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Rehumanizing the Other: Empathy and Reconciliation

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> Milosevic did not kill—our neighbors were killing.
>
> Male Croat, Vukovar, 2000[1]

> We are all pretending to be nice and to love each other. But, be it known that I hate them and that they hate me. It will be like that forever, but we are now pretending.
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> Female Bosniak, Mostar, 2000[2]

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1. Interview with Male Croat in Vukovar (Dec. 2002).
2. Interview with Female Bosniak in Mostar (Dec. 2002). The term "Bosniak" refers to those Bosnian citizens of the Muslim religion. During the course of the 1992–1995 war, the Muslim community adopted the term to distinguish itself in a nonreligious way from the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.

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ABSTRACT

The health effects of intra-ethnic conflict include hatred and fear among neighbors and friends who have become enemies. The dehumanization of specific groups through concomitant stereotyping does not stop when conflicts end. The inability to see former enemies as real people impedes reconciliation. While much attention has been paid to the reconstruction of infrastructure and the establishment of rule of law, little thought has been given to what is required at the day to day level in order to restore a sense of interpersonal security. To reverse the destruction of social and familial networks that normally sustain health and well-being, a process of rehumanization must occur. We suggest that the promotion of empathy is a critical component of reconciliation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The profound effects of war and conflict on the health of survivors are a significant public health concern. Intra-ethnic conflicts have swept the world since the fall of the Berlin wall. States torn apart by ethnic cleansing or genocide have been forced to confront the suffering and disability caused by violence where perpetrators may be neighbors, colleagues, or friends. Faced with the physical destruction of their states' infrastructures and the social destruction of familial and friendship networks, those victimized by war confront the challenge of restoring the health and well-being of their communities. From a public health perspective, the classic Alameda County studies revealed that poor social relationships are associated with increased mortality and that social support may act as a buffer to reduce risks to health.[3] Thus, reconstituting social networks is critical not only for a functioning society but also for the health and well-being of its people.

Promoting health in its broadest sense is therefore an important challenge for the rebuilding of these countries. This paper argues that healthy psychological and physical functioning requires overcoming the hatred that pervades the relationships between ethnic groups, and that, in turn, this depends upon seeing their recent enemies in human terms.

For countries emerging from such periods of turmoil, the first task of public health is to repair the social fabric of their societies. Given the tragic consequences of ethnic hatred and genocide, the goal of reconstruction is daunting. Much of the literature on peace building or stabilization focuses at the level of the state—particularly the creation of institutions, legal and electoral reform, security, economic development, and the return of

3. Lisa Berkman, *Assessing the Physical Health Effects of Social Networks and Social Support,* 5 Annual Rev. Pub. Health 413, 416 (Lester Breslow ed., 1984).

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displaced people.[4] Despite work showing the unique harms inflicted by ethnic conflicts in which neighbors killed neighbors, relatively little attention has been paid to the fact that these people now must learn to live together on a daily basis—in shops, the market, schools, playgrounds, concerts, and coffeehouses.[5] While much of the focus has been on institution building, aside from some attempts at conflict resolution usually derived from Western-based perspectives and promulgated by international nongovernmental organizations, there is surprisingly little investigation about how neighbors who have tortured neighbors, looted their homes, or fired them from jobs can learn to live together again.

The medical and psychiatric literature in turn has focused on the effects of trauma on individuals, in particular, post-traumatic stress disorder as a syndrome that results from overwhelming stressful events.[6] While there is a burgeoning amount of research on issues ranging from measurement to treatment,[7] the attempt to understand the effects of war has not been connected to analysis of social relationships and the rebuilding of societies.

This paper suggests that it is the interpersonal ruins, rather than ruined buildings and institutions, that pose the greatest challenge for rebuilding society. Robert Putnam has suggested that social capital is critical to the development of community and is based on building networks of social relationships.[8] His conception of "bridging social capital"—a process of

4. *See, e.g.*, Payan Akhavan, *Justice in the Hague: Peace in the Former Yugoslavia? A Commentary on the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal,* 20 Hum. Rts. Q. 737 (1998); Michael Pugh, Regeneration of War-Torn Societies (2000); International Crisis Group, *The Continuing Challenge of Refugee Return in Bosnia and Herzegovina,* Balkans Report No. 137 (13 Dec. 2002), *available at* www.crisisweb.org/home/index.cfm?id=1473&l=1.

5. One of the few exceptions to an emphasis on the state is the "Micro Grassroots Activity" described by Knox and Quirk in Northern Ireland. In Ulster, a variety of community relations programs that target development, reconciliation, education, and cultural traditions have been established. However, they conclude that a top-down approach initiated by the British government coupled with a lack of growth in the NGO sector and a resistance to integrated schools has made the success of these endeavors very limited. Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel, and South Africa: Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation (Colin Knox & Padraic Quirk eds., 2000).

6. Richard Mollica et al., *The Psychosocial Impact of War Trauma and Torture on Southeast Asian Refugees,* 144 Am. J. Psychiatry 1567 (1987); *see also* Stevan Weine et al., *PTSD Symptoms in Bosnian Refugees 1 Year After Resettlement in the United States,* 155 Am. J. Psychiatry 562 (1998); Rachel Yehuda & Alexander MacFarlane, *Conflict Between Current Knowledge About Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Its Original Conceptual Basis,* 152 Am. J. Psychiatry 1705 (1995); Joop De Jong et al., *Lifetime Events and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder,* 286 J. Am. Med. Assn. 555 (2001).

7. David Forbes et al., *The Validity of the PTSD Checklist as a Measure of Symptomatic Change in Combat-Related PTSD,* 39 Behavior Res. & Therapy 977 (2001); *see also* Edna Foa et al., *Psychosocial Treatments for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Critical Review,* 48 Ann. Rev. Psychol. 449 (1997).

8. Robert Putnam, Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (1993); Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community 21–22 (2000).

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reaching beyond one's own group to build interconnectedness and interdependence—is important here.[9] Such relationships, however, do not emerge unless individual interactions and encounters occur, exploration and acknowledgment of the past are allowed, and some level of openness or trust develops.

In the wake of mass violence, societies are trying to reestablish trust and to foster acknowledgment of the past by turning to legal mechanisms and other forms of reckoning.[10] During this era of intense intrastate conflict, the world witnessed a revitalization of international humanitarian law and the development of a new form of truth telling—the truth commission—directed at establishing a historical record of the events that led to the conflict, the facts of the violence, and the aftermath.[11] The implicit assumption is that criminal trials are an important component of reconciliation; in fact, the hundreds of millions of dollars devoted to these trials indicate a consensus in the international community that a juridical response is critical to the rebuilding of societies.[12] Though trials have a significant role to play, they are only part of what is required.[13] Further, this paper suggests that an ecological model that supports interventions at multiple levels from state actors to communities and neighborhoods will have the greatest likelihood of success.

Alongside the pursuit of truth, the emotional aspects of reconciliation in South Africa and elsewhere also are explored widely. These often emerge by evoking the religious ideal of transcending conflict through attitudes such as

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9. Putnam, Bowling Alone, *supra* note 6, at 22–24.
10. *See* Neil Kritz, *Accounting for International Crime and Serious Violations of Fundamental Human Rights: Coming to Terms With Atrocities: A Review of Accountability Mechanisms for Mass Violations of Human Rights*, 59 Law & Contemp. Probs. 127 (1996).
11. These institutional domestic and international responses have become equated with a process of reconciliation. Indeed, the website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia lists as one of its objectives, "to contribute to the restoration of peace by promoting reconciliation in the former Yugoslavia." The ICTY at a Glance, Website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, *available at* www.un.org/icty/glance/index. United Nations Security Council Resolution 955 (1994), which established the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, incorporates the concept of reconciliation in laying out the goals of the court: "Convinced that in the particular circumstances of Rwanda, the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law . . . would contribute to the process of national reconciliation and to the restoration and maintenance of peace." S.C. Res. 955, U.N. SCOR, 3453d mtg., at 1, U.N. Doc. S/RES/955 (1994).
12. These two different approaches—one that emphasizes retributive justice, the second that addresses issues of restorative justice—illustrate the ethical dilemmas that emerge in the context of social reconstruction. In fact, neither approach deals with the question of distributive justice—i.e., rectifying inequities in power, opportunity, and privilege that may have been antecedents to the violence.
13. *See* Laurel E. Fletcher & Harvey M. Weinstein, *Violence and Social Repair: Rethinking the Contribution of Justice to Reconciliation*, 24 Hum. Rts. Q. 573 (2002).

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forgiveness and mercy.[14] John Paul Lederach conceptualizes reconciliation as a social space that requires relationships, encounters, and a discourse that reflects a shift in paradigm from the state level focus traditionally found in political science.[15] He views this space as representing the confluence of four elements—truth, mercy, justice, and peace—and suggests that interventions at multiple levels of leadership and within multiple systems are critical to achieving reconciliation.[16] The problem with emphasizing transcendent forgiveness and mercy is twofold. First, not everyone who is committed to rebuilding social relationships necessarily believes that this necessitates a blanket attitude of forgiveness. Second, and more importantly, "forgiveness" is past rather than future oriented, and still does not provide a psychological basis for how people can overcome systematic dehumanization to see their neighbors once again as people.

Perceptual shifts, as this paper posits, that occur when one becomes interested in another's distinct subjective perspective are central to rehumanization. Yet, discussions of reconciliation in the aftermath of mass violence rarely address the rebuilding of individual relationships. While some may argue this approach is inherently "western," emphasizing individual relationships does not represent a bias towards Western individualism in the sense of treating persons atomistically. For example, interest in another as a person in his or her own right is captured in the traditional African value of "*ubuntu*," literally, "I am because you are." This comes from the Xhosa saying: "A person is a person through persons."[17] In practice, *ubuntu* refers to face-to-face understanding between two human beings.

Most work on social reconstruction focuses on the rule of law, state building, community development, and conflict resolution, with little literature beyond that dealing with forgiveness, psychosocial treatment, and community development on the critical dimension of what must happen between people to lead to genuine rehumanization.[18] The study of collective

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14. *See* Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, *Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization: Stories from South Africa*, 42 J. Humanistic Psychol. 7 (2002); Debra Kaminer et al., *Forgiveness: Toward an Integration of Theoretical Models*, 63 Psychiatry 344 (2000); Desmond Tutu, No Future Without Forgiveness (1999); Charles Villa-Vicencio and Wilhelm Verwoerd, Looking Back, Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (2000).
15. John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies 27 (1997).
16. *See id.* at 30.
17. Jennifer Llewellyn & Robert Howse, Restorative Justice—A Conceptual Framework, Law Commission of Canada (2002), *available at* www.lcc.gc.ca/en/themes/sr/rj/howse/howse_main.asp.
18. *See, e.g.*, Inger Agger, *Psychosocial Assistance During Ethnopolitical Warfare in the Former Yugoslavia*, *in* Ethnopolitical Warfare: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions 305 (Daniel Chiron & Martin E.P. Seligman eds., 2001); Rebuilding Societies After Civil War: Critical Roles for International Assistance (Krishna Kumar ed., 1997).

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memory, state myths and symbols, and conceptions of social identity offers important theoretical conceptions of the factors that contribute to the breakup of states. In addition, these conceptions suggest issues that must be dealt with in the society in order for stability to be restored.[19] However, social reconstruction arguably must attend to interactions between neighbors and friends as well; because ethnic violence is frequently intimate and relational, repair also must function on that level.

This raises the question of what is involved in rehumanizing the other? One place to begin to address this question is the literature on dehumanization. Herbert Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton, in their important study of the My Lai massacre, have suggested that there are three critical factors that operate in the process that allows individuals to commit war crimes: dehumanization, routinization, and authorization.[20] The process of dehumanization is a particularly critical step in the cycle that promotes ethnic cleansing. Social psychologists have put forth well-articulated theories of intergroup phenomena that result in the categorization of in- and out-group membership. These processes, subsumed under social identity theory, suggest that individuals all categorize themselves within some social framework; in other words, where then do I, as an individual, belong?[21] A corollary of this phenomenon is in-group favoritism and out-group exclusion.[22] If, as Anthony Oberschall explains, polarization and escalation occur, then the groups diverge, differences become magnified, and along with a host of other social factors, vulnerability to violence emerges.[23] In situations of heightened tension, negative stereotyping becomes pervasive,

19. The literature on collective memory and social identities is found in such fields as political science, law, and psychology. One of the definitive sources is Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983). See Stuart J. Kaufman, Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War (2001), for a discussion of myths and symbols. *See also* John R. Gillis, *Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship, in* The Politics of National Identity 3 (John R. Gillis ed., 1994); Joane Nagel, *Constructing Ethnicity: Creativity and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture,* 41 Social Problems 152 (1994). *See generally* Mark Osiel, Mass Atrocity, Collective Identity and the Law (1997); Paul Connerton, How Societies Remember (1989).
20. Herbert Kelman & V. Lee Hamilton, Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility 16–20 (1989).
21. *See, e.g.,* Miles Hewstone & Ed Cairns, *Social Psychology and Intergroup Conflict, in* Ethnopolitical Warfare: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions, *supra* note 18, at 319; John Turner & Riina Onorato, *Social Identity, Personality, and the Self-Concept: A Self-Categorization Perspective, in* The Psychology of the Social Self 11 (Tom Tyler et al. eds., 1999).
22. Henry Tajfel & John Turner, *An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict, in* The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations 33 (William G. Austin & Stephen Worchel eds., 1979).
23. Anthony Oberschall, *From Ethnic Cooperation to Violence and War in Yugoslavia, in* Ethnopolitical Warfare: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Solutions, *supra* note 18, at 119.

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or as Daniel Bar-Tal notes: "The opposing group is delegitimized."[24] This delegitimization may be used to support the violence.

If one defines stereotypes as a set of consensual beliefs and recognizes that under certain conditions these beliefs may contribute to actions that are destructive to those stereotyped, then one may begin to see that under these conditions the individuality of the stereotyped group members is lost.[25] In cases of social breakdown, there may be a shift of identity from the individual to the collective self, and individual actions become heavily determined by group influence. Those in the out-group become dehumanized and come to represent mere categories.[26] The suggested dilemma in reconciliation therefore is how to reverse this dehumanization and to return humanity to those from whom categorization has removed all individual attributes.

This article hypothesizes that one of the fundamental components of reconciliation between former enemies is the development of empathy, which it describes as a fundamentally individualizing view of another. In advancing this thesis, this paper suggests not that all that is required to address the wrongs that perpetrators have visited upon victims is empathy, but rather that if the desired outcome is reconciliation, as opposed to coexistence or cohabitation, an empathic connection must occur. From this thesis springs the argument that while social reconstruction occurs at the level of the state and communities, reconciliation involves the ability of one individual to regain empathy for another.

II. EMPATHY AND RECONCILIATION

To be effective, reconciliation must arguably begin at the level of the individual—neighbor to neighbor, then house to house, and finally, community to community. Such reconciliation requires the rehumanization of the "other," and for that to occur the "other" must be invested with qualities that are familiar and accepted. Finding commonality through identification with a former enemy is a first step.[27]

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24. Daniel Bar-Tal, *The Nature of Reconciliation*, *in* A CONFERENCE ON TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND RECONCILIATION 19 (2002), *available at* http://www.stockholmforum.com/extra/link/?module_instance=3.
25. Robert Gardner, *Stereotypes as Consensual Beliefs*, *in* THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PREJUDICE: THE ONTARIO SYMPOSIUM VOL. 7, at 1 (Mark Zanna & James Olson eds., 1994).
26. *See* Hewstone & Cairns, *supra* note 21, at 39.
27. Fletcher & Weinstein, *supra* note 13, at 588–89, 600–01. We see the need to move beyond the stereotyping that characterizes post-conflict views of the "enemy." Fletcher and Weinstein in their study of Bosnian legal professionals illustrate the difficulty that former enemies have in relinquishing their version of the truth—a truth that is colored

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The proceedings of the recent Stockholm International Forum on Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation emphasize the need to rebuild emotional connectedness for reconciliation:

> If reconciliation is not merely an intellectual but also an emotional process (contritio cordis), then a major role in making reconciliation between peoples possible, in generating a capacity for reconciliation, will be played by the education of attitudes, or what used to be known by the old-fashioned term "cultivation of the heart." Naturally the intellect and judgment also participate in remembrance, but the emotional dimension of empathy, which enables us to incorporate other people's perceptions, to see the experience with their eyes, plays a key role. How far it is possible for education to nurture this capacity to share in the feelings of others—which is not simply a matter of sympathy—is an open question.[28]

Gesine Schwan suggests that empathy, and not just sympathy, plays a major role in genuine reconciliation.[29] The distinction between empathy and sympathy is important. Sympathy is about experiencing shared emotion; empathy involves imagining and seeking to understand the perspective of another person.[30] Both sympathy and empathy involve experiencing emotional resonance or attuned feelings in the presence of another. This is sufficient for sympathy, but not for empathy.

Empathy is a process in which one person imagines the particular perspective of another person.[31] This imaginative inquiry presupposes a sense of the other as a distinct individual. Schwan claims that empathy is particularly important for reconciliation, but does not provide a theoretical basis for this claim.[32] Halpern's previous conceptualization of empathy provides the beginning of such an account.[33] Specifically, the major function of empathy is to individualize and particularize and thereby to challenge the major aspects of dehumanization. First, empathy differs from sympathy in that it entails seeking the individual perspective of another rather than generalizing or stereotyping. Descriptions of the dehumanization involved in violence recount how people stereotype and distance themselves from their enemies. Second, empathy involves being genuinely

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significantly by membership in their own social group. The in-group, out-group dynamic prevents the individualization of others and thus inhibits rehumanization and reconciliation. *Id.*

28. Gesine Schwan, *The Role of Education in German-Polish Reconciliation, in* A Conference on Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation, *supra* note 24, at 180, *available at* www. stockholm forum.com/extra/link?module_instance=3.
29. *See id.*
30. Jodi Halpern, From Detached Concern to Empathy: Humanizing Medical Practice 17–18 (2001).
31. *Id.*
32. *See* Schwan, *supra* note 28.
33. Halpern, *supra* note 30.

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curious about another person. In contrast, war involves closing one's mind toward the other's experiences, and presuming that one can already predict the other's behavior ("They'll never change"). Third, empathy involves emotional as well as cognitive openness, and tolerating the ambivalence this might arouse.[34]

Halpern has described empathy further as a complex cognitive and affective process that occurs in one unified activity.[35] It appears to be much easier for people to dehumanize others in one fell swoop (usually in response to social processes) than to rehumanize others through empathy (which requires an individual commitment).

This paper emerges from an on-going study of how people rebuild relationships in the aftermath of genocide and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Yugoslavia. Social anthropologist Tone Bringa has well-described the complex, while warm and cordial, relationships among people of all national groups that were the norm in the countries of ex-Yugoslavia for at least fifty years.[36] Slavenka Drakulic mourns the loss of her individuality and ability to include friends of all national groups: "Not only was I educated to believe that the whole territory of ex-Yugoslavia was my homeland, but because we could travel freely abroad . . . I almost believed that borders, as well as nationalities, existed only in people's heads."[37] Tepavac[38] and Neuffer[39] as well describe a way of life in which a multiethnic, multicultural Yugoslavia was celebrated at the neighborhood level.

However, much has changed. Our impressions are drawn from ninety key informant interviews, twenty-four focus groups, and a survey of 800 people in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 400 people in Vukovar, Croatia, and 400 people in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina. These cities represent sites of ongoing tension between groups that fought each other during the war lasting from 1991 to 1995. In Mostar, Bosnian Croats and Muslims remain primarily divided, as are the Serbs and Croats in Vukovar. Similarly, in Prijedor, Bosnian Muslims have returned to a city from which the Bosnian Serbs expelled them.

On the one hand, people from different ethnic groups are working together and living as neighbors at the present time. On the other hand, a

34. *Id.* at 130–33, 143.
35. *Id.* at 85–94.
36. Tone Bringa, Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village 4–5 (1995).
37. Slavenka Drakulic, The Balkan Express: Fragments From the Other Side of the War 50 (1993).
38. Mirko Tepavac, *Tito: 1945–1980, in* Burn this House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia 64 (Jasminka Udovicki & James Ridgeway eds., 1997).
39. Elizabeth Neuffer, The Key to my Neighbor's House: Seeking Justice in Bosnia and Rwanda (2001).

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major finding motivating this paper is that in the data analyzed thus far we could not find a single example of what we would term empathy. Nowhere in the data does a person demonstrate a full-blown curiosity and emotional openness towards another's distinct perspective. Given that people are coexisting peacefully at the present time and working together sufficiently for economic purposes, why not be satisfied with coexistence?

In our view, coexistence without empathy is both superficial and fragile. Just below the surface is mistrust, resentment, and even hatred. One of our informants writes, "We can live together, we just can't sleep."[40] The Bosniak woman quoted at the beginning of the paper said, "We are all pretending to be nice and to love each other. But, be it known that I hate them and that they hate me. It will be like that forever, but we are now pretending."[41]

There are many potential barriers to empathy in the communities we studied, including ongoing fear, mistrust, stereotypes, feelings of betrayal, ethnic group pressure, ongoing ethnic discrimination, and occasional violence. These barriers are described in great detail elsewhere.[42] Despite the "contact hypothesis"[43] and other theories that simple coexistence under certain conditions is rehumanizing, the research showed that even after six years, people view their coworkers and neighbors with ongoing suspicion and resentment.

> The two colleagues that I used to work with—neither said hello to me nor have asked me how I was or do I need anything. They have not shown even a bit of good will. They have betrayed me as human beings. And now I should be glad to see them? They are not asking for forgiveness which I am offering, but they are not asking for it.[44]

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40. Interview with Professional from ex-Yugoslavia (July 2002).
41. Interview with Focus Group Participant in Mostar (Dec. 2002).
42. Miklos Biro et al., Social Values, Attitudes, and Reconciliation in the Post-War Communities of Former Yugoslavia, Presentation at the Sixth International Conference for Health and Human Rights, Cavtat, Croatia (June 2001) (unpublished manuscript on file with authors); Phong Pham et al., Trauma Experience, PTSD, and Their Relationship with Attitudes Toward Justice and Reconciliation Among Different Ethnic Groups in Rwanda, Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Public Heath Association (November 2002) (unpublished manuscript on file with authors); Harvey Weinstein, Convening Speech at the Sixth International Conference for Health and Human Rights, Cavtat, Croatia (June 2001) (unpublished manuscript on file with authors).
43. Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice 281 (1954). Allport argues that relationships between groups could become positive if four conditions are satisfied: (1) equal status contact among groups, (2) common goals, (3) intergroup cooperation, and (4) explicit social support by authorities, law, or custom. In our study, we found that these conditions were rarely met. The status of minorities is still tenuous, intergroup cooperation is limited to commerce, and societal support for intergroup collaboration was undermined by nationalist leaders.
44. Interview with Focus Group Participant in Vukovar (Dec. 2002).

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> My marriage best man is a Serb. He lives here but I have no contact with him. There are many things that I cannot forgive him. He did not warn me although he knew everything. He socialized with such Serbs that he knew everything, and my children and I could have got killed.[45]

The closest example of empathy comes from statements of survivors that reflect an understanding of the social pressure on members of the other group not to interact and occasional reflections of the experience of a common tragedy. "Some of them are normal people who went through hell. They too had their own hell."[46] Note that this statement reflects compassion, but is addressed towards a generic, rather than a particular other. "Some of them are normal people who went through hell" is progress, but it does not yet represent a connection with a real coworker or neighbor as an individual.

These interviews are disheartening. Despite six years of apparent rebuilding of social ties, people in the countries of the former Yugoslavia have tremendous difficulty connecting with each other. Although some would suggest that coexistence should be sufficient, the lack of overt conflict may arguably only hide schisms that potentially may lead to future rupture.[47] We therefore combed case studies from other locations of mass trauma, as well as from our own data to find even partial or transient moments of empathy. Our goal is formative, to further clarify and elucidate the initial hypothesis that empathy relates to rehumanization. Our hope is that this will facilitate empirical inquiry into the barriers and possibilities for regenerating empathic relations.

III. REHUMANIZATION

This section introduces three examples to illustrate the relationship of empathy to rehumanizing the other. The first displays the need for individual initiative; the second illustrates the importance of social context;

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45. *Id.*
46. *Id.*
47. At international conferences attended by one of the authors, there has been much discussion about whether the ideal of reconciliation sets too high an expectation. Coexistence becomes a possible alternative, a benchmark that ultimately may lead to acceptance and reconciliation. For a discussion of how the lack of overt conflict during the Tito era in ex-Yugoslavia under the banner of "brotherhood and unity" may have masked profound group differences, see Aleksandr Pavkovic, *Yugoslavism: A National Identity that Failed?, in* Citizenship and Identity in Europe 147 (Leslie Holmes & Philomena Murray eds., 1999). *See also* Anthony Oberschall, *The Manipulation of Ethnicity: From Ethnic Cooperation to Violence and War in Yugoslavia,* 23 Ethnic & Racial Stud. 982 (2000).

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and the last demonstrates the critical dimension of social processes over time. These case examples show that societal change is necessary for individual change to occur.

A. Humanizing the Perpetrator

In 1995, after a long process of consultations, conferences, and public discussion, the South African government established its Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), with Archbishop Desmond Tutu as the chair. As Priscilla Hayner describes it, the TRC was the most carefully thought out and meticulously planned truth commission that has emerged as an alternative or as a complement to trials.[48] Though its strengths and weaknesses have been extensively debated, its emphasis on the humanity of both victims and perpetrators as well as its focus on restorative justice make it a unique contribution to the field of transitional justice. Its most unusual step was to offer a truth-for-justice opportunity. Through this opportunity, the TRC was empowered to offer individual amnesty for crimes committed between 1960 and April 1994 if they were politically motivated and if the perpetrator made a public confession.[49] In a very perceptive and provocative paper, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela describes an encounter between Eugene de Kock, a principal architect of apartheid killings, and two African women whose husbands he murdered.[50] In this meeting, de Kock seeks forgiveness from the widows and in their response, the author finds an example of mutual empathy between the women and de Kock. Further, she takes her own response to de Kock also to be an example of empathy for a perpetrator. The underlying thesis of the paper then is that empathic engagement converts the stereotype, and the fear becomes subsumed by humanness; the devil becomes a human being who committed evil acts.

Gobodo-Madikizela describes de Kock as perceiving and being moved by the women's pain, and says that to do this is to recognize the women as human beings.[51] In so doing, he differs from those who seek forgiveness without genuinely appreciating the humanity and suffering of the being in front of them. She describes de Kock as follows:

> Sitting directly across from me in the small prison consulting room where I saw him, he shifted his eyes uncomfortably. His feet shuffled, and I could hear the clatter of the leg chains that bound him to the chair, which was bolted to the

48. Priscilla Hayner, Unspeakable Truths: Confronting State Terror and Atrocity 41 (2001).
49. *Id.* at 43.
50. Gobodo-Madikizela, *supra* note 14.
51. *Id.* at 21–23.

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> floor. His mouth quivered and there were tears in his eyes. As he started to speak, his hand trembled and he became visibly distressed. With a breaking voice he said: "I wish I could do much more than 'I'm Sorry.' I wish there was a way of bringing their bodies back alive. I wish I could say, here are your husbands," he said, gesturing with shaking, outstretched arms and bending them in a holding position. "But unfortunately . . . I have to live with it." At that moment de Kock invited my empathy, and over several interviews I had with him it was clear that he was full of remorse for what he had done.[52]

Gobodo-Madikizela takes the genuineness of de Kock's affective reaction to the women's loss to be an indicator of his empathy, and this is what triggers her own empathy for him. De Kock appears genuinely moved by the women's suffering, hence the wish to be able to bring their husbands back. Although his wish does not commit him to action in any sense, it is presumably motivated by a sense of the women's suffering, and not just his need to be exonerated. Being moved by the suffering of another seems like an essential first step in empathic recognition.

A further aspect of empathy is to be genuinely interested in the particular perspective and needs of another individual.[53] Gobodo-Madikizela mentions later that de Kock responds to the wives' need to know exactly what happened to their husbands by giving them a detailed account, something no one else had done.[54] This suggests that de Kock recognized not only their suffering as generic victims, but the particular needs of these women. Interestingly, it is less clear that the women empathize with de Kock, despite the fact that they are clearly moved by him. For instance, Pearl Faku describes what Gobodo-Madikizela calls empathy as follows:

> I was profoundly touched by him, especially when he said he wished he could bring our husbands back. I didn't even look at him when he was speaking to us. . . . Yet I felt the genuineness in his apology. I couldn't control my tears. I could hear him, but I was overwhelmed by emotion, and I was just nodding, as a way of saying yes, I forgive you. I hope that when he sees our tears, he knows that they are not only tears for our husbands, but tears for him as well. . . . I would like to hold him by the hand, and show him that there is a future, and that he can still change.[55]

Gobodo-Madikizela then writes that:

> The image of the widow reaching out to her husband's murderer is an extraordinary expression-and *act*-of empathy, shedding tears not only for her loss, but also, it seems, for the loss of de Kock's moral soul-wishing to hold his

52. *Id.* at 21–22.
53. Halpern, *supra* note 30, at 130–33.
54. Gobodo-Madikizela, *supra* note 14, at 24.
55. *Id.* at 17.

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hand to lead him into a future where "he can still change" and rejoin the world of moral humanity.[56]

This is a tentative step towards rehumanization. The women resonate with de Kock's suffering. However, in our view, the women clearly display sympathy rather than empathy for de Kock. Emotional resonance is a core aspect of both sympathy and empathy. In sympathy, resonance is used to form an identification with the other so that it seems that the two are having shared emotional experience. In empathy, resonance is used to guide an imaginative inquiry into the individual experience of a distinct, complex other person.[57] What Faku describes is her experience of emotional identification with de Kock.

In contrast to sympathy, empathy involves imagining more than those aspects of another that one identifies with. It is unclear whether Faku could see de Kock as an individual in a broader sense. What Faku imagines is not how it feels to be de Kock, but what she and de Kock have in common—intense pain over the death of her husband (and of course they do not feel the same about this loss either). The limitation of sympathy is that such moments of identification are necessarily static and cannot provide the basis of an ongoing relationship.[58] In contrast, empathic curiosity pushes one to differentiate one's own from another's experience. In order to take an interest in the distinct perspective of another, one has to recognize that each person's life experience positions her differently; what is salient for one person may not be for another. A critical step in rehumanization is to view another person as a complex, nonidealized individual.[59]

In summary, the emotional resonance and sympathy that occurs between de Kock and Faku goes a long way towards rehumanization. Gobodo-Madikizela rightfully describes several reasons that such emotional encounters are rehumanizing.[60] First, to recognize another as a sufferer is to recognize that person as an emotional being. Second, to be capable of remorse is to experience oneself as morally human. Thus, for de Kock to feel remorse is to reclaim his moral potential; when the women recognize him as remorseful they are recognizing his status in the moral universe. Third, to feel sympathy for another who wronged one is to get over a dominant mood of resentment.

What is not yet present is the ability for his victims to see de Kock in all his complexity. Presumably recognizing those aspects of his personality that

56. *Id.* at 17–18.
57. Halpern, *supra* note 30, at 87–88.
58. *Id.* at 83–85.
59. *Id.* at 83–84.
60. Gobodo-Madikizela, *supra* note 14, at 20–28.

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relate to narcissism and control would evoke anger or hatred in the women and perhaps even in the author herself. To accept such feelings while continuing to resonate with his feelings of remorse would require tolerating intense emotional ambivalence. While it may be too much to expect victims to tolerate the intense emotional ambivalence evoked by a perpetrator like de Kock, the issue of what empathy demands is central to reconciliation. Creating ongoing workable relationships with former enemies involves recognizing their distinct, often distasteful emotions, without being catapulted into rejecting and dehumanizing them again. This is the work of empathy.

Why is this important for reconciliation? One obvious reason is that relating to another on an ongoing basis will involve disagreements, and therefore tolerating differences is part of a resilient relationship. Further, models of cooperation and political or joint action depend on the idea of respecting each other's distinct perspectives. Reconciliation does not occur merely in imagined solidarity, but rather shows itself in the degree to which people actually can act as distinct individuals with mutual regard in the real world. Thus, sympathy is arguably not enough for reconciliation to occur—it is limited to the moment of emotional resonance and does not offer a foundation on which trust and relational interdependence may be constructed. Social reconstruction then depends upon the degree to which people act in concert to rebuild societal structures, and that process requires respect for and the synthesis of divergent views.

B. Humanizing the Enemy in War

The following case study is in some sense a mirror image of the previous one. Here, two former enemies are forced into a situation where, in order to survive, they must cooperate in the sense just defined: they must find a way to act together while recognizing that they do not share each other's perspective. This example comes from the film "No Man's Land"—a film about soldiers made by Bosnian film maker, Danis Tanovic, in 2001.[61] The film presents itself, on the surface, with a certain tragic realism. Tchiki, a Bosniak, and Nino, a Serb, wind up trapped together in a trench in the middle of a fighting zone, with a third man, Tsera, a Bosniak, literally lying on a land mine that will explode if he moves. Both sides are shooting at them, and the incompetent UN forces endanger rather than help them.

The two enemies, Tchiki and Nino, must cooperate in order to secure assistance and to keep anything from moving the man on the bomb until it

61. No Man's Land (MGM/UA Home Entertainment Inc. 2001).

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can be deactivated. After initial angry words about who started the war, they quickly set such conversations aside and respond to the need to work together: "Who cares who started the war, we're in the same shit now."

As the two men try to cooperate to save their lives, the narrative moves towards partial "empathy" and then backwards, in a dance of approach-avoidance. Initially, the two Bosniaks talk to each other and not to Nino (the Serb). The men from opposing sides do not even know each other's names. The first personal moment comes when Nino gives his backpack to Tsera (the Bosniak lying on the bomb) to rest his head on. Nino then walks over to Tchiki to introduce himself to him and Tchiki rejects his outstretched hand. However, shortly after this, Tchiki apologizes to Nino for the rejection and they introduce themselves. Nino then expresses curiosity about Tchiki as an individual, asking him how he knows Tsera. This leads them to start talking about their real lives, and it quickly emerges that they both had an affair with the same woman, Sanja. They become bonded in a show of masculine solidarity, a shared identity, and attune emotionally at this moment, lighting up with pleasure together thinking about her, and recognizing together the sad fact that she was forced to leave the country.

However, this moment is short-lived. The bumbling UN forces offer Nino and Tchiki the chance to come with them, leaving Tsera behind stuck on the bomb. Tchiki would never leave his friend, but Nino starts to leave. Tchiki shoots at Nino to keep him from leaving, fearing that the Serbs will bomb himself and the other Bosniak if the Serb soldier leaves. This traps Nino, who now feels threatened by Tchiki. He waits and when he sees an opportunity, he knifes Tchiki in the leg in an attempt to escape. Tchiki then vows to kill him, saying in a hurt voice: "He betrayed me with my own knife."[62] These words are significant, because Tchiki does not see Nino now as any Serb, but as a particular man he had begun to trust and who betrayed him. While Nino no longer is the stereotype, he is still the "enemy." He ultimately shoots Nino, saying, as one would to a friend who betrayed the friendship: "You tried to kill me with my own knife, is that how you thank me?"[63]

The film dialogue echoes the words of many whom we interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, who describe the pain that they felt on recognizing that friends had betrayed them. For example:

> Some of them used that trust and have shown another face which I hadn't known until then.[64]

62. *Id.*
63. *Id.*
64. Interview with RC (June 2000).

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> Well, the worst thing actually is that I never could imagine that like, you know, your ex-, your former friend could attack you; you know, to wear guns and everything you know, to kill you.[65]

While Tchiki and Nino had not been friends, they had begun to relate on a more personal level, making the betrayal all the more potent.

The film ends with the depressing message that individuals are powerless to reconcile in the face of social forces that continue to polarize them.[66] The moments of connection between Tchiki and Nino are extremely short-lived. Yet the fact that they occur at all is interesting. A premise of the film is that being literally trapped together in a place that is no place, an utterly barren "no man's land," somehow makes this connection possible. It seems plausible to us that just as negative social forces continue to polarize people, the absence of such forces may be liberating. In our key informant interviews, people frequently raised a concern that if they became friends with former enemies, their own people would ostracize them. It is apparent and must be remembered that empathy is socially situated. While some individuals may be able to go against the tide and establish relationships across ethnic or other social barriers, for most, the social, political, and cultural environment must be supportive of that process. In the film, the isolation of the trench at a moment suspended in time allows for some rapprochement to occur.

Despite the tragic ending of the film, the possibility of sustained empathy is supported by the fact that the filmmaker is himself a Bosniak, yet he depicts the Serb, Nino, in fully human terms.[67] The Bosniak filmmaker imagines and is moved by the particular perspective of a Serbian soldier, while retaining an awareness of the distinct perspective he and his comrades might have. The film itself shows that the cognitive elements of empathy, and not just the sympathy depicted in the first example discussed above, are recoverable in the aftermath of mass violence.

C. Rehumanization Over Time

What is strikingly absent in the two previous cases is the development of a relationship over time. This is a crucial absence, because the ultimate outcome of reconciliation must be the ability to live together over the years. In stark contrast to the static nature of the encounter between de Kock and the two women and the short-lived meeting of the two men in "No Man's

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65. Interview with MP (June 2000).
66. *See* No Man's Land, *supra* note 61.
67. *See id.*

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Land," are the changes over the past five years experienced by two women from the former Yugoslavia. Dobrinka, a Serb, and Marija, a Croat, are both mothers who lost sons during the war. They met in 1997, and have been working together on projects related to finding those who went missing during the war in Croatia. By the end of the war in the former Yugoslavia, lasting between 1991 and 1995, more than 20,000 people had disappeared.[68] Initially, so much enmity existed between the new states and entities that there was little cooperation between them in finding the missing. This was especially the situation for the many who were buried in mass graves. Interstate and inter-entity cooperation was essential to finding these graves, exhuming them, and identifying the remains if possible.[69] As the two women both describe, they hated each other during their initial meetings in 1997. Dobrinka says it was "revolting, how badly people behaved."[70] However, she says:

> We have come to a point of interpersonal tolerance. We can now get together and have conversations without hatred; we have really done a lot together. We participated until last year in joint conferences, in which there were also disagreements about everything—but we finally realized that we are at base the same—we are the same because of our common tragedy, the loss of someone dear, and most essential is to find those who are lost.[71]

Marija gives a more complex answer than Dobrinka. She states generalized feelings of forgiveness towards Dobrinka and all the other Serb mothers who have lost children. She seems more comfortable speaking about the Serbs in idealized, static and group terms—she says: "We have already forgiven *them*."[72] She describes putting flowers on the graves of unidentified bodies together with the Serbian mothers, saying it does not matter which bodies were people from which ethnic groups. Compassion for the dead is clearly a step towards rehumanization, but it does not require ongoing developing relations.

When asked about her feelings towards a specific individual, Dobrinka, Marija's answer is more nuanced. Marija describes the changes in their relationship just as Dobrinka does. She remembers the initial meetings as terrible, full of conflict, and also points to the progress the two have made in working together. She expresses her own skepticism about whether she is really able to be friends with Dobrinka, describing how they can "give

68. *Up to '20,000' Still Missing in Bosnia*, BBC News, 23 July 1998, *available at* news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/137796.stm.
69. Christopher Girod, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Tracing Missing Persons*, 312 Int'l Rev. Red Cross 387 (1996).
70. Interview with "Dobrinka" (Aug. 2002).
71. *Id.*
72. Interview with "Marija" (Aug. 2002).

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support" but not have "the feeling to sit and eat together."[73] She does not idealize Dobrinka, and in fact implies she does not like her personality very much. At one point she says that she has "nothing nice to say" about Dobrinka.[74] Yet a colleague reported that when Marija witnessed Dobrinka being criticized by others after speaking up in a meeting, she urgently went to her and hugged her, expressing her heartfelt respect for Dobrinka's words.

Marija and Dobrinka relate more flexibly than de Kock and Faku do. First, their relationship is not idealized—it allows for conflict and ambivalence. Dobrinka can say she has "nothing nice to say" in one moment, and hug Marija in another. Second, their relationship changes over time. This is not necessarily only for the better—Marija may like aspects of Dobrinka less the more she gets to know her. Dobrinka describes how she is developing resentment for Marija because as a Croat, Marija has economic entitlements that Dobrinka, a Serb, lacks. These resentments, however, are not overgeneralized into a dehumanized view of the other. Neither woman looks back to their initial 1997 view of the other as inhuman and says, "See I was right. I should never have cooperated with her." Rather, the "other" is normalized as a human being like any other. They share some things in common, and yet there are differences as well.

Third, the two are able to share values, not just wishes. De Kock's wish to bring back the husbands operates entirely in the realm of fantasy and idealization. It is not related to his agency, to what he is actually willing to build his life around given serious choices. In contrast, Dobrinka and Marija make difficult choices in concert—they share a commitment to finding the missing over seeking justice. To hold values reciprocally is the basis of genuine respect for each other as moral agents. To put this slightly differently, Dobrinka and Marija do not see each other simply opportunistically, as people to be manipulated to meet their own needs. They genuinely see each other as holding the same values regarding their shared activity, and are committed to acting in concert on this basis.

IV. EMPATHY AS A NORMATIVE IDEAL AFTER MASS VIOLENCE

These cases suggest that individual effort is insufficient to reestablish empathy in the aftermath of mass violence. What individuals can achieve in rarefied moments bracketing the social world (meetings with de Kock the prisoner, encounters in a "no man's land") are moments of emotional resonance. As the de Kock-Faku example shows, resonating with another

73. *Id.*
74. *Id.*

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person emotionally breaks the spell of dehumanization. To be genuinely moved by another's suffering is to see the other *as* human, a first step in rehumanizing the other. Similarly, identification is mentioned often in discussions of reconciliation, overlapping with examples of sympathy.[75] Identification, is similar to sympathy in that it precipitates the process of rehumanization, yet limits itself to a strategically partial view of the other. Consider the moment in "No Man's Land" when Tchiki and Nino identify with each other's feelings about Sanja. As they relate warmly to their shared experiences as lovers of this woman, they are clearly viewing each other *as* human beings, not as generic enemies.[76] Yet this moment does not carry them forward to empathize with the other's distinct experiences during the war. However heartfelt, this moment presumes and builds nothing regarding their openness to, or tolerance for, the other's complex and differing views. Identification does not guide one in the future-oriented task of living and working with others, with whom disagreement is inevitable. Sympathetic feelings, in and of themselves, involve an idealized or at least a strategically incomplete view of the other.

In contrast, the goal of empathy is to see the world *from* the complex perspective of another person. This is quite pertinent to reconciliation. After war, it may be quite easy for a Bosniak and a Serb to recognize that the other is angry or afraid, and even to sympathize with such feelings given that each has his or her own anger and fear. What is difficult is to view the world in the specific way the other person does, to see why a person one otherwise saw as a perpetrator feels victimized by certain policies, or feels entitled to have defended himself.

Without empathy, accepting that the other has a different view of what happened is an impossible task. Doing so requires accepting that people hold different beliefs about a sequence of events and that agreement about the "truth" may never occur. After ethnic cleansing, truth is always contested even when the facts are revealed in a court of law. Without seeing the events through the enemies' eyes, there is little to help one tolerate disagreement, and reconciliation may never be achieved.

For example, empathy for de Kock would involve trying to imagine what it would be like to be an ambitious, powerful leader, fallen now and

75. Outside this context, the term "identification" has a complex usage. The strict psychological use of the term refers to developments (or deforming influences) on one's personality structure, for example a child's gender identification with a parent, or a prisoner's identification with an oppressor. We are not making strict use of the term, but using it loosely to refer to moments that are similar to moments of sympathetic resonance. Perhaps the only reason to distinguish identification from sympathetic resonance is that the former seems to be a better term when the two people have a real world experience in common.

76. *See* No Man's Land, *supra* note 61.

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full of regret, but still the same man. Where were his feelings of pride, of shame, of the need to regain self-esteem? How did it feel for a confirmed racist leader to view black women as "equals"? The work of empathy is precisely trying to imagine a view of the world that one does not share, and in fact may find it quite difficult to share. Notably, while empathy involves perceiving the other's complex point of view, it does not require accepting the other's views.

The reader may take issue with this paper's emphasis on curiosity and cultivating a realistic view of the other. After all, the sympathy between Faku and de Kock and the identification between Tchiki and Nino does have important social value. The problem is not the value of such moments, but their underlying basis. They presume a certain removal from the social world and ongoing historical reality.

Social forces that are barriers to reconciliation are suspended or bracketed during idealized moments of sympathy and simple identification. De Kock is a prisoner, immobilized and presumably with no future power to harm. The two men in "No Man's Land" are momentarily free of the social forces that make it so threatening to build ties with former enemies. One of the most frequent comments in our interviews with key informants was how people fear social ostracism if they reconcile with other ethnic groups. Presumably it is only because they are removed from such pressures that Tchiki and Nino are able to identify.

Pointing out the limitations of sympathy and identification highlights the need to form a paradigm for reconciliation based on empathy, but this does not yet show how to regenerate empathy. Recall that there are at least three aspects of empathy that correspond to rehumanizing another person: resonating emotionally, curiosity about the other's perspective, and the corresponding ability to tolerate emotional ambivalence. Tolerating ambivalence is crucial in conflict situations, because if one is to imagine another's perspective, he or she must vicariously feel the other's anger and simultaneously feel his or her own reactions to it.

Interestingly, despite the absence of full-blown curiosity in our interviews, we did find examples of people who were able to view each other in more complex ways and tolerate the accompanying emotional ambivalence. The best example we found was that of Dobrinka and Marija. The two women do identify with each other as mothers who have lost sons; this shared real world experience may be the fabric that holds everything together. In their day-to-day transactions, Marija and Dobrinka not only see each other's shortcomings, but even dislike each other. Yet they also care deeply for the other's feelings, and eventually are able to comfort each other during difficult times.

The relationship of Marija and Dobrinka is promoted by ongoing social entities, mothers searching for sons and working within nongovernmental

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organizations developed to pursue this goal. NGOs grow in the context of civil society. In the postwar situation, the emergence of civil society allows for social conditions in which people can reach across "enemy" lines in pursuit of a common objective. It is critical that any interventions focusing on empathy are integrated with people's realistic ongoing social circumstances, and take place with sufficient time for real development or change to occur in a region. Similarly necessary are social conditions that allow people to view each other in three dimensions, in their real social situations. For this to occur, a state must exist where the rule of law is the norm, where human rights are embraced, and where the security of all is protected. The film "No Man's Land" reminds us that reconciliation is not the work of individuals alone, but depends upon the real social circumstances these individuals encounter. While reconciliation must occur between individuals, the process can only occur within the context of a society that not only gives permission for people of opposing groups to interact but indeed, promotes their collaboration in pursuit of a common goal—building a humane society based on principles of justice and equity.

Ultimately, reconciliation will not occur without both individual and social change. While the post war emphasis has been on development and rule of law, those interventions are an important but limited part of social repair. Hand in hand with macrolevel interventions must be the development of grassroots programs that facilitate interpersonal interaction. There is a great need for future studies to search for the social conditions and to develop population-based programs that help people to maintain curiosity and emotional openness towards each other's distinct perspectives.

A critic might argue that individuals must achieve a true feeling of security before they can find any sense of empathy. Yet acts of the empathic imagination already exist, as can be seen in Tanovic's film, "No Man's Land." Social reconstruction and empathic rehumanization are not an either-or process but require synthesis to effect the rebuilding of social capital. Too often, however, the rebuilding of relationships is relegated to low priority if it is considered at all.

However, despite empathy being possible, it can be achieved only if the actual practices and social conditions that facilitate empathy are somehow within reach. This would include conditions for regaining trust, for voicing disagreement, and for securely developing relationships over time. In the countries of former Yugoslavia, specific barriers to this include biased media, corruption in government, distrust in the rule of law, schools divided by ethnicity, special interest groups that are either overly attended to or ignored, unemployment, and political passivity that is a legacy of the Communist era. Changing these societal conditions is critical to enabling a shift from coexistence to reconciliation and social reconstruction.

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V. CONCLUSION

As has been discussed, empathy serves as a normative ideal for a rehumanized view of the other. Each aspect corresponds to something that war robs people of—the ability to individualize rather than stereotype, feelings of curiosity about others rather than assumption of knowing, and tolerance of ambivalence rather than organization of experience through feelings of resentment, anger, or fear. Importantly, this ideal of empathy is not achieved in an intense moment of sympathy, but in living together and genuinely attending to another's perspective over time. Such an understanding seems to be the basis of genuine social cooperation.

In the aftermath of mass trauma, it is extraordinarily threatening and painful to imagine the perspective of another whose people so hurt one's own. However, rather than abandon our emphasis on empathy, we have become more interested in finding out what social processes and time can do to make empathy possible. There is a need for a more direct study of the health effects of interventions to foster empathy in communities over a sustained period of time. Concededly, discerning the value of empathy in concrete health and societal terms will be challenging. The alternative, however, to equate emotional reconciliation with sympathy and accompanying attitudes like forgiveness, perpetuates idealization and the goal of transcending social forces. This not only diminishes interpersonal relations, it lets society off the hook and is likely to have devastating consequences for the health and well-being of communities.

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