control group should be equal to group that is treated in all relevant characteristics, but for treatment itself. In clinical practice there is an ethical problem not to include into treatment some individuals that might need it. It does not happen in researches. But it is possible to make control group of individuals that will receive treatment afterwards.

In order to evaluate any treatment it is necessary to be clear about where we are (base line) and *where we want to end up (we can differ short-term and long-term outcomes)* (Bergin, Garfield,1994).

Problem with base line could be that at the beginning of therapy not all clients

are in the same situation; the problem might occur with "timing" of next measuring too. Extreme limitations exist in the assessing and deliberate manipulation (e.g. randomization) of patient groups in comparison with classical research situation.

When making conclusions about factors that resulted in changes in client's condition, we can differ:

- specific (direct) effects of the treatment
- non-specific (indirect) effects

Indirect effects of the treatment could be seen in client's feeling that somebody cares about them and that they are important to someone; that brings them their dignity back (Lambert, Hill, 1994). That effect was often seen as more important than specific interventions that are characteristic for some therapies.

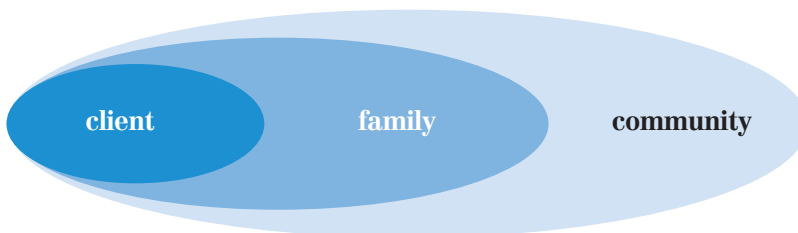
Here are some factors that should be taken into account when planning evaluation:

a) Periods of data collecting

- Before the treatment
- During the treatment (possibly in several occasions)
- After the treatment
 - immediately after the treatment (short-term effects)
 - some time after the treatment is completed (long-term effects)

It seems that some effects of psychotherapy can be observed long after the treatment has been completed, but there are some that cease right after the treatment.

b) Effects of the treatment can be measured on different levels



Changes can be seen on different levels. Improvement of individual status might influence improvement in the family functions, and in social community as well (working community, neighborhood, etc.)

c) The sources of the information needed for evaluation process

- Client (self-rated)
- Individuals close to the client (relatives, friends)
- Therapist
- Professionals not included in the treatment (e.g. professionals from other institutions)

d) Who collects data

- Professionals from team not directly included in the treatment
- Therapist
- Paraprofessionals from the team (fieldworkers)
- Professionals not included in the treatment (e.g. professionals from other institutions)

e) Methods of data collecting

- Psychological tests and questionnaires
- Interview
- Observation
- Objective behavioral changes

f) Criteria of improvement of the client's state (related to defined goals)

The question is: What can be considered as an improvement.
Indications for the termination of the treatment

- Changes of the scale results
 - statistical criteria
 - qualitative criteria
- subjective estimation of the client
- objective changes in behavior (e.g. employment)

Additional question is could we use one or more indicators.

- one indicator
- multiple indicators

Namely, positive outcomes occur when the client:

- exhibits fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression
- exhibits fewer symptoms of PTSD
- exhibits more positive self-concept
- exhibits more positive outlook on the future and reduction in symptoms of numbing
- develops more diversified coping strategies
- achieves increase in social participation
- more realistically trying to evaluate his/her personal participation in the traumatic experience
- experiences fewer disturbing feelings of shame and guilt

It is important to stress that there are situations where lack of deterioration could be considered a success.

We should once again emphasize importance of planning evaluation activities and clear definition of evaluation goals.

3. Why do we need evaluation ?

Although every form of treatment should include some evaluation (other than subjective therapist's), it does not always take place. So here we will give some reasons to underline its importance. Purpose of evaluation can be multiple.

* Estimation of treatment efficiency for the client
insight into changes of the client's state and making decisions
connected with the treatment

- Estimation of treatment efficiency for the client
insight into changes of the client's state and making decisions
connected with the treatment
- Feed back useful to the therapist
improvement and correction of his own work
- Estimation of the efficiency (adequacy) of the treatment
improvement of techniques used to detect the optimal kind of the treatment
- The use of the results for scientific purposes
improvement of treatment in general, building of new theories and models
- Documentation about torture and maltreatment authorities, public opinion

Research must be primarily committed to generating achievable outcomes. Achievable outcomes require theory construction, hypothesis building and experimentation capable of producing new, different and better outcomes. However, the research standards and methods of mainstream scientific approaches must be adapted to the problems and obstacles unique to the torture experience.

Protection of the survivor from further victimization demands that the investigator forms working partnership with the survivor, as well as a contract to share any new knowledge discovered. It is ethically correct to assume, as top priority, that research position will protect the client from further exploitation and harms and provide him with maximum benefits of the research process.

Any research in this field must answer the question: Who benefits from this research? If it is not the torture victim (client), and if the benefits are not well defined and useful, then studies should not be permitted.

Our rule has always been: If the client finds assessing too difficult we should give it up. The well-being of client is more important than data collected.

Evaluation data users

- Therapist and professionals from the team
- Other professionals through using scientific articles, books, lectures.
- Financial supporters (governmental organizations, NGOs)
- Clients

All data must be strictly confident.

4. Measuring instruments used in monitoring

The choice of measuring instruments for a traumatized population must be governed by the following factors:

1. Their applicability to the relevant population: it is better to use the instruments that have already been practiced in the area or at least have some defined norms, i.e., they have been translated and adapted for use in the regional cultural environment.
2. The instruments should be simple for use and linguistically appropriate for the relevant population. This is particularly important not only because of the socio-demographic characteristics of the refugee population, but also because of a number of non-professionals using the instruments.
3. The instruments should not be too long because they are sometimes implemented during field work in crowded refugee settlements and private homes, without appropriate working space.
4. They should have adequate psychometric characteristics.

After establishing that, we are ready to define variables and to decide on instruments or method we are going to use in order to collect data.

5. Organization of data collecting - problems and experiences

The great number of instruments are used by the psychologists in our Center, but some of data have been collected by physicians, psychiatrists or non-professional from the team.

While collecting data, it is very important to establish the atmosphere of confidence between interviewer and the client. More so if data refer to traumatic events. Therefore data concerning that kind of situations are generally not collected at the very beginning of the treatment, but at the moment the therapist finds optimal according to the state of his/her client.

It is possible that the client estimates the results of the treatment higher than they really are due to his gratitude to the therapist or the team members. Therefore it is much better to have someone outside the team or even outside the Center to collect evaluation data regarding treatment effects.

It is also very important to motivate client for testing and to explain him/her the aim and use of data collected. It is usual to apply 2 to 4 instruments at the time (depending on their length).

6. Theoretical frame and operative model of data collecting

To be able to design evaluation plan and to organize data collecting it is very important to have possible theoretical frame or model set in advance. At the same time it will make the analyses of data easier and work more systematic.

We shall here briefly give some variables that might be relevant during research and evaluation activities in field of stress and trauma caused by exile and return.

Theoretical background for exploration of this field is represented with construct of stress presented in Lazarus theoretical approach to stress (Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), as well as in model of traumatic stress reactions (Willson, 1989).

In Figure 2 principal groups (clusters) of variables are presented, which are of interest in this context, including the treatment effects. Sources of trauma are the entering variables which acted on specific individual in specific circumstances, and led to specific consequences (post-traumatic adjustment). Of special interest are the mediator variables which mediate between stress events and consequences.

Figure 1. IRCT Zagreb

Groups of factors important for monitoring and evaluation of posttraumatic adaptation

SOURCES OF TRAUMA	CONDITIONS BEFORE TRAUMA	TREATMENT	POSTTRAUMATIC ENVIRONMENT	
			INDIVIDUAL	SOCIO-CULTURAL
KIND OF TRAUMA	MATERIAL SOCIAL	KIND OF TREATMENT	MATERIAL CONDIT.	POLITICAL CHANGES
STRUCTURE OF TRAUMA	MENTAL AND HEALTH STATUS	DURATION	AVAILABLE AID	COMMUNITY CARE FOR VICTIMS
DURATION	EARLIER TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES	RELATION WITH THERAPIST	ACCOMMODATION	(POSSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT)...
			SOCIAL SUPPORT	
			FAMILY STATUS	

FACTORS OF FURTHER VICTIMISATION



CHARACTERS OF CLIENT							
AGE	EDUCATION	SEX	PERSONALITY	INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES	VALUES	RELIGION	
ATTITUDES	BELIEVES	EXPECTATIONS	SELF-ESTEEM	LOCUS OF CONTROL			
COPING STRATEGIES				GENERAL APPRAISAL			



LEVELS OF ADAPTATION						
PSYCHOLOGICAL	⇔	BEHAVIORAL	⇔	SOCIAL	⇔	HEALTH

We used Lazarus's and Willson's models as well as IRCT's experience as a base for designing our monitoring and data collecting model.

It seems that the Lazarus stress model has been elaborated and has significant empirical support, so it is used here as the basis for analysing our problem of adjusting to the stress caused by exile.

There are two basic constructs Lazarus puts between stress event and consequences, which are cognitive evaluation and coping processes. According to Lazarus they present critical mediators in relationship individual-environment and influence, together with numerous factors, direct and long-lasting effects of exposure to stress and trauma. Cognitive evaluation presents a process by which an individual evaluates if certain event is relevant for her/his well-being and in what way.

Processes of primary and secondary evaluation are differentiated. In the process of primary evaluation, a person, on the basis of available information and his/her own experience evaluates if an event or a situation represents a threat, or does it in any way endanger her/his values, motives or goals. In the process of secondary evaluation a person evaluates what could be done in order to prevent or to reduce noxious consequences of activity of stressors. These two processes determine a form of coping with stress. The coping process itself relates to the constant cognitive and behavioural efforts of individual to regulate specific outside and/or inside demands posed by environment which are evaluated potentially noxious and which overcome the capabilities of the individual for defence (Lazarus, Folkman, 1984).

In other words, a situation becomes stressful only when individual evaluates it as such. Processes of evaluation and coping are under influence of a great number of characteristics of the individual which Lazarus uses to explain large inter-individual variability in experience of stress, in reaction to stress, and consequences or a degree of adjustment.

One of the contemporary models of traumatic stress has been developed by Willson (1989). He maintains that posttraumatic adjustment can develop different pathological and non-pathological forms which can be connected with the characteristics of different development periods. Pathological reactions can include all major psychological disorders and changes in personal structure, which are not necessarily always diagnosed as PTSD regarding the intensity and number of symptoms. Non-pathological reactions to trauma are especially important in analysis and show what elements develop immunity or prevent pathological reactions. According to Willson, (Willson, 1989; Willson & Keane, 1997) such forms of reactions are categorised into following categories:

1. positive changes in a person and his character
2. strengthening of different levels development
3. increasing psychological maturity

4. changes in hierarchy and intensity of motives
5. changes in believes, attitudes and values

As reactions to traumatic event are very personal, it is of the utmost importance to get client's estimation of his/her experience of trauma. The number of traumatic events, on the other hand, is not in great correlation with the reactions or effects these events caused.

Our experience shows that personal impression of the client is essential. Numerous research results confirm that consequences of traumatic experiences on psychological, medical and social level exist (Willson 1989; Willson & Keane 1997). Forced exile, connected with torturing, is a cataclysmic phenomenon, representing one of the most serious forms of psychosocial stress, which can affect an individual or a group (Lazarus, Cohen, 1977). It represents a direct threat to almost all needs - from physical integrity, to material, social, moral, and self-actualization needs.

A problem of theoretical, but also of practical importance is establishing relation between groups of variables in model of stress.

Experiences of refugees/displaced persons could be divided in three time spans (Ben-Porath, 1991).

First period understands period before leaving home and going to exile. In that period individuals are exposed not only to pressures, which force them to leave, but also with obstacles that are preventing them to go. The period of exile, the second one, starts with going away, continues with searching for protection and security in different parts of one's own country or in some other country, and ends only with returning to one's home, or with permanent settlement somewhere else. Third period understands return (repatriation) which includes re-organization of life in homeland or stay in another place or state. Each one of three periods is marked by different stressors; some are acting throughout all periods, while some are specific only for certain periods. Refugees are often psychologically in situation of multiple denial. Kunz (1973) in kinetic model of exile states that forces of environment are crucial. In cases of economic migrations attractive forces of new environment are predominant. The selection of adequate environment which would be the least traumatic is especially important for successful recovery of victims of torture. Unfortunately, their "post-traumatic" environment still represents the source of stress.

Time spent in exile (refugee camps, private accommodation, placement with family) are characterized with postponement of decision, feeling of uncertainty, material deprivation, poor accommodation conditions, by broken social network, dependence on others, social stigmatization and marginalization, process of loosing their cultural identity (especially in children), language and other.

Return is often connected with political (objective) circumstances, but significant part of decision is up to the individual. Return could be characterized with fear

for one's own safety, destroyed home, encounters with previous neighbors, and maybe with perpetrators, re-living the traumatic events, need for increased tolerance and other elements.

Experience shows that repatriation is often linked with idealization accompanied with unrealistic expectations. Often conditions following the repatriation do not match conditions existing prior to exile. Very little research data is connected to the repatriation and life after return. Repatriation which is often conducted to politically unstable and impoverished areas represents new source of stress for individual.

Here are some specific variables and concepts we have used in our monitoring system related to repatriation.

In 1974 Seligman presented his theory of learned helplessness, which shows that if specific behaviour does not lead to cessation or to reduction of aversive or stressogenous stimuli, it could lead to motivational deficit in individual which, as a consequence, has general passivity (Mikulincer, 1989).

Personal characteristics are by definition relatively stable. Because of that changes of some aspects of personality, especially self-conception, are related to some extremely intensive stressful situations, which even do not have to last a long time. This is often verbally described by persons who survived some traumatic experience "I'm not the person I used to be".

Direct consequences could be change of specific relatively stable aspects of self-conception, decreased perception of self-competence or self-confidence, and perception of locus of control.

These variables, which we usually treat as mediators, could, if changed under stress, lead to different outcomes in process of adjusting to new stressful situation.

A hypothesis could be set that in situation of long-term exile (preceded by extreme traumatic events) tendency of decreased personal competence and increase of outside locus of control would appear, as a result of predominant objectively poor possibilities of control over situation.

Long-term exposure to such circumstances could lead to increased passivity, resignation, lack of active attempts of solving the problem, decrease in expectations related to one's own future, as well as to general uncertainty regarding one's own decisions.

To make decision about return or leaving for other countries asks for considering different positive and negative factors, for increased national tolerance, as well as for relevant information on real consequences of possible decisions. Visiting previous homes, accompanied by experts, represent an important step in decision making process.

There are relatively small number of research data which could give information on existence of such changes, as well as on their stability.

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Part II.

In our Clients' own Words

A Refugee - what is that?

To live for eight years as a refugee, to put questions to oneself each and every day about what has happened, where is the way out of all this turmoil, how to proceed; it means to be aware of the fact that eight years have been wasted. We know all too well that in normal circumstances at the end of the day a person asks himself what he has done during that day and what is there to be done the next day whereas a refugee asks such questions as: Where I am going to live tomorrow? How am I going to pay my rent, electricity bill or the wood for heating? Will I get the extension of my residence permit in the hosting country? These and so many other questions that people who live in normal circumstances never even dream of asking themselves. Only very strong persons may cope with a refugee's life: Or persons who are believers and who believe that it is just God's test, the test that all religious books speak of, about the persecution of people for religious reasons. I believe that in this respect we are very much like animals - we fight for a territory and we do not mingle with persons of other religions. In order to achieve this, people always claim that it is for religious reasons; they claim that their religion is threatened, so they look for a suitable person whom a specific nation will idealize even though he will lead them into imprudent actions with fatal consequences which even the perpetrators are later ashamed of.

In different countries we were given different names: in the Republic of Croatia we were refugees, in Turkey muhajees or paupers, in Malaysia musapheers or guests etc. Whenever we talked to people of similar fate after they had seen the pictures of disasters in Vukovar and Srebrenica, mass graves around Prijedor, human bones scattered all over the mountains in Bosnia and such other tragedies, they asked whether it was a tribal war. And after all those pictures of the atrocities in this area how to explain to the world that Sarajevo had the first tram in the Balkans, that the National Theatre in Sarajevo was founded 150 years ago, that just before the aggression it hosted the Winter Olympic Games? It took me and people like me quite a long time to comprehend questions: What is a human being? To what extent is he aware of what he does for his own good or for the good of his family or his tribe? How does he treat neighbor from another tribe, different race, or praying in different way? All these questions are basic in every religion, but unfortunately they are excuses for crimes committed against other nations.

All perpetrators claim that they behave in a certain way in the name of God, but they forget main principles of all three major religions - Catholic, Orthodox

and Muslim - are: there is only one God and that a person should not do to others what he would not do to himself. In no holy book there are no words like to kill, to rape, to loot or to persecute. But still all perpetrators did exactly that. In normal circumstances to conjure up a scene of torture in a concentration camp, of expelling people from their homes, of raping maidens in front of their parents would be a subject of writing script. It would mean to produce a movie, to assign roles, it would mean rehearsals and shooting. But we went through all those atrocities in reality. Then we were scattered around the world with our well-learned roles while those who committed atrocities are still unpunished, they are candidates for seats in the Parliament and other important positions in Bosnia and Herzegovina administration.

It is not easy to understand that in fact we felt saved in a foreign country; I watched people kissing the soil although their only possessions were the two bags they were allowed to take with them. Nothing of any value, not to mention the money. It is hard to understand that all ties between yesterday's neighbors and friends, even spouses, who had had children together were completely torn apart over one single night. Many wives left their husbands in the concentration camps and they never got out, and those very wives remarried but to men of their own religion. The same holds good for the husbands who sent their wives over the river Sava and then remarried women from their own tribe.

It is deplorable that among the leaders who led their peoples in that dirty war, in which nothing was sacred unless uttered by a leader, there were high church dignitaries too. They supported atrocities of soldiers if they belonged to their religion, they blessed their dead, forgave their sins forgetting that only God may forgive, forgetting God's words that by killing a person one commits a sin as big as if he had killed the whole world and that nobody is allowed to take the life of another person - only God who has given life may take it.

Every refugee has his own story. Many families have been separated; the only thing that mattered was to get out of that hell, be saved, there was no time for waiting and many remained in the death camps, many were taken away and their trail ran cold; many were taken to forced-labor camps and never came back. During those years many radio stations and particularly Free Europe, broadcasting from Prague, had on the program "Broken connections", which helped people to search for their loved ones. How many nights I cried listening to parents searching for their children, sometimes younger than 10, or listening to children searching for their parents in far away countries. At the end of the war there were few families who were reunited without having lost a family member.

When the war ended we had no idea what tests were still ahead of us. However we knew that the hard times were behind us and we only hoped they would never happen again.

Our coming to Croatia, it is very well known, was officially organized. However

we had to present all sorts of documents and renounce all our movable and immovable property. In order to speed the process up we engaged lawyers but it cost money. The absurd thing was that everything was organized through the Red Cross and one physician who headed one humanitarian organization, but nobody asked or cared whether we could afford that. To leave Croatia one needed a letter of guarantee from the country he wanted to go to, as Croatia was only a transit country. Our people in Croatia did not sit idle, they got organized, they registered hometown clubs as they had come to Croatia long time before the war and had Croatian citizenship. They were the only persons who had possibility to establish clubs and humanitarian organizations. They also helped with the papers, which were issued by the Government Office for Refugees. It was a time when many people made huge amounts of money on misery of their own people by forging documents or organizing the transfer of refugees by buses via Herzegovina, because for many people it was the only way to get to other countries.

It took quite a long time before the world came to know the real truth. All of us who went through that hell believe that war was agreed upon between leaders. It was led under the slogan "Divide and rule"; it was the plan to persecute people and then resettle them all over the world. As a result there are Bosnian refugees from New Zealand to Malaysia; many have already left their bones in foreign countries and many will never return for economic reasons.

Many are homesick but for all sorts of reasons they still live in foreign countries they have come to as refugees.

How has a refugee been living in Croatia for the past eight years? First there is a great difference between a Bosnian refugee and a domestic one. Even the name they have given us is different: we are refugees and they are displaced persons; much depends on whether you are a Catholic or a Muslim. Displaced persons, Catholics, had no problem in getting Croatian citizenship or an identity card, so they could apply for a passport and after obtaining it they could travel abroad searching for employment. Muslim refugees had only a refugee card with the number registered and recorded in the center for social welfare. With such status one cannot seek a job and consequently health care insurance, so a refugee is entitled only to the primary health care. For five years they have not received any social welfare allowance from the center for social welfare and during past two years any aid from the Red Cross or Caritas either.

And during all that time we listened to declarations about human rights, freedom, equality among people; all sorts of charters have been signed between the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding special relations, but there was nothing about us in these documents. And it is the 21st century - one must pay his rent, electricity bill, water and all sorts of other utility services. Nobody cares that we are not entitled to execute our right work and other similar rights.

I have mentioned earlier the hometown clubs, humanitarian organizations and people who organized them. At their official stamp or logo of the organization they had a symbol of Bosnian locality they came from - a lily or a chessboard. At that time at Ban Jelačić Square in Zagreb Croatian and Bosnian flags were tied together as a token of friendship but it did not last long. The conflict between the Catholics and Muslims broke out in Herzegovina and later spread to other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina

To become a member of a club you had to pay membership fees although the clubs had their sponsors who financed their maintenance and rent for office premises. Those clubs were engaged in all sorts of activities ranging from proclaiming war presidiums, the provision of health care, as there were a lot of unemployed doctors wandering around Zagreb, the distribution of humanitarian aid, issuing of various documents as many people were left without any. For many of them it was a good way of making money - documents were often forged, even diplomas, and those people did not bother that their dirty jobs would one day become known. The most profitable job was transfer to the Third Countries - it became quite a routine business. The easiest route was via Hungary into Sweden with fixed - very high - prices per person, so everyone was cashing in. Some clubs later grew into humanitarian organizations, some turned the deserted huts into refugee camps where they received the Bosnians transported by buses and trains from Bosnia to Croatia. Many refugees found safety there trying to find out something about their next of kin or to get in touch with those who had gone abroad and stayed there. The idea in itself was wonderful, only it turned into a business - no way to get into a camp unless you paid quite a sum of money or unless any of your next of kin was at the front fighting.

A lot of journalists from big newspapers came into Bosnia during the war and they helped the whole world to learn about the atrocities that the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina were going through. As none of the humanitarian organizations had access to the country where the war raged, most of them came to Zagreb where they received refugees, cared for them or referred them to their home countries. Many resourceful people made up stories about the sufferings of their families after they had been accommodated in a safe place, some lied about their children's disappearances or of their being at the war fronts all over Bosnia, which was particularly appreciated by Arabs, who lavishly compensated them. Thus many refugees enjoyed life by taking what they were not entitled to. In some of the humanitarian organizations one could get some money or some other aid. All of them had their own criteria; for example they would distribute the aid in the afternoon so they could see who said their prayers and who had not. Women even dressed the way they were expected to. One could understand such behavior, but resources were limited and in such a way the aid did not get into the hands of most needy people. In order to get aid you had to be dressed in wretched clothes, look completely run down or be dirty.

Of course, there were people who could not pretend. Many refugees maintained their dignity. I myself could not accept such pretentious behavior and I still do not approve it.

Merhamet came to Zagreb bringing relief in trucks via Bosanska Gradiška. This organization has been providing aid for food, toiletries, both for Muslims and Catholics who remained in Prijedor. As many as 6 trucks a day used to come; they were often looted on the way back from Zagreb. When they were not looted, aid reached those who needed it and for whom it was intended. It was the best bond with those who remained in Prijedor. I shall always admire those people who saved so many people from the hell there, who saved people's money, jewelry, not to mention the numerous letters and connections between family members they established that way.

During my early refugee days I used to go out quite often; I would take a tram and wander around the town which I knew so well as I had often stayed there before the war. I wondered how had I become a refugee, penniless and jobless just in Zagreb, in the city I loved and admired. Walking around the Square I watched groups of people who gathered there always at the same time and on same spot. People from Prijedor gathered in the Square by the clock every Sunday at 11 o'clock. Always the same people. They talked about the time before the war and about what was going on in Prijedor and Bosnia generally, about the movements of troops at the front, shared information about who died abroad, who was found to be alive. Yet, every time they gathered somebody was missing, somebody who had either died or left for the Third Countries. Those gatherings did not mean much to me as people always talked about the same things, concentration camps and the stories about them, the stories that haunted me every night. Remembrance of my friends are associated with the concentration camps in Omarska, Trnopolje and Keraterm, the mines of Tomašice and Omarska or some other mass graves not yet discovered. Many are buried as unidentified bodies with only a number on them because there was nothing to identify them, no documents or personal belongings. These things were immediately taken from them and their clothes disintegrated during their many months in hangars and runways of concentration camps of Omarska, Trnopolje and Keraterm. Identity documents were the first they would take from us in camps. Even if we saved them they did not mean much to us as we thought we would never get out of the hell we had been brought to.

I often wonder what actually happened: the city and people had experienced the burden of refugeeism. While looking for a flat I felt miserable and humiliated when I was asked whether I was a Croat. Of course, there were honorable exceptions who did not make distinctions among us. People always carefully listened to whether we used the eastern or western variant (Serbian or Croatian) of words, for example, bread or coffee (kruh-hljeb, kava-kahva). Landladies used to instruct us on using a vacuum cleaner, as if we had come from a God

forsaken place. And I could not make myself tell them that I used to sell dish washers even to people who lived in villages. Once I told them a true story that had happened to me in Prijedor. A woman walked into a furniture showroom where I worked to buy a color TV. Through a shop window I saw that she had arrived in a car with German plates. I asked her why she did not buy TV in Germany because they were cheaper there and she answered that TV was for her mother who did not speak German. I laughed at her then and now people laughed at me thinking that I was nobody who did not even know how to use a simple household device.

The war between Catholics and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina was another blow for my people although it was a useless war, a result of Milošević's politics aimed at division of Bosnia and Herzegovina and destruction of everything connected to Islam. The goal was to leave only 10% of the inhabitants of the Islamic religion. Although we were not labeled, our houses were: on each Muslim house in Prijedor there had to be a white flag just like in Hitler times when Jews were labeled.

However, true inhabitants of Zagreb and true Croats condemned that war. If only all of them had done so, there would not have been either Ahmići crimes or villages where Croats had experienced the same destiny. In 1995 the Dayton Agreement was signed and the event filled with enthusiasm all those in the towns which were surrounded, although the Dayton Agreement was no good for us, Muslims. The aggression and genocide were awarded; the Orthodox Serbs got 50% of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the parts with the richest soil. After Dayton all the donators moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina to provide their help directly and along with them moved all those who were opening hometown clubs in Croatia hoping to get a position in administration. Many of them are today candidates for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or in municipality bodies. They do not feel ashamed because of their shameful behavior towards refugees in Croatia, the way they illegally smuggled them into the Third Countries or the way they charged them for forged documents, letters of guarantee and other things. After they had left, only small number of people remained in Zagreb who stoically coped with all the hardship, though cheated and abandoned by the wrong politics and the executives of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those same politicians, intellectuals now live in someone else's houses while those like me cannot return to their house just because the displaced persons from those regions are there and before they return to their houses we cannot return to ours.

The last elections showed that Bosnia and Herzegovina is heading once again towards 1991; the same people who started the war are again in power. Only the creator Karadžić is missing, though he is always somewhere in the background, but his associates Maksimović and Ostojić are back in power. I have already written about the IRCT, the organization that has been very

active since the beginning of the aggression and that has continuously for eight years cared for the seriously traumatized war victims. In all those years I have visited many humanitarian organizations but there is not one that may be compared to the one in Draškovićeva Street 54. The Center is headed by Gorana Tocilj (c)imunković, Ph.D., a great humanist and a great woman, and staffed with very dedicated, kind and enthusiastic persons.

Every Thursday I look forward to our gatherings, the therapy has now become part of me; we exchange information there, both relating to politics and our families. We have become very close, we are all one family - we rejoice together, we mourn together over those who leave. We regularly visit our occupied or destroyed houses and those among us who have returned to their homes. There we always recall the moments and events from the IRCT Center. That the Center justifies its existence may be proved by the numerous examples, but the most important is that now we are able to communicate although we are of different nationalities or different religions. Our condition has changed, we are more relaxed and self-controlled, nobody among us has committed suicide that would not have been a surprise considering our sufferings. And for all that the credit goes to the Center staff. They also help us with medical treatment as they cover the costs of all the specialist's examinations that we cannot afford. They also pay for our tram/bus pass.

I would particularly like to point out the great success of the program of collective visit to our houses in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is hard for someone who has not gone through the same experience to understand how much easier it is to take the first step - to enter the house left in 1992 and in which somebody else lives now - when the physicians, your therapists and friends are there with you. They offered their support and encouragement, our doctors always were the ones who started the conversation with the present day occupants and then they gradually tried to include us into conversation and make the situation more relaxed. After those visits they would take us for a meal in the restaurant where we would freely communicate, not being afraid that somebody might recognize us. On the contrary, we tried to be loud and show that we still exist. I could talk about the Center and doctors working there for a long time as any Thursday is a story by itself. Regardless of whether some admit it or not, the therapy we receive there is very important for all of us, we still need it as we are frustrated after the elections and we do not see the light at the end of this tunnel yet.

Yet, certain progress has been made in Bosnia, my visits there are much more pleasant than they used to be: I cross the border without being nervous and my last stay in village of Kozaruša gives me strength to persevere. From the balcony of a friend's house I watched many new roofs, the roofs of the renewed houses. Nearby, at the foot of the Kozara mountain, a village inhabited by the Orthodox people, but they do not make any problems to the returnees. They even try to

communicate, they claim it was not their fault and that somebody else did the atrocities. Thus the other day Zijad (a Muslim) and Pero (a Serb) met and Pero tried to communicate with his former neighbor but Zijad immediately asked why had he beaten him in the Omarska concentration camp. Pero answered that he was ordered to do so. Zijad said that he has forgiven him but cannot understand why he was screaming while he was beating him.

Well, everyday people recognize one another and those who are guilty evade those whom they had maltreated. The most frequent topic of returnees is searching for mass graves, as many of them still search for their loved ones. They often go to Sanski Most into the gymnasium where all the dug out corpses are displayed to see if they can recognize them.

I wonder whether the false promises about mass return will ever end; every autumn and winter we wait for spring hoping that it will bring the return. But many springs have come and gone and there is no return for some of us yet. Politicians keep lying, occupying other people's houses, make fortunes from the humanitarian aid that is directed at us, sell state property that we had built, while we are rotting in huts. Many refugees return to Bosnia and Herzegovina in coffins because unfortunately we lack the instinct of elephants and do not know the moment when we shall die. Death keeps taking us by surprise everywhere - from New Zealand to Asia.

I did believe and I still do that there are good people and that life is worth living so while the war was still raging in Bosnia and Herzegovina I went to Caritas to organize an estimate of the damage done to my property hoping to get some compensation. I filed a claim for the return of my property on 12th February 1999 in the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons in Bihać and they notified me that my claim was registered on 10th March in Prijedor. Although the term prescribed by law for the return of the property is one year, I have not received any answer yet. The house is in my ownership, but I cannot use it because the present occupant considers it, as it seems to me, to be his war booty. Then I turned to the Commission for Property Claims of Refugees and Displaced Persons on 2nd February 2000 in Bauerova Street in Zagreb. I gave all the documentation required to Mrs. Mara Milković, who promised that within six months I would return to my house. Nothing has happened yet. I further photocopied all the documentation and sent it to Prijedor at the address of a lawyer's office IUSTITIA in Miloš Obilić Street G-2. However I have not received any answer until today. When I learned about the OSCE office in Prijedor I also sent them the documentation and a letter hoping that they might help, but all my hopes were dashed.

To conclude, what answer to the question: A refugee - what is that? can we give? Is there anybody who cares? The answer is in Draškovićeva 54. They do care. They are there to offer a kind word, pay attention and offer a minor material help. There are no privileged ones among us in Draškovićeva. We are

all equal. Unfortunately there are rumors that the Center might be closed for lack of finances. People who finance the Center are insensitive to people who have lost everything; they do not know what it means not to have home: they live in Geneva and other large cities and they know only what it means to have.

What I was waiting for all these years?

Waiting as an idea.

Word waiting is rather common one. Everyone knows the meaning of the word from his or her experience of waiting. There are some individual differences, but for a refugee waiting has meaning of its own.

Waiting for, expecting something, hoping for, to hear some good news, to daydream and dream, and to analyze how realistic each one of dreams are.

And why are they so different from those we had before 1992. Nowadays dreams are heavy, full of indistinct characters and objects, indistinct situations and locations they are placing me in. This is the way I wait every new day with an expectation to hear some news, good or bad.

Many of my dreams are unrealistic, but I wait and keep my hopes nevertheless. I have decided to write down something on subject of WAITING, the way I perceive it from the standpoint of my exile and awaiting. The way I see it, everyone is entitled to his waiting, his hopes, dreams, wishes, and even, in some proportion, to come true.

In 1992 the war came to the area of Prijedor where I lived with my family.

My premonitions about the war which was by that time raging in our neighborhood finally come about on May 30, 1992. Early in the morning on that day we were all picked up and taken away. I, my male friends and sons-in-law to the concentration camp in Omarska, and women, that is my wife and my daughters, together with a three year-old granddaughter to the concentration camp in Trnopolje, the camp for women and children.

There, in the concentration camp, I learned quite a new kind of waiting. Nights and days would last forever there. I was constantly waiting for the moment the jailors would come and take me for torture, waiting for the news from home, which came regularly with every new round of captives that were brought in. So we learned, fast, about everything that was going on outside.

In the camp they used to classify us, over and over again, on the basis of ever new alleged indictments and transferred us from one building into the other, every time forcing people to sign up the indictment documents. Many of my friends didn't live to the day we were finally let go from Omarska; they ended their lives in the iron-mines dugouts.

So we waited to be released or executed, witnessing the atrocities done to people we knew and to people we didn't know, the people, I am sure even today, who did not commit any of the crimes they were accused for by their torturers and tortured for. They were guilty of not belonging to the same tribe as their

perpetrators and jailers. Waiting back then I was only afraid not to lose my mind and to do something that could provoke jailers to fire and shoot me down, something they used to do at any move they perceived as a possible "menace to their security".

In the concentration camp lives of captives were worth less than lives of stray animals. Every night we would wait for our time to come for execution or a so-called exchange, which never took place. This I learned only after I was liberated from the camp. Finally we were transferred from Omarska to Trnopolje, another, somewhat more relenting, camp where we were allowed to wash up after two and a half months, to change our underwear, where we were finally dusted against the lice that used to eat us up. And after that we were released, only to wait for another departure from our homes. We were constantly intimidated and that went on and on. There was not a night that some of my neighbors, from the same or next street, were not taken away never to come back. We were waiting to get the necessary documents to be able to leave, but before we did we had to divest everything we owned for the benefit of some new trumped up state. What hurt me the most was that among perpetrators I recognized people I used to know, to converse with, people I considered intellectuals. I still wonder how was it possible for friendships and godfather-relations to perish so fast. How did it happen all at once that "mixed" - inter-national marriages became such a dispute? How was it possible for a mother or a father to leave one's own child for the sake of national propaganda. How did it happen that family ties were broken because the relatives were of different religion? These are questions I can not find answer to. Not even today, after nine years.

I still wonder how was it possible that at the same time people traveled to space, and accomplished other great scientific achievements, while here, on the confounded Balkans, people were doing atrocities to each other that no animal would ever do.

Nevertheless waiting has still another, finer aspect, and that is the space for hope, as unrealistic as hoping might be. In the expectance of good one starts feeling better somehow. With the problems I bear I actually do need too much to start feeling good. Waiting for tomorrow makes the time pass by swiftly. And one realizes that quite minimal conditions are enough to be happy, once you are past needing all the expedients, the expensive furniture, huge house, car, weekend house, great paycheck, clothes and all other material goods. Then waiting becomes easy tolerable.

While in exile I used to wait for news from Bosnia. I would wait for people who only recently emigrated and were on their way to the Third Countries. First I would be happy to hear something about my home, but soon I would get sad with news about the people that were killed and the people who perpetrated the atrocities, both of whom were my neighbors only yesterday.

During the war 1992 to 1995, the time of my waiting to return home, I was given hope by every conference and meeting on Bosnia. I hoped the people would come to their senses and start living like normal world once again. And because that this waiting in hope had some magic effect, time went by so fast that today, when looking back, I can only wonder where have all these nine years gone.

The way we refugees wait differs extremely from one to the other. My waiting is for example of entirely different nature than that of some of my friends, who lost their love ones and still today do not know what was their destiny. My whole family survived the war turmoil. I believe it is exactly the distinction of waiting for something impossible that makes their position different from mine. They are still waiting for their love ones to return from the concentration camps that nobody has survived, or at least to get their remaining so they could be properly buried at last.

Refugees always wait for something. First you wait for the papers to allow you to get out of your homeland to the far-away world. On that journey one suffers so many humiliations and so severe ones that no animal, let alone a human being, should. Then you wait for an accommodation in some refugee shelter. Then you wait in a line in some humanitarian organization, such as Caritas or Merhamet, to get some food to be able to make it through a day. Then you wait to figure out, thinking as hard as you can, the way to get some money to be able to pay for your accommodation. So, you wait and wait.

Many of people I used to know were not lucky enough to meet the day to visit their homes. They died. And they are in some foreign graveyard in some foreign country.

Many were just not able to hold out waiting, to endure inner pressure, the pressure that affects entire organism. It is impossible to describe this wish, this uncertainty. One has to experience it to understand it. One feels he is a burden to the host community, he becomes afraid of his own shadow. A refugee coming from different surrounding, society, background, customs and mentality has to work hard to adjust to the new circumstances. This is all very hard task.

So, once when waiting in Ban Jelačić Square in Zagreb, where people from Prijedor used to meet, I learned about a place where refugees could turn to for help. After talking with dr. Nora who also was from Prijedor and used to work in IRCT - International Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims - I finally looked for location in Petrinjska street in Zagreb to share my waiting with somebody that would listen to me. Soon after I was in a group with seven other ex-concentration camp prisoners from all over Bosnia, sharing everything me and my family had been through in the camps in Omarska and Trnopolje.

At the beginning when talking about the sufferings we had been through I would cry like a little child. But with the professional help and understanding

we received from dr. Gorana Tocilj-(c)imunković my waiting finally got some meaning - group gatherings. Every Thursday at 4 PM we would come to Petrinjska street, where the Center used to be. My waiting is easier now and I am looking forward to better future. I managed to get rid of nightmares and feel for the first time that I am not left on my own. I have gained some self-security again. I feel now that I'm not all alone, that I have somebody to share my problems with and that I can finally talk about anything. I have realized that problems somehow get much smaller if you have somebody to share them with. I am able to go to sleep again without drugs, which used to be regular ingredient of my life.

From that moment on my waiting has made sense to me. Now I perceive the things that have happened in a new way. I learn about the pain and how to share it in the group, especially with those that have lost their closest relatives. From that moment on I spend my time waiting for the 4 o'clock Thursday meetings, first in Petrinjska, then in Gavella and now in Draškovićeve street. From eight of us who have started the group some have returned to Bosnia, but they have been soon replaced by other newcomers. They all come because they cannot find their peace of mind or rest anywhere else but in the Center. And they come in great numbers, so there are group meetings almost every day. I do not know the exact number of the people coming to the Center but I do know that there are people coming to group meetings much earlier to be able to have their seat there.

That feeling of waiting, I've been talking about earlier, still lives within me, but now it has another form. Now I wait for visiting days to our homes in Bosnia. This is now organized by the Center. Or I wait for others to go and come back with the news. These visits have given new, additional sense to our groups. I am very grateful to IRCT for all its help, for making it possible for us to visit our homes and to attain our documents lost in the turmoil of the war.

While waiting and thinking I finally understood, and this was possible only in the group, that not the nations but individuals were responsible for my sufferings. And now I can wait for the moment of prosecution of those who were responsible for their misdeeds. And I see the day coming. I have finally found something good to wait for and that is the moment all those "heroes", who exhibited their strength against barehanded and unprotected people, will meet the justice. The justice is slow but fair. When in exile and while waiting, all one can hope for is to preserve his health as much as possible, to preserve his human dignity, and to make new friends. I am very glad now that I have recovered and that I have new and realistic vision for myself, for my future life. I have the final goal - to return home.

In my waiting I am still sad to hear that those who have started the war, who have spread all that hatred around are still active in their misdoings. But now I believe their success is getting smaller and smaller. No nation, no matter how

big it is, cannot claim Bosnia is its property. Bosnia is, and always has been, homeland for all its peoples regardless of their religion.

Even today, after all my waiting, there are still some important things left to be done, problems that, if left unsolved, will cast a shadow on everything good. Those who have committed war crimes should be found and prosecuted. Further on, Bosnia is now broken apart into two separate little countries with three separate armies and police forces. This is something I was not looking for to happen. Further on, it bothers me very much that there is no equality in Bosnia. Not everyone everywhere is equally treated. And there is that situation of the state governed by a three-men presidency. It makes it impossible to reach any conclusion about anything of any importance for the country.

I am also very unhappy with a lack of effort invested into reconciliation of peoples in Bosnia, into promoting tolerance. I hold it primarily against the religious institutions, which should try to reconcile us instead of turning us against each other. And that is what they are doing now. Such hypocrisy. On one hand they preach that God has made all the people the same, and that he speaks in favor of love and tolerance, and forgiveness. Not spreading hatred and shedding innocent blood, while on the other hand they encourage quite the opposite.

For someone like me, it is impossible not to feel humiliated, especially if you do not have any reassurance in better tomorrow. Without job, without any money, even for the most necessary things such as housing, food, clothing, basic hygienic necessities.

My waiting has been so very long. Now as I write this, I receive barely a pound of flour monthly. So I am forced to do the hardest physical jobs. And I am 63 and have five broken ribs and an unhealed broken clavicle, results from Omarska concentration camp.

Here is the final analysis of my story:

On one nice and fine night in May I have finally asked myself what did it mean to "wait". What does that word mean, the word we in Bosnia would say "expect for"? To answer this I put myself the following question: "What have I been waiting for all those years for?"

I have waited for:

- To leave Bosnia, because staying there would probably mean the end. In that respect waiting for the documents to leave was not a bad thing.
- To come back to Bosnia to see once again concentration camps in Omarska and Trnoplje, to remember nightmares that have lived in my memory day after day.
- Great changes for the better that have occurred in Bosnian people. The nationalistic euphoria is over; the euphoria that denied Bosnia claiming it was a part of Serbia or Croatia. Bosnia survived as a land of all those who accept to live in it as it is, and there is more and more of those every day.

- Solving many problems - people have started to return to their own homes and they should be able to enter them. Everything that was confiscated should be returned to proper owners. No war pillage should be awarded..
- Freedom of moving around the whole Bosnia. There is now some rule about it saying that I am an equal citizen in Bosnia, not a national minority as I used to be.

There are also some bad things I think about:

- It is very bad that the law on returning everyone to his own possession is being carried out very slowly. Persons on high places hold it back. It takes up to three years to complete documents. And after that there is still more waiting, sometimes even more than a year, to return to one's own property.
- Also the incidents such as in Trebinje, Banja Luka or Vitez are very harmful. But I believe the return can no longer be stopped.
- Personally I was extremely disappointed with international peacekeeping forces, which used every possibility to demonstrate their power both in air and on the ground, but when faced with an actual incident, they were ready to step back because of handful of criminals. They would justify every retreat they made saying that they were "holding the situation under control" when they would readily forget all the atrocities in numerous concentration camps, massacre in Srebrenica and many other scaffolds of innocent people.
- It is also bad that these nine years of my waiting have gone in vain. I always believed that everyone should make an account at the end of the day about what one had done, but I have nothing to complete my 3240 days.
- I also feel sorry because about many people who have not lived long enough to see their hopes and dreams about return to come true.
- I feel sorry for people searching mass graves all across Bosnia for remains of their loved ones to give them a proper burial. For all people who still do not know what their family members' fate was. Many things will unfortunately stay unknown forever, and many graves will stay unmarked.

And all that evil was don by humans and in God's name. I wonder what God it was and what religion did it suit. And concluding I can only say that I am still waiting, expecting and still casting a glance to future.

Illustrations cover the text "How we Understood the Repatriation Process: Story about Return told through Several Pictures done by Children"

