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Respecting the Wishes of the Families:

Burial, Mourning, and Politics Following the Massacre at Srebrenica

RESPECTING THE WISHES OF THE FAMILIES:
Burial, Mourning, and Politics Following the Massacre at Srebrenica

by

Craig Evan Pollack

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Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

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Committee in charge:
Assistant Professor Jodi Halpern, Chair
Adjunct Professor Eric Stover
Clinical Professor Harvey Weinstein

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RESPECTING THE WISHES OF THE FAMILIES:
Burial, Mourning, and Politics Following the Massacre at Srebrenica

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by

Craig Evan Pollack

ABSTRACT

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina raged from 1992-1995, leaving tens of thousands of people missing or dead. From the 1995 massacre at Srebrenica, over 7000 Muslim men remain missing. Of the people missing in the massacre, bones from over 4000 men have been collected. Very few of these bones have been identified as a particular individual. Five years after the massacre, families are hoping to bury the bones of their loved ones at Srebrenica. Forty-nine qualitative interviews with 74 people, including survivors, psychosocial workers, religious leaders, national and international government officials, and people involved in the identification process were completed over the summer of 2000. The research addressed three basic questions:

(1) Why is the issue of reburial emerging now? Factors that allow for reburial now include the collection and storage of the bones themselves, the realization by the families that their loved ones have died, strengthening of associations of families to lobby the government, formation of a local Srebrenica government, and commitment of the international representatives.

(2) Where do survivors want to have the burial and what to they want to see at the site? Survivors wanted burial at Potocari, a site just outside of Srebrenica, because it represents the site of ultimate horror, is connected to their sense of home, and underscores the various power relationships. Families wanted to have burial as a way to mourn their loved one in a proper funeral. Representatives of family associations stressed the burial leading to recognition of the past massacre and of present abuses.

(3) How does reburial relate to the return of people to their prewar homes?

Survivors are looking forward to the return of the dead to see whether it is safe and possible for them, the living, to return.

More generally, the data points to the importance of place for health. Trauma, as it occurs in particular locations, breaks the sense of attachment to a particular place. Restoring the physical and social environment through reburial and memorials mitigates the consequences of the trauma. In addition, the function of the burial varies from personal mourning to political ends with the meaning changing over time. The burial at Potocari provides a window into the mourning, politics, and recovery after mass violence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ticketing agent asked, "Aisle or window?" "Window," I replied, hoping I would be able to see the city of Sarajevo as I flew in. My seat, 27F, was the last row. Where there should have been a window, there was instead the wall of the plane. I have thought a great deal about the windowless windowseat as I researched and wrote up this report. I had intended to see clearly yet sometimes found the view obscured. Other times I was not sure what I was seeing. I am grateful for the many people who have helped me to see the project through many different eyes and different windows.

First I want to thank the Bosnian women and men who shared their stories with me. Their candor, kindness, and strength made this report possible. I can only hope that the process of reburial brings them a certain degree of peace.

Thank you to my thesis advisors, Jodi Halpern, Eric Stover, and Harvey Weinstein. From project's inception, their guidance, advice, and experience were vital. I feel privileged for having the opportunity to work with such an extraordinary group of mentors. In addition, Anne Richards' help was invaluable in the methodologic considerations.

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In Bosnia, I am grateful to the following organizations for their access and support of my research: the Human Rights Center at the University of Sarajevo, the International Commission for Missing Persons, Humanitarian Aide Medical

Development, and the Office of the High Representative. In particular, I want to thank Kathyrne Bomberger of the ICMP and Angelina Di Fazio of HaMD.

I owe a great debt to my translator and cultural broker Mirsad Hajrudin. He helped me communicate during interviews and prevented me from making numerous faux paus. Nada and Djordje Slavnic were the kindest of host families. I have never been as full after a breakfast. As Nada said, we were able to communicate through our stomachs and hearts.

The community at the Joint Medical Program has been wonderful. The staff—Nina Green, Susan Alward, Valerie Taylor, Ronnie London, and Dyanna Sweeny—have provided help and laughter in spades. The faculty has been incredibly encouraging. And I have learned more from my classmates than I could have imagined, inspired by their determination and intelligence

Last, I want to thank my family and friends. My housemates, James, Erin, Jill, and Jenny, provided a world away from medical school. My parents and sister continually showed their love and worry. And Abe, with love you answered my e-mails from far away and made me feel close to home; with patience you read draft after draft.

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"The End and the Beginning" by Wislawa Szymborska

After every war
someone has to tidy up.
Things won't pick themselves up, after all.

Someone has to shove the rubble to the roadsides
so the carts loaded with corpses
can get by.

Someone has to trudge
through sludge and ashes,
through the sofa springs,
the shards of glass,
the bloody rags.

Someone has to lug the post
to prop the wall,
someone has to glaze the window,
set the door in its frame.

No sound bites, no photo opportunities,
and it takes years.
all the cameras have gone
to other wars.

The bridges need to be rebuilt,
the railroad stations, too.
shirtsleeves will be rolled
to shreds.

Someone, broom in hand,
still remembers how it was.
Someone else listens, nodding
his unshattered head.
But others are bound to be bustling nearby
who'll find all that
a little boring.

From time to time someone still must
dig up a rusted argument
from underneath a bush
and haul it off to the dump.

Those who knew

what this was all about
must make way for those
who know little.
And less than that.
And at last nothing less than nothing.

Someone has to lie there
in the grass that covers up
the causes and effects
with a cornstalk in his teeth,
gawking at clouds
(Szymborska, 178-80).

I. INTRODUCTION

This time, five years later, the buses went towards rather than away from Potocari. Hot and crowded, Jasminka[1] stood for the three hour ride. In her seventies, with kind but piercing blue eyes, Jasmkina was physicially and emotionally exhausted. Outside the bus, Serbs cursed the women.[2] Young children threw stones and families tried to barricade the road. Even though police lined the road, she was afraid.

Potocari, the base for the Dutch peacekeepers, was located a few kilometers outside the town of Srebrenica. When Serb soldiers marched into Srebrenica on July 11, 1995, Muslim women and children gathered at the base, hoping for protection. Jasminka and her daughter huddled there for days until the Serb soldiers bused them to Muslim territory. While the women and children were transported, the men either fled through the woods or were detained by the Serb military for questioning about suspected 'war crimes.' Over seven thousand men were never seen again.

These memories flooded Jasminka as she rode the bus to Potocari. "I don't know how we can go back there again," she said. "I just feel too frightened about it. When you lose four chickens, you feel terrible. And I lost four sons, can you imagine how I feel?" Her five sons had run through the woods to escape the massacre. Out of the five sons, only one of them managed to escape; her youngest, a police officer, a strong man, who she was sure would make it, did not.

---

[1] All names have been changed.

[2] The designation of 'Serb' was used by Jasminka. While it is obvious that not all Serbs participated in the massacre or lined the streets on the anniversary, from Jasminka's perspective (along with many of the other women I interviewed) the individual person is subsumed by the group identity of being a 'Serb.' In this paper I try to avoid assigning group responsibility and blame. Nonetheless, the slippage between the individual and group is necessary in order to reflect the thoughts and feelings of the people I interviewed.

For the five-year anniversary on July 11, 2000, thousands of women stepped off the bus in Potocari. They washed their hands and feet in cold water and waited for the prayers to begin, their headscarves and traditional dmije skirts creating a sea of colors and patterns. They clasped their own hands as the prayer started. The Grand Mufti, the religious leader of the Bosnian Muslims, led a moving prayer, combining the traditional Islamic verse with a secular invocation. "We came here neither to revenge nor forgive, neither to judge nor set free," he said. "It's not a provocation…we don't forget. It's not an act of reconciliation."[3]

For Jasminka whose life has been irrevocably altered, forgetting the massacre would be impossible. But it is also not clear how to remember the tragedy and how to go on living. Her return on this five-year anniversary underscored the issue of reburying the bodies. After the massacre, Serb soldiers hastily buried the victims in mass graves or else left them exposed in open fields. International and national organizations have been involved in exhuming, collecting, and very slowly identifying the bodies. As of July 2000, bones from approximately 4,000 people have been collected. Less than 100 of these bodies have been identified. Once the bones have been identified they can be returned to their family members, however, the slow process of identification has meant that bones have been piling up in storage. People are considering whether to rebury the bodies, to put them back in the ground, as a dignified way of storing these largely unidentified remains. Families have been struggling to have these bodies buried at Potocari where their loved ones were massacred and where, on July 11, 2000, they prayed.

[3] Quoted from memory by person who attended the anniversary.

This thesis examines the process of reburial as a window into the lives of people affected by the trauma of Srebrenica. Using qualitative interviews, I try to answer three questions.

- First, where do the survivors want to have reburial? Survivors wanted to have the burial at Potocari, the Dutch base where they were massacred and where they now prayed. People link the burial at Potocari to their sense of homeland, their trauma, and to the power relationships that keep them displaced and their loved ones unburied.
- Second, what are the goals of the reburial? What do survivors want to see on the site? What does it mean to them? The site is one of mourning; however, the way people conceptualize this mourning differs.
- Third, I ask how does reburial relate to people returning to their prewar homes? People who used to live in the Srebrenica area have been displaced from their homes and are considering (or being forced into) returning. The burial of the bodies relates to the way people conceptualize their fears of and desire to return.

While the story is firmly rooted in the history of Bosnia and its people, this thesis raises broader issues concerning place, trauma, and memorials. I will argue that place, as defined in terms of one's physical environment and social interactions, is important for people's health and sense of well being. People become attached to specific places. Trauma, as it occurs in particular locations, may break that sense of attachment. Restoring the physical and social environment through reburial and memorials may mitigate the aftermath of the trauma.

Even though police lined the road, Jasminka was afraid to return to Potocari for the five-year anniversary of the massacre.

Returning brought back memories. One mother lamented, "It's very, very difficult for us. My son was with me [at Potocari]. I remember everything. My son was hungry and asked if I had anything to eat. I had some bread which I gave him a small piece. The Chetnicks at that moment said that they were going to take him away for questioning and I never saw him again."

In addition to restoring ties to place, burial is a way for the living to honor the dead, to fulfill the attachment between the survivor and her loved ones. Proper burial restores dignity to the bones and the lives they represent. In so doing, they help the survivors mourn their losses.

Attachments to place and to person must be understood within the political context. In the case of Srebrenica, the political agenda led to the massacre. While the burial occurs within this context, it also works to refashion the future politics. Mourning and politics are intricately intertwined.

When I asked another woman what needed to happen for there to be burials, she replied, "Just respect the wishes of the families." This thesis tries to examine these wishes, their roots and implications. It attempts to answer why Jasminka returned for the anniversary and why she wants to return again for the burial of her sons.

II. BOSNIAN HISTORY AND THE FALL OF SREBRENICA

The history of Bosnia-Herzegovina[4] has been at the crossroads of different empires and designs. The war from 1992 to 1995 was one of many that raged on its territory. Through careful manipulation by politicians, the region's history became one basis for the most recent war.

Conquered by the Ottomans in the 15th century, Bosnia experienced five hundred years of Muslim rule. At the end of the 19th century, the Austro-Hungarians took control until the First World War at which time Serbia annexed Bosnia (Malcolm, 135). It was during and following the Second World War that Marshall Tito and the Partisan movement united the republics of the former Yugoslavia, including Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia, under communist ideology (Malcolm, 191). Through the force of his personality, Tito carefully juggled the different ethnic groups, downplaying differences and forbidding ethnically derisive speech (Stover, 102).[5]

After Tito died in 1980, his balanced policies unraveled. In 1987, during a time of economic downturn, Slobodan Milosevic was elected president of Serbia. He played on Serb nationalism by tying his policies to the Orthodox Church, encouraging the use of the Cyrillic alphabet, and reviving dreams of a 'Greater Serbia.' Milosevic's plan for 'Greater Serbia' meant to unite the Serbs living in the various republics by extending Serbia's boundaries. Nationalism was also spreading in Croatia with its president, Franco

[4] For convenience, Bosnia-Herzegovina will be referred to as Bosnia or BiH.

[5] It is important to distinguish between ethnic Serbs and Serbia. Serbia is a republic of the former Yugoslavia while a 'Serb' is an ethnic designation for someone, usually Orthodox Christian, who may live in any of the former republics or abroad. Similarly, Croatia is a former republic, now its own country. 'Croat' is an ethnic designation for the Catholics from the region. 'Croatians' are citizens of Croatia. Bosnian is a general term for citizens of Bosnia. The term 'Bosniak' has gained prominence as the ethnic designation of Muslims who live in Bosnia.

Tudjman, reviving fascist signs and symbols from World War II. Both leaders self-consciously exploited the past to promote their own ends (Malcolm, xxi).

The tensions between the republics continued to grow with Slovenia and Croatia declaring their independence from the former Yugoslavia on June 25, 1991. The Yugoslav National Army (JNA), controlled by Milosevic, moved in. The JNA soon gave up efforts in Slovenia because they encountered heavy resistance and a very small number of ethnic Serbs lived in Slovenia.

In less than a year, the conflict between Serbia and Croatia spread to Bosnia. Milosevic of Serbia and Tudjman of Croatia both believed Bosnia was rightfully theirs. Before the war, Bosnia was the most diverse of the republics with 44% Muslims, 31% Serbs, and 17% Croats. And as Stover notes, "dividing lines could not be drawn so starkly. Bosnians—whether Muslim, Serb, or Croat—spoke the same language, dressed alike and intermarried frequently (19 percent of all marriages recorded from 1981 to 1991 were between people of different ethnic groups) (Stover, 114)." Even more blurring between the ethnic groups occurred in urban areas. To say that Bosnia belonged to either Serbia or Croatia was to deny the diversity and history of the republic.

As the war escalated, Serbian military attacks on eastern Bosnia followed a typical pattern. The Yugoslav National Army, comprised of Serb soldiers, would first set up road blocks and then warn the residents to evacuate. Next the army opened heavy artillery fire and mortars on the town before the paramilitary groups moved in. Soldiers raped women, burned houses, and plundered valuables. Muslim leaders and intellectuals in particular were tracked down and executed (Honig, 73-6).

Srebrenica was one of the last towns in Eastern Bosnia marked for 'cleansing' by the Bosnian Serb army. Before the war, Srebrenica had been a small mining town with a population of about 9,000, the majority of whom were Muslims. Nestled in the mountains, the quiet town had a small auto parts plant, a nearby battery factory at Potocari, and waters that were thought to be healing. A Serb paramilitary group took control of the city on April 18, 1992. Srebrenica did not remain under Serb control for very long. Muslim men, led by the 25 year-old Naser Oric, counterattacked and forced the Serbs to withdraw on May 8, 1992. Naser Oric and his soldiers used Srebrenica as a base for launching brutal raids on Serb-controlled towns.

Srebrenica swelled with Muslim refugees, mostly from surrounding towns and villages. By February 1993, over 40,000 people crowded the town. Cut-off from the rest of Muslim Bosnia, under constant siege, conditions in Srebrenica were abysmal. People living in Srebrenica died from lack of medical supplies, and food drops were insufficient to stave off hunger. As the Serb military seemed poised to take over the city, French General Morillon, then head of the UN mission to Bosnia, traveled to Srebrenica. He hoped his trip would draw attention to the plight of people living in Srebrenica, prevent a Serb attack, and allow much needed humanitarian aid to enter the city. Once Morillon entered the town, women and children, organized by Fatima Huseinovic and the Women's League, prevented him from leaving. They knew that as soon as Morillon left, conditions would continue to deteriorate. Morillon, realizing he was essentially a hostage, announced, "You are now under the protection of the United Nations…I will never abandon you (Stover, 119)."

Morillon and the United Nations were faced with a difficult decision. It appeared as though Srebrenica would soon fall to the Serbs. Morillon could help evacuate Muslims from Srebrenica, thus assisting in ethnic cleansing, or he could continue failing to deliver humanitarian aid to the dying population (Honig, 93). Under these pressures, on April 13, 1993, the Security Council adopted Resoultion 819, declaring Srebrenica a Safe Area. According to the resolution, international ground forces backed by the threat of air strikes would protect the region.

A year earlier in 1992, Safe Areas had been proposed as a solution to the crisis in Bosnia by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC). The idea met with resistance for two main reasons. First, people were concerned about the risks to United Nations' forces. Second, it was feared that by designating certain areas as safe, other areas were inherently marked as unsafe (Honig, 100). The passage of Resolution 819 in 1993 did not dispel these reservations, and few countries were willing to provide implementation troops. Canadians first protected the area followed by the Dutch.

The final assault on Srebrenica began two years later on July 9, 1995 when Serb soldiers attacked a Dutch observation post. At the time, 310 Dutch soldiers were stationed in the Srebrenica enclave. The Dutch soldiers initially believed the attack would be limited to the observation post. By the time they realized the Safe Area was truly under siege, it was too late. Dutch commanders called for air support but NATO airplanes dropped only two ineffective bombs.[6] In addition to lack of international response, Muslim soldiers were unable to mount a defense. Their commander, Naser

---

[6] A great deal of research has focused on the UN misreading of the attack. For example, Honig believed that there was a breakdown in military intelligence coupled with a very well executed Serb attack and the inability to imagine that Serbs would attack a Safe Area. Honig also questions the role of French

Oric, and other military leaders were not in the enclave at the time.[7] With little resistance, Serb soldiers took control of the city.

Serbian General Ratko Mladic marched into the town on July 11, 1995 and declared the day a national holiday for the Serbs. At this point the town was empty. Over 25,000 people, mainly women, children, and elderly fled to the Dutch base at Potocari, located a few kilometers outside of the town of Srebrenica. At the base, they hoped to receive protection. Serb troops pushed past the Dutch soldiers and, in less than two days, bused more than 23,000 women and children to Muslim controlled territory. The bus rides were horror-filled. Women reported seeing their husbands, children, and fathers taken prisoner or lying dead in the fields. On the bus, Serb soldiers raped women and severed the heads of children.

Some Muslim men gathered with the women at the Dutch base at Potocari. Men of military age were taken away to be 'questioned for war crimes' and never seen alive again. Other Muslim men gathered at a nearby site to plan their departure from Srebrenica. They would walk through the forest to the safety of Muslim controlled territory. On the nights of July 11 and 12, political and military leaders led between 10,000 and 15,000 men through the woods. Serb soldiers waited for the men on the roads that cut across the forest. The soldiers frightened the men out of the forest by blasting it

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Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier, the highest UN commander in the former Yugoslavia and UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Yasushi Akashi.

[7] Stories circulate as to why Oric was out of the enclave. Oric claims that he was barred by Bosnian government officials while government officials contend that he had been ordered to return to the area.

with artillery and mortar fire. Since the fall of Srebrenica, 0ver 7,000 men have been missing.[8]

Srebrenica was one of many enclaves designated as Safe Areas by UN Resolution 819, and other protected areas soon came under attack. In August 1995, a Serb mortar shell killed 37 people who were shopping in a Sarajevo market. As Sarajevo was designated a 'Safe Area', NATO retaliated with decisive airstrikes. They continued bombing until Serbs agreed to remove guns from around Sarajevo and negotiate a peace treaty.

Signed by Slobodan Milosevic representing the Serbs, Alija Itzebegovic the Muslims and Franco Tudjman the Croats on December 14, 1995, the Dayton Peace Accords ended the war.[9] Under the agreement Bosnia-Herzegovina remained a single country but divided in to two parts—the Federation and the Republika Srpska (RS). The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, representing 51% of the land, is controlled by the Croats and the Muslims while the Republika Srpska is administered by the Serbs. Srebrenica, while in the Republika Srpska, has a joint Muslim and Serb municipal council. A High Representative, currently Wolfgang Petritsch, oversees the implementation of Dayton and serves as the final arbiter on civilian aspects of the Accords.[10] Over 60,000 NATO peacekeeping troops were deployed to stabilize the region.

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[8] The actual number of missing is open to debate. According to the ICRC, 7439 people are registered as missing as of July 2000 (http://www.icrc.org/icrceng.nsf/Index/117827759ECE05B54125691B0050D0D8?Opendocument March 14, 2001). Some people say the actual number of missing is much higher. Because whole families and whole villages were destroyed, there may have been nobody to register these missing to the ICRC.

[9] The Dayton Peace Accords are also known as the General Framework Agreement for Peace.

[10] The Dayton Peace Accords are now the Constitution of BiH.

In sum, the war devastated the region. Tens of thousands of Bosnians died or are missing. Over two million people were displaced by the war, about half of whom fled the country. By April 2000, UNHCR estimated that 809,545 people remained displaced within Bosnia-Herzegovina and another 350,000 still lived abroad (Edwards, 7). The fates of over 17,000 missing people are unresolved. Srebrenica was the most heinous massacre in a war that shattered the country.

III. THE PROBLEM OF REBURIAL

At the five-year anniversary of the fall of Srebrenica in July 2000, both the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, and the head of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia, Jacques Klein concluded that it was time to address reburial. As Petritsch said, "It is a disgrace that five years later there is no decision on a location for a cemetery and a memorial to the dead and missing (Petritsch)." And Klein affirmed, "I join with the High Representative in giving the highest priority to the choosing of a burial ground in Potocari and the building of a memorial to the victims of ethnic chauvinism (Klein)." Approximately 4 months later, on October 25, 2000, the High Representative issued a decision that will allow burial to proceed across from the Dutch compound at Potocari.

The High Representative's decision resolved an ongoing debate over the location of the reburial. The debate and the High Representative's decision were not historical inevitabilities. Over the five years since the massacre, a confluence of factors arose to bring the issue of reburial to the fore. These factors are: (1) the discovery of the missing people and identification of the bodies, (2) family reactions and associations of survivors, (3) land laws and living situations, (4) Srebrenica politics, and (5) broader politics—national and international. The factors provide a basis for understanding reburial and frame my research on the topic.

1. The Discovery of the Missing and Identification of the Bodies.

Reburial is about the body—for there could be no reburial without the remains—and, in the case of Srebrenica, the bodies have been missing and unidentified. Out of

over 7,000 people missing from Srebrenica, the remains from over 4,000 bodies have been collected since 1995. Of these less than 100 have been identified while the rest wait in a storage facility. The process of collection, storage, and identification of the remains are a prerequisite for burial.

Overseeing the management of the remains has been a multifaceted process initially spearheaded by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). As a criminal tribunal, the ICTY had the jurisdiction to exhume sites and collect remains for evidence in their proceedings. They were concerned first and foremost with the corpus delecti, that is the body of the crime, and individual identification of the bodies was not an institutional priority.[11] For identification, bodies were transferred to the authorities in Tuzla canton who were ill-prepared for such a massive undertaking. Over time, as sufficient evidence was collected, the ICTY became less involved in the Srebrenica exhumations. The Bosnian authorities along with Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), the International Commission for Missing Persons (ICMP), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Podrinje Identification Project (PIP) became integral to the handling and identification of the remains.

The first step in the process is collection of remains. This includes exhuming bones from mass graves and picking up unburied bones from the ground. Both exhumation and surface collection continue, as the remains from approximately 3,000 people are yet to be discovered.

[11] The goal of the ICTY was to show patterns of crimes. In some graves, for example, the corpses were found with their hands bound behind their backs. Prosecuting the cases required that the bodies be identified as being Muslim who died in such a manner rather than of being a particular individual per se.

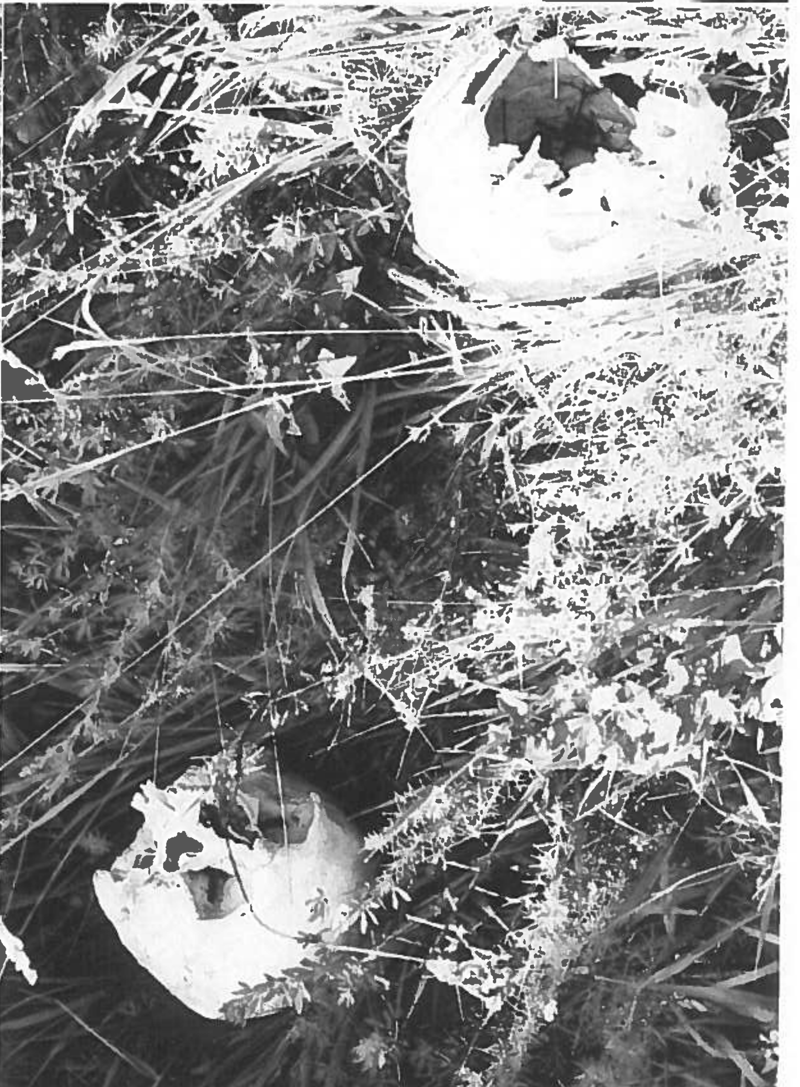
Next, the bones are stored as they await identification. Initially bags of bones were stored in old mining tunnels located behind the commemorative center in Tuzla.[12] In the dark, dank tunnel, bags were slung one on top of another in ramshackle fashion. In the spring of 2000, the bodies were moved from the tunnel behind the commemorative center to a newly constructed storage facility at the same site. It took four weeks to move all the bodies from the tunnel to the storage site. The Podrinje Identification Project, funded by the ICMP, is in charge of maintaining the storage facility and preparing the bones for identification.[13]

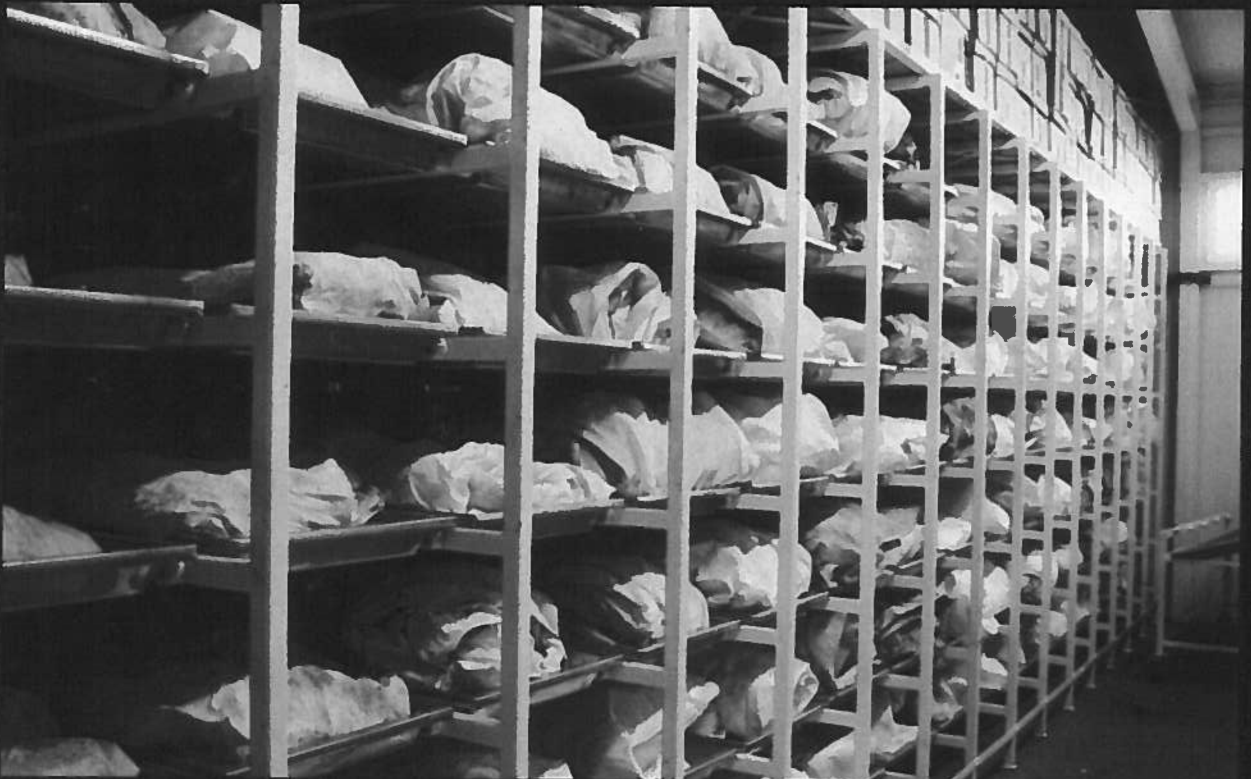
While the shelves in this warehouse are nearly full to capacity, new remains from exhumations and ground collections continue to accrue. Over the summer of 2000, the capacity of the facility reached a point where it could hold only 200 more bodies. I was told by workers at the Podrinje Identification Project that new bodies will soon need to be stored in the tunnels again, stored in newly constructed space, or reburied. Many families do not want to see the bodies piled in the tunnels because they view that as disrespectful. Political or financial will is not present to construct more storage space. Reburial remains the most viable option.

One official involved in identifications noted that the "crisis of storage space" was "in some ways forced." She told me that some groups wanted a larger or more expandable storage facility from the outset; however, the political will and money was insufficient. In 1999, even before the completion of the storage facility, the ICMP held a

[12] Commemorative center is a term used broadly in Bosnian society to denote a funeral parlor or morgue facility.

[13] Podrinje refers to the region of Bosnia in which Srebrenica is located.





meeting with family associations to discuss the expected difficulties with storage and plan for eventual reburial.

The third step of the process is actual identification of the remains. Current identification methods, as implemented by the Podrinje Identification Project, facilitate reburial of the remains. After anthropologic measurements are taken and bone samples for DNA analysis are cut, there is no scientific need to keep the bodies above ground. Presumably, the measurements and DNA sampling would allow for the body to be later identified without needing further information from the bones themselves.[14]

One goal of identifications is to return the remains to the loved ones so that they can do with the remains as they wish. Of the few identified bodies, some of the families have opted to reclaim the bodies in order to bury them. To add insult to injury, these families have had to pay for the funeral as well as taxes to have the body 'released' from the collective center.[15] Other families have chosen not to reclaim the bodies and instead wait for communal burial of the remains.[16] Overall, few families have had loved ones identified.

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[14] The initial method of identification was to try to match information from the survivors about their loved ones (called 'antemortem data') with anthropologic measurements from the bones and clothing. DNA from the bones and from the survivors would be used to confirm identifications. This method proved quite difficult for numerous reasons. These reasons include the enormous number of bodies with similar physical characteristics and the lack of antemortem dental records. The most recent approach to identification reverses the order. Two databases of DNA, one from the surviving relatives and the other from the bones will be created and compared. The anthropologic measurements will be used as a second step instead of a first. The huge task of creating the databases began during the summer of 2000. Blood is currently being collected from relatives. Identifications using this procedure have yet to occur.

[15] Although this is the goal, the return to families of the few identified bodies has been stymied. Burial in Bosnia can be quite expensive (over $600). Many of the displaced families cannot afford this sum and some assistance may be offered by the regional government. Moreover, the collective center charged an additional 'storage' fee to the families (as much as $300 in Tuzla). It is unclear if this situation has been resolved.

[16] As I will describe later, the great majority of (identified) bodies from the explosion on the May 25, 2000 in Tuzla are buried together.

The vast majority of the bones are unidentified and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The process of identification will take many years and will never be able to identify all the remains.[17] The slow process of identification means that most families will not be able to collect the individual bones in the near future.

The collection of the bodies, the lack of storage space, and the slow process of identification has meant that bones are piling up. People are considering reburying the bodies, putting them back in the ground, as a dignified way of storing these largely unidentified remains. The reburial could not take place without the bones, yet this is insufficient to explain the issue of reburial. The responses of the families along with the social and political situation need to be taken into account.

2. Responses of the Families

a. Survivors

In order for the family members to become an active part in the reburial process, they first have to accept that their loved ones are dead. The loss of loved ones is one of many losses—of home, family, community, livelihood, and dreams. One woman described losing her husband, not even having a picture of him to show her young son because "it happened so sudden, they caught us in our sleep. We couldn't take anything, not even spare clothes."

The ways in which people have come to understand the loss of their loved ones have changed over time. When the war ended, many people still believed that their

[17] Estimates on the number of bodies that will be identified ranged wildly. Some of the people involved in blood collection estimated that over 80% of the bodies would be identified. Other people involved in the identifications believed half that number was more realistic. In either case, the process will take many

missing relative was alive. Rumors abounded that Muslims were being held in Serbian mines, and pictures from prison camps circulated. In 1997, Eric Stover spoke with a fifteen year-old girl who had been made an orphan by the massacre. "The Serbs took prisoners," she said. "That's what some people have told us. They say they're in Serbia, working in the mines." She wondered if the rumors were true (Stover, 191).

The passage of time and discovery of more remains has led people to a greater understanding, at least at a purely cognitive level, that their loved ones are no longer alive. Rumors of work camps in Serbia have dissipated and people now hope for identification of their loved ones. In accepting the death of their family members, survivors are better able to engage with the issue of reburial. Believing that their loved one was alive precluded such engagement.

Nonetheless, the feelings are ambivalent—on the one hand they are more able to accept that their loved ones are dead and on the other hand, they still have hope. One survivor was married for 20 years before her husband disappeared during the fall of Srebrenica. Now living in an apartment complex with her two young sons, she describes the difficulty of not having a husband and a father for her sons. She hopes to find her husband's body and believes she can assist in the identification process because she remembers everything about him, "every tooth in his mouth." But in the same sentence she told me that she still hopes to find her husband alive. She said, "When the bus goes through [town] and it stops, I still hope that it could be him. Because I saw him alive and I didn't see him being killed or anything. That's why I still hope that he may be alive." Her son still worried, "Maybe dad is somewhere around, in the woods, searching for us.

years to complete. The higher estimations may raise expectations of the families and lead the way to future disappointment.

but he can't find us." Another woman said succinctly, "As a mother, I cannot give up hope [that my son is alive]."

The survivors, as Eric Stover described, are "caught in limbo between hope and grief (Stover, 181)." They have difficulty mourning the losses because they still hope against hope that their loved one is alive. Even given this tension between hope and grief, the survivors actively discuss the reburial as if it were their loved one being reburied. They believe, if only at a cognitive level, that their loved ones have died and need to be buried.

b. Family Associations

Family associations both mirror and reinforce a change in the way individuals conceptualize their losses. Family associations are groups of survivors who are committed to finding out the fates of missing family members. They advocate for government action in terms of collection of the remains and their identification. The roots for some of the associations extend back to before the end of the war. One organization of women helped detain Morillion in Srebrenica, leading to the town being declared a Safe Area. Later, the organization transformed into a family association searching for the missing.

Multiple organizations exist both from the Srebrenica region and from other regions of Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia. While overlapping in terms of broad goals, the associations also have their distinctive perspectives. Some are exclusively comprised of Bosnian Muslims, others exclusively Serb or Croat, and still others have members of various ethnicities. Some of the organizations are seen as being aligned with certain

political parties. The associations, while speaking for the collective, count a small portion of people from Srebrenica as members.[18] Over the five years since the end of the war, the groups have learned how to advocate, organize and work together to push for their collective agendas.

Echoing the changes expressed by individuals, the organizations are more willing to accept the fact that the missing are most likely dead. One telling example is that in 1997, the cover of the Women of Srebrenica's newsletter showed a black and white photograph. The photograph showed what appeared to be a line of prisoners, their heads bowed, their hands behind their backs. At the end of the row, a man was holding an electric hairtrimmer. Across the picture was written, 'Where are they?' Fatima Huseinovic, the president of the organization, explained to Eric Stover, that she was sure one of the men in the front row was her husband, Munib, who had disappeared from Potocari in 1995. The picture gave Fatima comfort because "What I don't understand is why the Serbs would give these men haircuts, if they were going to kill them later." Stover later learned that the picture on the cover had appeared in Newsweek in 1992 and was taken at a prison camp over a hundred miles away from Srebrenica (Stover, 199).

The cover of a newsletter from 2000 showed a very different picture. It was a photograph from an exhumation site. At the bottom of the pit, rotting bodies lay entangled. Rather than providing hope, this newsletter painted a stark picture. The men,

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[18] Exactly who became members of the various associations was, at times, unclear to me. I asked one representative of a family association, "Why do you think some people are active in your organization and some people aren't?" She replied, "If you have a missing member of a family, those people are active in the association but if you don't have anyone missing, those people are not that active." The actual situation was clearly more complicated as many people with whom I spoke had missing family members yet were not involved in family associations. Not being involved in a family association may have important ramifications. Because associations are perceived by government and international officials as speaking for the families, they exert some influence over the identification and burial process. Individuals not involved may have less of a voice in the various processes.

no longer prisoners, were dead. And an article in the newsletter pushed for continued exhumations and identifications.

In addition to the growing realization that their loved ones are dead, cooperation between family associations has increased. Although the goal of the various family associations is to determine the fates of the missing, early meetings among them were acrimonious. A 1997 meeting in Budapest was the first one to bring together associations from Srebrenica, other regions of Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia. A psychiatrist who chaired the meeting remembered, "For the first day, people were yelling at each other and giving speeches. They were attacking each other and people were crying." It was not until the afternoon when they acknowledged that each of them had lost loved ones. After that, they slowly began to work together across ethnic lines.

The five-year commemoration ceremony on July 11, 2000 at Potocari demonstrates the way that the family associations have become more effective in cooperating and lobbying. The associations coordinated the buses, security, and prayer. While international organizations and governmental officials in the Republika Srpska were initially reluctant to allow thousands of people to return, members of the family association cajoled and argued. In the end, they coordinated the return of thousands of people for the anniversary.

The coordination and lobbying efforts of the family associations provided a venue for the issue of reburial. A committee was formed by the associations with financial assistance by the ICMP. The burial committee, while reluctant to consider burial without identification, began to examine its options. The members decided to push for reburial at Potocari. Furthering these ends, one association performed a survey that asked people

displaced from Srebrenica where they wanted to have reburial. While I will discuss the results of the poll later, the poll itself showed the active involvement and leadership of a family association in the issue.

Not only are family members more willing to consider the idea that their loved one may be dead but also family associations provide a forum for public discussion of the issue. The changes in the individual mind-sets and group activities have allowed the issue of reburial to emerge and be addressed.

3. Land laws and living situation

These changes in the families and associations are occurring during a time when many are considering returning to their prewar home or are being uprooted by land laws. The living situation of the people displaced from Srebrenica and the laws governing their return stimulate the discussion regarding reburial. Directly after the war, the displaced people were housed in makeshift buildings; some housed 50 people to a room. Many people remained living in collective centers or group housing consisting of old schools or newly constructed settlements.[19] Others moved to houses that had been abandoned by Serb, or to another country entirely. In most cases, the financial and living situation is dire. With a poor economy in Bosnia, jobs have been nearly impossible to find and government support remains meager. Futhermore, with the war in Kosovo and in other parts of the globe, a great deal of international aide has been redirected away from Bosnia.

[19] New settlements were constructed with international aid.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that over 50% of the pre-war population in Bosnia was displaced by the conflict. Given the magnitude of displacement, the idea that people could return to their prewar homes was central to the Dayton Accords (General Framework Agreement for Peace Annex 7). Minority return is the practice of a Muslim or Croat returning to live in the Republika Srpska or a Serb returning to the Federation. The person returning would be a minority compared to the broader population and governance structure.

Return is especially difficult for Muslims who wish to return to the Republika Srpska and for Serbs who want to return to the Federation. Due to the difficulties of return, the High Representative issued land laws on October 28, 1999 that clarified this process of land reclamation and return. Forms needed to be filed during 1999 and local authorities are now deciding which property claims to grant. As decisions are granted, people who are occupying the land must leave to make way for the rightful owners. This means that refugees from Srebrenica are being evicted from their homes in the Federation to allow for returning Serbs. However, they have been unable to return to their homes in Srebrenica and do not have a place to go. As of July 2000, only 3 Bosniaks had returned to their homes in the center of Srebrenica. Even for people who have been cleared to return to their property in Srebrenica, there is incredible fear, ambivalence and financial distress surrounding return.

The connection of these land laws and return to reburial is complicated, but on a basic level, it is no coincidence that the land laws, return, and reburial are occurring simultaneously. The land laws provide a justification for allowing the reburial of the bodies to occur especially if they are on Muslim-owned land. But there is also a deeper

level of connection in the minds of many refugees related to their fear of returning. As one survivor told me, "Because if they don't let dead people go there, they won't let live people [go] as well."

4. Srebrenica Politics[20]

The changes in land laws, returns, and desires to have burial in Potocari dovetails with changes in local Srebrenica politics. The formation of the multi-ethnic council in Srebrenica provided a political arena for the issues to be raised; however, the council lacked the necessary means and will to resolve them.

Due to the weight of its history, Srebrenica had special status under the Dayton Peace Accords. While located in the Republika Srpska, Srebrenica was to have a municipal council composed of both Serbs and Muslims. However, there was tremendous intransigence as to how this arrangement would be implemented. Election for the municipal council occurred in 1997 where people could vote if (1) they currently lived in Srebrenica or (2) they lived there according to the 1991 census. This meant that the Muslims who used to live in Srebrenica before the war and the Serbs who were displaced to Srebrenica following the war were able to vote in the election leading to a mixed slate of Serb and Bosniak candidates. It was two years before the results of the election could be put into effect. On March 4, 1999, an agreement, mediated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), was reached by Bosniak (Muslim) and Serb parties on a Joint Municipal Government in Srebrenica. The

[20] The power structure in Srebrenica politics was difficult to discern as power is shared between the different ethnic groups and individuals. Different people I interviewed had different causal interpretations of the political events. How this related to the political involvement of the family associations was also unclear.

agreement provided a power sharing arrangement for the Executive Board and Municipal Assembly. And on June 7, 1999 the Municipal Assembly met for the first time (OSCE Press Release). In order for a decision to be reached by the council, it needs the support of members from each ethnic group.

Even though the council has been meeting, its ability to function has been severely hampered by lack of agreement on the issue of reburial. Reburial has been pushed as an issue not only because of the piling up of bodies and actions of the family associations but also because some politicians hope to use the issue for political or financial gain. Some Serb politicians have been clearly reluctant to allow the burial or recognize the massacre itself. And Muslim politicians called for burial as part of a larger plan for the special status of Srebrenica as a 'Safe Area' which included financial support. Other politicians have tried to use the burial for their personal financial gains. In one ill-founded plan, a politician wanted to have the bodies buried in Kladanj. Kladanj, located in Federation territory, is the place where refugees were bused to during the fall of Srebrenica. Rumors were that this site was owned by a politician that also had a stake in a tombstone business. The idea was swiftly rejected by members of the family associations and other politicians.[21] Politicians have seen burial as a way of maintaining control over their constituencies and furthering their own ends.

After much debate, the Srebrenica municipal council generally agreed that the reburial be permitted somewhere within the Srebrenica municipality. On April 3, 2000, the council passed two proposals. The first generally allowed for a burial site in the Srebrenica municipality and the second formed a subgroup of four people (two Muslim and two Serb) who would find four suitable choices. The subgroup was unable to work

together and the exact site of the reburial remained contested. In general, the Serbs on the Council have proposed a site behind the Dutch Headquarters on the mountainside. The Muslim Council members maintain that this site is too out of the way. Muslims have proposed two sites: at the battery factory or across the street in a cornfield. Both sites proposed by the Muslims are physically closer to the trauma itself and, perhaps more importantly, more visible from the road. A stalemate ensued between the two groups.

The establishment of the multiethnic city council created a forum in which the issue of reburial could be debated without being resolved. Due to the inability to find agreement, local politicians called in mediators from the international community, namely the High Representative.

5. International Involvement and Guilt

The political impasse on the issue of reburial in Srebrenica necessitated the involvement of the High Representative. The High Representative, under the Dayton Peace Accords, has the authority to resolve the impasse. But to view his involvement strictly in terms of his legal jurisdiction would obscure the depth to which the international community has been implicated. As is obvious from the history of the fall, international governments and organizations have been significantly involved in Srebrenica's sociopolitical reality since the beginning of the war. As a 'Safe Area' under the 'protection of the United Nations', Srebrenica was thought to occupy a privileged place within Bosnia and its fall represents a failure of Western diplomacy.

Directly after the fall, in July 1995, a party was held for the Dutch peacekeepers and a press conference by the Dutch authorities "deflected any criticism of their

[21] I was unable to find out more information on this plan. Rumors abounded without firm details.

government and especially of their troops that had been based in Srebrenica (Stover, 135)." In 1998, an inquiry led by the Dutch Defense Ministry found no deliberate cover-up among the Dutch troops. And as one official from the Dutch Embassy in Sarajevo explained to me, "There is a special relation [with Srebrenica]. Of course there is a special relation. But it is not as though we are responsible." While officials have denied responsibility, the stationing of Dutch peacekeepers in Srebrenica has led to a close questioning and examining of their role in the tragedy, and investigations are ongoing.

The United Nations, under whose auspices the Dutch were working, has accepted a greater brunt of the responsibility. In a report issued November 15, 1999, the UN stated, "When the international community makes a solemn promise to safeguard and protect innocent civilians from massacre, then it must be willing to back its promise with the necessary means (Crossette, 3)." Instead, a UN official admitted while introducing the report, it did not "recognize the scope of evil" and it's "philosophy of neutrality and nonviolence [was] wholly unsuited to the conflict in Bosnia." In addition to questioning its own role, the UN report also questions French and British commanders for their reluctance to call NATO bombers and Dutch soldiers for not immediately reporting the massacre (Crossette, 3). More recently, the French government has begun its own investigation into General Janvier's decision not to call for immediate and decisive airstrikes.

In addition to the international community's own role in the massacre, the international community has assisted in determining the role of the Serbs involved in the massacre. Formed in May 1993 by the Security Council of the United Nations, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) investigates violations

of international humanitarian law. The trial of General Radislav Krstic began in March 2000. Krstic led the Drina Corps of the Bosnian Serb Army that attacked Srebrenica. He has been charged with genocide, crimes against humanity, and violations of the laws or customs of war (www.un.org/icty/glance/krstic.htm 6/26/2000). Two indictiments are outstanding for Radovan Karadzic, president of the Bosnian Serbs, and General Ratko Mladic. Both men are charged with attacks against towns and villages in Bosnia generally and against Srebrenica in particular (www.un.org/icty/glance/karadzic.htm 6/26/2000).

Beyond the role of governments, international aid organizations have been deeply involved in aftermath of Srebrenica. Survivors went to the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to report the names of the missing relatives. As part of a "death attestation" program, the ICRC issued death certificates for some of the missing people even though there was no physical proof of the death. While the ICRC was trying to bring closure, the families were enraged by the attestations. Without proof, they could not believe that their loved ones were dead. On Febraury 2, 1996, hundreds of women stormed the ICRC headquarters and demanded efforts be made to find their missing men (Stover, 195). Although attempting to help, the "death attestation" program furthered feelings of resentment and abandonment by the internationals.

Given the extent of this history, it would be too narrow to view the High Representative's involvement in the burial strictly in terms of his legal mandate. Organizations of the international community and national governments were involved in the downfall of the Safe Area, and they have begun to examine their own responsibility

for the fall. The site across from the Dutch peacekeeper base allows for a continued questioning of the international community's role in the massacre.

The international politics interact with local and national policies. The missing bodies are being collected and survivors are coming to accept that their loved ones have died. These factors along with the history of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina combine to form a rationale for reburial five years after the massacre. They provide a background for understanding the controversy over the issue and its importance for survivors.

IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Throughout the ages and across cultures, burial has been an obligation and honor of the family. In Sophocles' *Antigone*, two brothers, Eteocles and Polyneices died while fighting each other. Creon, king of Thiebes, decrees that Eteocles "shall be buried in his grave with every rite of sanctity given to heroes under earth. However, his brother, Polyneices…shall no one honor with a grave and none shall mourn."168 Polyneice's sister cannot leave her brother unburied. Because she believes that the law of G-d overrules Creon's decree, she buries Polyneices. Creon realizes that his decree was misguided and is harshly punished for his folly. According to *Antigone*, the rule of G-d, above and beyond any earthly law, calls for proper burial of the dead.

Thus far proper burial has been denied to the people massacred at Srebrenica. Bones remain unidentified and the site of burial has been contentious. This study examines the burial as a window into the aftermath of the tragedy in order to ask how survivors in the context of their communities cope with their losses. In this work, I investigate the interaction and layering of mourning and politics. Focusing on the location of the burial in particular allows an understanding of how trauma affects people's conception of place.

Sadly, the case of Srebrenica is not unique. For example, over 100,000 people were killed during the 36-year conflict in Guatemala. For the Maya people, who constitute 60 percent of Guatemala's population and believe that a body must be given a proper burial before its spirit can progress to the next world, the exhumations are essential to their religious beliefs. "Ancestors are remembered as a part of the family that has never gone away, so communication between the living and the dead is very

important," said Sylvia Barreno, an anthropologist. "To be able to visit them at the cemetery or honor them with the proper rituals, it is very important to recover the remains (Rohter, A1, A5)." The ultimate goal is to stop the violence that leads to such devastation. Until that goal is realized, we need to understand how people in relation to place and in the context of their communities cope with the aftermath of tragedy.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of reburial intersects numerous frameworks from various academic disciplines. Literature on trauma, mourning, place, and social control are explored in order to provide a survey of the field and highlight areas that require further study. The literature derives from work in psychology, social epidemiology, anthropology, history, and human rights.

A. Trauma

Literature on trauma has been most well developed in the field of psychology and has focused on the emotional distress that may follow traumatic events. The concept of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was initially developed to understand the normal range of responses to stressful events. This conception of PTSD has changed to become "a progressive sensitization of biological systems that leave the individual hyperresponsive to a variety of stimuli (Yehuda, 1710)." Rather than being an inevitable consequence of trauma, PTSD represents a particular subset of individuals who exhibit various signs and symptoms of pathology (such as hyperarousal, intrusive thoughts, Association, 424-429). This leaves open the question of what constitutes an appropriate response to trauma.

Understanding trauma and the application of PTSD across cultures have been questioned (Eisenbruch, Silove, Summerfield). Derek Summerfield describes the category fallacy of assuming that similar symptoms seen in different cultures mean the same thing. He writes, "Victims react to extreme trauma in accordance with what it

means to them. Generating meaning is an activity that is socially, culturally, and often politically framed (Summerfield, 20)." Understanding the implications of trauma cannot be separated from the culture within which it occurs.

Recently, theorists have extended frameworks for understanding trauma within its cultural context. Derrick Silove argues that trauma threatens a person's safety system, attachment and bond maintenance, identity and role functioning, justice, and existential meaning. An individual's response needs to be examined within the specific cultural context in order to define which responses fall within an appropriate range.

In addition to neglecting the importance of culture, literature on trauma often takes the individual as the only unit of measurement. The individual, for example, may experience nightmares associated with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Derek Summerfield calls for examining not only the individual but also how trauma is a collective experience. He writes, "Traumatic experience, and the search for meaning which it triggers, must be understood in terms of the relationship between the individual and his or her society…(Summerfield, 27-8)." While these new models of trauma provide avenues of investigation, as Summerfield writes, "The question of long term and transgenerational effects is one that still awaits conclusive answers (Summerfield, 24)."

Although this thesis uses literature derived from Judith Herman's *Trauma and Recovery*, it does so in accordance with the recent criticism.[22] Cross-cultural and the individual-collective divide are carefully considered in the analysis. In terms of the cross-cultural considerations, Herman's framework is applied with the understanding of the particular cultural and political situation of Bosnia. In addition, the interaction

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[22] Trauma and Recovery is based on Herman's experience treating victims of domestic violence in the United States and extends Freud's work on hysteria and the experience of shell shock during World War I.

between the individual and the community is explored. Genocide and its aftermath, by their very nature, are both individual and collective. Individuals lost family members, and communities were decimated. The burial and the site are both personal and shared. Focusing on these issues allows for individuals to reflect on their own loss as well as the loss experienced by the community.

B. Bereavement

Bereavement, as defined as the response to the loss of a loved one, may intersect with trauma. The survivors of Srebrenica deal with the dual burden of trauma and bereavement. In this section I will go through some selected theories on bereavement before discussing the particular implication of bereavement as a result of trauma.

Many theories have been devised that examine how someone copes when a loved one dies. They have tried to understand the normal grief process in order to identify and assist people who are in pathologic bereavement.[23] Sigmund Freud believed that libido is invested in a loved object (cathected). Upon learning that the loved object is lost, the bereaved person must detach from the object (decathected). This process of detaching is the 'work of mourning' (Shackleton, 154). Once the bereaved has let go, the bereaved is

[23] These theories of bereavement have attempted to explain the process of grief and understand normal versus abnormal grief responses. Although variability exists in what constitutes abnormal, various factors have been associated with a poor outcome. Young age of the bereaved, a previous history of mental disorders, the relationship to the bereaved (spouse as worse than parent), and the nature of the death have all been posited (Parkes, 369-371). More recently, the disorder 'traumatic grief' was coined to describe persistent symptomatology following the loss of a loved one. Traumatic grief describes an abnormal response and should not be conflated with grief that may ensue following trauma. Manifestations of traumatic grief include efforts to avoid reminders of the death, feeling stunned, dazed, or shocked, and feelings of futility about the future that last longer than two months (Jacobs, 28). Traumatic grief is estimated to occur in 14-34% of the bereaved (Jacobs, 89). Risk factors may include young age, female gender of the bereaved and inability to accept an imminent death, severe distress during the loved one's illness (Jacobs, 95). Many questions remain concerning the validity of this diagnostic category including its cross-cultural relevance.

free again. Abnormal grief stems from the bereaved having ambivalent feelings towards the lost object.

While Freud's theory has formed the basis for a great deal of the current literature, it has been questioned. In 1944, Lindemann published his study of people who lost loved ones in World War II or the Boston Cocoanut Grove fire. Rather than focusing on the libidinal energy attached to the loved object, Lindemann described the symptomatology of the acute loss. He identified a bereavement syndrome composed of "somatic disturbances, preoccupation with the image of the dead, guilt, hostility, and disorganized behavior (Shackleton, 158)." Recovery from this acute grief depends on the 'grief work' in which an individual processes the feelings associated with the loss.

Another theory as posited by John Bowlby examined the instinctive behavior of loss. He compared the separation of mothers from infants, of animals from their progeny, and of bereaved adults to show instinctive behavior patterns triggered by the loss (Shackleton, 165). The patterns consist of the stages of protest, despair, and detachment. Abnormal responses occur when a bereaved person becomes stuck in the first phase.

These earlier theories on grief share the idea that the bereaved person is attached to the loved one. The attachment may occur through various mechanisms including Bowlby's notion of the infant-caregiver attachment. The process of mourning involves painful stages of becoming detached. These notions has been refined and challenged. George Hagman has argued that the process of detachment is unsupported by empirical data. Instead, he argues, the relationship with the lost person must be transformed in the tasks of mourning. Rituals such as funerals, as argued by Romanoff and Terenzio, may help in this continued relationship with the loved one. My research develops a similar

model in which the bereaved person is attached to their loved one and is engaged in a process of reforming that relationship.

These theories, similar to those describing trauma, have centered on the bereaved individual with little reference to the community context. Hagman redressed some of this imbalance in stressing the importance of the social environment with its culture, roles, and rituals. Rituals may assist the bereaved to assume new roles in society and connect with the community (Romanoff). Some literature from history (Winters, Gregory) and from psychology (Eppel, Haney) has focused on the way in which memorials may be one mediator of this relationship and hence assist in mourning.

Along with better situating the individual within her society, psychologists have begun addressing the issue of bereavement across cultures. Some psychologists such as Dennis Klass have called for an examination of the cross-cultural aspects of bereavement—those core aspects that are universal in their patterns. Others have emphasized the particular variablity of the culture. My study will focus on bereavement within a particular culture.

Additionally, theories of grief need to be extended to the contexts of traumatic loss, that is loss that stems from a traumatic event. In reviewing the literature on traumatic loss, Kohn and Levav write, "It is generally agreed that untimely death has a more devastating effect on the survivor than does anticipated death (Kohn, 61)." While studies that have examined the effect of trauma on bereavement have been confusing due to the various study designs and traumas studied (e.g. man made vs. natural), Kohn and Levav found various factors that may increase morbidity of the bereaved. These include "lack or weakness of social supports, female gender, loss of a child, and lack of

confirmation of the death (Kohn, 74)." All these factors were certainly significant considerations in my present study on the survivors of Srebrenica.

The uncertainty surrounding the death of a loved one is a key component in the move to exhume and identity remains. People working with human rights organizations have stressed the importance of identification for the survivors. Identification provides the certainty that permits the bereaved to begin the mourning process.

C. Place

Literature has rarely focused on the importance of place as a component of trauma. "Place," as Fullilove writes, "is, on the one hand, the external realities within which people shape their existence and, on the other hand, the object of human thought and action (Fullilove, 1518)." It is both the physical site and the interactions that occur within the site.

In a review of the literature, Mindy Thompson Fullivove found three proposed mechanisms for the connection people feel towards place. First, it has been proposed that, in accordance with Bowlby's theory of attachment between the infant and the caretaker, there is an attachment formed between the infant and place. The caretaker's arms are the initial safe place and the radius from those arms later extends to the home. As the child explores, the feeling of safety extends to a wider range of locales (Fullilove, 1518-9). Second, the connection to place has also been explained in terms of 'familiarity.' People develop a 'familiarity' with a specific place in which the environment becomes "indelibly etched on the nervous system and musculature (Fullilove, 1518)." Home is often the most familiar, and the place in which a person feels

the most comfortable. Third, people's sense of identify is, in part, constructed by place. For example, where people live (in a certain neighborhood) shapes not only how people view themselves but also how other people view them (Fullilove, 1520).

These three mechanisms show an attachment that people feel towards specific places and point to its importance in displacement. Broken connections to place may lead to feelings of nostalgia and alienation. Furthermore, these may contribute to the increased incidence of disease.

Until recently, epidemiologists have studied only the physical environments in looking for causes of disease, and this process has uncovered many infectious agents. The social environment has come under increasing scrutiny. Drawing from research on sociology, the social environment has been shown to affect people's health and sense of wellbeing (Yen, 290). The social environment has been examined in terms of the socioeconomic status of the community, social structures such as racial segregation, and the quality of the environment (Yen, 293-300).

As Lindheim and Syme write, disease rates are increased when "people are disconnected from their biological, personal, and historical past (Lindheim, 353). One study has found a "sense of grief akin to the loss of a loved one that occurs when people are forced to move from their neighborhood (Lindheim, 353)." Other studies have looked at territoriality in animals and in humans to show the way in which people try to protect their home. While the loss of place and lack of territory are posited to decrease host defense and increase the rates of disease, the results are preliminary. More studies are necessary to understand this mechanism.

The literature on place is sparse. It has not been examined in the setting of trauma and its aftermath. In examining the relationship between place, trauma, and reburial, this study addresses several deficits in the literature and hopes to inspire further effort in this area.

D. Control

Finally, I briefly discuss the literature on power and control. As part of trauma, Judith Herman argues, the survivor has been disempowered, been made to feel like an object. In recovering from trauma, Judith Herman argues, "No intervention that takes power away from the survivor can possibly foster her recovery, no matter how much it appears to be in her immediate best interest (Herman, 134)." The literature from psychology understands power to be central in the process of trauma and the recovery from it.

Trauma as a loss of control correlates with Antonovsky's view that a sense of coherence is vital in health. Sense of control refers to:

> …a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that (1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (3) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement (Antonovsky, 22).

Trauma shatters all three tenants—the survivor does not have control over the stressors in her life. The move towards recovery involves a restructuring of tenants and regaining a sense of coherence. This, in turn, may have a positive impact on her health.

Another way of examining this phenomenon is the 'control over one's destiny' hypothesis. Developed by Leonard Syme, control over one's destiny refers to the ability "to influence the events that impinge upon their lives (Syme, 495)." A greater sense of

control leads to better health outcomes. This theory has not been directly studied in situations of trauma, displacement, or bereavement. Leonard Syme writes, "The possibility that inequalities [in health] can be traced not to differences in money, in social, economic, and political context, or in relative deprivation, but, rather, to differences in problem-solving skills and ability to access resources, would open *a path to intervention* (Syme, 498)." In this view, interventions to empower the individual could occur at the individual level or at the system in which she is embedded (Syme, 502).

Psychologists dealing with survivors of trauma have postulated control to be a major determinant in recovery. And studies have examined the control and sense of coherence in relation to health. Looking at control in terms of trauma and health outcomes has not been studied. This paper on the survivors of Srebrenica raises issues of power and control in relation to trauma which may have important implications in terms of health outcomes.

VI. METHODOLOGY

Given the complexity of ethnic cleansing and the multiple factors that influence war, I used a qualitative methodology to examine the situation and generate hypothesis. I interviewed 37 people who survived the fall of Srebrenica along with numerous key informants. To help understand what I observed and heard in the interviews, I drew on literature describing the culture and history of Bosnia along with numerous theoretical frameworks.

A. Interviews

The primary data source were interviews conducted with people displaced by war and ethnic cleansing and with representatives of national and international organizations. All interviews were conducted during the summer 2000 in accordance with the University of California Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, #2000-5-49. The interviews were conducted in Bosnian with the aid of an interpreter.

I recruited representatives of national and international organizations to interview through my contacts at the University of California at Berkeley Human Rights Center, Physicians for Human Rights, and International Commission on Missing Persons. Snowball sampling was used to find more people knowledgeable about the topic. Displaced people who were involved in family associations were recruited through meetings at the offices of the family associations. Other displaced people were recruited through Humanitarian Aid Medical Development (HaMD), a psychosocial organization based in Tuzla that provides direct service to displaced people. After people identified

themselves as willing to participate to HaMD workers, I conducted interviews. Interviews took place at the homes or offices of the interviewee.

The interviews themselves were semi-structured with questions designed and redesigned over the course of the summer. A set of questions was formulated before the summer. These questions fit into the following four categories: (1) demographic information, including involvement in politics and family associations, and war losses, (2) experiences in and leaving Srebrenica, (3) current living situation, and (4) reburial of the bodies. I found that these questions were not useful because many of the questions were poorly phrased and did not speak to the experiences of the people in Bosnia. Refining the questions is a key component of qualitative research where "one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (Strauss, 23)."

The questions changed to become a series of domains that I tried to address in each interview. These domains were formed from my own interest in the topic combined with issues discussed by multiple interviewees and key informants. They were:

- **Identifying information**: Age, where the person is originally from and if they have children.
- **Current living situation**: Where are people living? How are they managing financially? What sort of pensions? Who is in their household? This includes finances, living arrangement, and occupation.
- **Identifications**: What family members are the survivors missing? How do the survivors feel about the missing people? What do the survivors think of the identification process? What is the knowledge that they have about it?
- **Reburial**: Where do people want to have reburial? Why? To what end?

- **Return**: Do people want to go back to Srebrenica? What are the pressures they feel?
- **Representation**: How are people represented in collective centers or by family associations, nongovernmental organizations, or governments? What are the mechanisms of representation?
- **Reconciliation**: How do people define or understand reconciliation? How do they feel about living with members of other ethnic groups? What are their views about justice?
- **Children**: What is the special situation of children following Srebrenica? What challenges do they facing?

These same domains were used in the initial data analysis.

While the interviews with key informants were usually completed in one-on-one interviews, many of the interviews with displaced people were performed in a group setting. This was due to the arrangement of the family association offices or the collective centers along with Bosnian cultural norms. In some cases, people were present for only part of an interview, adding a few comments before leaving.

While many interviews were tape recorded, some were not. Interviews were not taped when (1) I felt it would make the interviewees and/or the interaction unduly uncomfortable or (2) there were logistical concerns such as a noisy atmosphere. For the interviews that were not taped, extensive notes were taken during the conversation. For both the taped and non-taped interviews, field notes were written on the same day.

Some of the taped interviews were not transcribed and hence not included in the initial data analysis. This decision was made due to time constraints of transcribing and

analyzing copious data. Priority was given to (1) people from Srebrenica and (2) people from Bosnia in general. The tapes that were not transcribed were interviews with international workers in Bosnia.

B. Data Analysis

The interviews were analyzed according to a grounded theory methodology. Grounded theory is "inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents (Strauss, 23)." Strauss and Corbin continue, it is "discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to the phenomenon (Strauss, 23)." This systematic process allowed themes to emerge from the interviewees own words and ideas.

For the purposes of sorting the data, the interviews were divided into groups based on general identifying information. This division into groups was done after the fact as a way of providing a basis for comparison:

(1) displaced people

(2) displaced people in family associations or government positions

(3) psychosocial workers

(4) religious leaders

(5) people directly involved in the identification process (but not displaced people)

(6) other governmental and non-governmental workers

The coding consisted of a six-step process. First, each of the interviews was coded according to the domains identified above.[24] As a next step, a chart was made for

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[24] Some portions of the interview fit into multiple domains and these portions were put into the multiple categories.

each group of people. Along one axis were the domains and along the other was each interviewee. This fracturing of the interviews facilitated comparison between the domains and the interviews. Third, using the chart, each domain was coded, allowing themes to emerge from the interviews themselves. Fourth, the codes were mapped out in a preliminary way to try to visualize how they interrelated. Fifth, to ensure the accuracy of the codes, interviews from each category were fully re-coded using a grounded theory methodology and compared to the previous results. Last, the maps of the themes were revised. Interviews for people in the first four groups were coded according to this process. The last two groups of interviews were not coded and instead were used to provide background information.

The coding allowed for a grounded approach toward the thesis, and helped me understand and hear what people said. In writing this thesis, however, the findings of what people said need to be understood in the context of the historical roots and contemporary situation. Separating out the various facets would make little sense to the reader, especially for one not familiar with Bosnia. I try to give context to the results while leaving interpretation for the discussion sections.

C. Data Set

Forty nine interviews with a total of 74 people were completed over the summer of 2000. Of these, 29 interviews were taped.

Category	Number of interviews	People interviewed	Comments
Displaced people	12 interviews	Approximately 27 people, 22 of whom were women and 5	Represented 6 different collective centers or housing arrangements. Age ranged from 21 to approximately 70 years old. Of the

		were men.	12 interviews, 10 were with people displaced from Srebrenica and 2 were with people displaced from Glumina. All interviews were conducted in the Tuzla Municipality.
Displaced people in family associations	6	Approximately 8 people, 6 of whom were women and 2 were men.	Represented 3 different family associations with each family association being interviewed twice. Two were based in Sarajevo and one in Tuzla.
Displaced people in government positions	2	2 men	Both were middle-aged men who left Srebrenica after the fall. One worked in Tuzla government and the other worked in national and Srebrenica politics.
Psychosocial workers	6	7 women	One organization was based in Sarajevo the rest had offices in Tuzla.
Religious leaders	1	1	Worked for the head religious leader in Bosnia, based in Sarajevo.
Identification process	15	22	Ranged from internationals and Bosniak government officials involved in the exhumation and identification process to people collecting and distributing information to the families. Worked for Bosnian government (1 interview), International Commission on Missing Persons—ICMP (7 with 13 people interviewed), Kenyon Consulting for ICMP (2 with 3 people interviewed), Office of the High Representative—OHR (1), International Committee of the Red Cross—ICRC (1), Physicians for Human Rights—PHR (2)[25], Podrinje Identification Project—PIP (1).
Other governmental and non-governmental workers	7	7	Worked for Office of the High Representative—OHR (3), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—UNHCR (2), Organization for Security and

[25] One of these interviews was conducted in Berkeley, California during the fall of 2000.

			Cooperation in Europe—OSCE (1), and the Netherlands Embassy in Bosnia (1).
Total	**49**	**74**	

VII. RESPONDANTS

A. Demographic Information

The study focuses on the experiences of people displaced from Srebrenica during the war. The displaced people were either from Srebrenica originally or the area of eastern Bosnia more generally. During the war, many people fled to Srebrenica for safety, and the town swelled with refugees. All became displaced when Srebrenica was attacked in 1995.

In total, I interviewed 28 displaced women and 9 displaced men. Interviewees ranged in age from late teens to eighties. While people younger than 18 were not directly interviewed, many children were present with their parents during the interview. Everyone with whom I spoke had lost at least one member of her immediate family in the fall of Srebrenica, often her husband, son, or father. Some survivors had lost a total of four immediate family members.

The displaced people include two groups—those involved in 'family associations' or politics and those who were not. People involved in family associations or politics tended to have more political power, were more likely to be employed, and less likely to live in group housing.

The interviews with displaced people included 2 groups of women displaced from Glumina. Glumina is another town in eastern Bosnia that was ethnically cleansed by the Serb military. Survivors fled to Tuzla and live in similar conditions as people displaced from Srebrenica. They provide a useful comparison because the bodies of their family members killed in the massacre have been reburied.

B. Current Living Situation

After being displaced from Srebrenica, people moved into group shelters. This housing, known as collective centers, consisted of, for example, defunct primary schools with multiple families crowded in a classroom. Some people stayed living in collective centers. Some newer collective centers were built specifically for displaced people (often with international funding). Others moved into homes that used to be occupied by Serbs. A third group moved abroad (e.g. to the United States or Canada).

The interviewees who were not involved in family associations lived in collective centers in the Tuzla region. According to the UNHCR, 25 collective centers exist in the region including Tuzla as of January 31, 2001. The centers house a total 2413 displaced persons (http://www.unhcr.ba/Operations/cc/cc10.html 3/15/01). In all of Bosnia, 9,032 people are living in collective centers, down from 45,000 when the war ended. While the number of people living in collective centers has decreased, the lives of those who stay are difficult. Often physically isolated from main towns, collective centers contain opportunities for work, education, and social interaction. Supplies and money are scarce. As one young woman said, for her, the hardest thing about living in a center is the lack of peace and quiet. This sentiment was echoed by other women living in different centers.

In July 2000, I accompanied caseworkers from Humanitarian Aide and Medical Development to Mrdici. We made a right turn at the dilapidated school and continued on the road through the strip coal mine. Along either side were valleys of gray dust left by heavy equipment. We continued on for many kilometers before we saw the settlement open beneath us. Newly made wooden dwellings were divided in half for two families to share and corn struggled to grow in the small plots of land. Mrdici, one of 25 collective

centers in the Tuzla region, houses a few hundred people. One man from the center who escaped from Srebrenica said,

> The painful thing for us now is not the escape from Srebrenica. The more painful thing is that we are now here and nobody takes care of us while we are here. Our family members who are killed, they are dead and we know who killed them. But now they are killing us here with this politics and stuff. It's a well-known thing. Our local authorities, they don't care about us. We don't ask about help, we just want jobs.

There were no jobs available for him and the other men living at the center. Multiple men asked me to take them back to America where they could find jobs to support their families. Many men told me they would be better off dead because then their family would receive pensions.

Almost everyone with whom I spoke was unemployed. Although the majority of the women received government pensions, these pensions often arrived sporadically and were insufficient to meet the needs of living. Another woman at the center described the difficulty of sending her children to school. Often the bus did not come to the center and there was no way to get the children to school. Furthermore, she could not afford books and material to help her children learn. Given these horrendous conditions, people living in collective centers expressed desires to leave—whether that meant move to another country or back to their prewar homes.

Other people who were displaced from Srebrenica lived in houses formerly owned by Serbs. It was unclear how people came to live in collective centers as compared with Serb homes. One head of a psychosocial organization suggested that the people living in Serb homes may have had more power, money, or luck. People living in Serb houses are, in some ways, better off. While resources are still scarce, their homes

are often less isolated, less crowded, and offer more privacy. They may have greater opportunity to engage with the community, be better able to send their children to school, and potentially find work. These advantages, however, are balanced against the fear that they will be forced from their homes as the homes are reclaimed by their owners.

Survivors living in collective centers and in Serb homes are both in precarious living situations. Those in collective centers worry about the lack of space, jobs, and educational opportunities. The displaced people living in Serb homes contend with the fear of being expelled from their current homes. These conditions and fears frame the interviews regarding the burial of their loved ones.

VIII. RESULTS

The three research questions were: (1) Where do survivors want to have reburial? (2) What do they see as the purpose of reburial? and (3) How does reburial relate to people returning to their prewar places of residence? This section uses the survivors' own words to present the themes that emerged in response to each question. Context, in terms of the survivor's individual story and the situation more generally, is provided to assist in understanding the results.

A. Where Do Survivors Want Reburial?

1. Evidence for Potocari

Two lines of evidence suggest that people who lost loved ones in the fall of Srebrenica want to have the burial in Potocari, the site of the Dutch base. In a poll conducted by a family association in Srebrenica, 83% of the respondents desired to have

burial somewhere in Potocari. Second, families that I interviewed were unanimously in favor of Potocari.

Organized by the Women of Srebrenica and Zepa Enclaves and supported by Freedom House and the International Commission on Missing Persons, the poll asked families where they wanted reburial to occur. I have not scrutinized the poll to determine its validity and generalizability. The poll was conducted in face-to-face interviews by members of the family association. Members of the group, whose mission is to lobby for finding and identifying family members, have their own biases and beliefs concerning the reburial.[26] While these biases may have affected the results of the study, it is difficult to judge from the evidence I have available.

The poll asked people how many family members they were missing and where they wanted burial to take place. These questions, while straightforward, had little additional information about potential barriers to the sites. For example, there was no way of knowing if someone would want burial in Potocari only if SFOR provided security.

In addition, there are sampling limitations. Approximately 10,000 people who currently live in the Sarajevo Canton were questioned. This leaves out individuals living in other areas such as Tuzla or abroad. It is not clear if people living in Sarajevo feel differently about reburial as compared with people living in Tuzla or abroad. Furthermore, I was unable to find out how many people declined to participate in the poll. One interviewer explained to me that some people tore up the questionnaire or otherwise refused to respond because they did not want to discuss the issue of reburial.

These issues question the validity of the survey design. Nonetheless, its overwhelming results should not be abandoned. The majority of displaced people currently living in the Sarajevo region prefer to have burial at Potocari.

My own interviews support the results of the poll. All of the survivors I interviewed desired burial at the Dutch base in Potocari. While the sample was limited, they included people in Sarajevo as well as in the Tuzla Canton. The interviews were completed after the poll and press release of the results. Therefore, the poll could have influenced the families' choices. There is likely a mutually reinforcing relationship wherein the wishes of the families create the choice of the associations and then the voice of the associations strengthens the wishes of the family members. Potocari is the clear choice for the location of reburial.

2. Why Potocari?

The questions, "Where do you want to have burial? And why?" initially generated brief responses. One typical answer was from a counselor at a psychosocial organization based in Sarajevo, "I think that they really feel it is correct [to bury in Potocari] because of everything that happened there, that's why." However, on further questioning, it became clear that 'everything' includes the desire to be buried in one's homeland and memories of the trauma that occurred on that location. Memed, the head of a family association, offered his perspective:

> We hope we were very clear about the wishes of the survivors for the burials to be held not only in the original place where all the killings happened but also

[26] The relationship of the family association with political parties is difficult to deduce. Informally I was warned that various family associations are being 'used' by the political parties while the family associations maintain that they will pressure and use the political parties for their own goals.

because of our desire to go back where we come from—to go back to our houses, to go back to our places of work, to live where we're supposed to live.

For Memed, both aspects—the place of the killing and the home—were vital in the choice of location. Many people echoed Memed's sentiments.

While the homeland and site of trauma are certainly different, at Potocari they merge. It is the place where everything happened and where nothing will ever be the same. In order to discuss some of the implications of the site, I separate out the site of trauma and the site of homeland. Running through these issues is the sense of power in choosing one's own site as compared to having one dictated by someone else.

a. Site of Trauma

1. Initial Trauma

Potocari represents the site of the initial trauma for the people who were gathered there. While the war began three years before the massacre, and while many people had been living with terrible deprivations in the Safe Area of Srebrenica for years, it was Potocari where the traumas seemed to crystallize in "the 'ultimate horror' (Herman, 38)." Five years after the moment, one mother pounded her chest, tugged at her hair, and screamed, "It's very, very difficult for us. My son was with me. I remember everything. My son was hungry and asked if I had anything to eat. I had some bread which I gave him a small piece. The Chetniks [Serbs] at that moment said that they were going to take him away for questioning and I never saw him again." Memories of families being torn apart are embedded in the site of Potocari.

I asked a group gathered at the offices of a family association, "Why choose Potocari?" One woman very quickly responded, "Because genocide happened there. There is no way we can accept another location." Someone else in the group continued, "They took 3500 civilians bodies from this site." The first woman rejoined, "The people who allowed this to happen are embarrassed. I want this to be a reminder to the interational community, to the UN. They killed them there, they should be allowed to bury them there. They took a kid from my hands." A third woman concurred, "They didn't discriminate between kids and adults." Each of the three women describes the burial in terms of the devastating trauma that occurred on the site.

At the offices of a different family association, one woman made the analogy: "...when someone dies in a car accident, they put in that place a little memorial. So they want to do the same thing in Potocari. Because they were killed there, they want to make a memorial there." The tradition of burial at the site of trauma is not limited to Potocari and to car crashes, many traumas have been marked at the site where they occurred. Memorials at Holocaust concentration camps are another example brought up by a member of a family association.

The remembering and reworking of trauma seems to be the reason officially accepted by the High Representative. In the press release designating Potcari as the site of burial, the High Representative described, "This location signifies one of the most terrible moments in Bosnia and Herzegovina's recent history." For the High Representative, as for the women with whom I spoke, the meaning of the site was tied to the trauma that occurred five years ago.

2. *Continued Trauma*

More than a "terrible moment" in time, the trauma at Potocari continues. Sanela, who lost her husband and four sons in the massacre, currently lives in a room with her sister and elderly parents. When she returned to Potocari for the five-year anniversary, she felt threatened and unsafe.

> When we arrived we were going to say this prayer and the Serbs on the other side were swearing and provoking us. And their police were also provoking us. On the way back, kids were throwing stones and apples and anything they could get their hands on. I wasn't that frightened because if I die I don't care. I have no will to live. I was frightened in Bratuanc when they threw something under the bus and I thought maybe it was a grenade.

Sanela needed security to visit the site yet the security was not able to stop the provocations—the shouting and stone throwing. Sanela's experiences were typical of many of the women who returned, adding new layers of fear and trauma to the site. While not a reason for reburial at Potocari, the continued trauma figured into how survivors understood the possibility of reburial. The continued trauma adds layers of meaning to the site and was often discussed in relation to the plans for reburial.

b. **Homeland**

In addition to describing the trauma, many people expressed their ties to the site in terms of their homes. Many of the survivors were not from Potocari originally. Yet Potocari is seen as a home site for the entire region. One displaced woman who lost her husband said, "I think it's a good idea to put the dead people where they belong to, where they come from. It's a good idea to put them there but the Serbs make so many problems." Memed, the head of a family association, further said,

> We want them to be buried in their birthplace where they come from…Because there is in Bosnia a tradition of burying families together.… There's a very old saying in Bosnia that "even if we don't have anybody, we know where our grandfather's grave is and that's where we go to be buried."

For Memed, the desire to bury in the birthplace belonged to a "very old" tradition about burial in Bosnia that is tied to the customs and care of the deceased. It is also tied to the pride that Memed takes in his home and his birthplace. Over the course of the interview, he brought out postcards and pictures—ones from the 1920s showing the valley in black-and-white, narrow streets and low buildings; the hotel newly built in the 1970s; the destruction after the war. Burial and the homeland, according to Memed are intricately linked.

Dino, a religious leader and scholar, elaborated on the custom of having burials near homeland. "[From the religious perspective] It's not necessary. It has nothing to do with Islam. But it has to do with the personal wish to have dead people returning to their country and [the families] want to be able to, once a year, visit the grave. If their father [or other family member] is far away, in another country, it's less possible. Those are personal reasons." Visiting the grave is seen as important because it allows the family to visit and care for the grave. Flowers are often planted, the grass cut back. Visiting around the time of the anniversary and during the holy month of Ramadan is a way to remember and show respect for the dead. I will return to this theme in describing what family members want to see on the site.

c. **Power and Control**

Running across the site of trauma and homeland is the role of power and authority. As quoted earlier, the families know where they would like to have the burial "but the Serbs make so many problems." As noted previously, on April 13, 2000, a commission was formed by the Srebrenica Municipal Council to find a location for the burial. I was told by numerous family associations that one of the Serbs in the group was a war criminal. Whether or not the allegations are true, the perception that the perpetrator dictates the reburial creates a tragically absurd reality. As one old woman described, "We want to put the memorial there [at Potocari] so we know that genocide happened there because if we don't do that then the Chetniks [Serbs] will accept the fact that Srebrenica is their town." At a different interview, another woman concurred:

> Serbs wanted to build up a church at that place just to occupy that piece of land so [we] cannot make common grave. Srebrenica used to be a Muslim place and there was only a small percentage of Serbs there and there were lots of mosques there, so it's our place. Also, we want to send the bones there so we can also go back.

In this context, one can see the importance of trauma ('genocide happened there') and home ('used to be a Muslim place') but across these reasons is the disagreement with the Serbs. Both women fear that the Serbs actually control the site and can do with it as they please.[27] Furthermore, as I was told by a family association, not allowing burial in the Srebrenica region was a continuation of ethnic cleansing. Both the living and the dead were exterminated and expelled from the land.

[27] The controversy over burial of Muslims in the RS is evident in other locations as well. In Prnjavor, the Serb council would not allow the burial of Muslims in a Muslim cemetery. The international community again needed to intervene on behalf of the Muslims.

In the above examples, Serb is an ethnic designation painted with a very broad brush. People did not differentiate 'the Serbs who committed the atrocities' or 'the Serbs on the multi-ethnic council' from 'the broader population of Bosnia who happen to be Serb.' The categories, while different, have merged in the minds of many Srebrenica survivors.

I asked a psychosocial worker what would be the implications of not burying the bodies in Potocari. She replied,

> [The survivors] become angry when someone tells them it is impossible to bury these bodies in Potocari. They threaten that then they are going to ask for permission to bury the bodies in the middle of Sarajevo. If you are not going to bury our husbands in Potocari, we will bury across from the presidency. You will see them.

In their desire to have burial in Potocari, the families are willing to argue in the Srebrenica Municipal Council meetings and petition national politicians. Both Serb and Muslim politicians are being pressured by families to allow the burial. In discussing the site, power relations become paramount.

B. What are the Goals of Reburial?

The location of the burial is tied to its function, and the issues of trauma, homeland, and power are replayed in this section as I look at the goals people describe for the burial. The press release designating the site for reburial stated, "The High Representative feels that this is an important decision for the relatives of those killed, and those that survived. There is now a place where they can mourn their dead, and from where they, and the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, can try to come to terms with the

past and build a future (OHR Press Release)." From the High Representative's perspective, the site has a dual purpose. First the site will be one for the relatives of those killed to mourn the dead. Second, it would be a place for all of Bosnia to come to terms with the past for the purpose of the future.

While the goals expressed by the High Representative correlate well with the goals of the people I interviewed, different people gave the goals different weights. The displaced people who were not involved in family associations were more likely to talk about the importance of mourning while those involved in the family associations talked about the importance of coming to terms with the past. After presenting the results, I will compare this to what people said about other communal burials in Bosnia.

1. The Family Members

On the whole, these relatives talked about having burial at Potocari where they could visit, pray, and clean the graves. Further, many expressed the desire, when the body was identified, to put up an individual memorial for their loved one. The desire was to mourn their dead—to remember on a very personal and intimate level something that could never be forgotten.

From Visca collective center, one woman wanted a "proper grave." Even if her husband was identified, she described, "I would prefer to bury him so that I know where he is. Even if he's buried all together, it's fine. But I just want to know where he is. Just so he can be identified so I actually know where he is." Later on, when talking about the unidentified bones, she described, "Well, I would prefer to know where they are buried so we can be close to them, so we can visit the graves regularly and also we can build up

our own memorials, we have nisans which is Muslim custom,[28] so we can build up that to mark the place, so we can know and we can be close to them in that way, if nothing else." This woman's story was typical of the people with whom I spoke—burial is important so she can be near her children. Furthermore, marking the spot and erecting the memorial is seen as the correct action as proscribed by Muslim custom.

On the road between Banovici and Zvinici, in a courtyard of overcrowded townhouses, I met with a displaced woman named Sanela. Her green eyes were perpetually teary. She was glad that the burial would be taking place in Potocari, "It's a shame because those bodies are in bags for three years in the center. I'm disappointed because they are in bags. It's really difficult because they are in bags and not buried properly. It's a shame that our sons are in bags." When I asked what she meant by proper burial, Sanja replied, "I am not well into that. I just want them to be buried—to put the names of my husband and my sons. I don't know much about memorials. I just want to know where they are buried." In contrast to some of the explanations that we will see later, her reasons were not about political power, punishment, or recognition. Her reason dealt with the horror of having her loved ones waiting in body bags. Shortly after she took a photocollage off the wall. Color photocopies, enlarged, pasted together to piece together her four sons, reminded me of their ultimate separateness.

Jasminka said, "Well, better to put it in Potocari, put them all together but I want them to be identified so I know which are my children, so I can put the names there and put a proper memorial for them. That way I know where they are." She goes on to

[28] Nisans are traditional Muslim gravemarkers. There are two markers at the head and the foot. This arrangement is called Nisan (Nishan). The inscription at the head marker is first in Arabic and second in Roman lettering. The foot marker is shaped differently for men and women. For men it is shaped like a fez or a turban. If stone is used for the marker, it should be white because white is the color of mourning.

describe what her sons were wearing, saying she would recognize them, and takes out a photo, an enlarged photocopy from a driver's license. The license had been left behind because the son was afraid, if he had taken it with him, he would have been identified by the Serb soldiers. In all the stories the survivors expressed concern for a proper burial as prescribed by Muslim custom, for identifying their loved ones and having a place to visit.

Religious practices of proper burial are based on the body of the deceased being present and identified. As in the case of Srebrenica, the unidentified bodies precludes the same prescribed rituals. Dino explains, "So for those people, at least seven and half thousand people, none of them still is buried. And for the religious purpose, it's very very important that their remains are found as urgently as possible. And they can be buried so their souls can rest in peace. That's the religious point of view, the religious reasons for people to try to speed up this process." Even though there are prayers that can be said for the people who are missing and considered dead, these do not necessarily take the place of the washing, prayer, and burial.

None of the individuals with whom I spoke had their loved ones identified and I believe that identification is vital in understanding the situation. Workers at a psychosocial organization had worked with some women who had loved ones identified. Some of these women had decided to bury the bodies on their own. They did so despite incredible financial problems that included not only the cost of burial itself but also a tax placed on the body for storage in the identification facility. Some of the individuals, the psychosocial workers said, wanted a communal funeral but did not want to wait for years for this to happen. After the individual funerals, the people felt "more peaceful." Again,

the burial—following religious and cultural custom and having a site where the person is located—is paramount.

Only a handful of the people with whom I spoke described the importance of reminding the world. One young couple living at Mrdici described the dual role of the memorial "so we can remind them [meaning the world] and also if we identify our family members then they can be there." But to these ends the couple did not have strong feelings as to what would be important to see at the site and would agree with whatever collective decision was reached. A University student who lost her father described that on a personal level she does not want to forget what happened at the site. She also does not want other people to forget that something "incredible happened here." When asked what would help her and other people remember, she described that having the bodies buried together would mark history. "When you go to a memorial center and you see a few thousand names on the list, you will be, I think you will be asked by yourself how it's possible and how it's happened." She believed that the burial itself would lead the viewer to remember the events that led up to the killings.

According to the survivors, the burial of the loved ones is, above all, a burial to mourn the tremendous losses. Following religious and cultural custom, burial provides a specific site for prayer and visiting.

2. Family associations and Representatives from Srebrenica

Representatives of family associations and politicians from Srebrenica talked about burial as a form of recognition. 'Recognition' is a word that needs to be modified—there is the subject of recognition (who is doing the recognizing), the object (what is

being recognized), and indirect object (towards what end). The answers to these later questions differed among the various groups and individuals.

Damir was an interpreter for the United Nations when the Serbs attacked Srebrenica. He had begged his bosses, the Dutch commanders, to help him save his father and brother, but to no avail. Since the tragedy, Damir has been active in one family association, prodding the UN to admit to it's own guilt and fighting for the right to have burial at Potocari. He was worried that the catastrophe of Srebrenica would be forgotten, brushed over, buried. Recognition of the tragedy, being able to speak of it, is important for him as a survivor. He described, "There was a Jewish woman, a survivor of the Holocaust who gave a lecture called 'conspiracy of silence.' Her theory was that the survivors were around people who didn't care and I found myself in her theory. There are several important things for survivors. There should be no silence." By using theory derived from the Holocaust, Damir described the need to remember and speak out. The reburial, he and others believed, would break the silence, it would force rememberance and recognition on many different levels and to many different ends.

Recognition, according to Damir, is multilayered—of the past and of the present, by himself and by the Serbs. He must recognize the existence of the RS, given the Dayton Agreement and the drawing of maps; he has no choice. In turn, the Serbs must recognize the massacre at Srebrenica. He explained:

> So I explained to the UN. Why there must be reburials in Potocari? Because I'm going to return to the RS and I'm suppose to accept all these things—the flag, the constitution. I don't like it but I have to accept it. I'm standing in the town center in Potocari and I see the flag. I turn 180 degrees and I see a wonderful commemorative center of white marble shining in the sun, shining so bright I can't even look at it. You see what I mean? This is balance. Let's put it this way: the Serb flag is an example of victory and the commemorative center is an

> example of genocide. If I have to watch the flag, they have to watch that and they have to accept it.

By recognizing the massacre, the burial also recognizes that the very existence of the RS is based on the genocide. In addition, the burial is a form of punishment for the crimes. Damir said:

> I'm a survivor and a victim. I want revenge—as a victim…Could you imagine a murderer that you didn't put in jail? Instead you bury the victim under the window of the murderer. Everyday the murderer sees the victim. It's a punishment. I want the Serbs to be punished. I call this a boomerang. I was not a Muslim before the war. I was not different from the Serbs. I drink. I wear jeans. They wanted to kill me because of my name. That was the only thing that made me different from the Serbs. I didn't understand it why they wanted to kill me. Unfortunately, my family never went to a mosque. They killed citizens of BiH. They threw a boomerang and it's coming back in the form of a memorial center and some things that will follow. I hope it will be a site of pilgrimage for all the world. They try to kill not even Muslims and now they will get Muslims from all over the world.

For Damir, the Serbs killed his family even though his family was non-practicing as Muslims. In return, there will be recognition of the horror by Muslims of the entire world, and these practicing Muslims will flock to the site. Forcing the Serbs to live among Muslims would be, for Damir, the ultimate Karmic twist to the Srebrenica massacre.

More than reminding Serbs of the genocide, Damir hopes that the burial will actively work to dissolve the Dayton Peace accords. He said, "Maybe a memorial center would dissolve the idea of 'Serbstvo.' I don't know the word in English. It is something very extreme and it excludes tolerance. It is a sense of nationalism but more." When asked how the memorial center would dissolve this, he replied,

> This is only a theory, a dream. The center would be proof that the RS is built on blood, that the institution, that the country—because it is a country—is built on blood. And the center would remind the world that maybe a country shouldn't exist if it is based on blood and maybe there would be a revision of Dayton. My ultimate goal is to have Bosnia as one country again.

Recognizing the past murders and that the RS was based on the murders leads to an understanding of the country's present. Damir is not content to remember the past and the present, he hopes that the remembering will reshape the future of Bosnia.

In contrast to Damir, Simicic said early on in the interview, "I think that this memorial complex does not have a purpose of provocating Serbs (AK)." Simicic, currently a Deputy Minister in Tuzla, worked as an electrical engineer in Srebrenica before escaping through the woods to Tuzla. He showed me pictures from before the war. His mother's home stood next to a mosque. Pictures of the same place taken afterwards showed a vacant lot, the mosque and home razed. "The memorial complex does not actually bother the Serbs," he elaborated. "It actually bothers the people who did crimes because this is going to remind them what they did." In describing which Serbs would be bothered by the complex, Simicic includes two groups, those that committed the crimes in 1995 and those Serbs who are currently living in Srebrenica. He told me, "This memorial is going to have a message to them that they should go to their own homes and the project of making a big Serbia is destroyed. And it's a reminder that those people actually killed 10,000 people for some political party that was unsuccessful." He hopes that the recognition leads to people, both the Serbs and Muslims, returning to their own homes. While starting from the position of not provoking Serbs, his view was remarkably similar to Damir—recognition is not only of past events but also of the current living situation and the future state.

Mirsad is also a minister who fled through the woods to safety. Currently working on the Srebrenica multi-ethnic council, Mirsad believes that the goal of the memorial is to prevent the ethnic cleansing of Srebrenica. "For Serbs, this ethnic cleansing is the final goal. For them, the burial of the people is the final goal, to bury them down, underground. If they don't allow them to be buried in Potocari, then they will completely disappear from the region of Srebrenica and that's the final goal of Serbs because they can claim it was never a Muslim city. That would be their goal, to destroy all things connected with Bosniaks [Muslims]." Burial then would recognize the Serb plan for ethnic cleansing and, by having it in Potocari, counter that goal. Muslim bodies would remain in the area.

But for Mirsad, there is another political goal. "I will tell you now maybe as a politician, we have no intention just to rebury these people down there in Srebrenica and Potocari. We are actually trying to use this situation with the reburial and the buried people in Srebrenica to somehow get special status for Srebrenica already decided by the resolutions of the United Nations." He considers the UN Safe Area designation to be "still valid" and therefore it can be used "to push the international community to do more for the region of Srebrenica." Separate from the emotional significance of the burial described by the family members, Mirsad is pushing for economic and political support: recognition is by the international community and to attain power.

In addition to the particulars of Srebrenica, the family associations and politicians talked about a broader goal of remembering the tragedy, that is to prevent future atrocity. Simicic talked about the memorial in three parts. There would be the graves themselves, the religious element, and museum or education center. The museum would have

"photos, publications, videotapes, and everything that's been collected so these people can actually get there and do research and get some ideas." He wanted the museum because Srebrenica was an example to the world that this could happen anywhere. He warned, "If we forget one crime, one genocide, war crimes will be started again."

Memed, representing a family association in Sarajevo, also stressed the importance of people coming to the site to remember and learn. "[I]t would be like a memorial place of what happened. It would not just be where the burial sites are but also other information like a center of what happened, pictures, information. Many identification materials like clothes, parts of bodies, pictures, photographs, everything. Also an amphitheater where people can learn about what happend here, a sort of a history lesson. Also they could watch documentary films about what happened." Learning from history, Memed reasoned, avoids future tragedy.

For the family associations and representatives, the purpose of the reburial work is recognition of the massacre and the way the massacre has shaped the current living and political situation. Recognition may be by the Serbs, the international community, and the world and work towards dissolving Serb power or preventing future massacres.

3. Examples of Communal Reburials: Glumina and Tuzla

If burial rituals connect the mourner with the community, the connection with communal reburial may be even more profound. The burial process includes many families that have lost many members. Talking with family and community members from Glumina and in Tuzla reflect some of the pressures, misgivings, and reliefs inherent in a communal reburial.

Glumina is small town in the eastern Bosnia where, early in the war, Serbian military raided, slaughtering hundreds of people. In October 1998, 264 bodies were unearthed by Physicians for Human Rights. Rows of bodies were laid out in a field and family members walked through the rotting corpses, hoping to recognize a piece of clothing, a swatch of hair. About half of the bodies were identified through this grisly process. On November 17, 1999, family members from Glumina joined with politicians, religious leaders, and thousands of mourners to rebury the bodies (Neilan). The ceremony took place at Memici, the closest town in the Federation to Glumina. Bodies were individually buried, a wooden nisan marks each site. Some of the nisans have the names of the individuals while the unidentified are marked with a number.

One survivor's child was buried at Glumina. The survivor was less concerned with the collective reburial and in fact wanted the body buried individually. Teary eyed she described, "I would love it if I could take the body to Zvonik but under these conditions it's not possible. Memici is fine to some extent because I can visit and it's a nice spot. But it's hard to go back and see so many graves together." She described the difficulty of going back during Bajram, a religious holiday, with neighbors and friends to clean up the graves and pray. Her story illustrates a point not articulated by anyone I spoke to from Srebrenica—that having the bodies together would in itself be difficult. While it is important to remember, memory can be a heavy burden.

Another woman I spoke with was upset that her son was buried at Glumina but didn't feel as though she had any choice. The local community representative wouldn't let her bury her son close to home because, he warned her, "the massacre would be forgotten if they were buried separately." The reason she wanted her son buried close to

"I would love it if I could take the body to Zvornik but under these conditions it's not possible. Memici is fine to some extent because I can visit and it's a nice spot. But it's hard to go back and see so many graves together."

home was so she could look at the grave all the time and have him close. This reason points not to a sense of closure, but to a sense of peace or maybe unending love.

Communal burial also occurred in Tuzla following a massacre. On the 25 of May 1995 teenagers were gathered in the center of town. The youngsters were enjoying the warm night, talking and flirting at the cafes, when a shell was fired from the surrounding hills. The explosion killed 71 people and wounded 150 more. Senada, works for an aide organization and was living in Tuzla at the time. She remembered, "It was so sad because all these people were young people, teenagers, and everyone knew someone that was affected by that or everyone here in Tuzla knows someone who was killed or everyone knows family members of someone. It's so sad, I mean, it's so huge (AS)." The municipality of Tuzla gave families the choice to bury the bodies together in a park overlooking the city. Senada described, "I think that most parents agreed, if they lived together, let's bury them together because they were killed together." The funeral was kept a secret for security reasons, afraid that more shells would scar the funeral. At two o'clock in the morning, families gathered at the silent funeral. The town watched on television as the coffins were passed from hand to hand.

As opposed to Memici, all the bodies are identified and the burial is in the town where the families live. The townspeople with whom I spoke were glad to have a communal burial because it gave them a chance to grieve the losses. Because I was not able to talk with family members who lost loved ones, it is unclear whether having a communal burial was more difficult for them.[29]

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[29] In addition to the burial, a plaque marks the spot where the shell exploded. The plaque continues the tradition of marking the site of trauma. The one in Tuzla reads:

> You're not leaving
> Just because you want to live

A plaque and poem mark the site in the center of Tuzla where the bomb fell on the [illegible] May 1995. Victims were buried together on a hill overlooking the city.

C. How Does Reburial Relate to Return?

It is no coincidence that people displaced from Srebrenica are discussing reburial at the same time that survivors are considering a return to their prewar homes. Many are being forced out of their homes and others feel the pressure to leave due to lack of employment or arable land. The necessity or desire to leave their current homes abuts the reality of often not having a secure place to go. The issue of reburial mirrors many of these concerns. It is, however, not a passive mirroring of the situation as the reburial affects return and return may affect reburial. In this section, I present what people said about the necessity of return, barriers to it, and the relationship of return to reburial.

1. Uncertainty of the Present

New property laws, enacted on October 28, 1999 by the High Representative allow for people to file for return of their land. The filing deadline was late in 1999 and people now wait for various ministers to reach decisions regarding their land. Once the housing board reaches a positive decision, the displaced person files another request to execute the decision. Execution of the decision means that the authorities evict the current tenants so that the original owner can move in.[30]

The property law has led to tremendous uncertainty for refugees from Srebrenica. People living in Serb houses fear that they will be evicted from their present homes.

You're not leaving
Just because you want to die;
You died to be alive.

[30] According to the law, the original tenant of a state owned home can reclaim the home for the purpose of returning to it to live. In reality, some of the owners decide not to move in and instead sell their property.

Furthermore, they do not know when and if they will be able to return. This uncertainty is compounded by rumor and myth. As Maja from Mrdici explained:

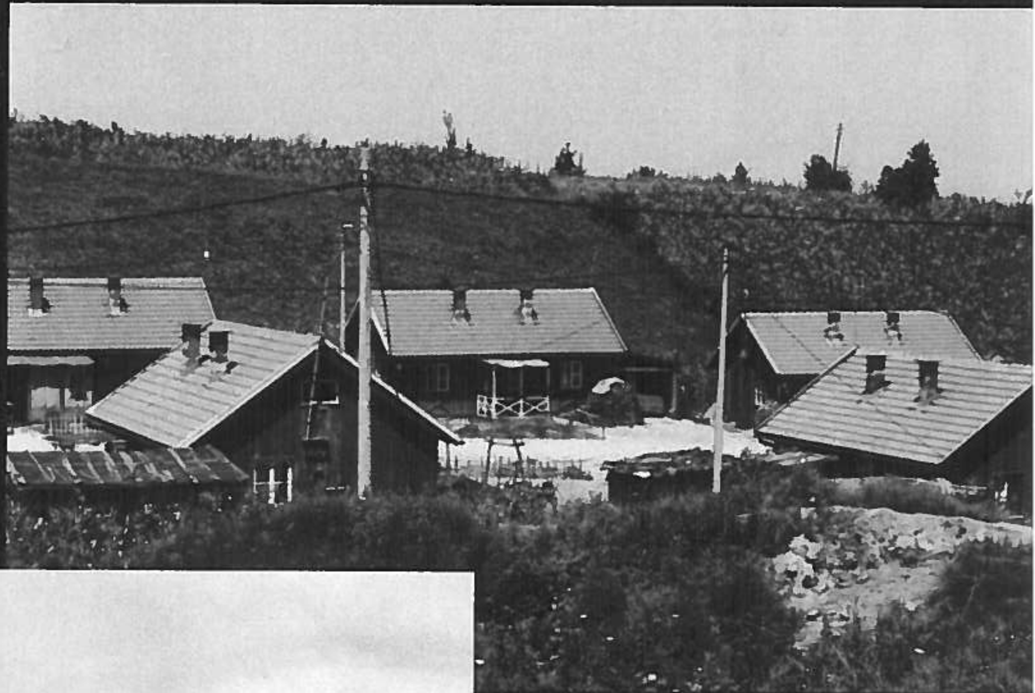
> There was an example in Tuzla, in Klanovici. One woman was forced out of a Serb house [because it was reclaimed by the owner] and she had nowhere to go. She was on the streets with her things. And this is happening all the time, especially in Sarajevo, in Tuzla, everywhere. So if you don't have any resources, any funds, any income, you have nowhere to go.

Her story was echoed by many interviewees. The survivors believed that Serbs were receiving their property in the Federation. Muslims, on the other hand, were not only being kicked out of these homes but also not receiving their prewar property in the Republika Srpska. The Muslims, like the woman in Klanovici, had nowhere to go.

Maja's perception of Serb power does not necessarily conform to the reality of the situation. While the Republika Srpska government does have the power to grant various land decisions, they are constrained by the laws and authority of the High Representative. In addition, the Serbs currently living in Srebrenica are in a terrible situation. Alma, who runs a psychosocial organization with projects in Srebrenica, described Srebrenica as "a ghost town, semi-destroyed and empty. It's not on the main road to anything. It's just an abandoned deadend." Of the approximately 16,000 Bosnian Serbs living in Srebrenica, 12,000 are themselves displaced from the Federation.[31] Until recently rebuilding has been nonexistent in Srebrenica because international fundors have withheld aide.

Alma recounted the story of a Serb woman currently living in Srebrenica.

[31] These statistics represent a marked change from the 1991 census which reported 37,000 inhabitants in Srebrenica of whom 28,000 were Bosnian Muslims and 8,300 Serbs. Approximately 30-40 displaced Serb have left Srebrenica and returned to their homes in the Federation (UNHCR Fact Sheet on Srebrenica, July 2000).



Mrdici Collective Center

> I know one woman who was from Sarajevo and now living in Srebrenica. She told me, "If I knew I would end up in this place I would kill myself." There are some people who'd like to return to their homes [in Sarajevo and the Federation] although it seems they don't dare say that loudly. They are silenced by Serb nationalists who want to keep the situation as it is. The nationalists tell them, "you can't go back, you can't live with Muslims."

The Serb woman wanted to return to her home in Sarajevo but was afraid of the power of the nationalists. Her story vividly contrasts with Maja's perception of people in Srebrenica and points to the difficulty both Muslim and Serb face in reclaiming property and returning home.

2. Barriers to Return

As of July 2000, only 3 Bosnian Muslims have returned to their homes in Srebrenica through implementation of property legislation. Return, according to one UNHCR official, has been slow when compared to the nearby regions of Doboj or Zvornick due to the "particular weight of the tragedy that has happened there."

For the people displaced from Srebrenica, the fear of losing one's home in the Federation was coupled with both the desire and inability to return to their homes. Often the desire to return was filled with a longing to return to the time before the war. One woman became tearful describing her own home,

> I spent my childhood, I met my husband, I raised my children in Srebrenica. I often dream about my balcony in Srebrenica, my garden, my roses. Nothing is there now. It hurts sometimes when I walk in Sarajevo and see the houses with roses and gardens. It hurts because I live in such a small space. That's not what I want. I had all that and sometimes I wanted more but now there's nothing. That's one of the reasons I'm afraid to live because I do not know where to go from here. I don't know if I have the strength to see it all through.

She worried about not having strength to 'see it all through' yet talked about sheltering her children from the war and fiercely fighting for her children to receive a strong education in Sarajevo. In her memory, Srebrenica is a place where roses still bloom. The disjunction between the past and the present also points to the barriers of return—fear and concerns for security and the lack of physical conditions necessary for return.

a. Security Concerns and Fears

Survivors fear returning to their homes near Srebrenica because they remember the massacre and worry about current incidents. Returning, whether that be for the anniversary or to live, reminds people about the tragedy of Srebrenica and of their loses. Remembering this past vulnerability exacerbates their present concerns. A woman from Mrdici said hopelessly, "I don't want to go back to the Serbs because they are going to kill me dead. They're going to kill me and my family. They're all the same. They slaughtered us once and they're going to do that again."

In addition to basing their fears solely on the past genocide, recent events provide cause for concern. Survivors brought up the recent house burnings in the region. During June 2000, three Muslim-owned houses were burned in the Srebrenica area. Although authorities have not ruled whether these were arson, many of the survivors felt angered and threatened by them. Returning for the five-year anniversary heightened this fear because even with the tremendous security, Serbs lined the streets to flash the three

fingers representing Serb victory, to throw stones, and to curse the Muslims. The anniversary confirmed fears about returning.[32]

Women's fears were further increased because they did not have their husbands, fathers, and sons to protect them. The men, it was felt, provided some measure of security. It is estimated that 20% of households in Bosnia are female-headed, and this number is much higher in the population displaced from Srebrenica (Edwards, 3).

Women worried not only for themselves but also their families. Many women described a feeling of being dead inside, not caring if they lived or died. Yet they went on living for their children so that their children should see a brighter future. Trying to protect their children would be very difficult if they return. One woman gave a typical reply, "I've got small kids and the conditions in Vlastinica and Srebrenica are full of Serbs calling and provoking. I'm not very happy about the returns because I'm so frightened to live with Serbs again. But I've got small kids and they cannot defend themselves. I don't want to go through hell again." The present provocations and past massacre condenses into a fear for the safety and security of her children.

In order to address some of these fears, one family association has called for an increased SFOR presence in the Srebrenica region. SFOR is the international security forces deployed in Bosnia after the war ended. During the interview, the group pointed to a map of Bosnia showing the locations of the SFOR bases. They pointed to the region around Srebrenica in Eastern Bosnia where there were no SFOR bases. Even as they called for SFOR protection, the group said they were acutely aware of how international

[32] At the same time, many of the international agencies involved in the anniversary viewed it a glowing success because there were no serious incidents. Security forces at the August Reconstruction and Return Task Force meeting in Srebrenica region reported no major incidents.

troops had failed them in the past and might fail them again in the future. They hoped having SFOR in the region would increase security.

Fear of returning was formidable. It stemmed from the past genocide and present abuses. Few men to protect the family and concern for their children exacerbate the survivor's fear.

b. Physical Conditions

In addition to the tremendous fear and insecurity attached to the idea of return, the refugees also recognize that, if they return, they will need proper housing. Some of their homes are still intact and now occupied by Serbs. One refugee showed me a color photograph of her home. It showed a three-story building with bricks and exposed cinder blocks; laundry hung on the second floor balcony and a man with a loping belly stood in the doorway. It is, she explained, the Serb who's living there. In order to return, he will need to be evicted from her home.

Many other homes have been razed. A survivor showed me a photograph of a patch of dirt where his house once stood. One woman remembered her recent trip back to her land: "Everything was just destroyed. Just remains of the house and the grass was really tall." In Mihatovici, another collective center, I asked a woman what was her biggest barrier to return. She replied, "My house hasn't been rebuilt. I cleaned it up five months ago. I'd just prefer it if somebody builds up the house and hands me the keys."

Unfortunately, funding from international aide agencies is not available to completely rebuild houses, and the process of attaining funds and rebuilding a house is arduous. First, the displaced person must clean the property, that is, remove debris and

prepare the house for rebuilding. When people are unable to clean the property themselves, they may pay people to help in the process. After cleaning, they must continue to demonstrate a desire to move back for example by sleeping and living near the property. This is done because donors want to be sure that if they give money or supplies to rebuild a house that the people will return and live in it. Then money, supplies, and/or assistance may be given for the rebuilding. The major difficulty is that there is a ninety percent funding gap. This means that for every hundred people who need money to rebuild their homes, money is available for only ten.

The process of attaining funding and building houses is poorly suited for the people displaced from Srebrenica. Another woman, who had lost her husband and only son, said,

> I saw the house and I lost hope of return because everything was destroyed. I can't clean up the place because I'm ill and I can't afford the 40DM per day [it would cost to hire people to clean it]. Even if I do clean the house up, it's in no condition to live there. There's no roof. There is water but no electricity. Even the floor is destroyed so that plants are growing through the floor. In my village there aren't any houses. They're all destroyed. You can't even recognize where the houses were.

She does not have the money to demonstrate her intent to live there and, in the self-fulfilling cycle, she will not be able to acquire more money.

In addition to the individual houses, community infrastructure has been destroyed in the Republika Srpska. Water and electricity for communities has been devastated. Medical care and schools are two huge issues for the potential returnees. Many of the returnees are elderly and are especially in need of assistance. In addition, many of the returnees have school-aged children. Where schools do exist, they are taught according

to the Serb curriculum—classes are taught in the Cyrillic script, proffering a version of history that is anathema to the Muslims.

The rebuilding of homes and of community structures needs to be in place before people can return. Financing must be available to reconstruct the homes. Medical care and education are also obstacles for return. Given these tremendous difficulties many people with whom I spoke expressed a wish to go abroad. Many joked about chartering a plane to America where homes and communities are intact. Another man offered to work for me for a year if I wold only take him with me back to America. Other people expressed a desire to have permanent homes built for them in Federation territory.

3. Return Relates to Reburial

It is in this context, in a precarious living situation with the hope and fear of return, that the discussion of reburial needs to be placed. Of the people I interviewed, some of them directly linked their return to the reburial of their loved ones.

"We would have a chance to go and visit it [the gravesite in Potocari]. Even though I'd be afraid, I'd just go and visit the place," one woman said. "Sooner or later we'll just have to make a return." In this example, having the bodies buried in Potocari is an impetus to visit and make a return to the area.

I asked a group of women: Why is it important for you to have them buried in Potocari? The eldest was eager to return. She answered, "That would allow for our return because if dead people go there, living people would go after that." A younger woman with two children agreed, reburial in Potocari was important, but she was not as convinced that she could return because she feels frightened.

"Only that location and no other," the leader of a family association told me. "Nowhere else. And if they won't let us bury there then we will not return. If we can't bury our dead people in there then we can't return." The leader of another family association followed in the same vein "because if they don't let dead people go there, they won't let live people as well." In both cases, the 'they' that allows or disallows burials are the political authorities who can grant permission. As described by the women, the same power relations that inform the reburial also informs returns—allowing for the bodies to return is analogous to allowing for the living to return.

One of the outreach workers involved in identifications, concurred with the opinion that return and reburial are linked. He said, "Most of the Srebrenica refugees have said if their family members are not buried at Potocari, they won't be able to return. If they are buried there, it will still be difficult." The reburial is not a panacea; it will not automatically allow for people to return to their homes. Yet it is related to the way survivors conceptualize their desire and fears to return.

VII. DISCUSSION

The results regarding the site of reburial, goals, and return were used to construct a framework for understanding the aftermath of trauma and move towards recovery. It will be argued that people become attached both to specific places and to people. Trauma, as in the case of Srebrenica, shatters both connections (to place and people), causing tremendous anguish. Reburial at the site of Potocari becomes a way to mourn the losses and reform these attachments.

First, I discuss people's attachment to place. While place has been shown to affect people's health and sense of well-being, it has not been discussed in the setting of trauma. People's desire to have burial at Potocari clearly demonstrates the importance of place in trauma and its aftermath. Second, I examine the goals of reburial in terms of its importance in mourning the loved ones. These attachments to place and person take place within and work to change the political context. I will explore the way in which the attachments and political context are fundamentally inseparable. Last, I examine these themes in regards to the survivor's thought and fears about returning to the prewar housing situation.

A. Understanding Place

Survivors called for the burial at Potocari, a specific place. Place has been defined in two overlapping ways. The first meaning describes the geographic spot, site, or location—the physical space. A second definition examines the human interactions that occur within the physical site.

Due to both aspects—the physical geography and the human interactions—places become invested with meaning. People invest meaning in places where they live and grow in them, where they make certain rituals and they live their daily life. As places are invested with meaning, people become attached to them. Home is invested with tremendous meaning and often the site of greatest attachment. It is a place of security and the point to which a person sets her personal compass.[33]

One of the rituals that is used to invest a site with meaning, especially in the Balkans, is the burial of bones. Following the Dayton Accords, territory was redistributed and the suburb of Vogosca, a heavily Serb area, came under the control of the Federation. As Serbs left their hometown of Vogosca, they dug up the remains of their loved one to take with them to their new homes. By bringing the bones with them they would be able to care for the graves and mark the new land as their own.

In the Balkans more generally, bones have been used to create attachments to the homeland, to mark its limits, and create a sense of national identity. For example, Serbian Prince Lazar died in the 1389 Battle of Kosovo when Serbia lost autonomy to the Turks. In 1987, Milosevic took the bones through all the monasteries in the area that he believed belonged to 'Greater Serbia.' The bones marked the territory as in Serbia's purview. Milosevic declared, "Serbia is wherever there are Serbian graves (Verdery, 98)." One begins to see the slipperiness of the reasoning: homeland is defined by bones and bones define the homeland. On some level this tautology allows for any land to become the homeland making it a perfect way to claim space.

[33] Mechanisms of early childhood bonding, 'familiarity,' and identity, as discussed in the literature review, coincide with the idea that places become invested with meaning and this leads to a feeling of attachment.

While the attachment to home facilitates feelings of comfort, familiarity, and belonging, trauma invests site with very different meanings. Potocari is the site where the massacre happened, where the child was taken from her arms. These memories become embedded at Potocari.

In the case of Potocari, there is also the disjunction between the past sense of security rooted at the site and the new layer of fear. Attachment to place is dislodged by the trauma. Potocari was no longer the hometown, it was now the site of the Dutch base and the site of the tragedy. The tragedy calls into question what the place formerly was by what it now represents. When the compass no longer points towards home, people are directionless, unable to make sense of the world. This disjunction causes an additional layer of pain and alienation.

The implications of this understanding are threefold. First, trauma happens in a specific site and may invest that site with particular negative associations. Second, there may be a disjunction between the prior meaning of a site and the present and this disjunction can increase the already tremendous suffering for the survivors.

Third, as evidenced by people desire for burial at Potocari, place is vital in the process of recovery. Recovery, in this setting, is not a complete healing or reconciliation. Rather, it is coming to a better understanding of the traumatic events and their role in a survivor's life. Reburial at the site of the tragedy embodies and facilitates the process of recovery a survivor must face.

Burial is a way to invest the site with new meanings and reform attachments. It establishes a physical place where the tragedy happened and where it can safely be

retold.[34] It also mitigates the disjunction between the past meanings of the site (home) and the present ones (tragedy). Reburials marks land as home and connects with a sense of safety. Yet the communal burial signifies the massacre. The two memories are joined through the act of reburial.

If the disjunction did not exist, if the site of tragedy and the site of home were different, the decision of where to bury would be more difficult.[35] The tradition of having burial at the homeland would have conflicted with people's goals of marking the site of trauma. Families of people who died on May 25, 1995 in Tuzla choose to mark the site where the bomb exploded in the town center and bury the victims together in a park. It is impossible to know if a similar solution would have been reached for the bodies massacred at Srebrenica.

As part of recovery, Judith Herman, in her book *Trauma and Recovery,* explains that the survivor must confront the fundamental paradox of horror (Herman, 1). On the one hand, the survivor wants to deny the horror, to forget the tragedy ever happened. On the other hand, she wants to proclaim it aloud, to speak out against the horror. Potocari, and sites of trauma more generally, embody this paradox for the individual survivor as well as for the entire community.

Marking the site provides a space where the trauma happened. It proclaims the trauma—it happened here. At the same time, marking the site designates an area where it

[34] According to Judith Herman, there are three basic stages of recovery: establishing safety, reconstructing the trauma story, and restoring the connection between survivors and community (Herman, 3). Burial at Potocari assists in all three. The third stage will be discussed in the next section on mourning.

[35] The question of where to bury the dead when the site of trauma and the site of homeland do not overlap was poignantly raised in the midst of World War I. While the French government planned to have burials at the frontline, many of the families hired 'graverobbers' to bring the bodies back home. In 1920, the French government relented and allowed families to claim the bodies of their loved ones. Germany and the United Kingdom buried their fallen soldiers on the front (Winter, 22-28).

did not happen. Marking the site embodies the paradox because it is an attempt to fence in the trauma, to control the uncontrollable. In many memorials, the fence is real as well as metaphorical. Winter describes the fencing in quality of memorials from World War I in Europe. These memorials were built in numerous towns to commemorate the soldiers who died in battle:

> In many war memorials there is a fence, doorway, or border clearly marking the distinction between an area adjacent to the monument, a space set apart from the rush of daily life. In some larger memorials, the border described the space set aside for mourners, either family members, veterans, or officials, speaking for the community, who were present during annual commemorative ceremonies (Winter, 96).

The fence, both real and metaphorical, can be seen as part of the paradox of remembering and forgetting, proclaiming and denying. The fence tries to draw a line around and circumscribes what is essentially blurry.

There is a terrible irony in marking Potocari as the site of the trauma. Marking Potocari would be designating the area as unsafe. This unsafe area is the Dutch base, the heart of the United Nations Safe Area. In marking the site, it creates a much larger area of safety. This reverses the argument initially used against the establishment of Safe Areas. People worried that by marking areas as 'safe', it would inherently mark other ones as dangerous, as open for attack. Marking the Safe Area becomes a distorted reflection of the area's promise and pain.

Fencing in the site of trauma resonates with other examples from the war in Bosnia. The streets of Sarajevo are pitted with the explosions of mortar shells. Craters are filled with red when people died in the blast. In Oklahoma City, the fence

surrounding the bombed Federal Building was lined with flowers, notes and momentos. The importance of the actual site in this process of mourning has been underestimated.

The argument has thus far focused on attachment to home and the effects of trauma. Attachments may also occur on to places of national significance. These too may be disrupted, causing significant pain. The National Library in Sarajevo and the Stari Most Bridge in Mostar were cultural sites of tremendous pride for the Bosnians. The achievements in learning and engineering linked through physical space the contemporary Bosnian with the Austro-Hungarians who constructed the library and with the Ottomans who built the bridge. The National Library in Sarajevo and the Stari Most Bridge in Mostar were specifically targeted for attack and destroyed during the war. One Sarajevo native told me, "I cried three times during the war—when my father was killed, when the library burned, and when the bridge was bombed." Because they were national treasures, the destruction was more than of books or a means to cross a river. The tragedy of their destruction was the loss of home and decimation of national pride. Their current rebuilding may represent the reconstruction of a nation and its citizens still reeling from the devastation of the war.

People invest places with meaning and, in so doing, become attached to them. Home is often the site of the greatest attachment, facilitating feelings of comfort and familiarity. Trauma, on the other hand, invests site with terrible associations and disrupts the attachments people feel towards places. In the case of Potocari, the fact that the trauma occurred at the homeland adds to the trauma, smashing the sense of home and security. Burial is an attempt to reconnect with the sense of security. Sites of trauma more generally designate a place where the trauma happened and a much larger world

where it did not. It is a means to both proclaim the tragedy and deny it. Reclaiming the site of trauma becomes part of the recovery process.

B. Proper Burial in Bosnia[36]

The second attachment that will be explored is that between the survivor and her loved ones. Burial of bones is one way to feel attached to place. Even more so, burial is a way for the living to honor the dead. Burial demonstrates how the attachments between the survivor and her loved ones change over time. Burial also incorporates Muslim customs and community; however, the customs are limited by the lack of identification and number of bodies. New traditions are necessary to affirm the loss and situate the survivor within her community.

Survivors wanted proper burial because it restores the dignity of the bones and the lives they represent. Sanja wanted a proper burial so she knows where her son and husband are buried. Jasminaka agreed that she wanted to make a memorial for her children. People stressed that proper burial stands in marked contrast to the current storage of the bodies in bags. The comments support the perhaps obvious notion that people are attached to their loved ones and that the loss causes tremendous pain. Contrary to older theories of bereavement that stressed detachment, the survivors wanted to remain close to their loved one and tend to the grave. Burial is a way to reaffirm and reform the attachments.

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[36] In this section I am dealing with the Muslim conception of burial practices. Many of the Bosnian Muslims are secular—intermarriage rates are high and religious practices were discouraged during Tito's rule. However, it is clear that the women I interviewed were referring to Muslim practices of burial.

According to Bosnian Muslim custom, proper burial has three steps: preparing the body, saying prayers, and reburial. The body is prepared through washing, wrapping it in a white shroud, and laying it on a lidless coffin. The second step of prayer is the most vital step. As Dino elucidates, "But until this prayer for the dead people is performed, his soul doesn't leave him. His soul cannot rest, cannot pass the line from this to another world. So the first thing when a man dies, the most urgent thing is to bury. And you cannot bury him unless you perform the prayer for dead."[37] Once the three steps have been completed, the soul is able to pass to another world.

In the burial, it is the men's role to wash the body, accompany it to the grave, and pray in mosque. The women's role occurs in the home through prayer. As Tone Bringa describes in *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way*, in praying for the dead, women are helping both the dead family members and the living ones earn religious merit. In this dual responsibility towards the living and the dead, women are judged according to "how dutifully they fulfilled prescribed Islamic practices…rather than on personal conviction and belief (Bringa, 160)." Women hold Tevhids (translated as "praise of G-d") which are ritualized prayers after the death of an individual. The ritual of the prayers helps give meaning to the death by placing it in a religious and cosmic framework. Through Tehvids, women reaffirm the importance of both the dead and the living.

When neighbors, friends, and relatives join together to recite, eat, and talk at a Tehvid, they bring the loss of the individual into the larger community. Katherine Verdery examined the reburial of bones from the Second World War in Yugoslavia. She

[37] This ritual of wash and prayer is not necessary for people who died in war as soldiers because, according to the Koran, it is as if they are not dead. They are called 'shaheeds' which means 'witnesses'. Even though the ritual is not necessary, explained Dino, it is often performed as custom. Dino performed the ritual for his brother who was killed in battle.

explained, "Burials and reburials serve both to create and to reorder the community (Verdery, 107)." It does so by bringing people together, through exchanges of food and objects, and through limiting the "community of mourners, all of whom think they have some relation to the dead person (Verdery, 108)." In defining a group of mourners, funerals strengthen the sense that the individual does not need to suffer the grief alone. Reconnecting the survivor with her community is vital in the aftermath of trauma (Herman, 61) and during bereavement (Romanoff, 702).

The inability to perform the rituals due to lack of identification furthers an unresolved loss.[38] As Judith Herman argues, "In ordinary bereavement, numerous social rituals contain and support the mourner through this process. By contrast, no custom or common ritual recognizes the mourning that follows traumatic life events. In the absence of such support, the potential for pathological grief and severe, persistent depression is extremely high (Herman, 69-70)." While Herman was not referring to mass violence or genocide, the application is certainly permissible. The traditions of burial have broken down under the extreme circumstances of Srebrenica where bodies remain unidentified. The move towards burial and fight over location demonstrates the need to find rituals.

Communal reburial is an attempt to refashion the traditions and thereby mourn the multiple losses. Communal reburial, however, has distinct problems and advantages.

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[38] Bosnian Muslims have their own specific burial rituals that differ from rituals performed by other Muslims and from rituals performed by people of other religions; however, death rituals are ubiquitous. And often their absence, as in the case of Srebrenica, points to their importance. In another contemporary example, people who die from the Ebola virus, a highly infectious agent, must be buried under strict precautions. Only masked and gloved technicians are able to bury the body in a field set away from the living. As Blaine Harden explains, "In traditions that endure among Christians and Muslims alike, the recently deceased, if properly buried, are believed to be able to watch out for their kinfolk and guard them from catastrophe." However, the burials for victims of Ebola cannot follow proper custome leaving it's survivors "doubly grieved. Loved ones will be dead. And the traditions of Africa will have done nothing to mitigate the finality of their dying (Harden, 44)."

First, families may not accept that their loved one is actually buried at the site without confirmation. This seems to be changing over time as more survivors internalize the reality that their loved ones have been killed. Second, the individual's autonomy in choosing a site may be limited or coerced by the group's desires. Third, placing the loss within the context of the tragic death, may be a heavy weight for families to bear. The two women from Glumina are different from the vast majority of people from Srebrenica in that the bodies of their loved ones were identified. However, it is clear that they were less worried with a collective message of reburial than having their loved ones nearby. On the other hand, the communal burial may provide support from the community and solace for the individual.

Survivors were adamant as to the importance of burial as a way of caring for their loved ones. It allows survivors to continue to be close to their loved ones. The communal burial reshapes the tradition to be useful in the context of unidentified bodies, and it facilitates a supporting community for the survivor.

C. Situating Power

The discussion has so far centered on the attachment to place and mourning. These attachments take place within a particular political context. The context affects the attachments and the attachments affect the politics. According to all the survivors I interviewed, the perception of power also plays a pivotal role in the site of reburial.

As Judith Herman writes, "The first principle of recovery is the empowerment of the survivor. She must be the author and arbiter of her own recovery (Herman, 133)." Furthermore, social epidemiology argues for control as a major determinant of health

(Lindheim, 346). The decision of where to bury in light of these principles of empowerment and control allows a nuanced understanding of the burial.

While empowerment is the ideal, survivors from Srebrenica must ask for permission for reburial. Asking permission, itself a disempowering act, is situated in the context of a municipal council that is mixed Serb and Muslim and a population that is almost entirely Serb. Survivors have been fighting in the municipal council to have the burial in what one family member described as the "backyard of the murderer." The burial is taking place in the context of this disempowerment in the face of the perceived perpetrators.

Viewed from this perspective, the controversy over the specific location becomes a physical embodiment of the struggle for political control.[39] The Muslims have been pushing for a site at or across from the Battery Factory, close to the site of the trauma, while the Serbs on the Municipal Council have suggested a site further away on the hill. The people I interviewed perceived the controversy as having the choice of the Muslims or dictates of the Serbs.

Because the multi-ethnic council could not reach a decision, the High Representative was asked to arbitrate. Again, rather than being empowering, asking the international community for support seems infantilizing. Many believe that the international community betrayed the people of Srebrenica when it did not defend the

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[39] The exact location has ramifications beyond political control. It is important in terms of physical visibility and vandalism. Having the memorial at the Battery Factory or across the road would force people on the road to look at the site, consciously avert their eyes, or take another route. The fact that it is on the road also makes it easier to protect from vandalism and destruction. The controversy over the exact location needs to be viewed on both levels—the general question of control and the pragmatics of visibility and vandalism.

Safe Area. To have the burial be a reminder of the international's failure while needing its help seems ambiguous if not contradictory.

The controversy over the burial reflects the political context. The power balance between the Muslims and Serbs and the relationship with the international community are replayed in the location. However, the situation is not static and the issue of reburial actively changes the political context.

Leaders of family associations and politicians stressed recognition as the goal of the burial. Damir called for recognition of the genocide as a means of punishment and a way to dissolve the Dayton Peace Accords. Mirsad hoped to use the special status of Srebrenica as a 'safe area.' Through the burial at Potocari, survivors fight for power. The burial becomes a tool in a struggle among the different ethnic groups to define the memory of the massacre and its implications.[40]

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[40] The political struggle over memory can be clearly seen in another example from Bosnia. David DeVoss, in an article for the Smithsonian Magazine, describes his trip to Sarajevo in which he tries to find the place where Gavrilo Princip shot Archduke Ferdinand thereby starting the First World War. He writes:

> One of my first priories upon arriving in Sarajevo was to find the famous corner where the assassination occurred, but after several false starts I realized that Gavrilo Princip, a national hero prior to Yugoslavia's disintegration, now was considered a criminal terrorist in the new Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina. Not only was the Princip museum closed, but all traces of its name had been sand blasted from the exterior. Gone, too, were the concrete-imbedded footprints marking the spot where Princip stood when he fired the fatal bullets. Even finding the site of the assassination was difficult since cantonal officials had changed street names and removed all historical markers pertaining to the event.

The markings are no longer present on the street because of the change in political fortune. Who was once a hero is now a traitor. And the people who remember the moment when Ferdinand was shot are also few and far between. The older generation has passed away and a different generation now walks on the corner.

In another contemporary example, a law was passed in Israel which banned monuments to terrorists. After the law, Israeli soldiers demolished a shrine at the gravesite of Baruch Goldstein. Dr. Goldstein had murdered 29 Muslims in the West Bank. While some saw Dr. Goldstein as a terrorist, others viewed him as a hero. This dismantling of the shrine took place at a time of 'strained relations' between the Jewish settlers and the Palestinians (Greenberg, A6). The meaning and message of memorials varies between individuals and across time.

The move to have burial in Potocari is both taking place within the specific political context and affecting that context. The political motives—for a Greater Serbia, for power—led to the massacre at Srebrenica and, in turn, the mourning. The mourning is shaped and provides a platform for the political context.[41]

Often literature on memorials (of which reburial would be a part) has focused on their use as political ideas or public art. [42] Political, in the sense of memorials, refers to an ideological agenda that supports a partisan interpretation of the past. Jay Winters redresses some of the imbalance. He says that while they are rightly seen as symbols, "They were built as places where people could mourn. And be seen to mourn. Their ritual significance has often been obscured by their political symbolism which, now that the moment of mourning has long passed, is all that we can see. At the time, communal commemorative art provided first and foremost a framework for and legitimation of individual and family grief (Winter, 93)." My focus on the reburial at Potocari demonstrates the importance of both the individual mourning and the political

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[41] The way in which mourning and politics are mutually reinforcing can be seen in another example from the Balkans. In July 1999, 68 ethnic Albanians were buried in the town of Celine, Albania. The massacre in 1999 is currently being investigated by the war crimes tribunal, and as reported by the Associated Press, "Throughout the ceremony, military and political leaders pledged to keep the goal of an independent Kosovo alive in the victims' memory." The military and political leaders were engaged in a politically staged event. And the political staging overlaps with families mourning their loses. The article describes, "Women wearing head scarves grew inconsolable as pallbearers lifted the coffins one by one to rows of open graves. Wives, aunts and mothers swooned from heat and grief. One young girl grabbed the photograph of her father from the top of his coffin and refused to realize it, sobbing (Barry, A16)."

[42]Discussions of World War I memorials in Europe to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in the United States have primarily focused on memorials as political ideas or public art. For example, Benedict Anderson describes the importance of monuments in creating a sense of national identity and nationalism. He writes, "No more arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist than cenotaphs and tombs of the Unknown Soldiers. The public ceremonial reverence accorded these monuments precisely *because* they are either deliberately empty or no one knows who lies inside them, has no true precedents in earlier times....Yet void as these tombs are of identifiable mortal remains or immortal souls, they are nonetheless saturated with ghostly *national* imaginings. (This is why so many different nations have such tombs without feeling any need to specify the nationality of their absent occupants. What else could they be *but* Germans, Americans, Argentinians...?) (Anderson, 9)"

significance. Recognizing the fundamental inability to separate mourning and politics allows us to see both with greater clarity.

D. Returning to a Safe Area

Seeing the reburial situated within this framework of attachments and politics allows a rich understanding of the relationship of reburial and return. The reburial needs to be considered within the context of the current living situation of the survivors and their hopes for the future. The current living situation is precarious—layered with the fear of being expelled from homes, the desire to return to their prewar homes, and the barriers preventing them from doing so. On one level, these issues seem distinct from the issue of reburial of the bodies. The international community deals with these issues through different agencies with different jurisdictions. For example, a spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) did not view the issues as interrelated. On another level, the land laws which allow people to return to their land are being used to allow for the reburial of the bodies. Proponents for reburial at Potocari argued that because the reburial is to be on Muslim property, it should be legal and permitted. On still a third level, the issues are tied together in the minds of people considering returning to their homes. Reburial provides both a material and symbolic justification for their return.

The material justification for the return is the tradition in Bosnia of having burial close to home. This custom, while not religious law, allows for people to frequently visit, clean, and pray at the gravesite. This is what the old woman was referring to when she described the necessity of visiting the grave.

The symbolic meaning of the reburial is linked to return through power relations and fear. People are afraid that the Serbs have the power to prevent the dead and the living from returning. The Serbs on the municipal council, it is believed, can block the land from being designated. The Muslims do not have the power to choose a location and to protect the location and themselves. The leader of a family association describes the plan, "At the moment they are asking for the permission you know. But in the future if they get the permission they will ask also for the security." Security is twofold—for the visitors to the gravesite and for the site itself. In visiting the site for the anniversary, women were harassed and threatened and they have no reason to believe it would be any better going back to visit graves. Moreover, desecration of the body or marker would be a further insult to bodies that have already been murdered, mutilated, and moved. The fear associated with the burial becomes a proxy for the fear of returning to live permanently in Srebrenica. Without protection for themselves and the bodies, reburial and return could become more unimaginable.

Many of the previous examples discuss the reburial preceding the return. A few people described the reverse situation in which return of the living would allow for reburial. In this view, living relations would provide security for the graves and provide greater impetus for reburial. The relationship between return and reburial becomes a chicken and the egg tautology. But stepping back, it is the sense of security that comes first, whether that be by having enough power to have reburial or by physically protecting the site.

Reburial becomes a metaphor for return—bodies that were expelled from the land return to it and yet the process is fraught with difficulty, tied to land laws and security.

More than a metaphor for return, reburial becomes a reason for return—to be close to the bodies—and a test to see whether return is possible.

VIII. IMPLICATIONS

Studying the burial provides a means to understand how survivors, in the context of their communities, cope in the aftermath of trauma. It allows us to see the importance of attachments to place and to people and the way in which these attachments occur within a particular political context. This study also points to future directions for the reburial process. It underscores the importance of survivors taking control of the design and development of the reburial. Furthermore, this study shows the complicated ways the reburial assists and detracts from the process of reconstruction that follows genocide.

A. Designing the Reburial

Thus far, survivors have discussed the perception of Serb power in burial process. Survivors have not been the "authors and arbiters of their own recovery (Herman, 133)." Active participation in the planning and design of the reburial allows survivors the opportunity to take control of their environment in mourning their losses. In addition, their active involvement would guard against the burial becoming a political tool in the hands of nationals leaders who would ignore the needs of the individual survivors. Participation, as evidenced by literature on social epidemiology and trauma, allows a greater sense of autonomy, control, and connection with the process. This participation must be extended to the burial process.

Social epidemiologists have examined the impact of participation in the design of the physical environment. Rosalyn Lindheim and Leonard Syme argue:

> The concept of 'active participation' as an important factor in strengthening resistance to disease also has implications for both future policy and research. Thus, no matter how elegantly wrought a physical solution, no matter how efficiently designed a factory, no matter how safe and sanitary a building—unless people can, in some way, create, manage, change, or participate in activities that affect their lives, dissatisfaction, alienation, and even illness are likely outcomes. (Lindheim, 354)

Active participation is vital in people's lived space because it increases a sense of connection and decreases rates of disease. Conversely, lack of participation can lead to estrangement and exacerbate disease. This is even more important following trauma where people are already disconnected and alienated. As discussed in the literature review, the survivor must be in control of her own recovery (Herman, 134). Active participation in the burial may foster recovery.

Active participation facilitates people taking control over their mourning. The goals of the survivors who lived in collective centers were different from the views of the people who were more politically involved. The former stressed the importance of having proper burial where they could pray and be close to their loved ones. The later stressed recognition as a goal. The different goals may not always be concordant.[43] Active participation guards against the burial becoming a means towards recognition at the expense of the individual mourning and attachment.

The participation then is not simply of the representatives who speak on behalf of the survivors. Representatives may not accurately reflect the wishes of the families. Not

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[43] In Nigeria, there has been great conflict over the grave of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Mr. Saro-Wiwa, along with eight other men, were tried by a kangaroo court and executed for the murder of four Ogoni chiefs. They were executed for their political dissent. The regime that committed the executions has since fallen and the new President has ordered that the bones be given back to the families. Mr. Saro-Wiwa's family wishes the body of their son to be buried in their hometown. The leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, along with the families of the other executed men wish to have a different burial. One described, "The men did not die for their families—they died for Ogoni (Onishi, A3)." The issue of the burial—family versus people—has yet to be resolved.

everyone is part of or has voice in the associations. Most of all, having representatives speak is fundamentally different from speaking for oneself. Direct participation of families, through meetings, surveys, or other means, may increase ownership over the space and the process of mourning.

Participation of increasing numbers of survivors will inevitably lead to controversy. The desires of one may conflict with the desires of another. And individual choice may be curtailed by the choices of others. Great pains must be made to both encourage consensus and allow for debate. As James Young argues, continued debate becomes part of the memory-work of memorials. Debate helps people to grapple with the past and how the past is remembered in the future (Young, 334-5). The debate will, in a sense, become a mode of participation, hence furthering the ends of the memorial.

Reburial and memorial, if designed with the principle of participation, may assist in recovery. In the United States, following the Oklahoma City Bombing in which 168 people died, task forces, public meetings, surveys, and group discussions were all used to decide on the themes and goals of the memorial. More than designated representatives, all families were invited to participate in the drafting. These goals provided a framework for the design, and, when the design was realized, they allowed a greater sense of connection between the family, the community, and the loss (//connections.oklahoman.net/memorial/history.html 5/17/99). [44]

As the process of reburial continues, these principles of participation and empowerment must be borne in mind. Active participation is especially necessary in the

[44] Different goals may lead to dramatically different outcomes. For example, marking the site as a way to 'never forget' the tragedy may lead to an artistic 'solution' to the problem. This may not necessitate active participation and runs the risk of re-objectifying people who have already suffered tremendous losses.

case of Srebrenica in which the people have been continually disempowered. It facilitates survivors in grieving their loved ones in their own ways.

B. Towards Social Reconstruction

The complicated links between mourning and politics point to the ways in which burial relates to social reconstruction. Since the war, Bosnia-Herzegovina, under the auspices of the international community, has been involved in reconstructing the society. Social reconstruction is a broad category including the rebuilding of homes and businesses. Infrastructure—ranging from schools to electricity—needs to be repaired. In addition to the physical devastation wrought by war is its social and emotional impact. People reconstruct their lives within the context of the broader community. In addition, there is the need for repair between different communities.[45] Burial may be one means to further the ends of reconstruction; however, the link between burial and social reconstruction works on multiple levels towards many different ends.

Reburial works at the physical, emotional, and social levels of reconstruction. It is a physical 'solution' that places the bodies at a particular site. Much richer is the way it works within and between individuals and communities both towards and away from reconstruction. On an individual level, all of the survivors wanted to have the reburial. It was seen as a respectful way to care for the dead, and it designated a place where the survivors could visit and remember the loss. For the Muslim community, it creates and defines a community of mourners who have some relationship to the dead. It brings them

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[45] The term reconciliation has been used to describe the reconstruction of the relationships among the various parties in a conflict, often between victims and perpetrators. The utility of this term has been questioned considering a complete restoration of the relationships is neither possible nor necessarily

together in a common physical space. The process of the burial has strengthened the family associations by forcing them to lobby for their wishes. Also, burial at Potocari may encourage the return of people to their prewar living conditions.

But the effect of the burial on the Serb community and between the Serb and Muslim communities is less clear. Similar to the function of Holocaust memorials in Germany, the burial may help some Serbs recognize past abuse while angering others.

The burial may also change the relationship between the two communities. Divisions between the Muslim and Serb communities may be exacerbated by the burial in Potocari. As Damir said, one of his goals in the reburial was to dissolve Serb nationalism and question the partition of the country. And Simici hoped that the message would be for Serbs to "go to their own homes." The goal, according to these men, was not social reconstruction between the two communities in Srebrenica. Given this situation, the burial may stand for what Michel Feher calls "the fundamental ambiguity of Dayton (conversation 11/27/00)." The accord calls for unification while tacitly endorsing partition. It hopes for people to return to their prewar homes and create communities of mixed ethnicity. Yet the treaty divides the territory and government in half, artificially balancing the different constituents. The burial would take place in Potocari while the area is still predominantly Serb. It would be a reminder of the ethnic cleansing while still being an area that has been cleansed. Unless return does follow reburial, the burial would be a reminder of the divisions.

Yet the burial in Potocari may also work to unite the Muslims and Serbs. As Michael Ignatieff writes that reconcilation may be founded on "the democracy of the

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desirable. The term reconciliation may be useful if it is used to describe the changed relationship in which the harms are accorded and debts paid.

dead, the equality of all victims, the drastic nullity of all struggles that end in killing and the demonstrable futility of avenging the past in the present (Ignatieff, 122)." The burial, with its lines of graves, is a powerful representation of this nullity.

Looking at how justice relates to social reconstruction can shed further light on the link between burial and reconstruction. Justice may assist in social reconstruction in two ways. First, by trying the people who committed crimes, it individualizes guilt. It abolishes the myth of collective guilt for the crimes.[46] Second, trials are presumed to create a clear historical record of the past abuses.[47]

While court stenographers transcribe the testimony of events, Michael Ignatieff argues that the factual truth is only one part of reconstruction. There is also the moral truth. He writes, "Agreement on a shared chronology of events might be possible though even this would be contentious; but it is impossible to imagine the three sides ever agreeing on how to apportion responsibility and moral blame. The truth that matters to people is not factual nor narrative truth but moral or interpretive truth (Ignatieff, Articles, 114)." Trials then may set the historical record straight and establish innocence or guilt in individual case but they cannot ascribe moral blame.

Memorials also work towards creating a historical record and memory of the tragedy. It marks the physical site where the massacre started and registers the number of people who died. In contrast to trials, the jury of a memorial does not vote on guilt and the history does not need to meet evidentiary review. Burial at Potocari may establish

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[46] In abolishing the myth of collective guilt, it may create the myth of collective innocence. Collective innocence is the idea that bystanders or people who were not tried are automatically absolved of responsibility for the crimes. Collective innocence seems as fraught with problems as collective guilt.

[47] Whether trials actually create a clear historical record has also come under question. In a recent study, many judges and prosecutors in Bosnia expressed concern over the running of the International Criminal

group guilt and ascribe moral blame. For example, a monument commemorates the people who died in Vukovar, Croatia. The plaque reads, "To the memory of 200 wounded Croatian defenders and civilians executed from the Vukovar Hospital committed during the Greater Serbian Aggression against the Republic of Croatia." The monument creates a historical record of the event in that 200 (Croatian) people were killed in the attack. In addition, the monument blames the attack on 'the Greater Serbian Aggression.' Individuals were not named as responsible for the attack and the moral truth is blamed on Serbs. Memorials may weigh a version of the past that is not shared by the various ethnic groups.

One woman said of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, "The Hague can't lessen my suffering because there's no punishment that can make me suffer less because of my lack of children." The same may be said of the burial. It cannot bring the fathers, sons, and brothers back to life. And its effect on social reconstruction is ambiguous. It may promote repair within individuals and communities while straining relationships between communities in the process. The burial at Potocari is both a burying of the massacre's remains and a reminder of the devastation for future generations.

Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and questioned the way it was a 'political' organization (Human Rights Center, 1).

IX. STUDY LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study was, by necessity, limited. Interviews in the summer of 2000 took place within the context of several events affecting the lives of the survivors. The summer was the five-year anniversary of the massacre and the interviews were also conducted before the High Representative issued his decision that designated a site for the reburial. In addition, house burnings in Srebrenica, national and international political events, and the particular life situations of the interviewees situate the interviews within a particular and ever-changing context. This context was used to help analyze and understand the interviews.

The number of interviews and the survivors who chose to be interviewed also limited the study. First, those who agreed to be interviewed were a distinct subset of the population. Because they were recruited through a psychosocial organization, they were receiving psychosocial support. Agreeing to be interviewed may indicate that they have better coping skills or social support. Being assisted by a psychosocial organization may indicate the opposite. Second, the survivors (not involved in family associations) all lived in collective centers. Many of the people displaced from Srebrenica currently live in private accommodations in Bosnia or in other countries. As I discussed in the section on return, the concerns of people living in collective centers regarding their housing are different from those who do not live in the center. There is no reason to believe that concerns related to burial would be significantly different between the two groups. Third, interviews were not conducted with Serbs currently living in either the Federation or Republika Srpska. Accordingly, this report is meant to address the concerns of the Bosnian Muslims in regard to the burial.

Interviews with survivors were affected by myself as the interviewer. Because I do not speak Bosnian and not of Bosnian heritage, an interpreter was used in conducting the interviews.[48] He acted as a 'cultural broker' in explaining many of the cultural cues and meanings (Fadiman, 95). Nonetheless using an interpreter provided the potential for misinterpretation.

Many of the people interviewed went to great pains to make sure that I understood what they had suffered. With candor, they described events and feelings in tremendous detail. As a male researcher interviewing predominately women, I obtained a unique perspective. The fact that many had lost sons my age may have affected the interaction although there is no direct evidence for this assertion.

The previous discussion has focused on interviews with displaced people. Interviews with representatives of the international organizations were conducted in English. People spoke from their professional perspective and often written documents reinforced the views expressed in the interviews.

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[48] The interpreter was instructed as to the nature of the human subjects protocol and the necessity of confidentiality

X. CONCLUSION

At the five-year anniversary, Jasminka bowed her head and closed her eyes. She listened to the Grand Mufti, the Muslim religious leader, who said, "We are here to listen to ones that have died, to the ones that have been killed." Understanding the burial at Potocari is a way to listen to the ones that have been killed. Even more so, it is an opportunity to learn how survivors like Jasminka cope in the aftermath of the tragedy. The burial process offers us insight into the ways place, mourning, and politics overlap and intersect.

Survivors wanted to have burial at Potocari because it was the site that represented their homes and the site where they remembered the tragedy. These two reasons point both to the importance of place in structuring our worldview and in trauma and recovery. The fact that Potocari represents home demonstrates the manner in which people become attached to specific places. People invest places with meaning as they live and grow in them. In so doing, people become attached to places with home at the core of the attachment. Trauma as it occurs in a particular place, infuses site with negative associations and disrupts the attachment. In the case of Potocari, the massacre caused a disjunction between the prior meaning of a site and its present associations. Potocari, the homeland, became Potocari, the site of devastation. The break between the two meanings added an additional layer of trauma for the survivors.

The desire for burial at Potocari also shows the importance of place in the process of recovery. Reburial at the site invests the site with new meanings and reforms the attachment to place. The burial of bones once again marks Potocari as a homeland. More generally, marking the site of trauma creates a space where the trauma happened

and a much larger area where it did not. It assists people coping in the aftermath of tragedy.

Moreover, burial reconnects the survivor with the loved ones who have died and with the broader community. Survivors see the reburial as a way of fulfilling proper rituals and remaining close to their loved ones. Burial at Potocari demonstrates that, contrary to traditional views of bereavement, the process of mourning is not one of detachment. Instead, it is one of recreating and revising attachments both to place and to people.

In addition, the communal burial is an invention of new rituals where old ones have broken down. Communal burial replaces the individual burial and situates the individual mourner within the broader community. The communal burial, however, has the challenge of overwhelming the survivor with not only the death of their loved one but also the killing of thousands and the loss of her community.

The choice of location and act of burial occur within the political framework. Survivors believed that they did not have control over the burial process and these power struggles counter the principle of empowerment when dealing with trauma survivors. Their participation in the process is vital to their recovery and possibly in their general health outcomes. Other survivors and politicians discussed the burial leading to recognition of the massacre and the way the massacre has shaped the present situation. The burial works within the political context and, many people hoped, would change that context.

These results point to the importance of place, mourning, and politics in the aftermath of trauma. However, the findings are introductory. It examines the intentions

of the survivors regarding the reburial but it is unable to show how the intentions will develop over time. The short and long-term effects of the actual burial are unknown. One way of uncovering some of the effects would be to repeat the current study at a later date after the reburial. Another way to examine the role of participation would be to administer questionnaires regarding current bereavement and then again after the burial has occurred (while controlling for numerous confounding variables). Groups could be stratified based on their level of participation in the burial. This would help elucidate (1) the effect of the actual burial on the mourning process and (2) whether participation in the burial process is important in recovery.

It is also not clear the way in which the burial will relate to social reconstruction. The reburial may help the Muslims come to terms with their losses; however, the relationship between the different ethnic groups may be strained. Unlike the pursuit of justice, the reburial may not clarify the historical record or moral blame. The effect on future generations and the evolution of the reburial's meaning remain unknown.

While many questions remain unanswered, burial at Potocari gives the survivors a place and means to mourn their losses. It is a way of honoring the people who died and listening to those who remain living.

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