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school voices

challenges facing education systems after identity-based conflicts

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ABSTRACT

We describe our research on the role of education in the social reconstruction of countries after mass conflict. Our studies focus on the voices of those least heard in the discourse – teachers, students, administrators and parents. We examine schools in four societies that experienced profound violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide during the 1990s – Croatia, the UN-administered province of Kosovo in Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda. We question the assumptions that underlie current practice such as a narrow focus on emergency interventions, conflict resolution, peace education and textbook reform. Societal repair must involve a comprehensive set of interventions that recognizes the integrated nature of a society's institutions. Schools are a unique component of building a long-term future.

KEYWORDS conflict, education, history, reconciliation, social reconstruction

Only a stable and peaceful environment can create the conditions in which every human being, child and adult alike, may benefit from the goals of [the World Declaration on Education For All]. (Article 10, EFA Declaration, 1990)

introduction

For the past 16 years, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has facilitated a process designed to increase the numbers of children who receive education and the quality of the schooling to which they are exposed. Buried within UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) Declaration of 1990 is the recognition that 'war, occupation, civil strife' can prevent many of the world's children from realizing their 'right to an education'. The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action recognized the importance of meeting 'the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability'. The countries present at the World Education Forum in Senegal further pledged to 'conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict'. Further, the Dakar Declaration recognized the critical importance of tying educational reconstruction or reform to the overall development interventions that are put into place in rebuilding societies fractured by conflict, '... plans should be integrated into a wider poverty reduction and developmental framework and should be developed through more transparent and democratic processes, involving stakeholders, especially peoples' representatives, community leaders, parents, learners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society'.

This article focuses on the fact that that despite these calls for action, rarely heard are the voices of those most affected by these wars and further, that little attention is paid to the integration of education reform into the overall process of societal development. Educational change after mass violence suffers from untested assumptions, a dearth of focused research, a gap between broad concepts and practice in the field, and a lack of coordination among the international organizations (INGOs, NGOs and UN bodies) under whose mandates the rebuilding of educational systems fall.

It is no surprise that it is only since the mid-1990s that increased attention has been paid to the role of schools in post-conflict societies. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 unleashed a significant number of intrastate conflicts in the Balkans, Africa and South Asia. Along with the increased attention paid to mechanisms of transitional justice, there has been more of a focus on how schools contributed to these identity-based conflicts and how schools might address the socially constructed schisms that led initially to the conflicts. However, while the international community has devoted funds and lavished concern on issues of retributive or restorative justice and the need to combat impunity, the role of schooling in rebuilding societies has been a side issue, the territory of peace educators, specialists in child trauma and policy reports. Educational theorists and developmental psychologists rarely are represented at the table when schooling is discussed. We must note that many millions of

dollars (US) have gone into physical reconstruction of school buildings, textbook reform and psychosocial treatment. However, we are concerned that there is little coherence to the process over the long term and further, that school policy and curricular changes are frequently devised in a decontextualized manner.

After reviewing current conceptualizations of issues facing post-conflict education, we present our research in four post-conflict societies to understand the role of education in social reconstruction. We examine schools in countries that experienced profound violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide during the 1990s – Croatia, the UN-administered province of Kosovo in Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Rwanda. We also offer our visions for how schools fit into the larger context of social reconstruction.

from crisis to reconstruction

In a series of critical papers published since the middle of the 1990s, we can see the evolution of thinking around the role of schools after conflict. Each of these papers moves the field in the direction of conceptualizing how education can be used in a constructive way to facilitate the development of multicultural, tolerant societies where human rights are observed, democracy is fostered and peace is maintained. As we will see, this conceptualization is mostly theoretical, as little assessment of the effects of such an approach has been carried out.

Arnhold et al. (1996) prepared a report for the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) in which they noted that the problems of educational reform in post-war Germany raised issues that are relevant today: purging a teaching force of those whose politics led to the conflict, the need for new teaching styles and methods, the need to encourage democracy, and the goal of facilitating long-term reform. As they note, such reforms were and are problematic and pose a risk for those who initiate the change – the risk being that the initiators can be seen as carrying out victor's justice in the schools. In their report, they described the importance of engaging multiple levels of the population and its institutions in the process but do not offer any practical ways to do that nor do they describe the pitfalls that may ensue.

The authors divide reconstruction into four areas – curricular, physical, ideological, and psychological. The latter two are the most problematic. Further, it is difficult to decouple the building of curriculum from ideological and psychological reconstruction. Just as schools are used by nation-states to promote a national identity, so too, it is thought, they may they be used to promote new ways of thinking and the absorption of different values. Most of the programs run by the European Community or other Western agencies are directed at building independence of thought and an orientation to democracy. There is a focus on developing tolerance, diminishing stereotypes and promoting reconciliation.

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The authors offer as an example, Rwanda, where they note '... the Ministry of Education has emphasized as essential to processes of reconciliation that children should see themselves as part of a larger entity, namely Rwandans, as opposed to seeing themselves as part of a particular tribe'. The statement itself reveals problems with the approach. As our studies demonstrate, many Rwandans see their government as an authoritarian one in that they fear acknowledging their backgrounds and feel that at least publicly they must repress their life experiences – a situation reminiscent of the former Yugoslavia under Tito (Corkalo et al., 2004). Further, the idea of reconciliation is a vague concept, the meaning of which is the center of much debate. Finally, tribalism was not the issue in Rwanda; the genocide was the result of a far more complex set of circumstances (Des Forges, 1999, Longman, 1997). The authors do raise two very critical concerns – 'the danger of [outside agencies] approaching their tasks along their own ideological lines without regard to local sensitivities' and the limits of peace education which may disregard local history.

Psychological reconstruction is an area that has evolved almost uncritically. While it has become fashionable for the United National Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other agencies to develop trauma recovery programs for children, it has been assumed that expression of trauma experience is the goal and that all children require this 'psychological first aid'. Freud and Burlingame in World War II reported that children showed less depressive symptoms when they were in situations where they had parental support and that they were far more resilient than was expected. Recent studies by Punamaki (1996) and Macksoud and Aber (1996) illustrate the complexity of children's reactions to war trauma. Arnhold et al. (1996) describe a UNICEF program in ex-Yugoslavia where 'an estimated 150,000 children age 3 to 16 have participated and about 1,000 teachers have been trained to help them'. Since there was no rigorous evaluation of the program, we do not know whether it made a difference. The lack of evaluative study lies at the core of why many post-conflict interventions may not reflect the best use of resources. This is an additional area where further research could be used to inform practice.

Curricular reconstruction is given cursory attention. The focus is on the emergency situation and then, over time, the teaching of tolerance. Curriculum modules that focus on teaching about tolerance or democracy in generic and decontextualized ways or on peace education are often introduced, using a training of trainers model for training teachers. These efforts are usually introduced from outside the local context and often are not sensitive to local needs. While there is no question that the many NGOs who focus on these interventions do so with the best of intentions, we question their effectiveness. We have found that curriculum development is a complex process that occurs within a confluence of social and political dynamics; the creation of curriculum and teaching methods is an art and expert and sensitive collaboration

is even more critical in post-conflict states. Instead of 'teaching tolerance' and/or democracy[1] and/or peace education (Clarke-Habibi, 2005), we ask whether integrated classrooms with challenging curricula and the long-term development of critical thinking skills might do much more than special classes in conflict resolution or in the ancient Greek roots of democracy. Further what is involved in teacher education will vary from context to context and simple trainer of trainer models may appear efficient but may not be sufficient. These are empirical questions that can be studied. Further, the programs that have been developed usually do not draw upon the extensive research literature that can inform curriculum such as the literatures on how stereotypes evolve (Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005). In sum, the long-term approaches are insufficiently addressed in this report.

Bush and Saltarelli (2000) prepared an important paper for UNICEF titled 'The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Peacebuilding Education for Children'. This report has been highly influential in thinking about the relationship of schools to conflict. The authors situate the role of education against the backdrop of ethnic conflict and the polarization of identities. By examining the process of ethnic socialization in children and acknowledging that schools do not function in isolation, they recognize that schools cannot in themselves prevent future conflict but as one of many societal interventions, the education system of a state can influence how ethnic or identity-based conflicts are perceived and managed. In this report, the authors have made clear the linkages between education, ethnicity, and conflict and delineate how education can have both positive and negative effects. Their work emerges from a consideration of social identity and developmental theory as well as a recognition of the powerful effects of nation-building and national myths or as Bell (2003) has termed them, mythscapes.

Bush and Saltarelli (2000) examine the 'negative face' of education with such examples as limitations of access because of ethnicity or political patronage, denial of education as a weapon of war, for example in Kosovo, and the manipulation of history to promote exclusion. One of the major factors that led to the genocide in Rwanda was the role of schools in limiting access of Tutsi children and teaching slanted versions of history that glorified the Hutu (Des Forges, 1999). The 'positive face' of education includes such examples as linguistic tolerance (as in Croatia), opening educational access to all, and promoting tolerance.

The authors introduce the concept of peace building education. They see traditional peace education programs as developed by UNICEF and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as somewhat narrow cookbook approaches that emphasize conflict management, mediation and workshops. While implemented widely, both their short and long-term effects

are unclear. They often are time-limited and offered in isolation from the regular curriculum of schools. They do not take into account that the sources of conflict usually lie in asymmetrical or distorted power relationships that sabotage community and promote divisiveness at the societal level.

Bush and Saltarelli (2000) note that during the 1990s UNESCO attempted to promulgate the idea of a 'culture of peace'; this approach was 'criticized for being too eclectic and unfocused with too much energy devoted to securing agreement around definitions'. The authors note that 'within the international community the language of training (external intervention with quick exit strategies) predominates over the language of education (implying long-term commitment)'. This is a very important critique that recognizes how divorced these modalities have been from the need of schools to develop children's values over time as opposed to time-limited, focused interventions with tenuous attitude change.

A rigorous evaluation of a 10-week curriculum designed to engage students of many backgrounds in looking at intergroup conflict, the 'Facing History and Ourselves' (FHAO) model, revealed that while there were some differences from the comparison group such as decreased racist attitudes, there were no changes in moral reasoning or civic attitudes and participation (Schultz et al., 2001). FHAO has more than a 20-year history of training teachers to implement this curriculum and these results suggest that there are may factors to consider such as peer relationships, individual ethnicity, gender and others. More studies like this one are necessary before we can assume that workshops by themselves make a positive difference.[2]

Peace building education, Bush and Saltarelli (2000) suggest, looks at education broadly – 'formal, informal, and non-formal; content and teaching methods; arts and sciences; child-centered and adult-centered'. The approach focuses on the unique cultural and political context and includes a variety of interventions within and outside the classroom. Its guiding principles include a focus on process not product, long-term change, local inputs, and the creation of opportunities versus preconceived solutions. Its goals are broadly defined but are responsive to the need for change at multiple levels – from the individual to group to community.

Missing from this report are the practicalities involved in effecting this intervention. How students, teachers and parents become engaged is not addressed. Further, there is no discussion of curricular change and how subject matter can address these concerns. Reform of teaching strategies is left out. While imaginative, the concept is idealistic and vague, offering only the prospect of changing a society in transition. Important in the report is the recognition that education is not neutral but has the capacity for both good and evil and that education reform must be based on a grounding in social and developmental psychology.

In 2003, DfID again commissioned a report on education and conflict. This paper by Smith and Vaux (2003) was a step forward in recognizing that schools could play a role in relationship to prevention of conflict and its resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction of societies. Framed around recognition that education is a fundamental human right, they elucidate the ways in which schools can contribute to social repair. They note, 'If conflict is perceived as transformation the proper relationship to education becomes clearer. Education is also a transforming process, and the two processes interact at all levels and stages'.

They claim further that human rights education is one way in which governments can address the relationship of education and conflict and a 'commitment to human rights values'. However, as with peace education, the authors indicate 'there is no clear research evidence to suggest a direct link between the prevalence of conflict and the "effectiveness" of human rights education'. As they explore the rights-based approach and how education interdigitates with the UN Millennium Development Goals, we see again how the challenges that schools face are lost in ideas that may be visionary but provide little direction. The authors explore the relationship between conflict and state education and examine such issues as governance and decentralization, equality and pluralism, the role of curricula in imparting not only knowledge and skills but also, values, the linguistic tensions that exist among various groups in a post-conflict society, the influence of religion, the teaching of subject matter particularly history and literature, and the implications for teachers, textbooks, teacher education and teaching methods. This article offers the most complete explication of the ways in which schools can address their relationship to conflict. Yet, here too the devil is in the details, and insufficient attention is paid to issues of culture or local ways of thinking with respect to long-term change.

Smith and Vaux (2003) were the first to address directly the question of education as part of reconciliation. They build on the work of Coletta and Cullen (2000) from the World Bank who examined how conflict relates to such concepts as social capital and social cohesion and they single out education as one societal institution that can maintain social cohesion. Smith's earlier work on the educational dimensions of reconstruction and reconciliation highlights the salience and critical importance of attending to education development and reform in post-conflict societies. However, while offering a definition of levels of reconciliation, they do not acknowledge that we know very little about the processes of within-community reconciliation among formerly warring groups.

Therefore, by 2003, we see Smith and Vaux arguing that 'education should be more deeply integrated into all forms of conflict analysis and response' and that the education system is a critical component of societal repair. At the same time, they are confronting an international response system in which education

is considered primarily in reaction to acute humanitarian emergencies and even then often as a secondary goal. The incorporation of education change or reform is still not closely linked to economic and social development but remains the purview of education related agencies. This silo approach to societal reconstruction mitigates the effectiveness that a coordinated approach could achieve.

The World Bank has been a major force in providing funds for school construction and restoration of the education system. In 2005, in a document titled 'Reshaping the Future: Education and Postconflict Reconstruction', the Bank proposed starting points for educational change. This pathway includes a focus on the basics and returning children to school as soon as possible; carrying out 'bold symbolic actions' such as purging textbooks; emphasizing that education reform is incremental and long term and finally, building capacity by engaging communities. The Bank encourages decentralization, a system-wide approach and partnerships. There are assumptions made here that are untested, for example the importance of symbolic steps such as immediate textbook reform. We would argue that that blackening-out textbooks results in a missed opportunity to challenge the antecedent distortions and further, that it runs the risk of cementing divisions. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, textbook reform was so contentious initially that the first attempts had to be abandoned. Second, decentralization is not always useful, especially where multiple identity groups vie for supremacy.

towards a foundation of understanding

In 2004, UNESCO's International Bureau of Education reported on its studies of the role of the 'role of educational policy change in shaping social and civic identities and in redefining or reconstructing national citizenship within the context of identity-based conflicts' (Tawil and Harley, 2004). This set of very ambitious studies examines curriculum change processes in seven countries ranging from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Guatemala to Sri Lanka. Framed around the question of how curriculum policy and development either contribute to an inclusive national identity and citizenship or worsen national divisions, these studies illuminate how difficult the process of strengthening a schools-based contribution to social reconstruction can be.

The subtitle of the book is *Assessing Curriculum Policy for Social and Civic Reconstruction*. These studies emphasize the importance of curriculum and its relation to the political and social realities that both led to the conflict and which might contribute to social repair. Further, the studies acknowledge that schools play a significant role in the transmission of collective memory and as such, serve as vehicles for the formation of national identity. The power of the educational system to influence growing minds has long been recognized by

states in the project of creating a civic identity (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992), and these studies explore in detail the importance of curriculum policy in that endeavor. The studies are framed around the paradigm of social cohesion that is considered a 'framing concept', a way to offer a comprehensive perspective on how curriculum must reflect the broader ecology of the country that is undergoing change. They emphasize the need for multiple voices and inputs, the identification of points of contention, a clear understanding of the nature of the precipitating conflict, and the importance of research in influencing curriculum policy. The studies indicate the importance of curricular design processes that reflect the changes that the conflict has brought to the country and which take into account the phenomena of inclusion and exclusion. By considering both the formal as well as the 'hidden' curriculum, this report illustrates how schools must not be thought of as islands of safety but as institutions that are open to all the vagaries of a society riven by conflict and war. As such, policy planners must examine such issues as language policy, the conception of the nation, governance, the teaching of history and other courses in social studies – all of which have the potential of influencing the cohesion of the society in which the school system is embedded.

One of their critical conclusions is that 'education policy reform is likely to be most effective and sustainable when initiated by a sovereign national education authority in a context of relative security and stability'. And that is the major challenge. Security and stability are difficult to achieve and societies do not emerge from war with all resolved. Cycles of violence may continue; conflicts may be submerged; a government may pay only lip service to the idea of democracy; a brain drain may leave few resources on which schools may draw; ideology may subvert rational educational policies.

These studies illuminate how difficult the process of strengthening a schools-based contribution to social reconstruction can be. In fact, despite enormous efforts, the overall conclusion that we draw from this review is that we remain at the beginning of understanding how to effect curricular and school environment changes that can contribute positively to rebuilding efforts. More specifically politicians and those tasked with social repair rarely acknowledge that investment in the youth through school reform could have enormous impact at multiple levels of society. Further, the case studies reveal that the ambitious goal of building tolerant societies within schools is doomed to failure if the sociopolitical environment is not supportive of these endeavors.

realties of post-conflict education

Despite the extensive thinking that has gone into a reconsideration of the role of schools after mass violence, it has fallen primarily to humanitarian agencies to get the schools going again and to initiate programs that will provide a

semblance of normalcy in the wake of wholesale conflict. Our review of multilateral and NGO programs suggests that the emphasis has been placed on emergency interventions and that, despite the increasing realization that development must be considered even as humanitarian intervention is on-going, there has been little integration of the approaches that we have been examining. One concrete example of this limitation is that, as Marc Sommers points out (Sommers, 2002), these agencies have not completely bought into the long-term commitment required for a developmental perspective. The clearest example of this problem is the interagency Sphere Project (2000) designed to develop minimal acceptable standards for humanitarian aid agencies. Strikingly missing from the standards is any reference to schools or education. As Sommers (2002) notes, 'Education's exclusion highlights a widespread view of education as a secondary humanitarian concern'. Unfortunately, this also tends to be true in long-term development as well where schools are relegated to formulaic change divorced from the economic and political processes that are addressed.

In 2004, a consortium of 100 organizational and 800 individual members known as the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)[3] launched a process of developing and promulgating 'Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies'. This UN and NGO initiative involves a broadly based consultative and training mechanism to promote standards in five categories – minimum standards in all categories, access and learning environment, teaching and learning, teachers and other education personnel, and education policy and coordination. Driven primarily by the need to address a perceived problem in the field, the focus remains on emergency interventions and early reconstruction. While extremely important and very worthwhile, missing once gain, is input from researchers who study education and child development. Missing as well is recognition of the need to think long term in building curriculum, the difficulties of creating curriculum and a view of schools as part of the overall process of change. Perhaps one of the most important dimensions of this project is to reinforce the idea that education must be seen as a priority in humanitarian intervention, not as an afterthought. The emphasis in the initiative highlights the gap and tension that exists between the pressures of humanitarian intervention and the ideal of incorporating a research base that will maximize the benefits of curriculum reform.

Miller and Affolter (USAID, 2002), present an outline of how educators must be incorporated into the policy planning that follows from emergency situations. This 'work in progress' titled 'Education in Crisis: Development Sequence and Transitions', is a unique attempt to clarify both the process and programs required. Unfortunately, the proposal indicates clearly the extent of the gap that exists and follows a particularly Western model of education development.

While the UNESCO case studies make a major contribution to our knowledge about school change, they do not tells us much about how students, teachers and parents think about these issues. Most, if not all, of the case studies in the relevant literature reflect the perspectives of policymakers, academics, or adhere to specific frameworks of what works, e.g. the World Bank report.

Just as those most affected by war are left out of the discussions about what is necessary to restore a functioning society, so too are those with the most stake in schools regularly left out of the planning for post-conflict change over the long-term. Basic assumptions become 'articles of faith' (Ignatieff, 1998). There is little evidence to support the usual mechanisms. In haste, after the conflict has ended, textbooks are purged of 'objectionable material', teachers are fired and curricula quickly rewritten. International non-governmental organizations may import programs from elsewhere; community projects designed to bring children together often have limited success where teachers and parents hold opposing views. In most cases, educational change occurs from the top down and reflects political power or international perspectives on what will effect change. Opportunities are missed to examine the objectionable material in the textbooks and to train teachers in how to support critical thinking or more interactive participation in classrooms – skills that may assist in examining the facts that led to mass violence. Finally, parents are not included in the programs designed to address divisions among their children.

One example of the importance of timing and consideration of the socio-political environment was the attempt in Bosnia and Herzegovina to remove offensive material from textbooks shortly after the war. The process led by the then Head of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to the BIH Education Ministry, Falk Pingel, was torpedoed by the inability of the three ethnic groups to agree. By 2004 (nine years after the Dayton Accord), a new initiative coordinated by the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, which Pingel now directs; the Council of Europe; and OSCE has led to the appointment of interethnic commissions to develop guidelines for history and geography textbooks.

voices of the survivors

With these issues in mind, the Human Rights Center at the University of California as part of a larger project to study post-conflict social reconstruction, began in 2000 to look at schools as social settings where a society's conflicts are both manifest and can be addressed (Stover and Weinstein, 2004). In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo and Rwanda we employed comparable methodologies. We focused on secondary schools sampling representative groups of students, teachers, parents, administrators, other educational specialists, and key informants in government and non-governmental or international

organizations. We sampled across ethnic lines to assure that the views of each group were represented.

Our focus was on the under-utilization of schools in the process of social repair and on how the attitudes and beliefs of parents, teachers, students and administrators might be a force for reconciliation and/or for the reification of ethnic partition. We further were interested in what those involved in schooling thought about how schools might support the reconstruction of their societies and shape the ideologies of the next generation. As our research developed, we became aware that more attention needed to be paid to community processes that contribute to social identity formation. Schools are among the major influences on young people's identities and on their attitudes towards 'the other'. A further question concerned how people in these communities viewed the structure of education; in particular, how critical thinking and a more interactive classroom might contribute to the building of a tolerant, pluralistic society.

The overarching goal of this project was to facilitate the understanding, articulation and contribution of 'unofficial' viewpoints and concerns, into the official bargaining and negotiations between local and international actors.

educational challenge

In the former Yugoslavia, preliminary study in two of the most conflicted and still divided cities – Vukovar in Croatia and Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina – revealed separate schools or schedules that keep children of different national groups from contact with each other and divided educational authorities that promote separate curriculum for Bosniak, Serb and Croat national groups. In Kosovo, Serbs and Albanians live primarily in segregated towns; the children attend schools in their own communities and follow curricula that are quite different – the Albanians follow a course of study designed by the Albanian majority in the Kosovo Ministry of Education; the Serb children follow a curriculum designed in Belgrade. Here the question is whether these separations, both in physical location and in curricular materials, while used to deflect violence in the short run, will have the long-term effect of inscribing separate identities, maintaining collective myths, and ensuring that a pluralistic society will not emerge.

The problems in Rwanda are different since the opposing factions attend school together while historical forces, including the legacy of colonial rule, undercut the creation of a culture of tolerance and human rights. Schools are considered an important influence in the periodic but intense conflicts that have dominated the lives of Rwandans since independence. We found that there was a moratorium on the teaching of history since 1994, and since official government policy is to repress Hutu–Tutsi difference in favor of a Rwandese identity, the history and traditions of the groups may not be acknowledged.

In Rwanda, the question is whether suppression of these identities will result in a unified civic identity or lead to an underground adherence to ethnic difference that ultimately might result in renewed violence.

Croatia (Eastern Slavonia) and Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Vukovar, the first city of concern, the Croat and Serb communities live parallel lives within one geographic area. The Yugoslavian Army (JNA), primarily Serb, virtually destroyed the city in a three-month period in 1991.[4] Croat citizens were displaced as refugees and Serbian citizens held the city until 1995 when the Erdut Agreement allowed for a transitional period of two years under a UN administration. Croats slowly began to return while many Serbs began to leave. Under the UN Transitional Administration, an agreement was made that allowed the Serb community to maintain separate schools for a period of five years. At the end of that time, the leaders of the Serb community advocated for this policy to be maintained. The agreement has reified the separateness of these two groups and the future of a combined system remains in doubt.[5] In Vukovar, the two national groups, each slanting historical events to reflect their own group's perspective, follow separate curricula.

The second city on which we focused was Mostar. In this town, the Bosniaks (Muslims) live separated from the Croats (Roman Catholic) on either side of the River Neretva with some small overlap. While the Dayton Accord brought an end to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a cold peace in Mostar was initially punctuated by violent episodes. For much of the decade following the Dayton Accord, the manipulation of Croat public opinion in the city led to a de facto semi-independent community that as much as possible ignored or circumvented the authority of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[6] One significant area of concern has been the separate school systems. While the structure of the system under the Cantonal government is designed to assure that leadership is shared between the two communities, in fact, the schools are separated by national origin and have followed different curricula; for Bosniaks, a curriculum developed by education personnel in the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina and for Croats, a curriculum designed by education authorities from the State of Croatia. Ten years after the end of the war, contact between children of these groups is minimal and schools reinforce difference and undermine the development of tolerance.

In Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, we carried out 38 informational interviews with educational leaders from local and international organizations. We also worked with local collaborators to conduct 78 in-depth interviews with 24 headmasters, pedagogues (psycho-educational specialists or what we would term school psychologists) and teachers; six parents, and eight students. We looked both at the academic high schools (gymnasia) and the vocational

schools (e.g. economics or medicine). Finally, we conducted 20 focus groups with 140 participants from these schools. Focus groups included 44 students, 35 parents, and 23 teachers or other educators. To encourage open dialogue, the focus groups were homogeneous with respect to national groups and the leader was of the same national origin as the participants. All interviews and focus groups were conducted in the participants' native languages and then translated into English (and back translated) to facilitate the analysis for all members of the research team (Freedman et al., 2004). As background data we had access to and reanalyzed information from 1212 door-to-door surveys about issues of social reconstruction (Biro et al., 2004) and an additional survey of 1277 students, 1603 parents and 161 teachers (Freedman et al., 2004).

Kosovo

In 2003, the Danish Adventist Development Relief Agency that had been working on school construction and teacher training approached the Human Rights Center about replicating the studies that were done in Mostar and Vukovar. In 1990, the autonomy that Kosovo had enjoyed under President Tito was abolished by the Milosevic regime. This led the vast majority of Kosovar Albanians to leave the educational system in a collective act of civil disobedience. This action led in 1980 to a parallel system of education that lasted almost a decade. Education was conducted with minimal resources and primarily in homes. The powerlessness and anger that emerged from that era led to the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the massive violence of 1999 when hundreds of thousands of Kosovars were expelled by the Serbian army. With the NATO bombings and the cessation of hostilities, a de facto semiautonomous state has emerged. The virtual ghettoization of those Serbs who had remained in Kosovo after 1999 produced school separation in which Albanian Kosovars followed a curriculum very different from the Serb children who followed the Serbian curriculum. The enmity between these two groups in the context of a very uncertain future for the province has led to periodic violence and rejection of the other group. While schools talk about human rights and tolerance, those beliefs and values do not appear to incorporate the opposing national group. This history does not augur well for a unified system particularly as Albanian demands for an independent state conflict with Serbian resistance to giving up Kosovo and with the stated aims of the international community for a pluralistic society in Kosovo.[7]

In Kosovo, ADRA sampled similar informants from nine Albanian schools and four Serbian schools as well as other key informants. Interviews were conducted with 130 school-based participants and seven key informants within the Ministry of Education, Albanian teachers' union, history curriculum committee and parallel Serbian education structures. Because of the unsettled nature of the

province, the researchers attempted to obtain representative views from three of the largest Serbian minority communities who live in somewhat different environments – the divided city of Mitrovice/Mitrovica, the Serbian dominated town of Gracanice/Gracanica, and Serbian enclaves within the town of Gjilan/Gjilane. Six focus groups (three from each national group) sampled the views of an additional 48 participants. In order to secure representation from all Kosovar communities, researchers conducted an additional 20 interviews from the Roma, Ashkalia, and Egyptian minority communities. These interviews were community-based as there are no mono-national schools that represent these populations. Focus groups and interviews together included 42 parents, 68 teachers and 42 students.[8]

Rwanda

In Rwanda, we confront the legacies of the colonial era. Under the Belgian system until 1961, education was not compulsory for fear of creating an elite that would dominate in ways the Belgians could not control (Meredith, 2005; Prunier, 1995). Subsidized mission schools were the principal venue for education. It is also the case that Hutu and Twa were systematically denied access to higher education. Following independence, all were brought under the supervision of a national ministry with on-going support of the missionary schools. When the Hutu gained power, Tutsi suffered similar discrimination in educational access. The periodic but intense conflicts that have dominated the lives of Rwandans since independence suggest that schools have had little influence in promoting national unity. Despite attempts to strengthen the educational system since independence, limited access to education continued with an illiteracy rate of 47 percent. Since its victory in 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) government has significantly increased access and a much larger proportion of children now receive a primary school education. Since 1994, reform efforts have been made to introduce a bilingual system in English and French at all levels while the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (1999) has a 'Civic Education Department'. The Commission plans to develop a national syllabus to promote national unity and reconciliation by using civic education to create a culture of tolerance, unity, and reconciliation. Ominously, one of its functions is a kind of censorship that would 'denounce any written or declared ideas and materials seeking to disunite the Rwandan people'.

Shortly after the 1994 genocide, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) placed a moratorium on teaching Rwandan history until a basic consensus could be reached on how history should be taught, but a decade later no such consensus existed. However by 1999 the MINEDUC had agreed that two hours per week should be devoted to teaching history but offered only rudimentary guidelines and no new textbooks or teaching materials on Rwandan history had been

written. Thus a virtual moratorium on the teaching of history was maintained. Our preliminary interviews revealed a frequent concern that schools had failed Rwandan society, since before the genocide the schools failed to inculcate moral values and taught history in ways that promoted cross-ethnic hatreds. However, many also believed that the schools could contribute to unity and reconciliation. The government has recognized that schools help shape the collective memory of the nation, remold social identity and can encourage cross-ethnic affiliation. Government agencies and non-governmental groups have undertaken efforts to revise the teaching of history, tolerance and human rights through conferences on the teaching of history and the proposed civics education curriculum. Despite these efforts, an apparent lack of consensus among policymakers resulted in a stalemate – no curricular materials had emerged by 2004.

In Rwanda, the issues facing the schools also are complicated by several sequelae from the genocide. Thousands of orphaned children have been taken into homes headed by women who now constitute 60 percent of the population. Many of these traumatized children exhibit emotional symptoms that are manifest in the classroom. The return of Rwandans from the diaspora, many of whom are English-speakers, have introduced a second official language into the schools. Children are expected to learn and be proficient in English as well as French while their home language remains Kinyarwanda.. Finally, the genocide was so massive in its scale that a large number of educated pro-fessionals including teachers and school administrators were lost. All of these experiences coupled with the psychological and social aftermath of ethnic cleansing, rape and trauma undoubtedly affect the educational system in a profoundly negative manner.

In Rwanda, we studied schools in three representative communities – Byumba/Buyoga, Kibuye/Rubengera and Butare/Save (Freedman et al., 2004). The communities were selected based on geographical distribution, rural/urban population and experience of the genocide. We interviewed 19 educational leaders and conducted 84 in-depth interviews, including 36 teachers and other school officials, 24 students and 24 parents. We looked both at pedagogical institutes (teacher training secondary schools) and general secondary schools. We conducted 21 focus groups with 164 participants from the selected schools. The groups included 23 parents, 23 teachers and 118 students. Our Rwandan colleagues conducted an additional 21 focus groups in three other settings: Umutara, Gisenyi and Kigali. The total number of focus group participants was 272. Where possible, these groups were ethnically homogeneous. However, given constraints on asking about ethnicity directly, we used other avenues to develop these groups e.g. selecting students with scholarships awarded to one ethnic group or another. As was the case for Mostar and Vukovar, we had access to a large-scale survey of 2091 individuals in these same communities in Rwanda (see Stover and Weinstein, 2005).

major themes

Whereas much of the literature that we reviewed talks abstractly about the issues in post-conflict societies, the reality of everyday life is a maelstrom of on-going conflict, the emotional consequences of trauma, the promulgation of stereotypes, the fear of violence in classrooms, and fractured attempts to find a way to live together with former enemies. In the press to rebuild schools and reform school curricula, this everyday experience may become lost. It is critical that social reconstruction both in and outside of schools attend to how people manage these intense processes if attempts at educational change are to succeed.

While context, culture and history are critical to our understanding of our data, three common themes emerged as we look across these post-conflict societies. Perhaps the underlying concern is that while in all cases, widespread violence either has ceased entirely or flares up only occasionally, fear of the return of conflict lies at the core of attitudes towards schools. Further this same fear manifests itself in the need by teachers and parents to control discussion in classroom environments. A further tension seems more ominous and emerges from a widespread desire of groups in power to maintain control over others and for those not in power to regain power. For the disempowered groups there is a spectrum, from those wanting to regain power from the empowered group to those who wish simply to maintain some sense of group identity. The final theme emerges from a consideration of the first two. The politics of memory and the teaching of history reflect the submerged but ongoing conflict that pervades these societies. It would be difficult indeed to infer from our studies that reconciliation has made significant gains in any of these settings, underlining the importance of understanding peoples' experience.

fear of return of conflict

resistance to interethnic contact

In both Vukovar and in Mostar, there is great resistance to integrated schools. Part of the problem lies, first, in the fear of overt violence and, second, those who were expelled returned with great hostility towards those who remained. The youth express some hesitation about the practicalities of integration in both Mostar and Vukovar because they fear that their teachers and their parents will not protect them from violent cross-national outbreaks (Freedman and Abazovic, 2006).

Most of the other resistance in Vukovar is found among the youth where fear, ignorance and stereotyping distort any real knowledge. A Croat student explained, 'I think if we would go in the same schools, it might come to national conflicts'. Similarly, the Serb youth want separate schools for the time being

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anyway. One explained, 'There are many students who lost someone in that war and he or she can't easily get over it to go together with him or her. There is some small hate; I don't know how to say it ... It is very hard when there is hate in us after all.' Unlike their elders, young people in Croatia have no experience of an integrated society.

In Mostar, despite a political situation that promotes division, we found that on the whole both adults and youth were more open to school integration than in Vukovar. While the Croat youth are more neutral than negative, the Bosniak young people are clearly in favor of integration. The Croats claim that Bosniak youth 'are no different in any way'. However one Bosniak student claimed that if schools were integrated, 'Classes would be better and ... people wouldn't be divided at all any more'. Another said, 'I think we should again go to school together.'

Kosovo presents a different picture – first, the violent conflict is more recent (1999) and periodic violence is on-going and second, as of this writing, the status of Kosovo as either a province of Serbia and Montenegro or as an independent state is still in limbo. Although the international community indicates that it supports Kosovo as a province of Serbia-Montenegro and no official decisions have been made about its future status, most Serbs have left except for guarded pockets of settlement. The official line is that Kosovo must be a multiethnic province with protections for all. But Kosovar Albanians live in the past holding tightly to memories of human rights violations and ethnic cleansing. Local communities focus on the need to separate; separation by ethnicity is equated with security. Schools are therefore segregated; contact across ethnic lines is minimal at the local level and among the youth. Teachers tend to be mono-ethnic and separate curricula exist. Further, most of the Serb population lives a ghettoized existence in guarded enclaves, totally removed from contact with Albanian Kosovars. The international community has pushed reintegration as an ideal outcome but daily reality is far different.

An Albanian student said, 'I don't think this possible [that Albanian and Serbian students go to school together] because Albanians and Serbs are two different people; they have different traditions and different languages as well. They can go to school in the same building but each community should learn in its own language.' A school administrator noted, 'We have to tell our children and students because they have to know the reality of the war. It is known that the Albanians have done a war for freedom from the Serb invaders.' A Serb teacher said, 'Nobody is going to tell something ugly about his own people, no matter what happened.' At first glance, responses appear similar to some of those heard in Bosnia and Croatia; however, the resistance to a multiethnic society is far greater among the Kosovar Albanian adults who experienced a decade of discrimination and repression prior to the 1999 war.

In Rwanda where schools are integrated, the suppression of discussion about ethnic difference makes it difficult to see the extent to which de facto segregation persists in the schools or in the society. As one school administrator explained, 'Even if they would have such ideas [about ethnic difference], they cannot express it because the school cannot allow it.' Discussion is inherently constrained or if debate is open, it to must fit in the parameters established by the government. In fact, there appears to be overwhelming support for the idea of unity and reconciliation. It is significant that a few of our participants spoke about the persistence of discrimination across ethnic lines. One school administrator from a heavily Hutu area remarked:

> One day I heard some students from Congolese refugee camps saying that there are many Hutu in this school. When I heard that, I have told that student who said that, that there is not a problem. It would be a problem if it was said by teachers. Of course some students still have the ethnic ideology and it will take a long time to remove off such ideas.

Another school administrator explained further that issues of ethnicity surface but people 'feel afraid' and that 'people's ideas are very deceitful. You can't realize what is in people's minds.' Conflict exists but is routinely pushed below the surface.

interpersonal and institutional mistrust

An important corollary that follows from the above is that a basic level of mistrust is found in all the settings. The focus of the mistrust is twofold: at the interpersonal level, the relationships across ethnic lines are tentative, particularly in the Balkans; perhaps of even greater concern is the mistrust of political structures and institutions. Given the nature of the ethnic cleansing and genocide that engulfed these societies, it is not surprising that the aftermath would be fraught with ambivalence towards politicians and the political process.

In Mostar and Vukovar, politicians are often held up as people who make the ongoing conflicts worse. A Serb history teacher in Vukovar said emphatically, 'I don't trust politicians and [the following] folk quote works for me, "Each time a politician opens his mouth, he lies"'. Another Vukovar Serb teacher echoed the views of many that 'the idea of separated classes (in the schools) came from the politicians'. Similarly in Mostar, a Bosniak parent explained, 'Money is not problem, people is not problem, problem is, are political. Political!' A Bosniak teacher elaborated, 'In this region, we still don't have sufficient political will since the nationalist parties, the HDZ (Croat political party) and the SDA (Bosniak political party), were in power for a long time, so we still don't have sufficient political will for direct communication, cooperation, dialogue, and so on and so on.'

A Serbian student from Kosovo said, '[T]hey should stop kidnapping and killing us. Every once in a while we hear the news that someone has been killed, kidnapped or beaten up.' And an Albanian teacher, 'We have been suffering under the Serb regime for almost 100 years and therefore I think we deserve independence.' A Serbian student from Kosovo said, 'they should stop kidnapping and killing us. Every once in a while we hear the news that someone has been killed, kidnapped or beaten up.' And an Albanian teacher, ' We have been suffering under the Serb regime for almost 100 years and therefore I think we deserve independence.'

In Rwanda, because of government pressure to support their perspective, people are hesitant to express their opinions in public. A number of people who participated in our study refused to give their ethnicity. One teacher put it this way, 'Once I'm asked my ethnicity, I get trouble. I wonder why someone asks me such a question.' The interviewer then asked, 'Can you reveal your ethnicity to anybody else.' The teacher replied, 'I cannot. The only answer I can give him is that I am a Rwandan.'

disparities in power: social identity

Depending upon how an ethnically based war is resolved, the group that has lost power must determine its place in the new society. In Vukovar, those Serbs who have chosen to remain within the state of Croatia are caught between the strategies necessary to preserve their heritage, traditions and language, and those measures they must take to be accepted by the majority as full citizens in the country. Surprisingly, there appeared to be more commitment to Croatia among the Serbs than recognition of the Serb commitment among the Croats. Serb youth in particular were quite open about their desire to be part of the State. However, the Serb political representatives magnify the concern among the adults that their traditions may be lost by continuing to emphasize the need for separation in the schools. This tension between maintaining a strong ethnic identity and a civic identity underlies much of the dialogue around integration of schools.

In Mostar, the major theme that emerged from our studies was the fear of loss of cultural identity among the Bosnian Croats. This fear is often expressed in terms of threats to the language. While the languages of Croatia and Bosnia are similar, there has been a concerted effort since the 1992–1995 war to magnify differences, coin new words or return to older ones in order to reify the language as unique. While Croats may support integrated schools, their concept maintains the opportunity to learn 'in their own language'. They frequently use the rationale that they have 'language rights'. One of the Croat teachers we interviewed voiced a common view about language, 'Let everyone have their own; there's nothing wrong in that.'

The Bosniaks reflect their ambivalence. While paying lip-service to the idea that Croats should have their own language and culture, they at the same time indicate, using the argument of mutual intelligibility of the languages, that they believe the languages to be virtually the same. A Bosniak teacher explains this view, 'I just do not see a big difference... because we understand each other.' Another attributes the differentiation to the political situation, 'I know that officially there are, unfortunately, three languages, but the thing is that we do not have interpreters. There are Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian. This is one language.... That damned nationalism is so strong and opposing, politics opposing, although it is completely the same language.' The Bosnians are committed to the idea of a unified state – the only people within the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina who are not ambivalent about this prospect. Clearly this reflects that fact that only in Bosnia can they be the largest ethnic group numerically; they have nowhere else to go. Some Croats still express their anger that they did not secure a separate entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina as did the Serbs in the Republika Srpska. While they do not necessarily support any activities (legal or illegal) designed to reach that goal, they are determined to protect their culture and traditions.

Ethnic identity is a critical issue for the province of Kosovo as well. The 1999 expulsion of some 800,000 Kosovar Albanians and the subsequent NATO bombing that allowed their return led to a massive exodus of Serbs to Serbia-Montenegro. Those who remain live primarily in the north of the province in a monoethnic region adjacent to Serbia proper or in monethnic villages or enclaves that are guarded. The potential for violence simmers all the time. In Kosovo, therefore, the education system is caught up in the past and in the un-certainty of the present.

In Rwanda, the factor of ethnic identity does not emerge spontaneously as all espouse the government philosophy of one civic identity. However, in our focus groups where members were mono-ethnic, concerns about discrimination were voiced, although there is recognition that the government has provided a more level playing field in terms of educational access. We also were told that the good jobs and the study opportunities go to the Tutsis, despite government statements that there is equal opportunity for all and that people speak differ-ently when they are among family and friends.

Another important societal schism is the role played by the thousands of English-speaking Tutsi who have returned to Rwanda post-genocide and who hold the most powerful political positions in the country. Identity becomes bound up with the question of who was in Rwanda during the genocide and who was outside. These categories are associated with language since all of those who were in Rwanda speak French as their official language while many who were not in the country speak English. English further is being imposed as a second official language in the country. Interestingly, although people

may have questions about those in power, they do not resist English because they also associate learning English with the possibility of increased economic prosperity for Rwanda.

politics of memory and the teaching of history

Results from our study suggest that the question of truth becomes the focus of any dialogue on the teaching of history. One legacy of the Communist era in the former Yugoslavia was a history that glorified Tito and the partisans in WW ll and the creation of a national myth that was suspect. National identity was pushed underground only to surface under the political manipulations that led to ethnic cleansing. Ethnic or national groups that have achieved supremacy want to make certain that their victory is represented in terms that show the rightness of their war and their victimization. Those groups that lost want to be seen as victims as well or at least as having fought and, in the Balkans, still fighting to preserve a history or culture that they valued highly. Further, while some argue for history to be taught to secure a public memory of the violence in order to prevent its recurrence, others want simply to forget and move on. They see danger in teaching about the past and in the likely manipulation of the 'truth'.

In Vukovar, while there was universal concern that history teaching must not be offensive to any ethnic group, teachers across both groups were positive about the need to record the past. There were ethnic differences in the larger community, however, with the Serb population being the most positive although ambivalent about whether the teaching of history would be even-handed. The ethnic groups have different ideas about what should be taught; this reflects their different experiences of the war – the Serbs want the past to be forgotten because of their fear that history will be written by the victors, that a Croatian slant would make them out to be the aggressors, and Croats the only victims. They prefer to be future-oriented and committed to lives as Croatian citizens. The Croats, on the other hand, see themselves as victims and want 'their' truth to be recorded. One of the Croat teachers told us, 'I am the witness of all that happened and I know the whole truth.' When asked what students should be taught about the past, another said, 'The truth and nothing but the truth... They should learn that Croatia was a victim which suffered and lost the most, that it was attacked by the aggressor, then Serbia. '

The children feel that there has been too much avoidance by their parents and they want history teaching that would directly address the events that led up to the war and its consequences. Thus in Vukovar, there is great tension between those who want to forget and those who want to remember. There is a credible fear that the teaching of history may be used in ways that reflect unitary perspectives and which may promote division and not unity.

In Mostar, as in Vukovar, the teaching of history is intimately bound up with memory. The Bosniaks in Mostar, as the Croats in Vukovar, see themselves as the principal victims of the war and are determined that the past must not be forgotten. On the other hand, the Croats worry that history will not reflect the 'Croatian truth'. With a belief among many that there are three truths, the challenge is to develop a version of history that will not offend others. A Croat student in Vukovar explained the multiple truths as being in opposition, 'Our Serbian side interprets the history on one way, Croatian side interprets history on other almost opposite way that has nothing in common with this. I'm not saying that both are correct but simply it has been interpreted like that'. This student continues by stating the challenge, 'Something common has to be said, instead of accusing each other.' Interestingly, Croat students want to learn about the war and suggest that they have not had an opportunity to examine critically the events that led up to the violence.

In Kosovo as well, issues of ethnicity and nationalism are the driving force behind the views of the role of the schools in teaching history. Here we see that group identity, values and goals supersede individual identity, values and goals. Ethnic groups are defined in opposition to each other and 'we' is defined along ethnic lines. Segregated schools reify these differences but the overriding feeling among study participants is that conflict must be minimized and avoided – contact can only lead to conflict and thus, segregation is essential. Promotion of the unique ethnic identity of each group colors any discussion of how to teach about the past. An Albanian teacher noted, 'it would be better if students learn all the events which caused the conflict' while a Serbian teacher said, 'History should be taught in a reduced manner, because it is not only Albanians who live in Kosovo.'

Consequently, schools teach a version of history that reflects 'their' truth – a nationalist perspective using literature and historical sources as evidence for that perspective. Caught in the middle are the minorities of Kosovo such as the Roma, the Ashkali and the Egyptians who strive for acceptance and opportunity and for whom schools are seen as the key to advancement.

The legacy of the Rwandan genocide makes the teaching of history even more problematic in that the government in power has made clear that the focus of education must be on inculcating a Rwandan identity. The purpose is to assure that ethnic difference will never again be used divisively in ways that have led to more than 45 years of violence since independence. The dilemma then is how to approach the teaching of history without acknowledging that the genocide was an ethnic war. The focus of the government on downplaying ethnic divisions has meant a reframing of history to attribute the ethnic classifications to the Belgian colonists and to promulgate the myth of an idealized early life of ethnic unity (Longman and Rutagengwa, 2004). Many participants echo this framework. Others note that ethnic identity is present, often unspoken,

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and sometimes expressed in discriminatory behaviors. These disparate views lead to tensions over curricular content. While there is much agreement about the need to promote unity and reconciliation, ethnicity is still very much at the forefront of people's thinking even 10 years after the genocide. Many supported a compromise solution – the curriculum should examine the origins of ethnicity in Rwanda, how it had been manipulated in the past, the effects of such manipulation, and how Rwandan youth could avoid the same errors. As one teacher noted: 'The truth is, keeping quiet over an existing problem does not provide a solution to it ... above all, you should know that you are a Munyarwanda, a citizen of Rwanda. Let us not be fearful to talk about our ethnicities.' In the Rwandan context, a critical exploration of the roots of the genocide in the education of children is inhibited by the innate but realistic fear that such examination will inevitably lead to further violence.[9]

classroom strategies and teaching methods

There is a great deal of interest among teachers in all of the societies we studied about western teaching methods. The idea of critical thinking and open debate around possibly contentious issues has some appeal but faces resistance as well from two fronts: first, adults including teachers fear that open discussion in integrated classrooms will lead to violence. Students express similar fears but appear more open to the possibility. This is particularly true in Croatia, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina where these fears are used as arguments against integrating the schools. Also, in these societies, the Communist era left a legacy of passive acquiescence to government doctrine; teachers awaited the requirements spelled out by the central administration and the lecture format was the norm.

In Kosovo, the Communist legacy in education is reflected in the view that concepts of learning are highly formalized and schools are not perceived as a forum for social and political discussion. Education is seen as a protected, stable, socializing agent for the transmission of accepted sociopolitical norms, traditions and beliefs. In this context, critical discussion of individual or group conflict, democracy and human rights is constrained and limited to discussions of human rights instruments as static codes, conventions and laws with little relevance to Kosovo. An Albanian teacher complained ' It is impossible for us after twenty-five years to change the way of teaching ... if we change ... the students will not take it seriously and they will abuse it.' And another 'the position of teachers and the treatment of education in Kosovo is miserable'. About school governance, a teacher said about teacher participation in decision-making, 'that is one of the issues of legacy from the Communist time, in the Ministry of Education people are "untouchable"; those people in comfortable chairs lost any touch with reality in the schools'.

The postcolonial legacy in Rwanda produced similar results. The idea of 'democratic' classrooms appeals in theory but must confront these areas of resistance and traditional ways of teaching dominated by lectures and rote learning. The idea of allowing classroom discussion and debate, while supported by many, evokes fears of new conflicts emerging. Critical thinking in more democratic classrooms runs the risk of fostering perspectives that may differ from government policy. While the value of a democratic approach is welcomed by the majority who see rote learning as ultimately self-defeating for Rwanda, others see it as a threat to government control. For the latter group, the 'true' facts come from the center, 'The teacher ... will give the reasons which will come from the Ministry of Education.' Parents feel little power to effect curricular reform. The passivity that emerges in totalitarian societies is also seen in tightly controlled countries where dissent is stifled. Thus, both the content of a history curriculum and teaching strategies will necessarily reflect the political context that led to the genocide and that which operates at present. Schools lie in the nexus of political manipulation, fear and societal conflict but also can be a potent forum for change.

conclusion

What do we learn from asking teachers, students, parents and school personnel to tell us what they think about the integration of the past and present and how schools can play a role in promoting peace and social and physical reconstruction after violent conflict? Do their beliefs and opinions offer perspectives that differ dramatically from those of academics, policymakers and diplomats?

The principal stakeholders or beneficiaries of education reform in the aftermath of mass violence hold strong opinions both about the problems that schools face as well as what options may be available for change. Each of the groups approaches the challenges based on their experience of schools, their age, what they have lived through before and during the violence, and how they have responded to the stereotyping that has emerged out of the conflict. It is readily apparent that each of these groups is highly influenced by the wider political scene and the identity group to which they belong. Problems of dehumanization of 'the other' persist and this is associated with fear based on ignorance and myth. Students are very attuned to the attitudes of their parents and their peers, and in at least one city, Vukovar, they feel a lack of safety because the adults in their lives have not protected them from violence. We argue then that it is essential to involve each of these stakeholders in any interventions designed to reform schools. However, even this approach is insufficient.

The education systems are constrained by the legacy of past political influences as well as traditional pedagogical practices; in Rwanda, the Belgian and

French tradition of lectures with passive students influenced generations of students and teachers; in the Balkans, the Communist era bred passivity in the population and in classrooms. There is active interest in all these societies in learning new methods associated with some hesitancy in how the process will evolve. In addition, the historical systematic exclusion of teachers from curriculum design is found in all the societies – some teachers are eager to be more involved; others see curriculum design still as coming from above. As well, parents are expressing a desire to be more involved in the schools but that process will require significant support and nurturing to be come a reality.

While this study illustrates the importance of involving local stakeholders, it also suggests that the structure of the educational system and the sociopolitical environment in which it operates are as important if long-term change is to be implemented. Further, the importance of sustained attention to curricular development with significant collaboration with teachers and local school officials around sensitive subject areas such as history and literature is key. Each group holds on to an identity-based perception of the 'truth' that will make curriculum development a challenge. Purging textbooks in isolation from other societal change does not change those perceptions. The challenge then is how to examine historical events from multiple points of view while not devolving into moral relativism.

While approaches such as conflict resolution groups or peace education workshops may be helpful, they cannot effect much change by themselves. The field of peace education is broadly based (Miller and Affolter, 2002; Salomon and Nevo, 2002) and appears to be developed with little attention to child development, or other societal change. While significant research has been done on the development of moral reasoning and values (see Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005; Kohlberg, 1984; Turiel, 2002) in children and adolescents, the conclusions that have emerged from this research do not appear to be incorporated into the design of these workshops and suggested curricular changes. Unless education is conceptualized as occurring within and outside schools and a broad-based shift in societal attitudes is encouraged, youth attitudes will change little resulting either in maintaining the status quo and the possibility of renewed violence or an on-going brain drain of those young people who see no future in their homeland.

Post-conflict societies face the unenviable task of forging a common framework that allows previously warring groups to rebuild infrastructure and perhaps, even more critically, to build social networks that rekindle a shared sense of the common good. We argue that a missing component of this process involves the educational systems of these transitional societies. Further, we contend that without sustained contact in learning and in social interaction, the youth will be unable to create any bridges to 'the other'; that, in itself, is a recipe for disaster. Further, as we saw in ex-Yugoslavia, suppression of historical

events does not produce a common history – it serves only to reinforce the social identities of those who fought against each other. Finally, passivity in the classroom, rote learning, and views from above do not promote democratic participation, critical thinking and independent action. Unfortunately, in the societies in which we have studied the schools, the educational systems are set up to preserve the legacy of war, not to counteract it.

There are several areas of commonality: first, the preservation of social identity is a critical dimension in how these schools function. In the Balkans, segregated classes or schools ensure that threats to the status quo will not be allowed to intrude. In Rwanda, while the classes are mixed, the official suppression of difference ensures that those differences will be maintained covertly. Threats to the preservation of the group (real or manipulated) led to the violence and will certainly foster on-going suspicion of former enemies unless the stereotypes that emerge from ignorance are confronted. Fear of violence pervades post-conflict societies particularly among the youth; this fear is supported by parental attitudes and reinforced by same group peers. In the Balkans, this fear leads to a sense of profound pessimism and a desire to emigrate. In Rwanda, where that option is very limited, the fear of violence leads to acquiescence with the government policy on developing a Rwandan identity.

Attitudes towards the teaching of history reflect differences in experience of war and even more importantly, the ethos of the group with which the participant identifies. While all subscribe to a notion that history must be taught, the overriding concern is that history must not reflect the views of any one group nor of the victor. Unfortunately, there is little confidence that the creation of a multiperspective curriculum is possible nor do most participants feel that their schools are set up to teach critical thinking about the reporting of historical events.

In these settings, the contribution of schools to imparting the values of a society is a contentious issue. How should ethnic groups be portrayed? How much should parents be involved? How much should religion be taught? How open can schools be in confronting the events of the past? The relationship between politics and education is difficult in all the societies studied. Participants agree that politics should not be a part of a school curriculum but on the other hand, there is little recognition that avoiding discussion of the political process does not augur well for an informed citizenry.

What then can we expect of the schools in a society that has been torn apart? Until the international community recognizes that the blackening-out of textbooks, and the rebuilding of school buildings are only one part of what can be done; that we are missing an opportunity to inculcate values of decency, human rights, and tolerance while lessening the dangers of ethnocentrism and ethnic strife; and that democracy will not blossom in a landscape where the

young are permitted, even encouraged to fear and hate those whose beliefs are different, we inevitably will be sowing the seeds of conflict for the next generation. Our studies suggest that in focusing narrowly on what can be done within schools, those involved in development projects, conflict resolution and psychosocial interventions are missing a critical opportunity. Societal repair must involve a comprehensive set of interventions that recognizes the integrated nature of a society's institutions (Fletcher and Weinstein, 2002). Schools are a unique component of building a long-term future. They must be moved to center stage. The children of ethnic cleansing and genocide deserve a better life.

acknowledgements

Notes

1. The Civitas organization has achieved great success in developing democracy curricula in the USA, Whether these kinds of programs achieve success in the midst of identity-based conflicts is an open question. Also, see http://www.civiced.org/archives/fall96/cc_intheirwords.html for an example of an overseas program.
2. We do not imply here that FHAO only does short-term interventions. In fact, their commitment to long-term support makes their interventions unique as does their wilingness to evaluate impact. We use this example only to illustrate the limitations of a short-term approach.
3. Further information on this process can be obtained from the INEE website at http://www,inee.org.
4. For more detailed history on the fall of Vukovar, see Stover and Weinstein (2004).
5. A recent (March 2006) communication from the Nansen Dialogue Project that has been attempting to develop an integrated school in Vukovar revealed that little has changed in Vukovar. In fact during the school year, 2004/5, in the last school where Croatian and Serbian children were attending in the same shift, they were placed in separate shifts resulting in a complete ethnic division of education. They noted that every year there are fewer children attending classes in the Serbian language, as more and more Serbian parents are sending their children to Croatian language classes. This may lead to assimilation rather than integration.
6. For more on the history of Mostar since the war, see Sumantra Bose (2003) 'Bosnia After Dayton' and Stover and Weinstein. A recent communication (March 2006) from Richard Medic of the OSCE in Vukovar noted that:

   there are still 52 so-called "two schools under one roof" in the Federation BiH. This means that the Bosniak and Croat schools are separate in every respect

apart from the fact that they share one roof. Two administrations, school boards, student councils, budgets etc. – and of course separate curricula. Most of these schools also have separate shifts, meaning that students of different ethnicities have little or no contact. The village of Stolac is an example.

He also noted that the most respected academic high school, the Gymnasium remained problematic. 'It has been 'administratively and legally' unified, which means it is now one legal institution, with one director (Croat) and deputy (Bosniak), one statute, a unified school board and student council, as well as joint shifts and extra-curricular activities. The curricula/classes, however, remain separate. The curricula in Croatian and Bosnian languages, whilst very similar in some subjects (sciences, IT, mathematics, etc.) are still very different in others (history, geography, literature etc). The common core curriculum (CCC) foresees that around 70 per cent of curriculum content would be common across all three curricula in BiH, with 30 per cent devoted to the so-called 'National' group of subjects. Implementation of the CCC, however, has been sluggish on the ground.

7. A recent communication (March 2006) from one of the researchers in the Kosovo study reported there is no improvement in the integration of Serbs into the education system. 'There are no Serbs going to Albanian schools and no Albanians going to the Serbian schools. The Serbian community still works with the Belgrade curriculum, even though the Ministry of Education has people working for minorities (including Serbs), but there is no improvement, especially in Mitrovica where everything functions through Belgrade.' There is no visible change since the education study was done.

8. The methodology and results of this study are contained in an ADRA Denmark report titled 'You, Me and Never the Twain Shall Meet: Perceptions of Education, History, Justice and Ethnicity in Kosovo', by Holly Hughson obtainable at http://www.hrcberkeley.org.

9. In 2003, the Human Rights Center at UC Berkeley entered into a collaboration with the National University of Rwanda and the Ministry of Education to begin a process of returning the teaching of history to the curriculum of secondary schools, Model curricular materials have been developed as well as new strategies of teaching. Results of this work will be forthcoming.

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