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Dynamical systems theory as applied to war-ravaged Bosnia and its people: Stage one of a multistrategy research

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DYNAMICAL SYSTEMS THEORY AS APPLIED TO
WAR-RAVAGED BOSNIA AND ITS PEOPLE:
STAGE ONE OF A MULTISTRATEGY RESEARCH

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Abstract

Using the theoretical underpinnings of dynamical systems theory and the construct of self-organization, this study uses a multistrategy research design to explore coping and adaptive mechanisms in a group of 26 Bosnian refugees.

Qualitative findings indicated that in spite of tremendous losses this group of Eastern European refugees restructured their lives in Canada in creative, unexpected, and novel ways. This study specifically focused on issues of post traumatic growth and explored exactly how refugees manage to rebuilt their lives and self-organize.

Quantitative measures looked at symptoms of trauma over a 200-day period. Using the Impact of Events Scale - Revised, symptom patterns of hyperarousal, intrusion, and avoidance were recorded daily in an effort to determine rate of recovery. Findings determined that overall, participants' symptoms decreased over time with single women's symptoms decreasing more than either married men or married women. The study also determined that, as might be expected, husbands and wives tend to experience similar symptom profiles. Further, the study determined that women tend to struggle more with intrusive memories than either avoidance or hyperarousal, while men experience all three symptoms equally.

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Stage One of a Multistrategy Research

"The Balkans is where anything can happen at any time."
Ivo Andric

<u>Introduction</u>

The recent war in former Yugoslavia has resulted in three million international and

internal refugees (Marsella, 1994). This is a study of 26 of them, who fled the horror of the

war and came to live in the West, far from their once beautiful native land of the South

Slavs. Their stories, like many of the stories of the world's 40 million refugees, chronicle

the effects of the atrocious and annihilative violence of war and the ongoing struggle

associated with resettlement and relocation. Although homes, family members, and

livelihoods were lost, on careful examination, it is not only themes of loss and brutal

social and psychological degradation that pervade the refugees' narratives. These themes

are often juxtaposed with ones of resistance, hope, and resilience. In spite of the fact that

high levels of anxiety and grief, along with feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness,

exact an enormous and lifelong cost from the refugee (Marsella, et al., 1994), study

participants spoke repeatedly not just of their fear and confusion, but also of their hope

and creativity in the face of overwhelming odds.

This study is an attempt to investigate the devastating symptomatic effects of the

trauma created by war and flight as well as the powerfully adaptive, reconstructive, and

novel human responses to such trauma. Fundamental to the research imperative is an

understanding that inasmuch as these 26 individuals bear witness to the human capacity

for violent destruction and the resultant traumatization, they also personify the potent

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resourcefulness of the human spirit.

Using a theoretical orientation consistent with dynamical systems theory, or the science of complex systems, this study explores the history, psychology and social reality of 26 war-weary women and men who fled Bosnia, in former central Yugoslavia, and settled in Southern Ontario. Because the central organizing principle of dynamical systems theory pertains to the study of self-organization (or how systems spontaneously develop organization, pattern, or an order of greater complexity (Werbos, 1994)), it provides an inclusive theoretical orientation to explore both the symptomatic and adaptive characteristics of the human response to trauma.

It is only within the past several decades that dynamical systems theory has emerged out of hard scientific circles as a powerful heuristic tool for understanding the evolution of complex nonlinear systems. Therefore, only recently has it been applied to phenomena in other fields of study such as psychiatry and psychology (Butz, 1992; Masterpasqua, 1997). Creating practical as well as rigorous scientific connections between human systems and dynamical systems theory is in its infancy. Hence, the following theoretical musings linking the human response to trauma and dynamical systems theory remain highly metaphorical and analogous. Moreover, it must also be acknowledged that the theoretical lens of dynamical systems theory will be applied through the corporeal lens of the pale blue eyes of a white, female, middle-class Canadian researcher, who has never been to the Balkans and has never experienced a war.

Nevertheless, because traumatic anxieties and "discontinuities are affecting increasingly larger segments of the world's population" (Loye, et al., 1987, p.53), Western mental health professionals need to find innovative ways to view the multitude of

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traumatized individuals, groups and families that are pouring into the West from war-ravaged areas of the globe. Within the last fifty years levels of global trauma are unparalleled in human history (Wilson, 1989). According to the United Nations, in the mid-1990s Bosnia was just one of more than150 political conflicts in the world (Nordstrom, et al., 1995) and was but one of at least 100 countries around the globe where murder and torture of civilians routinely took place (Basoglu, 1992). The effects of sociopolitical violence are a fact of our time.

Graphic visual and verbal accounts of widespread terrorism, torture and famine, childhood physical and sexual abuse, the Cambodian holocaust and the war in the former Yugoslavia, as well as the continual reliving of the Vietnam War and the genocidal horrors of World War II, are a part of our daily psychological diet. Horrific traumatic events are now unquestionably part of our collective consciousness, and in ways we have yet to determine, these events are altering our physiological, psychological, sociological and spiritual functioning.

Individually and collectively, and as professional mental health workers, we struggle to intervene effectively and ultimately integrate trauma and its effects into a meaningful contextualized framework. However, what proves to be the primary issue for the traumatized individual, namely, acceptance and integration of trauma, is also the issue for Western professionals and Western culture. The study of trauma and its effects on the human spirit repeatedly lead investigators into the realm of the unthinkable and unspeakable, resulting in a curious history of denial and "episodic amnesia" (Herman, 1992, p.1) where researchers are continually rediscovering humanity's vulnerability as well as capacity for cruelty.

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Currently, we are living in a time of rediscovering and, in recent years, the study of trauma and the human response to trauma has burgeoned and intensified. This paper is a small part of that burgeoning. It rests upon the underlying assumption that the more we understand how troublesome adjustments to traumatic symptoms, cultural differences, work, marital and family life coexist with a capacity for transformation, imagination, and creativity, the more effectively we may be able to build bridges that span the abyss between the destruction of the past, hope for the future, and innovative strategies designed to create a livable present.

Research Question

This study involves a multistrategy (Layder, 1993) approach and uses qualitative and some quantitative methods to illustrate and explicate the patterns of coping and adaptation in a Bosnian refugee population that has suffered severe traumatization. A multistrategy approach to research encourages "the use of quantitative data and forms of measurement to complement the central core of qualitative analysis" (Layder, 1993, p.123). The study design is exploratory and developmental and the purpose of the research is to investigate patterns and sequences of coping, growth and/or change as a function of time. This is consistent with the general purpose of all developmental research (Isaac, 1983). Hence, this study took place over a period of 200 days.

Qualitatively, this study is designed to investigate both the effects of trauma and the adaptation, growth and transformation that can occur in the aftermath of suffering, traumatization and relocation. Only recently have researchers and clinicians begun to document, study and create formulations concerning positive changes and growth in the aftermath of crisis and trauma (Tedeschi, et al., 1998; Tedeschi, et al., 1995). The

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following research questions underlie the qualitative portion of this study:

1)   On what adaptive and coping processes do Eastern European refugees rely to help deal with trauma, crisis and relocation?

2)   How would the outcomes of trauma, crisis and relocation be described?

Quantitatively, the intention is to investigate the following research questions:

1)   Are there underlying patterns and associations present in the human response to trauma?

2)   If there are patterns, can these patterns be described?

Historical Context of the Question:
The War in Former Yugoslavia

Beginning in 1991, the people of former Yugoslavia suffered three progressively

long, brutal and bloody wars along with a fourth relatively short and violent war waged in

1999 against Serbia by NATO forces. The 1991-95 wars displaced and traumatized "at

least three and a half million people out of a pre-war population of twenty-three million.

This number was further magnified by the 1999 exodus of Kosovar Albanians. Europe has

seen nothing like it since the end of the Second World War" (Judah, 1997, p. 5). Through

this war the world was again reminded of the Holocaust: emaciated bodies with dead eyes

staring from behind tall wire fences, bodies of elders lying on the roadside in pools of

blood, vast streams of children, women and men on the run, and thousands of men, women

and children massacred because of their religion and ethnicity.

In the wake of these grisly wars there will be many who will look to politics for an

explanation, many who, like me, will write about the effects of the war on the individual

and the resultant post traumatic stress, and a few who will struggle to answer the question,

"How did neighbours who lived together for decades in peace and harmony, who broke

bread together and toasted each other's holy days, who celebrated birthdays and cared for

each other's children, turn and attack each other with such deadly and venomous intent?".

When Slovenia and Croatia declared themselves sovereign, independent states, with their own armies, customs, excise, and immigration control (West, 1995), the destruction of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, made up of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia, passed the point of no return (see figure I). For the second time in its history of unification, Yugoslavia began a rapid descent into the bitter depravity of war. There have been two Yugoslavias and both arose from the ashes of battle. The first (1918-1941), self-organized out of the chaos and blood of World War I and the second (1945-1990), was born in the chaos and blood of World War II. When the Austro-Hungarian Empire crumbled after WWI, the way was opened for a unified Yugoslavia. However, as it was in 1941, so it was in 1992: An uprising of the Serbs in Croatia led to a three-way massacre in Bosnia-Herzegovina where Muslims, Serbs and Croats were slaughtered with horrifyingly shocking brutality.

Bosnia (see figure II), with its mixed population of 44 percent Muslims, 31 percent Serbs, 17 percent Croatians, and 8 percent Yugoslavs, or people who describe themselves as part of Yugoslavia rather than part of a nationality, is one of the world's great crossroads (Rohde, 1997). For centuries, world religions, armies and empires have met, overlapped, and clashed on this soil (Clissold, 1969). Here, the most vicious fighting of the war in former Yugoslavia took place, and genocidal maniacs perpetrated Europe's worst massacres since WWII. It was in Bosnia that heinous acts of rape and torture reached a fevered and insane pitch.

Understanding experience on that level of savagery and making meaning out of the ultimate destruction of war occurs on at least four fronts. Meaning and understanding arise

Figure I: Post 1945 Yugoslavia
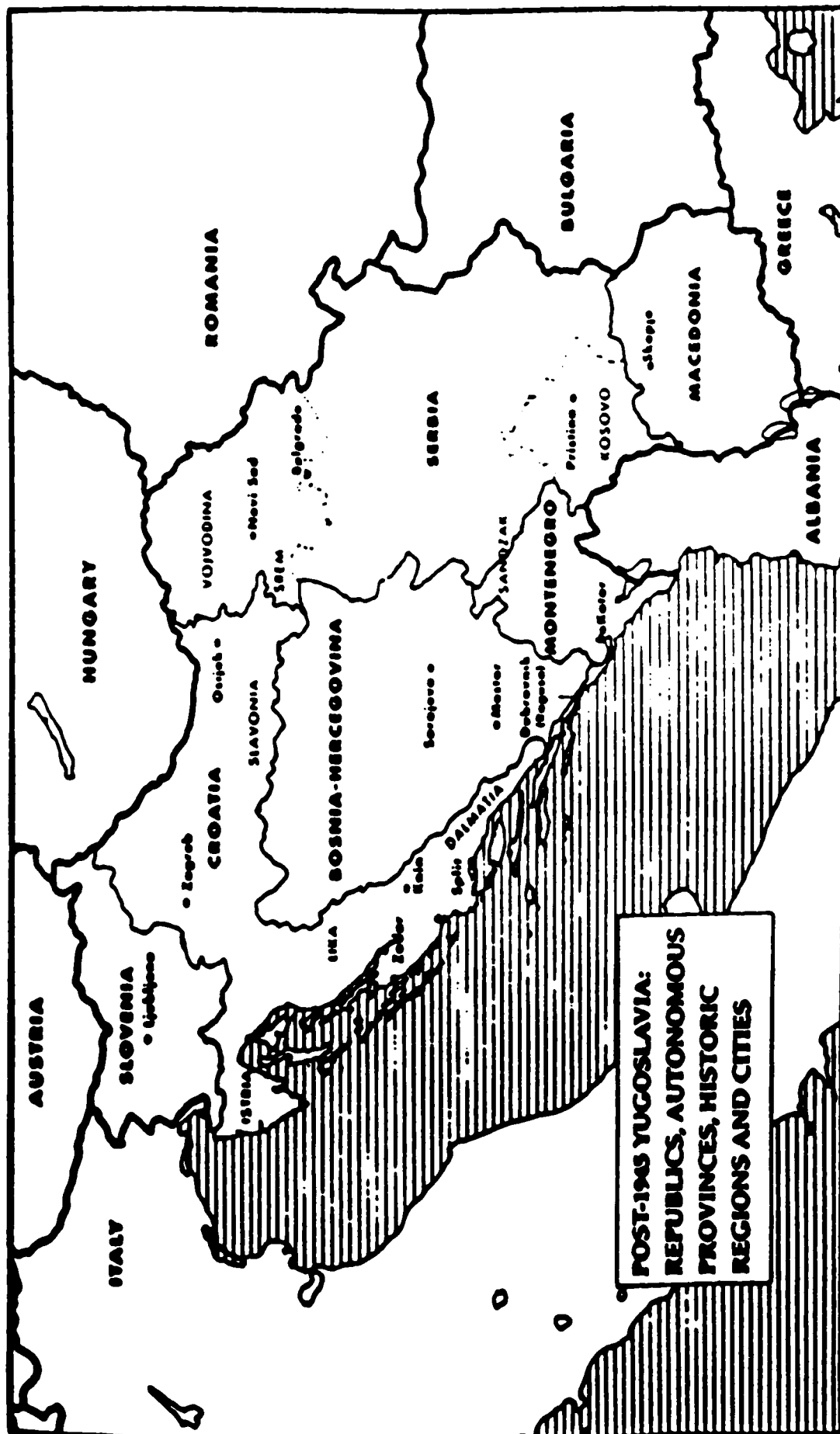
POST-1945 YUGOSLAVIA:
REPUBLICS, AUTONOMOUS
PROVINCES, HISTORIC
REGIONS AND CITIES

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Figure II: Modern Bosnia (Before 1992)

MODERN BOSNIA

out of individual, sociocultural, international, and historical contexts. The individual level

of meaning is represented by the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of individuals who

are the targets of the war, such as civilians, soldiers, families and kin groups. The

sociocultural level is represented by the meaning attached to the destruction of a culture or

social order, as well as the destruction of a people through practices such as ethnic

cleansing, environmental destruction, and mass rapes. The international experience of war

is represented and contextualized by the impact war has beyond the boundaries of the

waring nation itself. Trade and arms embargos, the involvement and mobilization of other

nations toward peace initiatives or toward the conflict itself, such as NATO's attack on

Serbia, as well as the influx of refugees to foreign countries are all examples of how the

international community contextualizes the experience of war. Finally, the historical

meaning of war is represented by the actual events of the war. Interpretation of these

events, however, is seriously complicated through official and unofficial propaganda,

historically driven rituals and beliefs about war that pervade the culture, and finally, an

accounting that passes for truth about the war and echos down the tunnel of time as history

(Nordstrom, et al., 1995).

Although this paper concentrates on the individual level, each of these levels of the

experience and meaning of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina will be examined under the

theoretical rubric of dynamical systems theory.

Dynamical Systems Theory and Trauma

Dynamical Systems Theory

The rationale and perspective put forward in this study derive from the emergent

field of scientific inquiry, dynamical systems theory or, as already stated, the study of the

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dynamics of complex systems. In any complex system, which is made up of many interacting parts, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts in pragmatic and profound ways, so that given the properties of the parts and the rules of their interactions, "it is not a trivial matter to infer the properties of the whole" (Andrew, 1989, p.13).

The main characteristics of systems thinking arose simultaneously in several disciplines in the first half of the 20th century and represented "a profound revolution in the history of Western scientific and philosophical thought" (Capra, 1996, p.29). Prior to the advent of systemic thought, central to the Western scientific world view was the idea that the behaviour of the whole could be understood entirely from the properties of its parts. This essential characteristic of modern thought was Descartes' celebrated method of analytical thinking (Capra, 1996). The modern world view has been seriously shaped not only through this understanding that the behaviour of the parts determines the behaviour of the whole, but by linear, mechanistic principles which have defined the universe as resembling a gigantic "super machine" governed by linear chains of causes and effects (Grof, 1988). In a linear model of the world, input and output are seen as proportional. When input equals output there is an assumed balanced and equitable relationship between cause and effect. By emphasizing linear, independent, closed and equilibrium models of the world, classical science has created a particular image of the world (Goerner, 1995) as knowable, predictable, and ordered. In this view, the world ultimately grinds down, as any machine will, toward its own destruction.

Systemic thinking has helped to balance, shift and even revolutionize (Capra, 1996) this world view by developing and focusing on relational, interdependent, connected and contextual ways of thinking. By definition, a system consists of a set of interacting

component parts or elements and the relationships which organize those elements (Von

Bertalanffy, 1968). Mutual interaction is a distinctive property of all open systems as each

variable within the system affects all other variables, itself (Van Geert, 1994), and

interacts with and affects variables in other systems. Contrary to the Cartesian model of

the universe, a systemic perspective holds that the properties of the parts can be

understood only from the organization of the whole. Accordingly, systems thinking

concentrates not on the independent and basic building blocks or isolated parts of the

system but, rather, on basic principles and patterns of organization (Capra, 1996). Because

systemic thinking is based on the larger whole, it is always contextual and, therefore,

believed to be multileveled and perceived as networks nesting within networks, nesting

within networks (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). From a systemic perspective, the material world

is seen as a dynamic web of interrelated events (Capra, 1996).

Although the cardinal principles of systemic thought such as relationality,

interdependence, and shifting attention from the parts to the whole have remained

constant, during the past two decades of its evolution, further refinements of systemic

thought have occurred. Breakthroughs in mathematics, physics, and the study of complex

living systems, along with the advent of the computer, have expanded the horizons of

systems thought so that by the 1980s "a coherent theory of living systems, together with

the proper mathematical language" (Capra, 1996, p.79) to describe and model those

systems, finally emerged. The developments that have revolutionized systems theory

during the last several decades concern the constructs of nonlinearity and chaos theory, or

the new mathematics of complexity, and the powerful novel concept of self-organization.

The study of inchoate, cooperative, interdependent self-organizing behaviours represents a

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furtherance of dynamic systems theory as conceptualized in the earlier works of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (1968) and Gregory Bateson (1972). These refinements have occurred between earlier conceptualizations of what is referred to as dynamic systems (Von Bertalanffy, 1968; Wiener, 1961) and what is currently being referred to as dynamical systems (Van Geert, 1994; Vallacher, et al., 1993; Albert, 1995). That which had hitherto been implicit in dynamic systems theory became explicit in dynamical systems theory. In a dynamic system there is a direct and predictable linear relationship between input into the system and system output (Vallacher, et al., 1993; Albert, 1995; Gleick, 1987). Change in such a system is linear and proportional and a change in A creates proportional changes in B. In a dynamical system, change is nonlinear and nonproportional and there is no proportional relationship between input into a system and output, that is, a small and insignificant change in system input can create unpredictable and/or large and significant changes in output. Change in such a system is nonlinear and nonproportional and a change in A creates a vast and unpredictable change in B. In a dynamical system the possibility of rapid, novel and unpredictable change always exists (Warren, et al., 1998).

Whereas linear models preclude the notion that fundamental to all organic and inorganic processes is the ability to spontaneously self-organize, nonlinear models suggest that, given the right circumstances, systems, including human systems, will structure and restructure themselves in novel and unexpected ways.

Central to understanding all complex dynamical systems are the notions of self-organization, nonlinearity, and chaos. When a system self-organizes it increases in size, and/or complexity, and/or organization and it does so as a result of a coherent systemic behaviour or pattern occurring without being explicitly imposed by the outside

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environment (Schiepek, et al., 1992). Nonlinearity refers to the lack of a direct and proportional relationship between a piece of information or perturbation and the reaction of the system (Masterpasqua, 1997). Nonlinearity exists where a system's output is not proportional to the magnitude of input (Vallacher, et al., 1993). The behaviour of the whole is qualitatively different from the sum of the individual parts (Thelan, et al., 1994) precisely because of the nonlinear interactions among the parts or between the parts and the environment (Kelso, 1995). Chaos refers to the study of unstable, aperiodic, or irregular behaviour within nonlinear, dynamical systems (Kellert, 1993, p.2). Two ideas that are fundamental to chaos theory are also fundamental to the larger metatheory of dynamical systems. First, within chaos theory, unstable, aperiodic behaviour is characterized by sensitive dependence on initial conditions and, therefore, there is always the potential for small insignificant changes in initial conditions to create large, nonproportional changes throughout the system. Second, underlying the apparent random behaviour of a system is a subtle form of order (Kellert, 1993) creating the quintessential paradox. Chaos, in the context of chaos theory, is the study of the phenomena of "orderly disorder" (Kellert, 1993, p.2) where what appears to be the random behaviour of a system is, in fact, a system en route to either self-organization or ultimate system destruction. To study chaos is to study pattern (Robertson, et al., 1995) or the subtle forms of underlying organization within apparently chaotic behaviour. This idea, that chaos is more than a state of utter confusion creating erratic and irregular discontinuities, but appears as the starting point in the search for a new pattern and order of existence, is being embraced by mental health professionals from schools of thought as diverse as behaviourism and Jungian psychology (Goerner, 1995).

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From a purely mathematical perspective the science of chaos is precise and exact and may be somewhat of a misnomer because what appeared to be chaotic, upon closer examination, was exceptionally ordered. On the winter day in 1961 (Gleick, 1987) that the seeds for a new science of chaos were sowed, an American meteorologist Edward Lorenz, accidentally discovered that two nearly identical computer run simulations of weather could diverge dramatically so that within a short time all similarity had vanished. Lorenz decided to examine one sequence of equations in more depth. He entered the data directly from an earlier printout. Instead of entering the sequence .05612 that the computer had been working with, Lorenz entered the rounded off sequence .056 (Gleick, 1987). The difference, one part in a thousand, was quite reasonably considered inconsequential. Not so, however, because this tiny apparently inconsequential change in initial conditions created huge changes in subsequent output. "In science it is well known that a chain of events can have a point of crisis that can magnify small changes . . . but, Lorenz's discovery meant that such points were everywhere and pervasive. Had Lorenz stopped at this point, he would have produced nothing more than bad news concerning the ability to forecast and predict weather patterns" (Gleick, 1987, p.23). His persistence revealed much more than randomness in his weather model. Embedded within and emerging from this apparent randomness, Lorenz discovered through tracing out his equations as a set of curves in a graph, the fine geometric pattern that has become the now-famous Lorenz attractor. The Lorenz attractor, once graphed, appeared as a beautifully ordered butterfly-shaped pattern.

From the perspective of the social sciences the question might become, "Is the 'butterfly,' or that orderly pattern underlying apparent randomness and chaos, always

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there?". While it has yet to be demonstrated mathematically in the social sciences, the notion of chaos is a useful metaphor to describe states of symptomatic chaos and self-organization. If the so-called 'butterfly' is viewed as analogous to the construct of self-organization and the system is an open, far-from-equilibrium nonlinear system, the answer to that question would be yes because the ability to self-organize or create patterns of greater complexity is characteristic of all open systems. And, at the heart of the theory of self-organization is understanding and unravelling exactly how those orderly patterns are formed in complex systems (Kelso, 1997).

Complex systems maintain themselves in a stable but far-from-equilibrium state until internal and external perturbations cause them to tumble into chaos and either cease to exist or self-organize into greater levels of complexity. When a system is far-from-equilibrium, it means that there is a large energy concentration or buildup and the energy in the field is not evenly distributed. Energy buildups create a pressure toward new energy flows. Both living and nonliving systems exist in far-from-equilibrium states (Goerner, 1995). Imagine a balloon that has just been released prior to the point of breaking, and you have an example of a nonliving system where the energy buildup and pressure in the field necessitates a new flow. Imagine a war zone and you have an example of living systems where the energy buildup and pressure in the field necessitates a new flow.

Dynamical systems theory studies and models open, interdependent, nonlinear, far-from-equilibrium systems with a central goal of creating models and modelling techniques that could apply to disparate problems inherent in all complex systems. Hence, the potential for a host of new interdisciplinary fields exists (Bar-Yam, 1997) and, conceivably, problems ranging from those encountered in particle physics to those

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encountered in the human response to trauma might be described through similar principles.

Trauma as a Dynamical Construct

The importance of creating a nonlinear, dynamical systems model of the trauma response lies in the formative power of theoretical redefinition. Theoretical models lend a seal of certainty to world views. Theories undergird ways of ordering the world and constructing reality.

Constructs such as self-organization, nonlinearity, and chaos provide theoretical underpinnings that can be used to uphold normative principles in the clinical assessment and intervention of trauma survivors. Both symptomatic and adaptive responses to trauma are a normal reaction to an abnormal situation and if therapist and client understand this and work from normative principles, rather than pathological ones, then greater acceptance of the client, the situation and the symptoms is a sequella (Lifton, 1988).

Within dynamical systems theory, chaos is a normal and necessary part of system evolution, as are the spontaneous creations of new patterns of being through the process of self-organization. Ideas of nonlinearity and chaos ensure that novel and unexpected solutions are always available and by exploring and identifying both linear and nonlinear possibilities, it becomes possible to frame nonlinearity, chaos, and interdependence as not only "central organizers of the components and patterns" (Shane, et al., 1997, p.13) of all living systems, but as necessary for continued transformation, growth and adaptability of the system.

Seeing the behaviour of a traumatized individual as self-organization serves to depotentiate highly pathological connotations. If behaviour is depathologized, it can more

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readily be reconstructed from a strength perspective, where the unique outcome is extended and augmented through the core therapeutic constructs of "empowerment, membership, regeneration, synergy" (Saleebey, 1992) and communication. Concomitant with such a view is the understanding that the debilitating effects of trauma represent "the best possible self-protective strategies for the individual" and represent the best possible means of serving that individual's adaptive needs in "an inadequate, unresponsive or abusive milieu" (Shane, et al., 1997, p.13).

Symptoms can be viewed as part of a response pattern whose purpose is not to prolong or destroy, but to heal. The "trauma response" (Everstine, et al., 1993) then becomes less of a collection of symptomatic problems and more of an expression of the human experience of trauma, both in its transformational and traumatic guises. By defining the trauma response as self-organizing it becomes possible to view the human response to trauma along a continuum from creative and transformational at one end, to symptomatic and debilitating at the other. Perceptions can shift from a focus that pertains to either extreme on the continuum and open to an inclusive approach to traumatized individuals where both transformational and symptomatic aspects are explored and defined as part of the process of self-organization following extreme trauma. Powerful symptomatic responses to trauma are rarely coupled and/or balanced with transformational and adaptive responses. Further, by viewing the trauma response along a continuum, a path might open into research directions that may not be available under current conceptualizations.

According to the Greek root "traumat" (Everstine, et al., 1993), to traumatize means to wound (Caruth, 1996, p.3). While still referring to an injury inflicted on the

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body, the word has also come to mean a wound inflicted upon the psyche and the mind. A traumatic experience creates a "breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world (Caruth, 1996, p.4), and is located not so much in the original event in the individual's past, but rather "in the way that its very unassimilated nature, the way it was precisely *not known* in the first instance, returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Caruth, 1996, p.4). The very essence of a traumatic experience is that it deluges an individual's and even a society's coping mechanisms. Unlike other forms of psychological disorders, the core issue of trauma lies not in the psychopathology of the individual but in the traumatic experience, which happens too fast and too unexpectedly to be fully known and is, therefore, unavailable to consciousness until it imposes itself again and again in the form of nightmares or intrusive remembering (van der Kolk, et al., 1996; Caruth, 1996).

Through the lens created by dynamical systems theory, traumatized populations such as refugees can be assessed from a strengths perspective. By exploring through a nonpathological lens the dynamical patterns of both coping with trauma and adapting to trauma, a knowledge base might evolve that leads researchers and clinicians into a greater understanding of the needs of traumatized individuals and groups. Moreover, through an understanding and application of the principles of dynamical systems theory, assessment formulations and intervention strategies might be designed that maximize an understanding of the interdependent biopsychosocial patterns that characterize the trauma response along its continuum from symptomatic to transformational.

On one hand, the refugee is a symbol of a society's failure to resolve conflict and all its underlying causes such as poverty, intolerance, antagonism, greed and persecution, and the human capacity to abuse and violate the rights of others. On the other hand, the

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refugee is a society's symbol of resilience, adaptability and success, in that individually and as a group they survive and recreate themselves and their traditions through the use of emergent and spontaneous self-organization.

When refugees flee their home, community or country, they do so because they are afraid of being murdered, raped, tortured, imprisoned, enslaved, robbed or starved (UNHCR, 1995). The disarray into which the life of the refugee descends represents disorder and uncertainty in the extreme. However, for the 26 refugees in this study, the epic journey which began with homelessness and terror and ended in resettlement stands as a testament to the human capacity to reestablish, reorder, restructure, and reorganize the self.

Self-organization, interconnectivity, and nonlinearity are all powerful ideas that can be woven into extant information on trauma to create a strengths based theoretical model upon which to build intervention and assessment techniques. Moreover, ideas of interconnectivity allow one to work with a traumatized individual in the context of an entire social order.

Trauma as a Social Construct

In an interdependent dynamical systems model, the effects of trauma will influence not only the life of the individual but the lives of many. From a dynamical systems perspective the traumatic experience(s) must be contextualized. Mass rapes in the Balkan wars, for example, were committed for political and social reasons. Occupying a woman's womb and diluting the enemy's seed with one's own is synonymous with occupying territory (Nordstrom, et al., 1995). Soil and blood, metaphors for male honour and control, means that rape was used as a weapon during war and that women are devalued as

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property during peace. Moreover, women carry the shame of the loss of men's honour and, therefore, often opt to say nothing of the atrocities they suffered. However, the sheer scale of violence against women made it impossible to hide (Nordstrom, et al., p.1995).

Dynamical systems, with its emphasis on shifting one's attention back and forth between system levels, allows one to contextualize on individual and biological, social and cultural, and psychological and emotional systems levels. In a dynamical model of human systems, networks of interacting, inter-creating processes of systems nested within systems evidence a high degree of interactive dynamical complexities within and between individuals, organizations and global human societies (Goertzel, 1994). The effects of trauma in such a model can be likened to an object being dropped into a pond, where the object is the traumatic event. The ripples are its effects, felt more strongly near the source but creating a circular, ever-widening and dispersed pattern of impact, and the water is the cosmic soup that contains humanity in all its experiential wisdom and folly.

The concept of "life-web events" (Miller, 1989) captures this idea. Traumatic events are life-web events. The 1993 three-day Russian coup sent the world stock markets reeling. At the outbreak and close of the Gulf War the world experienced a collective gasp and subsequent sigh of relief (Merry, 1995). The tremendous influx of refugees now entering Canada from former Yugoslavia, Africa, and Asia bring with them the experiences of torture, starvation, displacement, war and numerous other traumatic stressors. In this way, the reverberations of political systems that routinely sanction torture and genocidal warfare as a means of control are felt in the hospitals, clinics, schools and streets of predominantly white, middle-class North Americans, and in the offices of North American psychotherapists who struggle to create efficacious treatment plans while

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dealing with vicarious victimization.

As complexity grows within and between evolving changing systems, interconnectivity becomes richer. Awareness of developing complexity and interconnectivity is occurring faster than humanity's ability to deal with it by manifesting mutual aid and support, cooperation and empathy, and responsibility for and consciousness of, such levels of interdependence. This gap between growing complexity and interconnectivity and human systems' inability to create meaningful communication and relationships, creates an increase in uncertainty and its more potent sibling anxiety (Merry, 1995). When dealing specifically with interconnectivity and the effects of trauma, anxieties increase because interconnectivity can also be synonymous with contagion and psychic trauma has been described as perhaps one of the most contagious mental conditions known to humanity at this time (Early, 1993).

On both an individual and societal level, environmental as well as historical factors will determine how any system evolves, changes, and creates emergent complexity or self-organization. During a 200-day period, this study used interviews and self-report questionnaires to examine the evolution and self-organization of 26 individuals, using both environmental and historical factors as contextual determinants. Both the symptomatic and transformational aspects of the human response to trauma were explored. The major aspects of Chapter One include the following: a discussion of the theory of dynamical systems as related to the human response to trauma and the capacity of human beings as complex, systems to self-organize; a discussion of the traumatic history of the Balkans, refugees and the trauma of war; and finally, an application of dynamical systems theory to the war and its effects on the people of the Balkans.

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Chapter Two is an explication of the quantitative and qualitative methodologies used in this study. Ideas of interconnectivity, nonlinearity, and most especially the concept of self-organization played a large part in the analysis and collection of data. The human response to trauma is studied through multiple interviews designed to explore coping and symptomatology, and adaptation and transformation, from a dynamical systems perspective. Daily self-report measures of coping were quantitatively operationalized by the Impact of Event Scale - Revised (IES-Revised) (Horowitz, et al., 1979; Weiss, et al., 1995; Marmar, et al., 1996) which measures the three primary indicators of post traumatic stress: intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal (DSM-IV, 1994). Chapter Three consists of a discussion and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative findings focussing especially on how study participants adapt and self-organize out of chaos, and Chapter Four consists of conclusions and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER ONE

A Literature Review of the Theory of Dynamical Systems and Self-Organization as Applied to War-Devastated Bosnia and Its People

Trauma Within a Dynamical Systems Model

Traumatic events jolt people out of linear models of reality and catapult them into an experiential understanding of an overwhelmingly swift and changing, far-from-equilibrium dynamical world where input does not equal output and nonlinearity creates a whole that is more intricate and qualitatively different than the sum of its parts. In a nonlinear interdependent universe where all things are interwoven, linear models are shattered over and over again by the apparently random nature of traumatic events. A "low level of interest in victims' suffering" (Solomon, 1995, p.271), outright allegations of malingering, ascribing culpability to victims of rape and other crimes, and other blame-the-victim stances that are cross-culturally evidenced following traumatic events (Solomon, 1995) are, in part, an effort to maintain the mechanistic, linear, causal paradigm around which we structure our lives. If the victim can be blamed for what happened, then the world is not a random, malevolent, meaningless place where outcomes are illogical, nonlinear and apparently not contingent upon what one thinks and does (Janoff-Bulman, 1992).

These linear ideologies that organize our world view, reach deep into our religious, scientific, and philosophical roots. Dynamical systems theory, with its emphasis on nonlinearity, chaos, diversity, imperfections, anarchy, unpredictability, and conflict, stands in direct contrast to ideas of linearity, predictability and orderliness. The quintessential message of the science of complexity is that the world is nonlinear, and out of nonlinearity

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arises the information-rich chaos which all complex adaptive systems use as fodder to spontaneously self-organize (Albert, 1995).

Very simply put, perturbations, disruptions and disturbances are primary forces in self-organization. Fluctuations and perturbations continuously probe a system, allowing it to experience known patterns and, in effect, "feel its stability" (Kelso, 1997, p.16). When a far-from-equilibrium system begins to respond to both internal and external fluctuations because those fluctuations have reached a critical level, nonlinear interactions within the system and between the system and its environment can cause the system to tumble into chaos. When defined within the confines of chaos theory, however, this is not abject confusion but, rather, an enormous number of potential states densely packed together (Coveney, et al., 1995). Within this information-rich field, the system is forced to self-organize, thus discovering a new pattern of being. So common is this property and propensity to self-organize that it "underlies and bridges between the animate and the inanimate worlds" (Jantsch, 1980, p.19). This "spontaneous formation of structures, or the phenomenon of self-organization appears in a huge variety of systems from crystals and living cells to spiral galaxies" (Bushev, 1994, p.5) and even traumatized people. Because self-organization is so central to a dynamical systems view, it has been studied from several different perspectives. Prigogine and Stengers (1984) have shown thermodynamically that a spontaneous increase in system organization is a property of all open "dissipative structures." Haken's discussion of "synergetics" (1988), Greek for joint or co-action, and Maturana and Varela's (1992; Dalenoort, 1989) discussion of "autopoiesis," Greek for self-creation, have furthered the discussion on several different fronts.

Through the lens provided by dynamical systems theory, which emphasizes self-organization, chaos as an information-rich field of choice, and nonlinearity, one can speculate that severely traumatized human beings are exhibiting powerful attempts at adaptive, creative, self-organization subsequent to horrifying trauma and both symptomatic and adaptive strategies can be framed as meaningful and purposeful conditions. Through such a lens, traumatic events themselves provide points of deep instability or perturbations which ultimately act as central organizers of the change process and change potential.

The Trauma Response as a Continuum:
From Symptoms and Classification to Transformation and Adaptation

Traumatic stressors invariably involve change and severe ones, such as war, have a rapid onset, affect multiple domains of an individual's life, and the impact is considered to be pervasive. When considered along a continuum, however, the changes can manifest as debilitating, frightening symptomatic patterns at one end, and transformational, growth-oriented patterns at the other. From a dynamical systems perspective, the effects of trauma are both destructive and devastating and creative and transformational: two sides of the same coin. And, although individuals living in the wake of trauma may land more often on one side than the other, within such a model they are not one side or the other. They are the coin and, therefore, capable of both/and, rather than either/or, responses. The perspective taken here is that people can and do move through this continuum behaviourally manifesting both symptomatic and growth-oriented characteristics. Survivors of trauma, trauma researchers, and people who work with trauma survivors report positive as well as negative changes in behaviour and perceptions of the self

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following severe trauma (Tedeschi, et al., 1995; Lifton, 1993, 1988).

From a nosological perspective, the trauma response is described and addressed symptomatically, through predisposing characteristics, and through a unique physiology that develops as a result of long term traumatic stress (Davidson, et al., 1993).

From a transformational perspective, the trauma response, although always considered costly on all levels of functioning, can result in the survivor developing a capacity for insight and illumination that others, who have not suffered in the same way, have perhaps not developed quite so fully (Lifton, 1988). This this ability to transform suffering, has been termed "post traumatic growth" (PTG) (Tedeschi, et al., 1998, p.1).

Trauma and Nosology:
Symptoms, Predisposing Characteristics, Physiology

Symptoms

When defined from a symptomatic perspective or, as outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (1994), the response to trauma is classified as an anxiety disorder and individuals are given a diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) "if symptoms last more than one month and there is significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning" (DSM-VI, 1994, p.429). For a diagnosis of PTSD the person must be "exposed to a traumatic event in which that person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury and the individual's response must involve intense fear, helplessness or horror" (DSM-IV, 1994, p.427-8). PTSD is the only anxiety disorder for which an external event is specified as a diagnostic criterion (appendix A).

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Full-blown PTSD and subclinical post traumatic syndromes occur in a significant proportion of the population. One in seven is said to suffer from either PTSD or post-traumatic syndrome (Davidson, et al., 1993). About one-quarter of the individuals who are exposed to traumatic events go on to develop full-blown PTSD, with rape routinely producing the highest rates (Meichenbaum, 1994, p.23). Etiologically, research has linked numerous diagnostic categories such as PTSD, anxiety disorders, borderline personality disorder and multiple personality disorder, as well as all auxiliary and differential diagnoses associated with these major disorders (such as major depression, eating disorders, substance dependency, adjustment disorders, anxiety disorders), to traumatic events such as rape, kidnapping, torture, war, childhood sexual abuse and spousal assault (Davidson, et al., 1993).

People who suffer from the long-term effects of trauma are most commonly diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, depressive disorders and hysterical personality disorder (Davidson, et al., 1993). Somatization disorder is a further diagnosis often received by traumatized individuals and a study of 60 women with somatization disorder found that fully 55 percent had been sexually molested as children (Morrison, 1989). Clinicians who work with clients that have been severely traumatized are aware of the heterogeneity of the symptomatic response to trauma. The response to trauma, at one time or another, might mimic every disorder from schizophrenia to major depressive disorder (Davidson, et al., 1993). Symptomatically, dysregulation as a result of trauma is defined as difficulty in biological, psychological and social regulation that results in what has been defined as impaired, abnormal or pathological behaviour that is highly resistant to change (van der Kolk, et al., 1996).

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PTSD response patterns are organized for diagnostic purposes into three major areas of concern: persistent re-experiencing of the traumatic event through intrusive and persistent memories, thoughts and/or images of the trauma, dreams, affective or environmental triggers, and waking hallucinations or flashbacks; avoidance of any stimuli associated with the trauma including thoughts, feelings, and people and places that might remind one of the trauma, coupled with a numbing of general responsiveness; and hypervigilance and symptoms of increased arousal (DSM-IV, 1994). Extreme feelings of helplessness and powerlessness disrupt existing psychic structures.

Previously held beliefs, images and world views are shattered and the sufferer struggles against an internal, terror-based discomfort that is avoided at all costs. Chronic anxiety accompanied by an inability to engage in the flow of one's life are common outcomes of extreme trauma (Lifton, 1988).

Excessive somatization couples with insomnia and numerous other somatic symptoms such as headaches, gastrointestinal problems, abdominal, back and pelvic pain, tremors, choking, nausea and nonspecific pain. These somatizations are durable and can increase over time (Davidson, et al., 1993). Along with hypervigilance and avoidance and numbing, individuals deal with dissociation, sharp and often explosive changes of affect and outbursts of anger, feelings of detachment from others, apparently inexplicable anxiety and agitation, sleep disorders, confusion as to identity formation, and sometimes, repeated self harming behaviour such as putting oneself into a dangerous situation, or slashing and burning of the skin. Moreover, survivors of prolonged trauma understandably exhibit characterological changes and differences which often result in tremendous problems in interpersonal relatedness (Davidson, et al., 1996).

Predisposing Characteristics

Individuals are also believed to be predisposed to the development of troublesome

and persistent traumatic symptoms depending upon certain predisposing characteristics.

These characteristics have been categorized as follows: 1) predisposition due to pre-

existing psychopathology; 2) predisposition due to pre-existing traits or characteristics;

and 3) predisposition due to pre-existing experience of stressors in family of origin

(Emery, et al., 1991) where the degree of trauma suffered in childhood is thought to affect

the adult's predisposition toward developing serious and debilitating traumatic symptoms

(Solomon, 1993).

Genetic vulnerability to stress, prehistory of traumatic experiences including early

childhood and family of origin experiences, personality characteristics, and sense of

control over life events are all variables which affect how an individual deals with

traumatic experiences. Moreover, social and cultural ideologies about the human response

to trauma, adequate or inadequate family support, recent life stressors, and recent heavy

use of drugs or alcohol (Emery, et al., 1991) also impact on the development of traumatic

symptomatology.

The Biology of Trauma

Historically, biological theories of trauma date back to Freud, Janet and Charcot

but it was Abraham Kardiner who, in 1941, first described the full syndrome. Kardiner

coined the term "physioneurosis," thus encompassing both psychological and

physiological components. Kardiner's work on World War I and II veterans has been

highly influential in delineating modern biological approaches to the effects of trauma

(Friedman, et al., 1991; Pitman, et al., 1987).

Biological research that describes current models of the long term effects of trauma

falls into one of at least three highly interconnected models: 1) biological alterations in

central noradrenergic activity; 2) hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical (HPA) axis

dysregulation; and 3) dysregulation of the endogenous opioid systems (Shalev, 1993;

Friedman, et al., 1991) (see appendix B).

Post Traumatic Growth:
Trauma as Transformation and Adaptation

Although transformational growth following trauma has been acknowledged for

centuries in religious and literary themes, studying the experiences of people who not only

cope with trauma but use it as a means to promote genuine growth and development, is in

its infancy. "Until the 1980s, researchers almost never set out specifically to investigate

post traumatic growth or to understand the processes involved in its emergence"

(Tedeschi, et al., 1998, p.6). Post traumatic growth appears to be more than a coping

mechanism, and is believed to constitute "significant beneficial changes in the cognitive

and emotional life of an individual that may have behavioural implications as well"

(Tedeschi, et al., 1998, p.3).

Adaptive, positive changes in behaviour include the following: increases in coping

skills, self-confidence, self-knowledge and self-esteem; increases in feelings of self-

reliance and strength of character; recognition and appreciation of vulnerability and

sensitivity; and changes in values and behaviour within relationships. Positive relational

changes cited by survivors of severe trauma include a greater degree of self-disclosure and

emotional expressiveness, and greater levels of compassion, empathy and effort (Tedeschi,

et al., 1995).

Adaptive and transformational behaviours that occur as a result of trauma have been characterized in the literature as "resilient" (Anthony, et al., 1987), "transcendent" (Butz, 1992), and indicative of a "will to meaning" (Frankl, 1977). Lifton (1993) has referred to this quality of resilience as the "Protean self" named after the Greek sea god Proteus, who was capable of taking many forms. The Protean self emerges out of the confusion and loss that follows from social, emotional, and physical buffeting by unmanageable forces.

Initially, given a serious enough traumatic event, almost everyone will respond ineffectually. The level of distress is unmanageable, old cognitions are challenged and any behavioural response appears ineffectual in regaining control of the situation. As the individual moves through time and continues to work within the situation, secondary responses that consist of revisions of existing schemas become necessary. "As aspects of the trauma are accepted, goals are revised, new meaning is constructed, and cognitive schemas are altered" (O'Leary, et al., 1998, p.140).

The restless and agonizing search for a larger meaning that synthesizes the confusion within the survivor is characteristic of transforming traumatic stress, as is a fluidity of affect and cognition that stops short of fragmentation (Lifton, 1993). Creating growth and transformational meaning in the aftermath of suffering is viewed as more powerful than any other motivational factor, including sex, safety, pleasure, achievement, comfort and power (Frankl, 1977; Lantz, 1992). In Victor Frankl's system of treatment (Frankl, 1977) for example, meaning can be created in any circumstances, even the Nazi death camps. When meaning-making is repressed due to biological or neurological illness or powerful reactions to physical and emotional pain, then a meaning vacuum on the

conscious level of awareness is created and tends to fill with depression, anxiety, substance abuse and other forms of problematic behaviour (Lantz, 1992).

The experience of Palestinian children living under Israeli military occupation exemplifies the above idea. During the Palestinian national uprising or Intifada, one in 22 children was seriously injured by gunfire, beatings, or tear gas, and countless others witnessed shocking cruelty and brutality. When peace was declared and the treaty formalized, children who participated in Palestinian flag-raising ceremonies suffered less from low self-esteem and "neuroticism than those who did not" (Qouta, et al., 1995) attend the ceremonies.

"Exposure to traumatic experiences decreased self-esteem and increased neuroticism even after the peace treaty, but only among children who refused to participate in the flag-raising festivities. . . . Participating in the flag-raising festivities helped to mitigate the effects of earlier traumatic experiences and whether or not the children participated was determined by the political and religious affiliations of the child's family" (Qouta, et al., 1995, p.1202-1205).

The peace treaty alone was not decisive in mitigating effects of earlier war trauma. The children needed a way to create meaning from the horrors of war and it would appear from the study results that the flag-raising ceremonies provided a concretized and participatory form of meaning-making. As nonlinear, nonpathological models that embrace the whole of the human response to trauma are developed, emergent characteristics of resilience and the will to create meaning and transcendence may encourage the ongoing development of a clinical language that encompasses the process of healthy adaptation to trauma in an uncertain world, as well as traumatic symptomatology.

If Frankl's theorizing on meaning-making is extended to a dynamical systems framework, then meaning-making can be conceptualized as germane to the self-organization process. Bringing repressed meanings to the surface and discovering or rediscovering meaning has the potential to transform the pain of trauma into unique personal and social opportunities for self-transcendence (Frankl, 1977). A cornerstone of the therapeutic work entails engaging the individual in a process of integration where the traumatized self becomes part of some larger, meaningful whole.

Although there is always a profound acknowledgment that the traumatic experience(s) has forever changed the self, extant literature would indicate that the individual tends to focus on what is meaningful to survival in order to live, bear witness and/or serve God (Kahana, et al., 1988, p.62). It is also possible that one may wish to exact revenge. Integration of such oppositional cognitions and affect is central to the transformation of trauma.

The transformational aspects of struggling with trauma reach beyond coping and into a creative encounter with life where "the fruit of the wisdom is not in the solution to (and control of) mysteries" (Scott, 1971, p.186-7), but in knowing that transformation is possible even while living under the shadow of life's uncertainties. In transforming trauma, a new psychic structure that lies outside known experiences must be created. Creativity, then, is a vital aspect of dealing with traumatic events. When chaotic and creative processes afford new meanings, which culminate in self-organization, then "a traumatic experience can also become a transforming experience of great positive value" (Agger, 1994, p.14).

The Trauma Response Along a Dynamical Systems Continuum

The Trauma Response and Chaos Theory:
Attractors and Bifurcation Points

Out of the rigorous mathematical exploration of chaos two seminal ideas have
emerged that, at least theoretically, lend themselves to the formulation and furtherance of a
dynamical systems theory of trauma. First, the idea that a subtle form of underlying order
and pattern guides a system's transformation and emergence from chaos, brings into focus
one of the most fascinating ideas to come out of dynamical systems theory, the idea of a
"system attractor." A system attractor is defined as the point or pattern toward which "all
nearby trajectories tend" (Abraham, 1995, p. 35). The system attractor, or trajectory[1] into
which all other trajectories in the vicinity are pulled, is a subset of all possible system
behaviours. The second seminal idea to emerge from the study of chaos concerns the
notion of bifurcation points, or critical places of choice within a system's evolution as it
tumbles through chaos toward eventual self-organization or system disintegration and
death. The potential for apparently spontaneous and discontinuous change exists at
bifurcation or critical choice points in a system's evolution. Understanding how
discontinuous forms of change occur when a system is tumbling toward chaos necessitates
some understanding of the nature of critical choice points.

Hence, theoretically, the study of chaos attends not only to underlying patterns of
order within chaos, but also focusses on discontinuous, abrupt and spontaneous forms of
change. Each of these ideas will be defined, discussed and woven into a dynamical
systems theory of the human response to trauma.

Bifurcations in the Human Response to Trauma

Complex adaptive dynamical systems consist of sets of coherent, evolving

interactive processes which manifest temporarily in globally stable structures that are

always open to evolution and change (Jantsch, 1980). Transformational change in a

temporarily stabilized structure is possible when one emerges from chaos having created

new meanings and patterns of behaviour that better serve the evolution, growth and

learning of the organism.

Severe trauma causes adaptive psychological structures to crumble. Faced with

such shatteringly dissipative forces, human beings enter chaos. "Chaos in the human

psyche seems to share many dynamical properties of chaos as it is expressed in chaos

theory" (Butz, 1992, p.830). Psychologically, transforming trauma has been

conceptualized (Butz, 1992; Jung, 1966) as the process of making the unconscious

conscious, which is sometimes referred to as the "transcendent function" (Jung, 1966,

p.121). The transcendent function is characterized by five main stages: the initial

appearance of chaos; the struggle against chaos; the acceptance of chaos; a "psychic

death"; and a rebirth or transcendence (Butz, 1992, p.828). In dynamical systems

terminology, the transcendent function is actually spontaneous self-organization, and the

five stages become a nonlinear process where an initial encounter with a traumatic event

leads to a cascade into chaos, the appearance of chaos, movement into systemic self-

organization or death, and finally, a new and emergent evolutionary complexity.

Chaos plays a vital role in self-organization. In order for a system to self-organize

it must go through periods of chaos where chaos is seen to be both a creative and

disruptive force that leads systems along pathways to change. All nonlinear systems as

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they evolve and change must invoke transitions to chaos. Chaos is not only a harbinger of change, but without it any system stagnates and/or dies (Wieland-Burston, 1992). Traumatic junctures create chaos and the pathway to and through chaos is replete with critically unstable points of choice or bifurcations.

The historical record of human evolutionary choices at bifurcation points is etched in the shape of our lungs, our brains, and in the embryonic stages we pass through in utero where we resemble first fish, then amphibians and reptiles. "Enfolded in all shapes and processes that make us unique, in the chemical reactions of our cells and the shape of our nerve nets, are thousands upon thousands of bifurcation points constituting a living chronology of the choices by which we evolved as a system from the primordial single cell to our present form" (Briggs, et al., 1989, p.144). Bifurcations, or critical unstable points within a system's evolution that provide a path to chaos, are the points where something novel is likely to appear (Abraham, et al., 1995).

As a far-from-equilibrium system is perturbed, it moves away from a steady state and reaches a choice point or the first bifurcation point away from equilibrium. Here, the first fork in the road, or bifurcation, appears and two distinct behaviours are possible. As perturbations increase, these bifurcation points branch into more possible options and soon bifurcations begin to occur with overwhelming frequency. Once a system passes a certain critical point in the process, it tumbles into a bifurcation cascade and then into chaos. This critical point is called period doubling, where a period is defined as the amount of time it takes for a system to complete a cycle and return to its original state, and period doubling is defined as a doubling of the time it takes for a system to oscillate back to its starting point (Briggs et al., 1989). Following period doubling, the system tumbles into a

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bifurcation cascade and then into chaos. "Sequences of period-doubling bifurcations ending in chaos are ubiquitous features of dynamical systems" (Lorenz, 1993, p.71).

As bifurcations increase, behavioural patterns within a system become increasingly unstable, often displaying both outmoded and new patterns intermittently. Dramatic qualitative changes occur in a system's behaviour at bifurcation points and it is at or just beyond a bifurcation point where a system loses predictability (Vallacher, et al., 1993). One of the most common ways to outline the manner in which a system bifurcates is the Feigenbaum diagram (see figure III) which can be viewed as that which underlies dynamical processes as they make the transition from global stability to full-blown chaos (Guastello, 1995).

As bifurcations multiply, the system's evolutionary field is rich with probabilities, choices and possible futures. Nonlinearity within chaos ensures the possibility of novel outcomes which appear to arise from out of nowhere. Nonlinearity within chaos creates rich diversity. By the same token, although outcomes in such a model are not predictable and elements are believed to mutually influence each other "in a fashion that is relatively unpredictable, because the system is capable of self-organizing at certain points in the interaction, there is a relatively predictable aspect within the nonlinearity" (Shane, et al., 1997, p.31).

Bifurcations, or points where a system is highly sensitive to perturbations or changes in events and activities and even small perturbations or fluctuations are amplified, are an important idea in the conceptualization, understanding and treatment of trauma for several reasons.

First, our current conceptualizations of chaos as something to be avoided do not

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Figure III
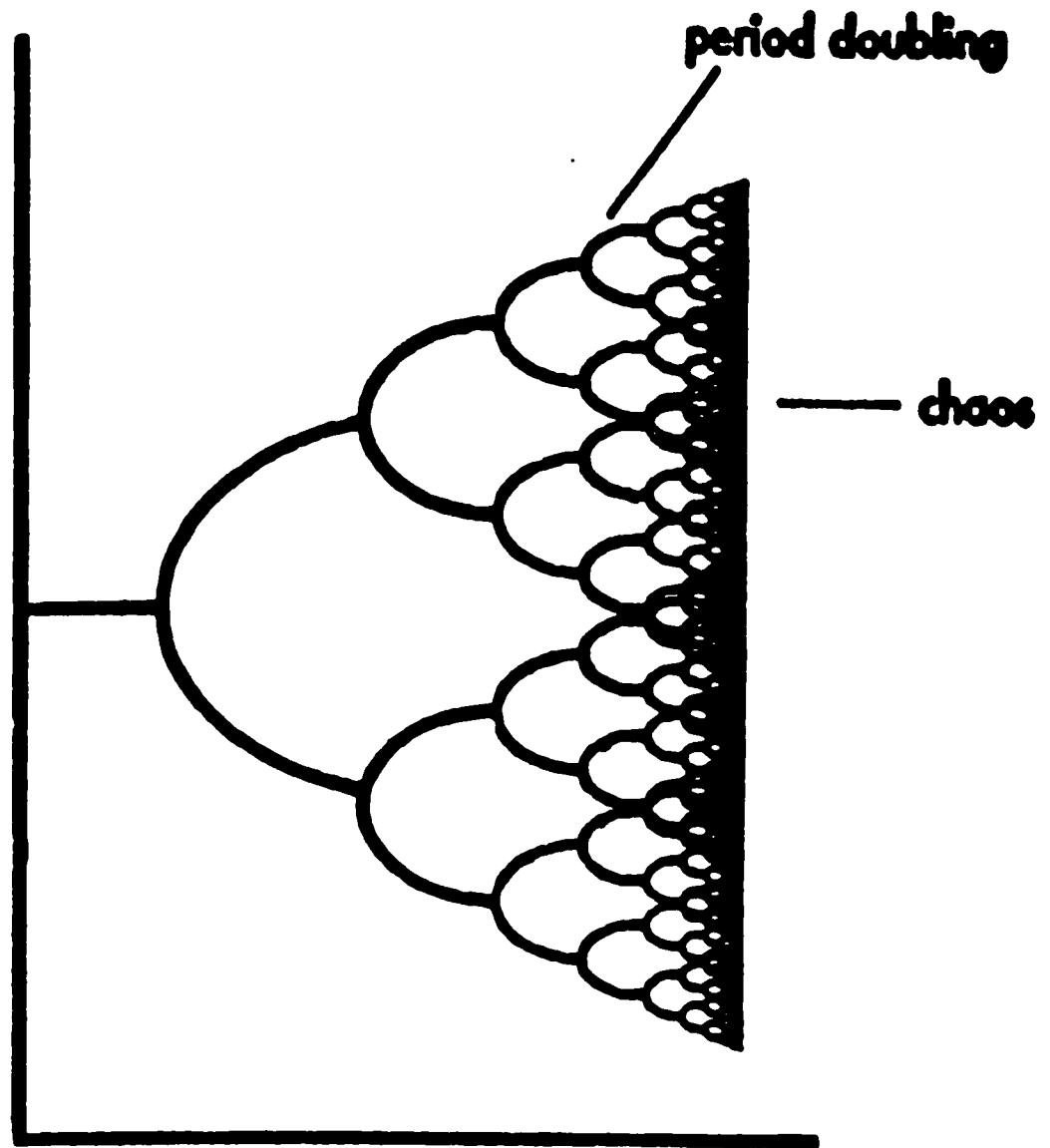
This representation of what is referred to as a Feigenbaum diagram, depicts a simplified version of the underlying dynamical process of a system en route to chaos. Each bifurcation means that the pattern is breaking down a step further. Beyond a certain point, called period doubling, periodicity gives way to chaos ar fluctuations do not settle down.

allow us to view chaos as being undergirded by a multiplicity of choices or critical bifurcation points. As we live through chaos we are in fact living through a rapidly changing field that is rich with potent points of choice and change. By considering chaos in a dynamical rather than popular light, we might begin to reexamine the function of chaos in human evolution as well as its relationship to change. Our conscious denial of the value of chaos is seriously detrimental to us in that when it strikes we have no appropriate models within which to frame it. Three hundred years of Newtonian mechanics, Cartesian duality, reductionist rationality and linear causality have indeed influenced our ability to understand nonlinearity, reciprocal causality and the emergent complexity of complex systems as whole entities (Perna, 1997). The adaptive potential in chaotic events can only be appreciated through understanding that dynamical systems will descend into chaos and evolve and change as a result, precisely because chaos represents the system's evolutionary wisdom. By rejecting chaos a priori, "we are relatively helpless when it strikes" (Wieland-Burston, 1992, p.4), whether it is in the form of an automobile accident, a rape, or a war.

Second, it becomes possible to reevaluate our models of chaos and begin to see chaos not as something to be avoided but as something that, as an inevitable occurrence in all evolving, far-from-equilibrium systems, is not necessarily an end in itself but a new beginning. One of the major problems that occurs as a result of emotional numbing is that people appear to need high levels of outside stimulation to feel alive. This is commonly observed and clinically categorized as excessive amounts of "chaos" in survivors' lives (Lifton, 1967; McFarlane, et al., 1996; Davidson, et al., 1993). However, chaos in popular usage is never defined as interwoven with order or consistent with potent and critical

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change points. Persistent encounters with excessive amounts of chaos can create considerable movement toward possible healing and self-organization where critical bifurcations might actively encourage the emergence of a new order of complexity. Encounters with chaos continually offer the individual an opportunity to enter into chaos and self-organize, thereby creating levels of even greater complexity. Nonequilibrium conditions create a source of vital information where far-from-equilibrium order derives from the very conditions of the system's nonequilibrium and disorder (Meyer, 1991). Systems, given enough perturbations will not seek to return to homeostasis and in fact after a certain point (i.e., period doubling) usually cannot return to homeostasis. Rather, systems will use perturbations to create new and more adaptive structures of greater complexity.

Finally, in the intervention and treatment of traumatized individuals it may prove useful to facilitate a client's process toward chaos rather than toward the status quo. Because all nonlinear systems, as they evolve and change, must invoke transitions to chaos ". . . it makes sense that a psyche that is almost overwhelmed by anxiety would evolve toward chaos both to dissipate anxiety and to adapt" (Perna, 1997, p.106). The flow or turbulence inherent in chaos is used as a building block toward the emergence of greater levels of complexity and adaptability.

"From a traditional (psychotherapeutic) point of view equilibrium and stability indicate mental health. Disequilibrium and disorder define pathology. . . . To the extent that psychotherapists accept stability and order as hallmarks of health they are an accomplice in the client's own assumption that disequilibrium, complexity and chaos are signs of sickness and thus to be avoided" (Masterpasqua, 1997, pp.36-7). Trauma

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continually brings both the culture and the individual to bifurcations where patterns of behaviour are highly susceptible to change and open to opportunities for self-organization and learning. At issue in the trauma response is the human capacity to absorb suffering, learn from it, and self-organize in more complex and intricate ways. Within such a model the guiding rationale for clinical interventions is the facilitation, recognition, and actualization of novel possibilities. The effects of trauma impact on the individual such that a series of critical bifurcation points that cascade the individual into chaos occurs, and because bifurcation points are points of high susceptibility to choice and change, the possibility of novel behaviour is always present (Abraham, et al., 1995).

As in many forms of therapy, intervention strategies can then be designed to acknowledge, explore, and explicate the shapes and patterns that might characterize novel and unique outcomes as well as maximize the potential for transformation. The difference, however, lies in how dynamical systems theory is used to inform practice.

Finding nodal points of intervention in a nonlinear model requires studying feedback loops within the system as a whole in an attempt to find those nodes or critical points that are resistant to change and those that are open to change (Briggs, et al., 1989). Feedback loops, or abstract patterns of relationships embedded in physical structures or in the activities of living organisms (Capra, 1996, p.64), are the behaviour codes that reveal pattern in a system. Studying feedback loops or behaviour patterns will provide insight into bifurcation points and, therefore, may provide powerful nodal points of intervention. For example, an individual trauma survivor who is experiencing active flashbacks, nightmares, or reliving of the trauma is working through a feedback loop and could conceivably be approaching chaos or actively involved in chaotic behaviour. At such

points, in a nonlinear dynamical systems model, the individual is highly sensitive and small perturbations or fluctuations are amplified. Expect novel behaviour at bifurcation points precisely because the potential for change is inherently high at these times.

To summarize, perturbations are seen as primary forces in self-organization. Chaos is seen as the harbinger of change and signals the existence of underlying bifurcations points and, therefore, systematic susceptibility to change and novel behaviour.

Models of complexity and nonlinearity provide a starting place for the exploration of how dynamical living systems evolve, change, spontaneously become chaotic and then either reorganize into greater levels of complexity or die (Briggs, et al., 1989). Integrating the ideas of chaos theory with conceptualizations of trauma and its assessment and treatment has the potential to broaden the understanding of the trauma response. Inherent in the constructs are not just the collapse of the current structure of the self or the society along all referential planes. Included in the constructs are the possibilities of systemic self-organization into new forms and structures. For example, the evolution from victim to social activist appears to entail a collapse and a restructuring of the self as does the evolution of refugee to immigrant and citizen.

Attractors in the Human Response to Trauma

System attractors are defined as key to understanding how complex, dynamical systems self-organize. Many of the mathematical arguments to support the existence of attractors have come from the work of David Ruelle (Ruelle, 1991; Priesmeyer, 1992). As entropy or disorganized energy increases in a system, Ruelle reasoned that much of the behaviour of the system could be explained by the system's tendency to move toward some underlying pattern or attractor. Within dynamical systems there are four types of

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attractors. An attractor can be a fixed or single point attractor where the system has zero dimensions because all trajectories within the space tend toward a single point. An attractor can also be periodic. In this case, the system returns to the same point in state space after a cycle of a particular length and duration. Because the resulting limit cycle is a line, this type of attractor has a dimension of one. A third version of attractor is the quasiperiodic attractor. Although it is similar to a periodic attractor in that cycles are of a fixed length and duration, the system never precisely revisits points in state space, that is, the cycle never precisely repeats itself. A quasiperiodic attractor is at least two-dimensional as it takes two periods to constitute one cycle (Vallacher, et al., 1993). An example of a quasiperiodic attractor is the way one brushes one's teeth, the same but slightly different each time (Merry, 1995).

Point and periodic attractors describe predictable behaviours where systems decay gently to a fixed point or oscillate in well-mannered limit-cycles. This does not, however, describe the unpredictable behaviour of a nonlinear system. With the advent of the strange or chaotic attractor it became possible to facilitate the description of the behaviour of nonlinear, chaotic systems. Because this is a nonlinear world, chaotic attractors are found to abound. "Made up of an infinite number of points representing potential trajectories of the system" (Albert, 1995, p.23), a chaotic attractor does not close on itself as does a closed loop periodic attractor but, rather, folds, stretches and goes through all manners of contortions such that one cannot know where the system will eventually end up (Cambel, 1993; Parker, 1996).

In a strange or chaotic attractor a point never repeats its exact motion (Robertson, et al., 1995), although chaotic attractors do demonstrate some pattern and regularity. This

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is important in gaining insight into systems that appear random but have some underlying pattern (Cambel, 1993) generated by the system attractor. Chaotic attractors constitute much of a system's self-organization because they box behaviour of the system into small parts of available state space.

Chaotic attractors exist in what is referred to as "phase space." Phase space is an abstract mathematical space (Capra, 1996) which allows numbers to be turned into pictures (Gleick, 1987). It is "the playing field of dynamic phenomena" (Cambel, 1993, p.59) where a geometric map is created and the design dynamically and visually articulates the way in which a system moves and transforms (Briggs, et al., 1989). This hypothetical, multidimensional space contains as many dimensions as the number of variables needed to describe the system's movement (Lorenz, 1993). Chaotic attractors, which are characteristically sensitive to initial conditions, can be of high or low dimensionality (Kauffman, 1993) and have respectively greater and fewer degrees of freedom. Degrees of freedom represent the number of states or dimensions a system can potentially adopt at any moment and is, therefore, related to the number of variables within that system (Freeman, 1995, p.27). Chaotic attractors can be of a low dimensionality even in a high dimensional space and from the point of view of the entire phase space the attractor can be somewhat insignificant except that it is that portion of phase space into which a system is drawn. Evolution toward an attractor is a general property of dynamical systems (Vallacher, et al., 1993).

Because "a strange attractor, when it exists, is truly the heart of a chaotic dynamical system" (Lorenz, 1993, p.50), I am hypothesizing that in a biopsychosocial dynamical systems model of the trauma response the heart of the system is found in either

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the transformational stress response or the symptomatic response. It is possible for a system to have more than one attractor and it is toward one or the other or both of these two bounded attractors that an individual will evolve after a traumatic encounter.

The human response to trauma, as hypothesized here, has at its core two attractors: 1) the traumatic stress response pattern which corresponds to what in other models is called post traumatic stress disorder; and 2) the transformational response which corresponds to post traumatic growth. In a dynamical systems model, these two attractors will organize an individual's response to trauma. These attractor states represent the extreme adaptivity of highly complex, dynamical living systems like ourselves which, like all other living systems over the last 3.8 billion years of continuous biopsychosocial evolution, have evolved in the direction of overall complexity (Miller, et al., 1990). Further, I am hypothesizing that from a dynamical systems perspective, individuals have the capacity to organize around either and/or both attractors.

Dissociation: The Core of the Symptomatic Attractor

In a linear model, organization around traumatic symptoms has pathological connotations. Relationships (including therapeutic ones) with severely traumatized people are characterized as difficult in that the "other" is often idealized. Simultaneously, however, an attempt is made to recreate abusive situations through boundary violations, conflict, and attempts at exploitation. The hope is that the abuse will not be repeated but, in fact, the fear is that it will (Mitchell, 1993). Such behaviour is seen to be "motivated by complex deformations of the identity which result in a malignant sense of self. The self is seen as guilty, evil, contaminated and in some way damaged beyond redemption. An integrated sense of self is deemed impossible because the sense of self is highly unstable.

This lack of stability in one's sense of self and the splitting of inner representations of self and others is considered by some theorists to be the central underlying problem" (Davidson, et al., 1993, p.223). As well, a splitting off of affect or memory occurs. This results in forgetting and material is removed from consciousness or conscious memory and relegated to the unconscious.

In a nonequilibrium-based nonlinear model, these same characteristics can be viewed as perturbations to the system and the very prima materia that will move the individual into chaos and eventual self-organization. Moreover, the so-called "deformations of identity" (Davidson, et al., 1993) are viewed as consistent opportunities and invitations for the individual to enter into full-blown chaos and subsequent reorganization or system death.

Dissociation, which is considered to be the major defense used against the overwhelming anxiety of trauma, is defined as a "disturbance or alteration in the normally integrative functions of identity, memory, or consciousness" (Spiegel, et al., 1988, p.303). So fundamental is dissociation in the human response to trauma that characteristics of the actual stressor are less predictive of outcomes than degree of dissociation at the moment of the traumatic event. In other words, degree of dissociation is believed to be the characteristic which predicts traumatic symptomatology and level of adjustment at follow-up intervals regardless of the actual stressor (Davidson, et al., 1993).

People who have been imprisoned either through war, torture, or childhood sexual abuse become adept at altering consciousness and thereby shifting what would otherwise be an unbearable reality. Shifts in time sense, identity, memory and concentration, all characteristics of dissociation, are almost universally reported by clinicians and

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researchers working with survivors of prolonged trauma. In the case of multiple

personality disorder which is characterized by the presence of two or more distinct

identities or personality states that recurrently take control of behaviour (DSM-IV, 1994),

for example, the dissociative capacities are developed to the extreme (Putnam, 1989;

Linehan, 1993) and the result is a profound shift in human consciousness.

In a nonlinear model, this profound shift in human consciousness exemplifies a

startlingly novel reaction to extreme conditions which indicate powerful self-organization

processes. Goertzel (1994) has suggested that underlying dissociative identity disorder

(formerly called multiple personality disorder), is a highly structured, ordered state where

the trauma survivor imposes order on that which cannot reasonably be ordered. The mind

is viewed as a network of interacting, inter-creating processes in which logic thrives on

chaos and chaos on logic and the dissociation that "might first seem to be an obstruction to

logic, is in fact necessary to the evolution of useful logic-guided systems within the mental

network" (Goertzel, 1994, p.242) of the trauma survivor.

Dissociative experiences are necessary and natural features of mental life. However

dissociated memories seem to enter the mind and disappear until certain conditions trigger

them at which time they pop up with the intensity of a large and terrifying jack-in-the-box.

Traumatic memories may return as physical sensations, horrific images and nightmares,

behavioural reenactments or any combination of these. In linear models the suggestion is

that these dissociated images and experiences are without adaptive function or value (van

der Kolk, et al., 1991) because they cannot be integrated due to the pain and anxiety

attached to the memories.

In a dynamical systems model these same painful dissociated images and the

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affective states connected to them are not without adaptive function or value. Dissociated memories are defined as "traumatic subnetworks" (Goertzel, 1994) where the adaptive value and function lie in the very fact that the memories continue to exist. With a seeming life of their own, chaotically bursting into consciousness along with the affective states, dissociated memories ensure that the individual remembers that trauma exists and that it remains to be integrated. On an ongoing basis, opportunities are created to deal with the unintegrated pain, anxiety and confusion. The attractor continues to organize the individual's experience in a highly structured manner offering opportunities to reorganize these memories by coupling them with higher-level verbal and cognitive networks. Traumatic subnetworks and the attractors that organize them provide opportunities to integrate what, paradoxically, seems impossible to integrate.

Dynamical Cultural and Social Dimensions of the Trauma Response

A nonlinear dynamical model of the trauma response requires not only some understanding of the adaptivity and dynamical potential of the individual as a complex living system, but also some understanding of the social and political issues generated from the larger society. A systemic perspective is an interdependent one. Therefore, contextualizing the traumatized individual within a social and cultural dimension is crucial to understanding and treating that individual. Further, by including a sociocultural perspective in any working model of the trauma response, it becomes possible to think in interdependent terms about both the individual and the web of relationships that creates, sustains and legitimizes violent acts of social, corporate, political and personal abuse, as well as acts of war and political aggression. System levels are conceptualized as nested rather than tiered and consist of microscopic, mesoscopic and macroscopic elements which

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are defined according to the specific experimental design and unit of analysis being investigated.

The microscopic level of a system is the smallest unit, or the innermost level that can reasonably be investigated in the specific analysis of interacting biopsychosocial processes (Schiepek, et al., 1992). The mesoscopic system level is defined in terms of the intermediate level of the system. The mesoscopic level mediates between the microscopic and macroscopic system levels. If the microscopic system is defined as the individual, for example, then the mesoscopic level would consist of family influence and beliefs or some other intermediate systemic level of influence. The macroscopic layer within this nested systems approach is defined as the "overarching patterns of ideology and organization of the social institutions common to a particular culture or subculture" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.8). The larger context within which a traumatic event occurs includes the economic and political beliefs, and social policies and processes which create ready-made interpretations of events, especially traumatic ones.

Complex systems contain many interacting, interwoven and interconnected parts and when trauma strikes an individual it usually does so suddenly and with such brutal force that the individual is psychically torn apart. Collectively, trauma tears apart the basic tissue of social life and damages the bonds which attach people and affords them a sense of communality (Erikson, 1994). The idea that traumatic events affect not just an individual but also the connective tissue that creates and bonds community, allows one to think in terms of energetic fields of reality where the effects of trauma reverberate across boundaries and the distinction between self and other, inner and outer, collective and individual becomes less rigid. The field of inquiry and the unit of analysis shifts from the

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individual's response to, and healing from the effects of, trauma to the interdependent web itself. Intricate interconnections that cannot even be conceptualized within a linear framework can be identified in a nonlinear model.

Exchanges among elements of an open system are pervasive. Massive interdependence is inherent in open systems, and the trauma response as it reverberates throughout the social web creates a coupling that moves along the arrow of time creating individual and societal intergenerational patterns of response to trauma. For example, subsequent to the 1967 Six-Day War, studies confirmed that second-generation Holocaust survivors were far more likely to develop full-blown, persistent symptomatic responses than those whose parents were not survivors (Solomon, 1993).

Stress, grief, trauma and disaster must be continually managed at all system levels and continued abuse and violence depends on maintaining silence and denial. Secrecy and silence are the weapons used by perpetrators of violence (Herman, 1992; Basoglu, 1992; van der Veer, 1992). Whether violence is enacted upon an individual or an entire society, "the ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness" or simply pretend they did not happen (Herman, 1992, p.1). When immigrants or refugees from war-torn parts of the world arrive in Canada, for example, they are specifically warned by officials not to speak about their war-time experience as it may hinder their ability to obtain work. They are warned that Canadian employers are not interested in their story and all aspects of trauma, war and violence must be minimized. Remembering, telling the truth about horrific events, and empathizing with the pain of the victim is a prerequisite for the reorganization of society. However, after every atrocity one can "expect to hear the same predictable rationalizations. It never happened. The victim(s) is lying. The victim(s)

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brought it on her/himself. The victim(s) is exaggerating. Or, What does it matter? It's in the past and it's time to move on" (Herman, 1992, p.8).

Cultural avoidance of the effects of trauma is juxtaposed to an aggrandizing of the violence that creates trauma as evidenced in various forms of entertainment and the focus of media stories, as well as a plethora of talk shows and violent crime documentaries that crowd the airwaves. This juxtaposition of denial and aggrandizement occurs as a result of societal dissociation. Interestingly, patterns of denial of trauma cross temporal, national and cultural boundaries, and defy all accumulated knowledge (Solomon, 1995). Subsequent to the Vietnam War, for example, veterans who sought treatment were routinely misdiagnosed by mental health professionals with the same types of psychiatric diagnoses that were erroneously attached to Holocaust survivors. In otherwise comprehensive psychiatric histories, military histories were rarely taken (Haley, 1978).

Integration of traumatic memories is intimately connected to how an individual or a society creates meaning out of serious trauma and an individual must accomplish such integration and meaning-making within a psychosocial context (i.e., Western society) that suggests human beings to be autonomous and powerful masters of their own fate. Because survivors represent, and through dissociative memories remember, the pain the society longs to forget (McFarlane, et al., 1996), they are further burdened. Such ideological stances reflect core cultural assumptions that the world is ordered, just and essentially benevolent. The cultural myth that consistently emphasizes overcoming great odds and attaining happiness in a "land of opportunity" has resulted in a total lack of cultural roles for survivors of trauma except as decided outsiders (Janoff-Bulman, 1992).

Cooperation, mutual aid and responsibility, and witnessing, reporting, intervening

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and acknowledging the perpetration of trauma and its effects, are vital skills in the successful self-organization and evolution of a society. The core experiences of trauma, disempowerment and disconnection from others (Herman, 1992), are the antithesis of interdependency. As more complex social structures emerge, societal and individual denial of traumatic acts maintain oppression, isolation, and fear. Simultaneously, however, because the human response to trauma contains both traumatic and transformational opportunities, it also holds a promise for real transformation.

Dynamical systems theory holds that in order to create a new state, disparate component parts of a system are brought together in unexpected and unpredictable ways. Emergent complexity necessitates a gathering together of seemingly disparate elements to create the seeds of a new form. Empowerment and empathetic reconnection are the core experiences of healing from trauma (Herman, 1992). Isolation and disempowerment are the core experiences of trauma. For complexity to emerge, isolation and disempowerment, and empowerment and empathetic reconnection, must self-organize in an emergent pattern of greater complexity on both an individual and societal level.

Societies within the global human community that are able to develop cultures which have an inherent ability to self-organize and adapt to rapidly changing conditions will develop an evolutionary competence that will ensure survival. Adapting to accelerated levels of change and complexity is the equivalent of building an identity around being a learning, evolving system. Empathetic acknowledgment and incorporation of trauma and its effects are vital to the learning that human systems need in order to successfully self-organize and create alternatives to dissociative forgetting.

Iterations

New order emerges in a nonlinear system as a result of the dependence of the shape of the whole upon the most minute part. One method of conceptualizing and investigating this profound interconnectedness is to study the process of what is referred to as "iteration." Iterations occur when a simple process repeats itself over and over and system output is taken as new input which in turn becomes new output (van Geert, 1994). Iteration involves the continuous reabsorption of what has come before (Briggs, et al., 1989). Simple iterations use feedback processes to enfold, reabsorb, engulf and ultimately, recreate systems. The nonlinearity and sensitivity to initial conditions inherent in an open system create iterations and the system folds back upon itself, thereby liberating the hidden complexity within (Briggs, et al., 1989).

Iterative processes encapsulate both stability and change because the initial uncertainty inherent in a microscopic system begins to accumulate and distort the results of each iteration, creating a situation that is fundamentally unpredictable so the future behaviour of the system can no longer be anticipated from its behaviour in the past. The error or difference in the most minute part of the system ultimately affects the entire system. The individual victim, through the process of iteration, has an impact on the whole of the social order and new organizing principles are introduced into the system.

Essentially, this iterative process pumps microscopic fluctuations up to a macroscopic scale and when it reaches certain values, full-blown chaos develops. From a strictly mathematical perspective, iterative equations generate shapes and patterns where the shape of the whole is similar to itself at all levels of scale. This property is referred to as self-similarity, where the repetition of detail at descending scales (Briggs, et al., 1989;

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Feder, 1988) expresses the idea that each piece of a shape is geometrically similar to the whole (Mandlebrot, 1983).

Fractals

These repetitive self-similar patterns, where a magnified view of a part is similar to the whole, are called fractals (Peitgen, et al., 1992; Vallacher, et al., 1993). Mathematically, a geometric object with nonintegral or fractional dimensions is a fractal (Cambel, 1993). The fractal dimension of an object represents the degree of irregularity of that object. Regardless of how much a fractal object is magnified, however, the part contains the entire structure of the object and with each iteration the shape repeats itself in a similar, but not an identical manner.

These ideas of iterative, self-similar, fractal objects are important to a dynamical systems model of the trauma response because the trauma response appears to have an iterative, self-similar, fractal nature. That is, the experience of trauma and the effects of trauma are felt at the microscopic level in the same way they are experienced at the meso and macroscopic levels of the system. For example, "repression, dissociation, and denial are phenomena of social as well as individual consciousness" (Herman, 1992, p.9).

It has been hypothesized that the trauma response has at its core two primary attractor states, the traumatic stress response and the transformational response. The individual, the group, and the society will experience trauma and its effects in a self-similar way because all strange attractors have a fractal nature, that is, they repeat themselves. And all fractals have a self-similar nature. Regardless of how much a fractal object is magnified, it contains the entire structure of the whole. Hence, these same two attractor states will exert the same influence on every system level and the experience of

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trauma will be the same at the macroscopic level as it is at the microscopic. Within a

nonlinear model of trauma the nature of the trauma response can be conceptualized as both

fractal and self-similar and, therefore, all that is understood about trauma at the individual

level of consciousness can also be understood at the societal level.

From Dynamical Systems to War in the Balkans

Creating connections between the above theory and the events that destroyed

Yugoslavia is the goal of this chapter. But before such connections can be made, it is

necessary to facilitate some degree of understanding of the war in former Yugoslavia, its

causes, and the impact on the people it displaced and traumatized. The following section

of the paper is, therefore, a literature review of the history of the Balkans and a chronology

and socio-political profile of the 1991-1995 war, particularly the war that began in 1992

and ended in 1995 in Bosnia in central former Yugoslavia.

A Literature Review of The Balkans and The Traumatic Destruction of a Nation-State

A Historical Overview

The Trauma of War in Former Yugoslavia

> *"The postcard images lose none of their luster in the reality of this
> country. Cliffs plunged down to beaches of pink rock. Mountains were
> bright with snow or wildflowers. Bronze Age ruins and Roman
> amphitheaters made the countryside seem timeless. Tiny medieval churches
> perched in valleys of plum trees. . . . "* (Zimmerman, 1996, p.3).

So Warren Zimmerman, America's last ambassador to former Yugoslavia,

described this area of the world, an area that in the last decade of the twentieth century

witnessed a level of brutality and bloodshed that scorched, withered, seared and finally

annihilated the heart of the federation and many of its people. The wars in former

Yugoslavia ravaged this country, its inhabitants and its economy and, except for the criminals and black marketeers, plunged people into bottomless anguish and despair, gnawing poverty, and an unprecedented awareness of death and war.

Both the destructive and transformational effects of trauma are clearly etched in the turbulent history of this country and the tempered faces of its people who, in the last decade, have scattered across the globe like seeds in a fierce wind. The demise of this nation-state, the first European country to die since World War II, is a study in nonlinearity, chaos, and system death. A reorganization of former Yugoslavia has taken place but the system has yet to self-organize. A new and more complex evolutionary pattern has yet to emerge. The tiny land of the South Slavs is now shattered into even tinier pieces. And everywhere, especially in the Republic of Bosnia where some of the worst and most vicious killing occurred, is the heavy tread of the international peacekeeper's boots.

Dynamical systems and complexity theory provide a conjectural framework within which to examine a people whose plight suddenly and with vicious violence burst into our living rooms via the brief, intense and voyeuristic gaze of the television camera's eye. For the most part, former Yugoslavia is one of those countries that the West had all but ignored. And precisely because so little is understood about the complexities of this part of the world and its people, it is easy for Westerners to dismiss the dark and depraved nature of the conflict as ethnic, and the people as simply crazy. Therefore, what follows is an abbreviated version of the history of former Yugoslavia, the events that led up to the recent outbreak of war, the reasons for the savage nature of that war, and the fate of some of the people whose lives were destroyed as a result.

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A Truly Brief History of Former Yugoslavia

That the descendants of present day inhabitants blew into the Balkan peninsula on the winds of war, and that time and again they have felt that same hot, heavy, blood-drenched breeze, is a matter of historical record. That this is an ancient part of the world, peopled by individuals who share a latent collective memory of myths and beliefs about each other that do not necessarily form part of their lived experience, but can be activated at any given time, is a readily accepted idea espoused by many writers (Dyker, et al., 1996; Judah, 1997; Mojzes, 1994). Archeological remains indicate that long before the dawning of history this part of the world was populated. Little is known of the original inhabitants of the western and central Balkan peninsula. They are first mentioned in the fifth century BC by the ancient Greeks who refer to them as Illyrians and Thracians. Not until the sixth and seventh centuries, however, did time and history began to weave together the contrasting colours which constitute the mismatched ensemble the modern world knows as former Yugoslavia.

As the Roman Empire began to disintegrate and Eastern Europe was filled with wars and refugees, a new people, driven by the terror of war and a need to flee for their lives, appeared in Illyria and were destined to make it their own. These were the Slavs, the largest ethnic and linguistic group in Europe, who during the sixth and seventh centuries were driven southward as part of the great dispersion of Slavs. The Slavs are usually classified by three main divisions and include the West Slavs or Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and Lusatians, the East Slavs or Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians, and the South Slavs which include the Serbs, the Croats, the Slovenes, the Macedonians, the Montenegrins, the Bosnians, and the Bulgars.

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It was the South Slavs who entered the western Balkan lands. On the heels of the

Slovenes, who probably arrived first and settled to the north, came the Croats and Serbs

who settled in the south. The early distinctions between these three groups are fairly

obscure but in time, through both cultural and historical influences, those differences

would be accentuated and exploited to everyone's detriment.

Most of the Balkans had been part of the Roman Empire since the first century, but

when in the fourth century, the decision was made to divide the empire, the Slovenes and

the Croats came under western, Roman Catholic influence, while the Serbs to the east

came under the influence of Constantinople and the Orthodox Church. A cornerstone was

set down and the groundwork begun for the religious and ethnic problems that were to

haunt the Balkan peninsula from that time forward (Clissold, 1969).

With the arrival and settlement of the Slavs there were no more massive

movements of people in Europe until the eruption of the Turks, into Europe (Judah, 1997).

Such an impact did the steady advance of the Ottoman Empire have on the history of the

Balkans that it is considered by some to be the central event of the long and complex

history of Yugoslavia. The Turkish invasion in the fourteenth century resulted in "the

destruction of the medieval Serbian state, the conversion to Islam of most of

Bosnia/Herzegovina, and the dependence of Croatia and Dalmatia on the Catholic powers

of Hungary, Austria, and Venice" (Clissold, 1969, p. 2). With the coming of the Turks

another historical cornerstone of the problems in the Balkans, especially Bosnia, was

wedged into place.

The Slav Muslims of Bosnia, who were once primarily Serbs or Croats, converted

to Islam during the five centuries of Ottoman rule and, prior to the collapse of the Ottoman

Empire, became the land-owning, ruling aristocracy of Bosnia. Hence, they were associated with class and religion rather than with nationhood. For many centuries, Bosnian rulers, because they enjoyed the privileges of class and power, were less inclined to worry about a national identity. While other federations in the Balkans were forming a modern national identity in the nineteenth century, Bosnian Muslims, as the privileged and powerful of the region, were not. It was not until the period between the two world wars that the Muslims began to transcend their religious and class origins and assume some sense of an ethno religious national identity (Glenny, 1992). Consequently, when talking about the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the term refers both to a nation and to a religious community.

Nowhere else in the Yugoslav territories did converts to Islam occur in such huge numbers and across such a broad section of society. Historians have put forward a number of explanations as to why this happened. First, it is argued that Bosnian nobles converted in order to keep their privileges and property. Since the Bosnian gentry were the first to embrace Islam, this may have been the case. Second, it is hypothesized that the conversions were forced upon the Bosnian population and third, it is argued that those who converted were already being persecuted as heretics by the established Christian churches, in particular the Roman Catholic church. These heretics, or Bogomils, as they are called, were a peaceful sect who rejected the Old Testament, the Incarnation, the Cross, the sacraments and the hierarchical organization of the Christian church. The line of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina has typically run between Catholic Croatia on the one side and Orthodox Serbia on the other, with Bosnia caught somewhere in the middle, exposed to both influences. The spread of the Bogomil heresy somewhere around the tenth or

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eleventh century further complicated relationships in the Balkans. Essentially, the Bogomils held a dualistic view where God and the Devil had equal power. They believed that the material world was created by Satan. In order to escape that domination the elite had to foreswear the things of the flesh and lead a rigid and ascetic life (Clissold, 1969). The Bogomil masses, however, enjoyed love, life, music and wine. It was the Bogomils who converted in droves when the Turks arrived on the scene in 1463, preferring to be conquered by the Sultan than converted by the Pope.

At any time in its long and intricate history, Bosnia has straddled the middle road and has struggled with attempting to reconcile three religious traditions, Orthodox, Catholic, and Islam. It was, in fact, the Ottomans who established the administrative scheme, or millet system, whereby membership in a nation is determined by religious affiliation and not, for example, by shared language, a defined common territory, or a perceived common history or ethnicity. Precisely because the population of Bosnia is the most diverse in former Yugoslavia and comprises the greatest mix of Orthodox Serbs, Roman Catholic Croats and Bosnian Muslims, the fighting is usually most intense and pitiless in this region. This was so in both world wars and it was so in the wars of the 1990s.

Although the very early history of Bosnia is completely obscure, throughout its later history Bosnia-Herzegovina "has straddled some of the major political and ideological divisions on the European continent. It straddled the boundaries between Byzantium and Rome, those between eastern and western Christendom, and those between the Catholic Austro-Hungarian empire and the Islamic Ottoman empire" (Brinja, 1995, p.13).

With the exception of Slovenia, Croatia, and Vojvodina (in northern Serbia), which were part of the Austro-Hungarian empire under the rule of the Habsburgs, most of what became Yugoslavia had until the nineteenth century been part of the Ottoman Empire. Hence, in the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Serbia and Montenegro were states in their own right and had been independent since 1830. The Slovenes and the Croats, however, lived under the domination of the Austro-Hungarians until 1918 and the remainder of the Yugoslav territories lived under the rule of the Turks until taken over by the Austro-Hungarian kingdom in 1878. Because the people of the Balkans were subject to the actions of five different empires (Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, French and to a lesser extent British), whose respective interests might have been in conflict in that part of the world at any given time, they were slow to realize any national ambitions. Moreover, because it was often in the interests of foreign nations to sow and nurture the seeds of mistrust and suspicion among the people of the Balkans, divisive efforts made use of religious, linguistic, cultural and political differences (Brinja, 1995).

Accordingly, the majority of the people of this area lived divided and subject to foreign rule until 1918 when the first Yugoslav dream of unity was realized. Prior to the outbreak of World War I, Austria was looking to settle accounts with Serbia over Austria's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 when Serbian forces joined temporarily with the Muslims of Bosnia to press for constitutional reform. Serbia was looking for a route to the sea and as long as its sworn enemy Austria had control of Bosnia-Herzegovina, other routes to the sea had to be found. In 1914, Austria saw an opportunity to provoke open hostilities with Serbia. It is even suspected that the Austrian militarists helped create the

circumstances which led to assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and ultimately World War I. Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, advocated the creation of a Slav kingdom which would share equal status with the Austrian and Hungarian lands. Understandably, neither Austria's nor Hungary's ruling circles were in favour of this idea and the decision to send the Duke to Sarajevo was "a deliberate provocation to nationalist feelings in Bosnia" (Singleton, 1985, p.115).

As the First World War played itself out and the winter of 1915 saw the conquest of Serbia by Austrian, German and Bulgarian forces, the South Slavs closed ranks, believing that their sole hope lay in unity. As the Austro-Hungarian empire began to disintegrate from within and its stranglehold on the Balkans loosened, the way was opened to form the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Halfway between a nation-state and a fully multinational community (Pavlowitch, 1988), the task of nation building was nothing less than colossal. Creating cohesion from the organizational chaos that followed WWI and the collapse of the old order meant creating coherency out of four legal systems, "six customs areas, five currencies, four railway networks, three banking systems and even, for a time, two governments until the government in Zagreb and the Serbian government in Belgrade were merged into a single authority" (Singleton, 1985, p.131). Moreover, kinsfolk and extended family formed the basis of social organization throughout the Balkans and religion, local customs and traditions "were part of the heritage which provided bonds of cultural identity far stronger than the abstract concept of a nation" (Singleton, 1985, p.133). To exacerbate matters even further, living among the Serbian Orthodox, Catholic Christians and Muslims were tens of thousands of Jews and Germans, 150,000 Turks, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Russians, Poles, Italians, Vlahs,

Bulgars and Greeks. Leaders attempted to impose political and economic order as well as a common set of rules on this diverse and heterogeneous mix of peoples. However, by ignoring the reality of differences which existed at all levels, the leaders of the first Yugoslavia made the same mistake as the leader of the second.

The first Yugoslavia, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed in 1929 and its short and tumultuous life was marked by three political periods. During the first decade, an attempt was made to operate a parliamentary democracy along the same lines as that which had evolved in western Europe. The attempt failed and was followed by a royal dictatorship which began in 1929 and ended in 1934, and from 1934 until the German invasion of 1941, a Regency Council presided over a mock parliamentary system. With the coming of World War II and the invasion of the Axis powers, the always fragile unity of the first Yugoslavia collapsed (Singleton, 1985).

By 1940 Yugoslavia was totally isolated and surrounded on all sides except the south by Axis occupied countries or countries that sympathized with Germany. Because Hitler had already decided on the destruction of Yugoslavia and promised pieces to his allies, the Russians were pulled into the fray. On the eve of a German attack on Yugoslavia, a Soviet-Yugoslav treaty of non-aggression and friendship was signed. This Soviet-Yugoslavian, particularly Serbian, alliance would surface again in the wars of the 1990s. It was amid this fear and the madness of WWII that the Chetniks, or Serbian nationalists, and the Ustasa, or Croatian nationalists, did the most bitter and outrageous fighting and murdering of each other and innocent civilians. The vicious fighting in WWII had set Allied-aligned Serbs against Axis-aligned Croats against Bosnians, in a way that rivalled, on a smaller scale, the bizarre violence of the Germans against the Jews. Several

thousand Croats died at the hands of Serbian Chetniks in Croatia and Dalmatia, and in one

of the most infamous massacres, about 200 people from the villages near Split in Croatia

were murdered by Chetniks under the command of a priest named father Momcilo Djujic.

And this body count was much lower than the death toll in Eastern Bosnia. In like fashion,

the Croatian Ustasa, perhaps in an attempt to mimic the Germans, set up a number of

concentration camps where they murdered Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and anyone else deemed

undesirable. One of the most notorious was constructed at Jasenovac on the Sava River on

the Bosnian border. No one knows exactly how many died there but the name Jasenovac

resonates with a Serb much like the name Auschwitz does with the rest of the world

(Judah, 1997).

Some of the most extreme nationalists came from the ranks of the church and the

priesthood, both Serbian and Croatian. Many of the Axis-aligned Croatian fanatics were

Franciscans who served in the Ustasa government and on the staffs of the concentration

camps. The Ustasa policy toward the smaller minorities such as the Jews was as inhumane

and savage as it was toward the Serbs. As for German-occupied Serbia, the puppet

administration of Milan Acimovic was under intense fire on two fronts. It was under attack

from fierce Serbian Chetniks under the command of a former officer in the Royal Army,

colonel Draza Mihailovic, and the communist-led Partisans under the command of Josip

Broz. He would later be known to the world by his war-time code name, Tito. Josip Broz

Tito was a revolutionary whose drive, energy, unswerving loyalty to Communism, and

personal charisma was to first unite an army of 150,000 fighting men and later a federation

of six states, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia and Montenegro,

which were united more by the coercive power of his personality rather than the strength

of his policies.

The Yugoslav communist party was illegal in the interwar years and had been outlawed in 1921, so for the leader of the communist-led Partisans to pull together the Yugoslav republics at the end of World War II was a feat of banner proportions. Not only was Tito the leader of the Communist Partisans, but this half-Croat, half-Slovene World War II hero, who lead Serbian forces against the Germans and the Ustasa, was revered by many and elevated to legendary proportions both during his lifetime and after his death. Although he died in 1980, the man who reunified Yugoslavia in 1945 had a strange and brief resurrection in the mid-1990s. He strolled the streets of Belgrade and in spite of the fact that he was an actor hired by Aleksandar Vasovic, sponsor and owner of station B-92 independent radio, adoring and sometimes angry Yugoslavians greeted and treated him like he was the real thing. Women showered him with flowers, cried and told him how much they loved and missed him. They explained how everyone now had their own flag and coat of arms and where once there was one Tito, now there were ten. And some got very angry, blaming Tito for the current bloodied and bitter affairs of state (Judah, 1997).

Tito's soft communist regime lay somewhere between the rigours of Soviet Communism and the capitalist West. It spanned the latter half of this century from 1945 to the breakdown of Yugoslavia, which began in 1991, eleven years after his death. Although his ghost, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, lingered for more than a decade, with Tito's passing the stage was set for the Yugoslav drama to begin to unfold. He did not die quickly, but spent four months in hospital with the state of his health daily headlining news broadcast. Doctors had amputated both legs and had kept him alive long past what might be humane, and when he finally did die, he was mourned deeply and

profoundly by a majority of his people. His funeral consisted of the biggest gathering of world statesmen and dignitaries ever assembled for such an occasion. In the first four years after his death, his burial place was the object of massive pilgrimages for more than 11 million people, or half the population of Yugoslavia (Crnobrnja, 1996).

The collective Federal Presidency attempted to gloss over the political void created by Tito's death by arming the propaganda machine with slogans such as, "After Tito - Tito" and by attempting to give the impression of orderly succession and a smooth continuity of leadership change. The reality, however, was that the loosely federated states were extremely divergent. The first to recognize the power void left by Tito was Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. Until the death of Tito, the collective federation of states was largely a symbolic body, since Tito was the unrivalled president.

Contrary to reports of western journalists who tended to believe Stalin when he said, "I have only to raise my little finger and there will be no more Tito" (Clissold, 1969, p.7), Tito was anything but a puppet of the Soviet Union, and the Tito years are generally regarded as years of ascendance, prosperity, stability, and respectability. During those years, a Yugoslav passport was a much coveted black market item and a much respected card to carry within both Eastern and Western Europe. Stalin's break with Tito, when Yugoslavia was summarily booted out of the Cominform or Communist Information Bureau (1947) headquartered in Belgrade, burst upon the world like a bombshell. This was the first crack in post-war Soviet foreign policy (Singleton, 1985, p.218-219). And the subsequent economic Soviet blockade of Yugoslavia forced the Yugoslavs to seek trading partners in the west. It quickly became apparent to the West that a united Yugoslavia was to their benefit. The bulk of Yugoslavia's growing trade deficit was, for the next ten years,

covered by western credit and other forms of aid.

Although Tito took power with a bloody vengeance, executing more than two hundred priests and nuns along with hard core Chetniks and their leader Mihailovic, the break from Russia along with constitutional reforms and the 1965 removal of barriers to the free exchange of people, ideas and goods, resulted in Yugoslavia changing from a Stalinist police state to a virtually open society. In no other country in Eastern Europe were citizens able to travel as freely in and out of the country. Often they worked in nearby countries such as Italy and Germany while remaining citizens of Yugoslavia, where they planned to retire and in preparation built homes close to extended family. Tito created a country where a British visitor described his experience as one of never having been in a country with so much freedom and so little democracy, a telling statement indeed (Zimmerman, 1996). However, even Tito was somewhat startled at the momentum gathered once initial freedoms were granted and as early as 1962 he "told the Central Committee that the process had gone too far and that freedom of expression in writing and speech should not go so far that it allowed the emergence of divisive national chauvinist polemics" (Singleton, 1985, p.245). Tito knew his people and realized early that the disparate groups would never be able to agree upon a common history where each ethnic group took responsibility for its own sins and errors of the past. He therefore decided it would be better to forget and move forward under a banner of unity and brotherhood. Hence, centuries of ethnic antagonism, the last vicious outbreak being WWII, was forced underground and although in the 1960s and 1970s generations grew up believing themselves to be Yugoslavians, many people "had neither been able to forget nor been given the chance to forgive" (Brinja, 1995, p.23).

In spite of Tito, however, nationalistic trouble was bubbling to the surface and in Croatia, Kosovo, and Montenegro assertions of national rights and the nationalist voice were becoming shrill and difficult to ignore. In order to quell the rumblings, 23 amendments to the constitution were passed which loosened central control and gave more power to local interests and the republics. In 1971 a collective presidency was established because Tito himself knew that his era was entering its last phase and there was no successor who could command the respect and loyalty of Yugoslavians in all the republics. As nationalistic feelings rose to a fervour in Zagreb, police and troops moved in, arresting more than four hundred student demonstrators and their leaders. Nationalists in other republics were also becoming more vocal in spite of Tito's warnings that such a course would lead to civil war, killing and foreign interference. Whereas economics were emphasized in some republics, others such as Serbia and Kosovo emphasized cultural identity. Yugoslavia was deep in debt, nationalism was on the rise, and the man who held it all together was on the decline. The decades of peace and plenty were about to become a time remembered and desperately mourned by many of the people of the Balkans.

On the Road to War: The Reasons Why

At any given time the republics of the Yugoslav state have found themselves marked by vastly differing outlooks, traditions and interests (Clissold, 1969), and although they are a study in bellicose diversity, the ethnic hatred that motivated the unimaginably cruel acts of the 1992-95 war in Bosnia surfaced much later, a consequence of the politically engineered turmoil, not its cause. "Echoing the WWII claims of the ultranationalist Ustasa and Chetniks, the controlling power structure exploited the mythology of ethnic hatred among the Serbians, Croatians and Bosnian Muslims. Ethnic

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conflict in itself would not have destroyed Yugoslavia" (Udovicki, et.al, 1997, p.6). Although the battle ultimately came down to nationalism, "the disintegration was caused by the political elites of the republics" (Mojzes, 1994, p.77.). This was not a people's war, but it was a war about people.

In 1988, historian Stevan Pavlowitch wrote, "Yugoslavia now has an authoritarian, narrow-minded and second-rate leadership. It is so divided among itself, not only on regional lines, that it no longer clearly understands what it is trying to do beyond preserving its power" (Pavlowitch, 1988, p.148). In the minds of some academics, Yugoslavia was at a crossroads (Mojzes, 1994). The country faced four options: First, that it might surrender wholeheartedly to an unregulated capitalist economic take-over; second, that a military or Communist dictator might grab power; third, that the country would disintegrate, possibly followed by great violence and war; and fourth, that reforms just might succeed. Ultimately, Yugoslavia chose the third option (Mojzes, 1994, p.64).

The Albanian-dominated province of Kosovo had been restless for years before Tito's death, and in spite of efforts to placate the people, nationalistic fervor, centered at the University of Pristina, spread through the land. This same university was turning out 10,000 graduates a year, many of them of peasant background who refused to return to the family farm and eke out such a living. Hence, the only way to employ them was through an inflated administrative machine and in cultural institution which had been the recipient of mismanaged national funding from Belgrade and the rest of Yugoslavia. Moreover, tension was building within Kosovo because the minority Serbian population still held, especially in technology, medicine, and law, the majority of senior positions. Militant Albanian students harassed Serbian students, and graveyards and churches were

desecrated. While Tito was still alive, the situation was controllable. After his death, however, the brew bubbled over and in 1981 students began to protest against poor food and housing conditions and declining job opportunities. There was even talk of a "Greater Albania" and the annexation of Kosovo to neighbouring Albania. In the ensuing violence, the official death toll was eleven, with fifty-seven seriously injured (Singleton, 1985).

This kind of national unrest, brought about by the desperate economic decline throughout the whole of the Balkans and coupled with the abject failure of the post-Tito leadership to alleviate the chronic economic malaise, was one of the root causes of the political difficulties which grew through the eighties and exploded into the nineties. Yugoslavia's economic decline began before Tito's death in 1980 and grew in severity until it reached crisis proportions by the end of the decade (Donia, et al., 1994). By the "post-Tito period Yugoslavia had been for too long a time politically and economically" drifting toward chaos, a drift that not many were willing to see because, for many, "Yugoslavia had been an authentic socialist revolution that started from the grass-roots level . . . " (Crnobrnja, 1996, p.91).

But in the absence of Tito and any democratic process, there were no clear answers forthcoming, and when a young Bosnian lecturer, Vojislav Seselij, was arrested and sentenced to eight years in prison for endangering the social order by his writings, the land of the South Slavs took a giant step away from reforms that might have helped avert the war. Because of the wide-ranging freedoms of the Yugoslav people under Communism, the potential was there after the rapid collapse of Soviet-bloc Communism for Yugoslavia to be the first country to forge a path toward the gradual relaxation of Communist oppression. In short, the way-stations on the road to war were constructed in the vacuum

left by Tito's passing and the failure of leaders with divergent agendas to create viable economic reform. Moreover, the unsuccessful attempts at democratic reform that might have emerged as the main ideology after the collapse of Communism gave way to a resurgence of nationalism (Mojzes, 1994).

For many, it seemed impossible that such an interwoven multiethnic community could so completely and drastically unravel. The second Yugoslavia had lasted longer than the first, many of the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats had intermarried, ethnically different people had settled in one another's areas, and sports teams had been successfully integrated so that sports heros were considered the property of all Yugoslavia, no matter where they hailed from. In these ways the country's ethnic communities had successfully embraced each other and nationhood. Other areas of the social order were not so easily transformed. So dire was the growing economic crisis and general unrest that nothing less than a "transformation of Yugoslavia into a market-oriented, pluralistic democracy, aware of and attentive to its multinational structure" would have led to the self-organization necessary to avert the war and recreate the country on the basis of human rights and freedoms. Politically, such a reorganization, "which was a necessary condition for the country's conversion into a modern, democratic state capable of gradually dissolving rather than abruptly resolving the national question," (Crnobrnja, 1996, p.88) would have meant breaking away from Titoism. By liberalizing the political and economic structure, nationalism would not have had "an exclusive and overriding significance: it would have been one among many possible points of political differentiation, not the only one" (Crnobrnja, 1996, p.89).

When the underground swell of nationalistic feelings did erupt, it was in Kosovo

and it was in Kosovo where the most rapid deterioration was felt. As Yugoslavia's poorest region with little developed industrial structure, the highest rate of population growth, and a minority of Serbians pitted against a majority of Albanians demanding autonomy, Slobodan Milosevic's 1989 visit to Kosovo is believed by some to be the quintessential event that placed the proverbial straw on the back of an already buckling camel. When the Serbian leader paid a visit to the Serbs in Kosovo, the cradle of Old Serbia and an area long believed to be sacred Serbian ground, and stated, "No one will be allowed to beat you in your own land" (Mojzes, 1994, p.96), he may have lit the match which ignited the most vicious conflict in Europe since World War II. Such a statement at such a critical choice or bifurcation point in the history of former Yugoslavia, proved to be nonlinear and incendiary in its effects. As the Serbians struggled to redress former grievances and obtain a more prominent place within the structure of former Yugoslavia and Milosevic struggled to don Tito's cloak of supreme leader, the Croats and the Slovenes fanned the already escalating flames of opposing centrifugal forces operating in the country. On June 25, 1991, they declared their independence. War broke out shortly thereafter between those who considered themselves the Serbs of Croatia, backed by Serbia, and those who saw themselves as Croatians. On March 3, 1992, Bosnia-Herzegovina declared its independence and a month later war broke out between the Serbs and Muslims. In May 1992, all three, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, were admitted to the UN. Serbia and Montenegro declared themselves the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and adopted a new constitution.

Loss of leadership, economic crisis, and an ineffectual fading bureaucracy; assertive Serbs trying to fill the vacuum within the federation with a more centralized

ideology that reflected specific Serbian concerns and its position in Yugoslavia; the centrifugal drive of Slovenia and Croatia, trying to diminish Serbian and federal authority; and a rising wave of historically precedented nationalism, fanned by leaders who thought they could control and aim such a deadly energy: all were principle forces that determined the fate of former Yugoslavia (Crnobrnja, 1996).

Along with these more macroscopic forces, the mesoscopic ones played by the intelligentsia, the media, the army, and as is always the case with Yugoslavia, the interests of foreign powers, also played a vital role in the unfolding of the Yugoslav tragedy. The intelligentsia, with a minority of exceptions who warned of the coming crisis, rallied around their national flags and willingly served the interests of their national leaders. Soon, from Serbia to Slovenia the propaganda machines were in full swing, with each emphasizing in its own inimitable fashion the simple and uncomplicated message that everyone could resonate to: "We are good, they are bad". Such a message, was effective precisely because it successfully cut through complexity and fed to the hungry an easily digested simplicity that one could sink one's teeth into without worrying about what might be served up next. The Yugoslavian National Army, or JNA, which played out the most bizarre and least understood role in this Yugoslavian tragedy was, up to the outbreak of war, devoted to the preservation of Yugoslavia. As one of the best fighting forces in Europe, the JNA was Tito's reaction to Soviet threats, and because he never trusted the Soviets, he created within the JNA a supplementary component responsible for territorial defense. Although part of the JNA, this territorial fighting force answered to the individual republics and would eventually turn on the JNA. Moreover, as in the total population of Yugoslavia, Serbs were the most numerous members and officers of the JNA. Because

soldering is held in high esteem in Serbia, more from that republic joined the armed forces and became career officers (Crnobrnja, 1996). Hence, at the outbreak of war in Slovenia, soldiers found themselves in the unenviable position of having to fight their own countrymen or break with the JNA and return to their own republic and fight. Finally, the foreign actors, who had been deeply involved in Yugoslavian politics since at least the First World War, and much earlier for countries such as Austria and Hungary, saw the deepening crisis as an opportunity to promote their own interests.

As war became more and more imminent and Serbian nationalism was answered by waves of Croatian and Slovenian nationalism, rallies were organized in Serbian communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Attempts to organize Serbian demonstrations in Slovenia fell flat, however, as the Slovenians promised a border confrontation with bused-in Serbs. The Serbs retaliated by boycotting Slovenian goods and became the first to introduce economic sanctions into the Balkan wars. In both Serbia and Croatia, national pride consistently spilled over into national chauvinism and even a return to the fascism of the Ustasas and the Chetniks. "For example, it was and is extremely difficult to explain to Serbs and others who suffered Ustasa brutalities during World War II the name change of an elementary school in Zagreb. It had been named after a school principal killed by the Ustasa, along with a class of schoolchildren. The new Croatian regime named it after an ill-famed Ustasa minister who made an agreement with Hitler to send Jews from Croatia to Auschwitz" (Crnobrnja, 1996, p.151). The Serbs of Croatia responded with violence and a common Serbian cry was, " . . . the cameras were there when the Albanians were driven out of Kosovo but they were not there when the Serbs were driven out of their homes in Croatia". One of the final blows came when it was

revealed that Serbia had been dipping into the federal monetary reserve to the tune of 1.8 billion dollars. The Serbs responded with allegations and a videotaped interview showing that Croatian officials had purchased foreign arms and were, preparing for war.

By the end of May 1991, former Yugoslavia, the beautiful green and pink land of snow and wildflowers, was in total disarray. All last minute efforts to avert war were ignored and the path was clear. War was imminent.

The Savage Nature of War

When Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, fighting broke out almost immediately between the Slovene nationalists and the mostly Serb JNA. It lasted for only ten days. In Croatia, bitter fighting erupted in July between Serbs and Croats. It lasted for six months amid frantic European efforts to bring about some kind of peace. In September 1991 a UN arms embargo was placed on all Yugoslavia. "What this accomplished was to lock into place the huge military advantage enjoyed by the Serbs, the largest group in former Yugoslavia, who controlled the JNA and its vast stockpile of ammunition" (Rohde, 1997, p. XII). In an effort to implement and police a cease-fire in Croatia, more than 12,000 UN peacekeepers arrived. However, in that six months of savage fighting more than 10,000 Serbs and Croats died and Serb nationalists seized one third of Croatia. They vowed to link their territory with Serbia and create a Greater Serbia. The Croats vowed to take every inch back.

Fighting erupted in Bosnia less than a month after these events. Paramilitary groups from Serbia entered Bosnia and began expelling, ethnically cleansing, or outright murdering hundreds of thousands of Muslims and Croats from eastern and northern Bosnia. At the same time, Croatia, the second-largest republic in former Yugoslavia,

began channelling troops, weapons and ammunition to Croatians living in Bosnia. The Croats, too, established concentration camps and rampaged and murdered in order to advance the eventual plan for Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman to parcel off pieces of Bosnia thereby creating not only a Greater Serbia but also a Greater Croatia. The Bosnian Muslims, trapped between these two powerful aggressors, had few weapons and no outside backing. Unlike the help the Kosovar Albanians received, where UN forces attacked Serbia, outside help never did arrive for the Bosnian Muslims and the genocide that took place was as macabre and horrific as any other historical systematic rounding up, torture, and murder of civilians (Cushman, et al., 1996).

In 1995, between July 12 and 16, 7,414 Muslims were murdered by Serbian forces in the tiny town of Srebrenica, Bosnia. Located just 10 miles from the Serbian border, in a remote area of eastern Bosnia, steep hills rise on either side of the town, where white houses with terra-cotta roofs line the streets and dot the hillsides. Driving from one end to the other takes a mere 15 minutes. With a pre-war population of about 9,000 this tiny jewel of a town shines amidst the silver mines that the Romans worked more than twenty centuries ago.

Srebrenica, along with five other locations, was declared a UN safe zone and because of this, by 1993 more than 60,000 Muslim civilians packed the town and surrounding area. Serbian blockades effectively stopped the flow of food and water and many starved to death. The abject failure of the UN to protect civilians was nowhere more apparent than in Srebrenica. At the outset, seven hundred and fifty lightly armed UN peacekeepers, first Canadian and then Dutch, were deployed to disarm the Muslim

defenders and deter the Serbian offensive. When the Canadians and Dutch pulled out,

Ukranian peacekeeping forces moved in. They, however, were notorious for their

drunkenness, incompetence and black market activity. It was hardly surprising that, "two

years later a Serb flag flew where the UN's once did and more than 7,000 Muslim men

were missing" (Rohde, 1997, p. XVI). In effect, for the men who were murdered, the

arrival of the UN was a death warrant in that they complied with the UN safe zone

recommendation that all weaponry be turned over to the peacekeepers. So the meager two

tanks and handful of guns they had stolen from the Serbs became UN property. The

massacre was two years in coming, but come it did.

> *The men closest to the doors and the windows were*
> *probably puzzled when they saw the Serbs raise their rifles.*
> *Positioned in front of windows and doorways, the Serbs*
> *suddenly opened fire and then threw hand grenades into the*
> *warehouse. Chaos erupted inside. Men shrieked when they*
> *realized they were trapped. Others screamed as shrapnel*
> *and bullets tore into them. The few that leapt over the piles*
> *of bodies and made it outside were mowed down. The sound*
> *of the hand and rocket-propelled grenades exploding inside*
> *the warehouse was deafening. Bodies were pulverized.*
> *Blood and crimson bits of flesh were spattered across the*
> *gray cinder-block walls. Chunks of skull and brain matter*
> *flew sixteen feet in the air and stuck to the ceiling. . . . After*
> *five minutes, there was a lull in the firing. Piles of corpses,*
> *or what was left of them, lay strewn across the concrete*
> *floor. Wounded men moaned. The living hid under the dead.*
> *A Survivor of the Srebrenica Massacres (Rohde, 1997).*

Like all wars, this one had its heros, like Rezak Hukanovic, a survivor of a Serbian

concentration camp, and its villains, like General Ratko Mladic and Zeljko Raznjatovic-

Arkan, both war criminals of Nazi proportions. Mladic was the commander in charge at

Srebrenica. Raznjatovic-Arkan, better known by his nom de guerre, Arkan, was among the

most notorious of warlords. A lifelong criminal wanted by Interpol for murder and armed

robbery, he suddenly emerged in the wake of the Serbian-Croatian war to conduct bloody

and merciless campaigns in eastern Slavonia, the region between Belgrade and Zagreb,

and Bosnia. Known as Serbia's "pretty-boy psychopath," his private army of 800

ultranationalist thugs are, among other crimes of war, accused of murdering up to 3,000

people near the Bosnian town of Brcko as well as the violent expulsion of 20,000 Muslims

from Bijeljina. His exploits were selectively reported in the Serbian press and he became a

hero to the Serbians. Until his recent murder in January 2000, he sat in the Serbian

parliament as one of its more active member (Crnobrnja, 1996). Acts of mass murder,

rape, torture, beatings, mutilation, severed heads turned into footballs, the creation of

concentration camps that rivaled those of Nazi Germany in intent if not in scope, and

immense ineffable suffering of hundreds of thousands of civilians grew to recalcitrant

proportions as the bloody orgy that was the war in former Yugoslavia spread.

    In this century, war has broken out seven times in the Balkans, and concentration

camps have been a part of some of those outbreaks. Two of the most notorious of this war

were Omarska and Manjaca.

> *At Omarska "the guards were all young men from*
> *the surrounding villages . . . they were Serb volunteers . . . .*
> *On weekends regular troops from Banja Luka came to the*
> *camp. The guards called them specialists and they were*
> *indeed specialists, at breaking arms and legs, tearing out*
> *organs, and smashing skulls against walls. The weekends at*
> *Omarska were orgies of blood. One day, while pacing*
> *around a group of prisoners who had been taken out to the*
> *runway, one of the regulars said, loudly, so everyone could*
> *hear: "Today is my twenty-fifth birthday, and I've only*
> *killed twenty-three Muslims." The runway was where the*
> *prisoners were brought after their meal. . . . When the*
> *guards brought new prisoners from other dorms upstairs for*
> *questioning, they ordered everyone on the runway to lie on*
> *their stomachs and put their heads into their folded arms so*

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they couldn't see sideways. That's when the guards carried
out the "disobedient" ones, all broken up and sometimes
dead, to be loaded onto a yellow van and taken away. Most
of the time other prisoners loaded the corpses onto the van;
usually they too ended up as corpses on the same van, to
eliminate the possibility of leaving living witnesses. With the
scorching sun above frying the asphalt below, it wasn't at
all unusual for the prisoners to stay on their stomachs on the
runway for up to ten hours, especially on days when the
guards had been particularly "efficient". This ritual
happened almost every day. . . . Rizo Hadzalic, a man in his
early thirties . . . was sitting on the asphalt one day eating a
piece of bread he hadn't managed to finish in the canteen
because the guards had hurried them on. A soldier came by
and, with a devious smile, said, "Cheers!" Rizo looked at
him, and for just an instant the soldier seemed friendly,
almost a nice guy. Rizo responded in the traditional Bosnian
way, with a hearty "Bujrum," meaning "Thanks".
"You think you can just say Bujrum to me, you
motherfucker? Well, now let me introduce you to God!" The
nice guy suddenly turned into a ferocious beast. He grabbed
Rizo and, clubbing him with his truncheon, took him
upstairs. A few minutes later he called two prisoners from
the runway to come upstairs and carry Rizo down to the
runway, ordering the others to lie on their stomachs. Rizo's
bitter crying could be heard on the runway, but nobody
dared make the slightest move, let alone try to help him. His
sobbing became softer and softer. . . . When the prisoners
stood up to go to the dorm, Rizo was the only one left on the
runway. He was dead. . . . It was as if the slightest kindness
had been put under lock and key.

Survivor of Omarska (Hukanovic, 1996)

In this time of war the criminals and the murderers rose to the top. Decent people

were paralyzed by terror and the most sadistic killings were done by dangerous men who,

according to many testimonies, had often been on extended drinking binges. "Few realize

just how much money was made by gangsters, politicians, and army officers trading across

the frontlines. Whole communities became pawns to be pushed across the board like so

many chess pieces, and the kings grew rich in the process" (Judah, 1997, p . XII).

Some elders in those communities had lived through as many as five wars, and psychologically and economically the discontinuity this has created has been ruinous. A deep, soul-numbing instability is now fused with the consciousness of the people, and the resulting impact is both a heavy dose of fatalism and hedonism, where personal power and influence must always bend to the whims of fate, and living for today makes far more sense than saving for tomorrow.

There are four prominent myths that bind the minds of the people of the Balkans, myths that leaders exploited over and over again to the detriment of the country and its people (Mojzes, 1994). "Myth is a version of the past that refuses to be just the past. Myth is a narrative shaped by desire, not by truth, formed not by the facts as best we can establish them but by our longing to be reassured and consoled" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.167).

The first is *the myth of land and blood*. From the heart of this myth comes the rationale for ethnic cleansing. The land is perceived as sacred, as is the blood of the people it supports. The more pure-blooded a person, the more patriotic and better than one of mixed blood. Further, one's nation state exists not only in the here and now, but is continuous with a powerful and medieval state of one's ethnic ancestors. The myth perpetuates the belief that every local ethnic group has had to defend itself against continuous attempts from inside and outside to rob it of its ethnicity, religious identity and land.

The second myth is *the myth of the crucifixion and resurrection*. This is the myth that legitimizes suffering and in so doing turns defeat into victory through glorifying suffering and narrowing and romanticizing history. Heros are painted larger than life, and understood not through serious study but through epic songs that glorify the local ethnic

hero and vilify the stranger (Mojzes, 1994). For example, "Serbia's tragic flaw is indeed an obsession with its own history," (Zimmerman, 1996, p.13) and although there are many legends and stories that embody the grievances and glory of Serbia's mytho-historical reality, there are two that stand out in the people's collective memory. The fact that they marginally lost the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 where the Turkish sultan and the Serbian king were both killed, and the memory of bitter Turkish overlordship during which the Serbian elite was exterminated and the nation became one of peasants and farmers led by a small cadre of clergy and merchants (Mojzes, 1994), are indelibly etched in the Serbian people's collective consciousness.

The third myth lies in the meaning and understanding of time. Time is understood *mythologically not chronologically*. So steeped in history is this part of the world, and so intermixed is past and present, that a grievance of long ago is perceived as a present day problem. Such a long and indiscriminate memory makes a catharsis concerning past traumas and crimes impossible. It impossible to forget and even more impossible to forgive. There is no statute of limitations and payment in blood for what others have done to you and yours is forever outstanding. Tito's regime succeeded in walling off those memories, but present day leaders have opened the floodgates. In so doing they have created a new generation of angry traumatized individuals who will not forget.

The fourth myth is *the myth of the glorification of war and violence as the way to keep or reclaim one's freedom*. In the Balkans, there is no tradition of pacifism. People are ready to sacrifice everything in order to win the next round. History's greatest heros are the ones that inflicted the greatest amount of damage to the enemy (Mojzes, 1994, p.39-41).

Strategic political exploitation of such myths created large-scale violence that was caused by the "purposeful acts of the ruling power structure rather than irrational acts of the masses" (Vukovic, 1997, p.12). And although there was ample evidence to substantiate the fact that, especially in Bosnia, the masses did not want war, nevertheless, Yugoslavia came to an abrupt and apocalyptic ending. In spite of the fact that thousands of people poured into the streets en mass to protest war, the list of horrors soon became far longer than the list of honours.

Friends and neighbours came to understand, sometimes slowly and sometimes in a flash, that it was possible for people whose friendship went back many years to suddenly "find an abyss of suspicion opening between then" (Cohen, 1998, p.158). This estrangement between individuals was painful to witness and even more painful to accept and experience. Nationalistic rhetoric tore through the country like a threshing machine through straw. Even though peace engendered considerable blurring of ethnic boundaries, and in both an intuitive and immediately practical way Yugoslavians understood the enormous value of cultural diversity, ethnicity ultimately proved to be the most difficult cleavage to manage.

Some scholars believe that ethnicity in any political system is the most incendiary fissure to contend with because ethnicity taps "cultural and symbolic issues - basic notions of identity and the self, of individual and group worth and entitlement, such as glorification of a national language - that cannot be broken down into bargainable increments" (Vukovic, 1997, p.12). "Before a neighbour or a friend can be reinvented as an enemy, living tissue of connection and recognition must be cauterized. Violence must be done to the self before it can be done to others" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.54). "In order to

dissolve his identity in Serbdom, for example, the Serbian foot soldier must repress his own individuality and his memory of common ties with former Muslim or Croatian friends. He must do a certain violence to himself to make the mask of hatred fit" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.51) and above all, he must keep it simple. Violence accomplishes that.

The system's seams began to rip at its ethnic edges because differences in religion and ethnicity are neither simple nor small. Domestically, the specific republics were unable to regulate ethnic conflict and mobilizing the various ethnic groups had a tremendous impact on the country's fragile equilibrium. The system was thrown into chaos. Internationally, the failure of Soviet bloc Communism and the failure of the international powers to act effectively, are all implicated in the causes of the violence during the war (Brown, et al., 1997). Ultimately, however, in the Serbian death camps in areas such as Gorazde and Srebrenica, and the Croatian death camps in Mostar where the Croats housed Serbians and those of mixed marriages, it is a question of "individual people who cannot engage with the Other in any real sense" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.52).

A murderous totalitarian society cannot allow for individuality or alternative individual world views. Entertaining diversity is the antithesis of such a social order and of course, diversity lies at the heart of former Yugoslavia. Although many Serbs helped their Muslim neighbours and vice versa, many more fell into a state of consummate narcissistic or extreme self-absorption where the Other was seen as wholly different, dangerous, and less than human because of that difference. Real differences had to be acknowledged, understood and above all tolerated. However, narcissism and nationalistic intolerance are strongly connected (Ignatieff, 1998) and together form a self-referential system where narcissistic defence blinds one to any clear representation of the Other and

intolerance makes it impossible to actively learn about the Other. In the throws of nationalistic narcissism the belief is that no one else can understand you but your own narrow group. What is denied in this logic is any capacity for empathy with the Other. What follows is the emergence of total objectification with its concomitant ability to dehumanize and abuse the Other.

For some, ethnic hostilities snuff out the capacity to reason and reflect as an individual. The doorway then stands open to collective hostility, which is predicated on ethnically defined grievances and negative ethnic stereotypes, as well as the belligerent hostility of power-hungry warlords and leaders who promote increasingly extreme nationalistic positions. Opening relational space between self and Other necessitates a realization that inter-ethnic security is necessary for not only the Other but for oneself as well (Brown, et al., 1997). Under the above conditions such a realization is impossible.

In "ethnic civil wars . . . the emotional heat comes from a fear of group and individual extinction, which is usually anxiety-laden or exaggerated by emotions" (Brown, et al., 1997, p.170) and paradoxically, one's very identity is often imposed by the opposing group. For example, the Muslim sentiment that religion was less important to them before the war than after is a commonly expressed sentiment. Muslims thought of themselves primarily as Yugoslavs, but when they began to be fired from jobs, were discriminated against in many other ways, and ultimately murdered, things changed and the definition of who they are today has been determined by their opponents.

The horror of ethnic cleansing hinges and turns on a collective illusion that defies reason and engenders a fear-driven, tortured and nightmarish reality from which one cannot awaken. To come "awake means to renounce the longing to be reassured and

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consoled, to recover all the sharpness of the distinction between what is true and what we wish were true" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.167). In this century, differing factions have murdered and tortured one another off and on for years. It is as if ethnic groups act as each other's shadow or secondary process where the secondary process is defined as an unconscious identity crisis. In primary processes, people are identified with their intentions. Secondary processes, on the other hand, are experienced as foreign and distant and, therefore, present us with an identity crisis (Mindell, 1989). In times of peace ethnic differences are set aside. The very act of setting aside and ignoring ethnicity, however, appears to create the need to assert one's ethnicity. The more ethnicity is repressed, the more violent its unleashing on every level.

"Ethnic war isolates aggressors from the truth of their own actions. If ethnic cleansing is successful, it removes victims and leaves the victor in possession of a terrain of undisputed truth" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.177). There is no one left to remember. History is easily rewritten. "Victims of ethnic war, for their part, have lost the sites that validate their version of the truth" (Ignatieff, 1998, p.177). Rubble remains of what they knew as their lives and homes and loss and grief pervades their consciousness. They become refugees and wherever they go, they carry the effects of oppressive and perturbing trauma. All of them are refugees and many of them have lived through hell and in hell, all things can be found (Hukanovic, 1993).

Refugees: The Cost of War in Human Suffering

In 1951, the refugee was defined according to the Geneva Convention. It was determined that a refugee was "someone with a well-founded fear of being persecuted in his country of origin for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular

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social group or political opinion" (Loescher, 1993, p.5). In that same year the principle international protector of refugees, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), was formed. UNHCR will be half a century old next year and when it was established there were two million refugees in the world. Today, the world is awash with more than 23 million refugees and the scope of the crisis has grown far beyond UNHCR's range of effectiveness (Loescher, 1993). Fundamental changes on the world's political and economic stage, such as the fall of the Soviet Union and the ideologies which upheld it, the collapse of a country such as the world witnessed with the fall of former Yugoslavia, or the formation of new states, have resulted in massive movements of people.

The war in former Yugoslavia relied upon the brutalization of civilian populations and the genocidal intentions resulted in conspicuous atrocities like concentration camps, mass killings, systematic rape, forced starvation such as in the siege of Sarajevo, the destruction of religious and historic monuments, the use of shells and rockets against civilian targets such as homes, hospitals, and crowded market places, and the use of land mines around schools and other areas to render them uninhabitable and unusable. All these methods were used in this beleaguered country to wear down its people and destroy its character and consciousness. For example, in this tiny space inhabited by the South Slavs, it is estimated that there are land-mines which, at the current rate of removal, will take almost a thousand years to find and render harmless (Forbidden Places, 1999). Moreover, both during the war and in present-day Bosnia, government officials and other groups continue to support a sophisticated war-based economy where those who have enriched themselves have done so through black market activities, rampant nepotism, and

corruption.

Evidence suggests that mass population movements are now assuming a larger scale and are occurring within a shorter time frame than in previous years (UNHCR, 1997). "A number of trends have contributed to the growing scale and speed of forced displacement in these and other parts of the world: the emergence of new forms of warfare, entailing the destruction of whole social, economic and political systems: the spread of light weapons and land-mines, available at prices which enable whole populations - including their youngest members - to be armed: and, perhaps most significantly, the use of mass evictions and expulsions as a weapon of war and as a means of establishing culturally or ethnically homogenous societies" (UNHCR, 1997, p. 31).

Forced displacement in general, and rural depopulation in particular, have also become increasingly common weapons of war, even in armed conflicts where ethnic cleansing is not a specific objective. In former Yugoslavia, however, ethnic cleansing was a specific objective and rural Yugoslavians were driven from their homes to the cities, providing the rather shocking sight of goats and other livestock foraging, not very successfully, on fourth floor balconies and elder rural Yugoslavians squatting on city streets selling their wares.

However, forced displacement, rural deportation, "war, persecution, and mass expulsion are not just the refugees' problems: they are also perceived to be a major problem by practically every community and nation in the world, because governments fear the instability that uncontrolled migration might bring" (Loescher, 1993, p.10). Refugee flows are increasingly seen as a political, economic, and social threat to potential host countries, so the refugee is faced not only with expulsion from his or her country of

origin but is greeted with rejection once in the host country. " ... The declining

willingness of states to grant asylum to refugees is now one of the most important issues

on the international humanitarian agenda" (UNHCR, 1997, p. 64). The continuing spread

of ethnic violence seems set to replace the spread of communism as the central security

concern in western society and when officials say that instability is the major worldwide

threat to American national security, ethnic wars are largely what they have in mind. The

result is that the world's refugee problem is carried overwhelmingly by the poorest

countries. The twenty countries that have the highest rate of refugees per capital earn, on

average, about $700 U.S. per capita per year (Loescher, 1993). "Refugee problems are by

definition transnational problems, which cannot be resolved by means of uncoordinated

activities in separate countries" (UNHCR, 1997, p.49) and they surely cannot be resolved

without intense involvement from First World nations.

The intensity of these xenophobic sentiments is related not only to political, social,

and economic causes but also to an inability to empathize with the refugee and his or her

appalling predicament. Understanding the bleak world of refugees means not only

considering the context and events from which they escaped, but also taking into account

the conditions under which they lived in exile. Often there are many stops on the way to

the refugee's final one. Former Yugoslavians ran from war, torture, hunger, and rape,

often to conditions that were almost as terrifying. For example, Serbs from Croatia or

Bosnia who migrated to Serbia expecting to find comfort and acceptance met with

poverty, prejudice and anger from local people who neither wanted nor welcomed their

presence. People who fled from war ravaged areas of Croatia into Bosnia, prior to the war

in Bosnia, were often taunted and ridiculed as they dove for cover when planes flew

overhead. People who fled the countryside in Bosnia and made it to Slovenia lived, at least for the first few years of asylum, in prison-like conditions in refugee camps. Life in the camp meant segregation from the host population, the need to share facilities, a complete lack of privacy, plus overcrowding and a limited, restricted area within which all of daily life had to be conducted.

Migration of vast numbers during war is a common pattern in the Balkans. Moreover, "it is certain that the unstable history of the Balkans has taught its people precisely when is the right moment to flee" (Judah, 1997, p.86). However, becoming a homeless refugee in the space of few hours or a few days was not something any of the participants in this study knew anything about. It was months before they realized that going home would never again be an option. The status of refugee does not seem to be something an individual adopts quickly. Many refugees take flight believing that this madness will pass quickly and common sense will triumph and all will be right with the world soon enough. Only slowly, and accompanied by horrified disbelief and incredulity, does the cloak of homelessness and the status of refugee wind itself around one's mind and body.

Flight and resettlement patterns of most refugees follow one of two kinetic types, anticipatory and acute refugee movement (Stein, 1986). Anticipatory refugee movement results when the refugee senses danger and leaves well before the problems have reached critical proportions. Acute refugee movements occur from an overwhelming push to leave. Mortality rates in refugee populations during the acute phases of displacement are estimated at sixty times the normal rates (Marsella, et al., 1994, p.328). War, or political crisis, or government policy, places the emphasis on immediate escape, and because little

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time is put into the planning little thought is given to the consequences of flight. Not until a place of asylum is reached, often in a state of shock and in a condition called "midway to nowhere", (Stein, 1986, p.9), will the refugee begin to think about the choices available to him or her. There are three classic choices: to return home, to remain in the place of first asylum, or to accept refugee status in a distant place in a strange land. Often, the first two are illusory. For example, many of the people who fled the battle in Bosnia fled to Germany. Here, although finding work was not a problem for many of them, the work was often backbreaking, mind-numbing labour. Further, they found it next to impossible to become Germany citizens and, therefore, work permits and visas had to be renewed every three months. Whether they were expelled at the end of these three months or allowed to remain was a matter left to the vagaries of German immigration officials. Any sense of security under the circumstances seemed unrealistic. Moreover, following the 1995 Dayton Accord which created the Republika Srpska where Serbians now live, and the Bosnian-Croatian Federation, which included Muslim and Croatian people, family homes and lands may have been expropriated by members of another nationality. Home simply did not exist anymore. There was nowhere to return to and nowhere to go.

The experience that all refugees have in common is that they have suffered extensive loss, and to a larger or lesser degree, the abuse of power by those around them. Their human rights have been violated and they have undergone various hardships, possibly before and certainly during their flight (van der Veer, 1992). Many have been arrested, abducted, raped, and tortured. Isolated from friends and families, many have served in paramilitary groups, were subjected to various forms of violence, witnessed death and destruction, sometimes of loved ones, and hold within their memories sights,

sounds, and scenes of violence that those of us in the West cannot even imagine. And almost all of them have lost everything they possessed. So compelling is the decision to flee that it is often made within hours and the fear is so great they take flight with only the clothes they are wearing. It is not until much later that they realize they have nothing to change into, not even underwear, and they have nothing to put on their children. These exceptionally difficult, painful, and fear-filled experiences are likely to result in psychological traumatization both in the short and the long term.

"Majority-identified" (Kunz, 1981), refers to refugees who identify with their nation and with their homeland and its people. These people delay departure until it is almost too late. Every participant in this study would be majority-identified. "Events-alienated" people, on the other hand, are marginalized within the society and find it easier to leave. Moreover, although refugees have much in common with the victims of violent crime, what happened to them was sanctioned by the authorities and officials of their country. There was little or no opposition and, certainly, there was nowhere to turn for understanding, help, and compensation.

Research indicates that the experience of flight or escape leaves a residual psychological imprint of guilt, invulnerability, and aggression (Keller, 1975). Guilt exists because the refugee has survived, often failed to protect loved ones, and failed to somehow change the situation. Invulnerability occurs as a result of having survived the worst, and aggression is evidenced by displacement of guilt onto others, and a willingness to take risks. Research (Scudder, et al., 1982) would indicate, however, that refugees make a transition to a stage characterized by increased initiative and risk-taking only after several years of a reconstituted life.

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This does not happen until well into resettlement, however. Prior to any adjustment or growth of any kind, the refugee must at some point confront the loss of identity, homeland, language, culture, loved ones, the ability to predict, coordinate, and structure his or her life, as well as feelings of basic competence which have been shattered in fundamental ways. For example, participants in this study spoke of witnessing cold-blooded beatings and hearing screams for help to which they did not dare respond. Such events disrupt aspects that are intrinsic to the structure of an individual's identity.

Further, refugees need to be considered within their age, gender, family context, and specific experiences. For example, during flight, refugee women are particularly "subject to sexual violence and abduction at every step of their escape, and are particularly vulnerable when crossing borders to seek asylum" (Cole, et al., 1992, p.67). It is estimated that 75 to 80 percent of the total refugee population is made up of women and girls (Cole, et al., 1992). Hence, the traumas refugee women experience are highly correlated with their gender as is the acculturation period where they may have to work, deal with angry and abusive husbands whose livelihood and status have been destroyed, and children who wholeheartedly adopt the new culture and abandon traditional ways of thinking and acting (Marsella, et al., 1994). Moreover, parents may find themselves dependent on children who are more familiar with the new language and the society.

"Refugees represent a special category of persons undergoing acculturation" (Berry, 1986, p. 25) where acculturation is defined as a learning of the culture and behaviour of the dominant society and all cultural change that occurs as a result of the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems (Berry, 1986). A cultural system refers to the pervasive "organized patterns of values, beliefs, and behaviours developed

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and transmitted over time by a social group" (Robbins, et al., 1998, p. 122). In theory, the acculturation process is two-way, and to a certain extent this is precisely the case. In practice, however, the dominant group culture contributes more to the flow of cultural elements than does the weaker of the groups. This apparent domination of one culture over another predisposes interactions between cultures to be difficult, reactive and conflictual, rather than smooth and gradual in nature (Berry, 1986). As acculturation becomes more intense for the refugee, ideally he or she begins a process of dual identification where both sets of cultural values are internalized and available for use in various contexts (Robbins, et al., 1998). This, however, is not often the case and refugees suffer because so much of Western society is historically predicated on constructs of exploitation, slavery and conquest where white, Western elitist world views traditionally deprecate those who are nonwhite, working-class, poor, female, children, and/or are culturally different. The practices of the larger culture, of which social work, psychiatric and psychological discourse are a part, can and are used to effectively stereotype, categorize and construct a divisive stereotypical picture of the refugee and his or her plight. In fact, adjustment, resettlement and acculturation involve complex multifaceted processes. A smooth and gradual transition to a bicultural or tanscultural identity, where a person can relate comfortably in many different cultural contexts, is the consummate objective but hardly the reality.

Studies of exactly how refugees adjust and acculturate to their country of asylum tend to focus on two main areas. First, studies have investigated the refugees themselves, their mental health, occupational adjustment, language adjustment, residential and community adjustment, and adjustment to a totally new culture and identity. Problems

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with health, reactions to trauma, and relationships with natives are also part of this type of study. A second group of studies falls into the category of policy study and tends to focus more on programs themselves. This would include a focus on language programs, welfare and job search programs, as well as policies and mixes of programs that provide the most efficacious aid (Stein, 1986).

Typically, studies have concluded that patterns of adjustment can be best analyzed in four stages: 1) the initial arrival period of the first few months; 2) the first and second years; 3) after four to five years; and 4) a decade or more later (Stein, 1986).

In that initial period the refugee is confronted with the reality of what has been lost and this extends to all areas of life, from the ability to buy a cup of coffee to one's professional status and occupation. Overnight a physician can no longer practice medicine and an engineer is lining up for "English as a Second Language" (ESL) classes. So deep does the nostalgia, frustration, fear, anger, anxiety, depression and despair become that the urge to go home, in spite of the danger, is unbearable. Everything from buying milk to enrolling children in school is a task of enormous proportions and takes a tremendous amount of energy and concentration.

In the second period of adjustment, the first and second years, the literature would support the idea that refugees work diligently to recover what they can of what they have lost. The effort to rebuild their lives is concentrated and calculated. The strengths they have accumulated as a result of their experiences, strengths such as risk-taking and a sense of self-reliance and independence, may make them more aggressive and innovative in this stage of their adjustment. Also, many refugees were successful, well-educated people in their country of origin and those qualities that facilitated upward mobility will again come

into prominence. In this period, refugees will change jobs, go to school and learn, at the very least a new language, move, possibly to a place where there is a concentration of refugees, experience increased problems within the family, and likely experience a shift and increase in their level of mental dysfunction (Stein, 1986).

After four or five years the refugee has completed the major part of adjustment. Usually the refugee has acquired enough of the language to participate in the culture and has found an ethnic community of his or her own culture. Such a community can both ease the shock of adjustment and transition for the refugee as well as become a safe haven from which the refugee does not venture. Because a like ethnic community "lessens the danger of social and personal disorganization and provides a group identity, as well as a network of relationships, associations and institutions, it can be viewed as dysfunctional, a barrier that keeps the refugee in an ambivalent position: Midway to nowhere, between the lost homeland and the new world" (Stein, 1989, p. 17).

As a rule, by this stage of adjustment the refugee has a job and has retrained. If the goals that were set earlier have not been reached then drive and determination give way to despair. An attitude of resignation takes hold and the refugee begins to accept his or her status and the changes that have occurred. Older, and caught up in the day-to-day grind of making ends meet, the refugee begins to talk of the exodus from the country of origin as having been for the sake of the children. Hopes and dreams are transferred to the next generation (Stein, 1986; Soskis, 1967).

Resignation can and sometimes does become bitterness and alienation. Not having achieved what they wanted, expected, and dreamed of, the refugee will merely survive. He or she will function but will feel neither assimilated, acculturated, nor integrated. If this

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prevails, in the final stage of adjustment, although a certain amount of stability will have been achieved, the refugee will not have established or recovered the status or comfort level that he or she may have enjoyed in the country of origin. And, although the decline is experienced as less painful and slower than in the first stages of adjustment, it is experienced as a decline nonetheless (Stein, 1986).

Refugees often hold high expectations of what is possible in their new country, especially if that country is a First World nation. They quite literally plunge into the alien and unknown with as much optimism as possible. Those expectations are often embellished by well-meaning but misinformed immigration officials. However, having lived through the devastation of war and emerged vaguely intact, the new land is approached with great ambivalence. At the point of escape, there was no destination in mind and the country of resettlement is often chosen as the least offensive of a number of unpleasant possibilities. This titanic upheaval occurred through no fault or need of the refugee's to settle elsewhere. Understandably, the refugee wants to stem the tide of loss and begin the process of recovering lost status, time, possessions, and revenue and is, at least in the beginning, reluctant to take a job that represents less status and underemployment. However, stemming the tide of losses is often impossible due to the comprehensive nature of the cognitive, linguistic, cultural, financial, familial, and emotional adjustments.

Further, refugees often endure myriad physical ailments as a result of their suffering and need complicated medical diagnoses and care. Hence, "to the stresses and trauma inflicted upon the refugee before escape, during flight, and in refugee camps, one must add the difficulties and fears refugees face during resettlement. Acculturation, loss of

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status, identity confusion, language difficulties, poverty, concern and grief over lost, missing, or dead family members, guilt, isolation, host hostility, and countless other factors" (Stein, 1986, p.18) facilitate the development of major mental illnesses such as depression, and various anxiety disorders such as post traumatic stress disorder.

The refugees from former Yugoslavia that have streamed into the United States and Canada since the outbreak of the 1992 war have suffered all of the above plus the betrayal of neighbours, associates, friends and relatives due to the civil nature of the war. They carry with them images of death, loss and atrocity that have no ready place in their new world. They struggle daily over whether to talk about this with others or leave it in the past, if they can. And even now, many years after the war, some find the memories so disturbing they question whether or not it happened at all. They struggle daily with intrusion, avoidance and hyperarousal, and even in the fulness of time, like many survivors of trauma, cannot integrate the emotional and cognitive overload of the genocidal trauma they experienced (Weine, et al., 1994).

In a study of 20 newly arrived Bosnian refugees, all but five met criteria for at least one DSM-III-R diagnosis. "Thirteen met criteria for PTSD, seven met criteria for depressive disorder, and of the subjects over 18, all but one met diagnostic criteria for PTSD" (Weine, et al., 1995, p. 538). All of this emphasizes the need for social workers to adopt an approach that honours the intricacies and many-sidedness of the global, political, social, economic and personal dynamics against which the refugee struggles.

Dynamical Systems Theory
Applied to War-Devastated Bosnia and Its People

To be a refugee is to be at first homeless, a victim of the crime of mass expulsion, and later a stranger in a strange land, homesick and grief-filled. Refugees who settle in a country of exile are walking, breathing, extreme examples of the states of consciousness experienced on the human journey from chaos to self-organization. States of consciousness can be conceptualized as complex coherent processes (Robertson, et al., 1995), and from a nonlinear synergetic perspective several conditions are necessary for a complex system to self-organize by organizing and coordinating emergent complexity. First, the system must be open and dissipative and exchanges of both matter and energy must occur with the environment. Second, the system must be maintained far-from-equilibrium. Third, the system must be nonlinear and the condition of extreme sensitivity to initial conditions must be met. Finally, not only must nonlinear interactions exist both within and between the system and its environment, but interdependent macro and microscopic levels of systemic activity are assumed as well (Schiepek, et al., 1992).

Both the land of former Yugoslavia and its people meet all those conditions, and self-organization is inherent in the trauma response precisely because the above conditions of open, far-from-equilibrium, nonlinear interdependence are met. An individual in a steady-state, or moving toward equilibrium, will not be buffeted by small perturbations, whereas, in the wake of a traumatic event like the outbreak of war, energy flows and nonequilibrium conditions create a source of inconceivable chaos where small perturbations have major effects on the macro, meso, and microscopic level and all interactions within and between.

On all levels, national or mesoscopic, individual or microscopic, and global or macroscopic, new forms of flow create either systemic self-organization or system death. On an individual level, a quarter of a million people died in the Balkan wars of the 1990s. The individual participants in this study, however, self-organized by learning a new language, finding a new vocation (often below what they had achieved in their country of origin), getting married, having children, learning to drive and to buy a car, setting goals, and making massive attitudinal adjustments in thinking, dressing, and living. From a societal or mesoscopic perspective, however, the country, former Yugoslavia, has not self-organized. It has become the first European country to die since the Second World War. Macroscopically, or globally, the world has been pulled into this war in many ways. From the army of United Nation peacekeepers who currently patrol the former Yugoslavia, to the bombing of Kosovo, to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the world's first war-crime tribunal since the Second World War, the Western world has been rocked by the 1990s Balkan wars.

Dynamical Systems and the Macroscopic Level: The West and the 1990s Balkan Wars

In systemic models of human functioning (Bushev, 1994; Haken, 1988; Bronfenbrenner, 1979), micro, meso and macroscopic system levels are composed of a large number of interrelated subsystems which interact in far-from-equilibrium conditions to create novel structures and modes of behaviour. In a nonlinear system it is impossible to describe all the effects of one system upon another, let alone describe the effects of a subsystem upon itself and other systems. The illusion of crisp causality disappears into a more intricate picture of relational interaction where reciprocal causes and effects colour each other (Goerner, 1991).

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For example, the international community has been forced to refocus its attention on the horrors of genocide. The impact of one level of the system upon the global or macro level of the system instigated the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. It was established in 1993 and was "in the broadest sense" instrumental in "provoking and then justifying the first full-scale military operation in half a century, and the first operation of its magnitude, to address a humanitarian disaster - the killing of thousands of Kosovar Albanians and the deportation of nearly a million" (Trueheart, 2000, p.82). NATO may have had many reasons for launching the attack against Serbia, but the argument that was put forward with the most frequency and eloquence was the humanitarian one. By the time NATO began its bombing of Kosovo, this war had been underway since 1991, claimed 250,000 lives, and had rendered more than two million people homeless.

Following World War II the United Nations wanted to codify war crimes and crimes against humanity. However the task was never more than an ideal until the atrocities emerging from the war in former Yugoslavia once again reminded the world that some international means of justice and consequence were needed to deal with those who committed crimes against humanity, genocide, and/or grossly violated the customs of war. Up until the 1990s, the ideas the world held about international codes of law designed to deter individuals from initiating acts of war began and ended with the 218 days of hearings in Nuremberg in 1945- 46. The highest-ranking survivors of Hitler's Third Reich faced sentences ranging from hanging to acquittal (Cowell, 1995). It was these trials and the subsequent theoretical musings that emerged from these trials that provided the legal and political underpinnings for the tribunals of the 1990s.

Three global precedents may have been set with the NATO bombing of Kosovo and the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. First, "the commission of atrocities and the pursuit of ethnic cleansing are now accepted justifications for military intervention, sometimes rendering state sovereignty irrelevant. Second, war-crime charges have been shown to be powerful weapons . . . . Third, international criminal justice *may* have become integral to what the civilized world believes and does" (Trueheart, 2000, p.90). Whether the International Criminal Court in the Hague becomes just another ineffectual UN program with little punch and no teeth or whether it has a bearing on how the rule of law prevails internationally in this century, it was the war in the Balkans that has to a large degree brought these issues to the front and centre of the world stage. To date, unfortunately, the principal characters under indictment such as Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, and Slobodan Milosevic live, apparently well-protected in their Balkan strongholds, quite safe from arrest and world justice.

Massive interdependence is inherent in any open, far-from-equilibrium system. Still haunted by images of the genocide from the Second World War, the West was mobilized, slowly but surely by the graphic pictures that emerged from Bosnia and then from Kosovo. In fact, the massacre by Serbian soldiers of 40 Albanians in the village of Racak near the capital city of Pristina is often cited as the peremptory event in the NATO bombing of Serbia. The names of the Racak victims are largely unknown, but their deaths made Kosovo a part of the lives of millions worldwide. Etched in the mind of Juliette Terzieff, a freelance journalist and one of the first on the Racak scene, is the image of "the body of a 74-year-old man in slippers, a walking cane by his side, a young boy shot in the back, and an 18-year-old woman shot just outside her house" (Terzieff, 1999).

These images were ultimately shown in the West and did much to concentrate western attention on the brutal power game Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic was playing. Co-transformation and co-evolution are primary processes in nonlinear, dynamical models and within such interdependent complexity there is always more than one adaptive solution available when destabilizations challenge a system and render previously efficacious coping skills and mechanisms obsolete (Chen, 1991). New order and choices emerge in an interdependent system when disparate component parts are brought together in unexpected ways. When war erupted in former Yugoslavia the international community was both unprepared to deal with it and unable, due to modern technology, to ignore it.

In every process of energy conversion, there is energy flow and dissipation. Entropy is the concept used in physics to describe the quality of energy flow when it is disorganized or lost and, therefore, irrecoverable to the system. In any process, entropic energy is dissipated as heat. When an energy flow occurs that is either physical, chemical or social, changes occur and entropy is produced. When a cup breaks, the energy that is cracking china is turned into heat and sound and can never be recovered. And when a country cracks, the traumatic energy released reverberates around the world and impacts in a way that makes us question the basic tissue of social life, community and the nature of humanity.

The scientific law that talks about entropy is the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Thermodynamics is the study of energy flow and constitutes "the science of complex systems" (Prigogine, et al., 1984, p.239). The laws of thermodynamics apply to all physical processes and, therefore, to biopsychosocial processes (Sabelli, et al., 1995). This

Second Law states that heat can only flow from a hotter body to a cooler one and statues can only crumble and snowmen melt (Coveney, et al., 1995). According to the Second Law, entropy always increases over time (Cambel, 1993) in a closed system. Within any linear model, entropy must increase until the system reaches thermodynamic equilibrium, which is the equivalent of the death of the system. Thermodynamic equilibrium, although sometimes confused and equated with a steady state or homeostasis, means all potential for change within that system is spent. Because entropy can only increase and is characterized as lost and disordered energy, in a closed system entropy does increase in the direction of ever-increasing disorder and, therefore, is synonymous with an inexorable decline and collapse into system death (Coveney, et al., 1990). Entropy has nowhere to go in a closed system and cannot be dissipated. It therefore, increases until ultimate system death or equilibrium and self-organization cannot occur. However, when one begins to interpret the Second Law in light of nonlinear nonequilibrium thermodynamics and open systems, then order-production rather than an inexorable movement toward complete disorder becomes possible. The Second Law, rather than a principle of disorder, can be viewed as the underlying creative principle in the universe (Goerner, 1993). In open systems self-organization is now seen to occur because of the Second Law.

A dissipative system dumps or dissipates internal entropy or disorganized energy into the environment, while complementarily draining and assimilating what is called negentropy or organized energy from the environment, and in this way adapts and self-organizes (Masterpasqua, et al., 1997). In far-from-equilibrium open systems there are always inflows and outflows of energy, matter, information, and entropy which promote the occurrence of dynamic patterns of self-organization.

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The entropy dumped into the global political system due to the Balkan war embraced a broad spectrum of countries and even squeezed a growl out of the bankrupt and beleaguered Russian Bear. Traditionally, Russia has supported Serbia in times of international aggression and although the relationship between the two is often strained, the Kremlin launched a fierce verbal assault on NATO, condemning its attack on Kosovo. Although Russia threatened "extreme measures" against the Western alliance, the current need for Western money prevailed and the deepest rift since the Cold War was successfully sidestepped (York, 1999).

As complexity grows within and between systems, interconnectivity becomes richer and new order emerges as a result of the dependence of the shape of the whole upon the most minute part. The land of the South Slavs, tiny and tucked neatly between East and West has created and experienced perturbations that have ultimately shifted global perceptions back to establishing some foundation of international ethics amidst some understanding of the extreme violence human beings are capable of. As diversity and complexity increase, so too must humanity's awareness and ability to deal with it by manifesting mutual aid and support, cooperation and empathy, and responsibility for and consciousness of, such levels of interdependence.

Conceptualizing interdependence in light of Miller's (1989) life-event webs, or Capra's (1996) and others notion of "web of life," means building communities and countries on principles that reflect interdependence as crucial to sustainable existence, not because interdependence might be a righteous or moral idea, but because the level of diversity and complexity which has evolved within the human global community will not be sustained without an intellectual understanding, as well as a practical application, of the

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construct of interdependence. Interdependence on all system levels, from micro to macro, means first of all acknowledging that diversity is synonymous with resilience only when a community or country is committed to the idea that vibrant communities are literally sustained by this diverse web of relationships. Otherwise, diversity in human communities has the potential to fragment groups and individuals and deteriorate into the kind of bloodbath that swamped former Yugoslavia. What results is not chaotic activity en route to self-organization and emergent complexity, but death of the system.

Dynamical systems theory is in essence about discovering the importance and relevance of interdependence in shaping the world at all levels from the molecular to the societal. "We live in an increasingly interconnected global system characterized by new geopolitical arrangements, new social institutions, new communications and information networks, new belief systems, symbols, and cultural assumptions" (Spradling, 1993, p.203). Such extensive and increasing interdependence results in accelerating rates of change. As rates of change accelerate, systems must self-organize into ever-increasing levels of complexity or die. If global human systems are going to self-organize, then they must ultimately adopt an identity around being a flexible learning system conscious of interdependence, as well as emphasize structure and form less and quality of life and process more. For example, ghosts of religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity, as well as ultranationalist Ustasas and Chetniks, haunted former Yugoslavia. Rather than facilitating a process of exorcising those ghosts through acknowledging their presence, establishing reform through democratic processes and measures, and building on its potential as the most liberal of the Communist countries, both the Tito regime and the regime that followed attempted to banish those ghosts from consciousness and squash all moments of

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societal chaos or rebellion.

The wars in former Yugoslavia mirror ethnicity and diversity at its most destructive and underscores the need to globally and internationally sustain and actively protect the rights of minorities. The interdependent, multicultural and diverse nature of Yugoslavia is a teeming example of a diverse living system that constantly fluctuates between instability, stability and change.

As an ethnically mixed region of the world that tumbled into chaos, perhaps former Yugoslavia has afforded the world a look into the future of international relations. Central to what happened in former Yugoslavia is our ability to understand and appreciate diversity and difference and the tremendous challenge it presents at all levels of the human community. From a dynamical systems macroscopic perspective, the question becomes, "Are ethnically mixed regions in the post Cold War era inevitably the sites of violent conflict that will spill over into the international arena?" (Gagnon, 1997, p.132). This toxic spillage may occur not so much because people cannot live in peace and are driven by ancient ethnic hatreds, but because of our inability to deal with human difference when fanned by poverty, inequity, hopelessness, fear, and oppression. In fact, "Yugoslavia never saw the kind of religious war seen in Western and Central Europe, and Serbs and Croats never fought before this century, intermarriage rates were quite high in those ethnically-mixed regions . . . , and sociological polling as late as 1989-90 showed a high level of tolerance, especially in these mixed regions" (Gagnon, 1997, p.136).

The antithesis of interdependence is fragmentation and isolation, which results in high levels of sustained stress and anxiety and eventually trauma. Wars reveal the worst of who we are in our disconnection, independence and fragmentation. All wars reflect

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extreme manifestations of oppressive trauma and manifest violent patterns that are already inherent in the structure of a social or world order. For example, wars reflect both global and local sexual-political power structures and this war was no exception. Globally, women experience high levels of oppression and stress. According to a United Nations study, they perform 66 percent of all work, but receive only 10 percent of all income and own less than one percent of material assets (Ozawa, 1989).

In the Balkan wars, the violations of human rights that many women suffer globally were reflected locally in the crimes committed against women. One study participant talked of a young and beautiful dentist who slept near her in the concentration camp. Each night she was repeatedly raped until eventually she was unable to get up without a great deal of encouragement and help from other camp inmates. Women were forced to work naked from the waist down and because in times of war lawlessness is the rule, existing oppression became inflated and exaggerated. As complex social wholes emerge and beliefs about women, such as those represented by the sexual-political power structure, affect and infect individual members of the society, those beliefs are redefined and invested with attributes of the society that individuals may not possess as independent organisms (Artigiani, 1991). Hence, global beliefs about women's worth and endemic beliefs such as "the man is the head of the household," that sustain behaviour patterns in prototypical Yugoslavian families, become inflated and structurally coupled with larger cultural beliefs, and activities of war such as rape naturally follow.

However, dynamical systems theory suggests that when self-organization occurs, either through self-renewal or through the creation of new structures and internal connections, the uncertainty inherent in chaotic processes is organized into learning and

those very events that tumbled the system into chaos become the fuel for future self-organization. For example, attitudes of violence toward women, which are active in peace and unleashed in war, can hypothetically be the very attitudes that tumble the system into chaos and new learning. Self-organization theory is quite radical in its social implications in that it suggests that given the right conditions, that is conditions agreeable and amenable to the human psyche, systems will structure themselves (Goerner, 1995) accordingly. All living self-organizing systems are inherently creative and under the right conditions are internally motivated to take charge of those conditions that order and control system behaviour, change, and evolution. Interactive dynamics create networks and wholes out of parts. Previously separate things mutually affect one another to create not only chaos but novel and holistic order out of disparate parts.

Following World War II the most common rationalization for the Holocaust was, "We did not know" (Cushman, et al., 1996). In Bosnia, however, the intricate global information highway of the 1990s made certain we knew. We were bombarded with information about mass rapes, ethnic cleansing and genocidal activity. The butchering of civilians went on under the watchful gaze of the camera's eye. Still, most of the world remained remarkably disengaged from what has been referred to as "this prime time horror" (Cushman, et al., 1996, p.9).

However, from a dynamical systems perspective, every time the world witnesses atrocities they can be seen and compared with previous ones. System output is taken as new input which in turn becomes new output (van Geert, 1994). This is an iterative process, that is, a process which repeats itself and continuously reabsorbs what has come before. Iterations use feedback processes to enfold, reabsorb, engulf and, ultimately,

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recreate systems through releasing and liberating hidden complexities that lie within the system. Nonlinearity creates iterations which encapsulate both stability and change, because the initial uncertainty inherent in a microscopic system begins to accumulate and distort the results of each iteration, creating a situation that is fundamentally unpredictable. The future behaviour of the system can no longer be anticipated from its behaviour in the past. The error or difference in the most minute part of the system ultimately affects the entire system. New order emerges because the shape of the whole is dependent upon the most minute part.

To study iterations in complex systems is to understand profound interconnectedness. One more time, Bosnia brought the world to the edge of humanity's capacity for merciless antagonism and reminded us, yet again, of the waste that is war. Throughout this war the spectre of the Holocaust was repeatedly invoked right down to the deportation of Muslim populations in boxcars being carried away to concentration camps. This time we really did know. Because the West did not act immediately does not mean the learning of the Second World War was lost. What was uncertain, however, was exactly how the United Nations should proceed in the face of that learning. The spectre of Vietnam loomed large creating complexities. The lesson learned in sending thousands of troops to the jungles of Vietnam and losing the war anyway was not lost either (Cushman, et al., 1996).

However, as Serbian aggression moved into Kosovo the die was cast and the West, under the auspices of NATO, in March 1999 attacked a sovereign nation for the first time in fifty years. Canada has not been as involved in a conflict since Korea. Warren Christopher, American secretary of state, described the war in Bosnia in the early summer

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of 1993 as, "a humanitarian crisis a long way from home, in the middle of another continent" (Cushman, et al., 1996, p.77). The implication, much like that of Neville Chamberlain speaking of Nazi aggression against Czechoslovakia in 1938, was that such aggression was a long way away and mattered little to the West. However, from a dynamical systems and historical perspective, both men could not have been more inaccurate. Global interdependence dictates that such aggression, whether it is Germany in 1939 or Bosnia in 1992, will impact on the world at large.

Dynamical Systems and the Mesoscopic Level: The Death of a Country

Four years after the smoldering peace brought about by the Dayton Accord, Bosnia was divided into the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnian Muslims and Croatians and there is a huge, some 65,000 strong, peacekeeping presence everywhere (Atlantic Monthly, April 2000). When a system self-organizes, it takes command of the forces that both order and control it, and it does so not because that control has been imposed from the outside, but because the system itself has taken charge of itself. This is not the case in former Yugoslavia and nowhere is that more apparent than in Bosnia, where the land and its people were spiritually, physically, economically, and socially ravaged.

In Sarajevo, the once thriving Bosnian capital, what endures five years after the bombing has stopped and more than 10,000 of its citizens have been killed, 3,000 of them children, is a smaller, more provincial city that can be characterized as more like an emerging backwater than a place of opportunity. In spite of the fact that unlike many of the smaller and more remote cities and villages where little repair work has been done to the bombed out shells that used to be homes, schools, community centres and sports

facilities, five billion dollars of foreign aid has done much to rebuilt the damaged city. There is, however, a feeling of stagnation (Rieff, 2000, p.100). Many of the brightest and best have left the country and "Bosnian authorities have proved largely incapable of restarting the economy" (Rieff, 2000, p.101). Nor is there any realistic prospect that one will develop soon. As one Sarajevan put it, "Bosnian leaders are incapable of thinking about the needs of ordinary people. They think only about the problems that pit nationality against nationality. Snow removal simply does not register with them" (Rieff, 2000, p.102).

War seems to be an easily ignited fuse in the Balkans and so is something akin to a strange attractor. This is the second Yugoslavia destroyed by a war where neighbour was pitted against neighbour. In the April 2000 issue of The Presence of the Past, the Atlantic Monthly's peek into yesteryear, a story by Roland Usher is quoted as follows:

> "Yet, as certainly, since the days of imperial Rome, no European
> state has been more often the subject of anxious inquiry; for those
> mountain valleys are the keys of Europe . . . The racial antipathy of the
> Occidental for the Oriental, the fierce religious hatred of the Christian for
> the Mohammedan, are motives actuating the Balkan peoples to a degree
> inconceivable in America . . . This war is a gigantic blood feud, a racial
> struggle, a crusade. " (p.78)

This could have been referring to the recent wars but instead was written in 1913 in reference to the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, where the battle lines for the First World War were first drawn up.

Underlying pattern is generated by the system attractor which articulates the way in which a system moves and transforms. The transition from peace to war is a living example of the Second Law of thermodynamics, the law that states there is disorganized energy which is always increasing as systems move toward an inexorable end. Swenson's

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thermodynamic Principle of Maximum Entropy Production states that not only does entropy increase, but it increases "at the fastest possible rate" (Goerner, 1993, p.170). In war, people feel disorganized energy to the point of numb terror. The explanation as to why pressure toward increased rates of energy flow/entropy production drive systems toward increasing levels of ordered-complexity works in a general sense, and it works when the energy flow is generated through a traumatic event like war.

Given a serious enough traumatic event, traumatic energy will increase until fluctuations reach a critical size and the system is forced into critical evolutionary places of choice (Miller, et al., 1990; Miller, 1978). As probability for change grows, so does entropy or disorganized energy (Prigogine, et al., 1984) which forces the system to change. When a critical threshold is reached and the time-space constraints that hold the flow of energy in place are broken, a new form of flow will come into being (Goerner, 1993).

War is indeed a new and terrifying flow of energy and forces the system to change. The power of the entropy that is unleashed in war necessitates radical shifts and changes and new energy flows. So profound were the changes brought about by the wars that Yugoslavia is dead. The country, as it was formed in 1945, no longer exists. In war everything stops and all available energy goes into surviving. All systems break down at the fastest possible rate. Very soon there is no water, no food, no heat, no lights, and the sound of bombs is all around. The disequilibrium is so consuming and immediate that it creates a motive force that presses energy to flow toward a new equilibrium. The type of flow that occurs does so as a result of the interaction between disequilibrium forces and resistance to those forces (Goerner, 1993).

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Hence, in war tremendous energy goes into simply not accepting what is happening, and into disbelief, denial and shock. Precisely because entropy increases over time and the system must adapt or die, entropy is concerned with the system's capacity for change. War is the essence of entropy and creates irreversible changes due to systemic deviations from a stable state. It pours vast amounts of overwhelmingly disorganized information into all system levels.

A stable system will dampen perturbations, but as a system becomes unstable, there is a decrease in the rate of decay of perturbations. Hence, as the conditions which led up to war in the Balkans worsened, instability increased and the forces which would have destabilized the system and dampened perturbations were simply not powerful enough. They were not as powerful as the void left by the loss of leadership, the economic crisis, an impotent bureaucracy, the Serbian attempts to fill the vacuum within the federation, coupled with the Slovenian and Croatian attempts to diminish Serbian and federal authority, plus the rising swell of nationalism ignited by leaders.

The manner in which a system changes is governed by historical, cultural, individual, evolutionary, and environmental influences. Choices are made at bifurcation points or critical choice points according to those influences. A severe enough traumatic event will catapult any organic system into a bifurcation cascade and chaos. Each bifurcation point represents a possible future in terms of the individual, group or society's structure and behaviour. As one future is chosen, other possible futures are lost. By the time former Yugoslavia had again chosen for war all other options had been closed off.

Prior to the outbreak of war, as nationalists closed ranks there was much talk about not being able to live together as one country. "This kind of talk helped to foster processes

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of ethnic homogenization and tended to marginalize those who were not only advocating a possible institutional recasting of Yugoslavia in a democratic, multinational image, but were also warning against the possible escalation of ethnic conflict" (Vejvoda, 1996, p.252). When the first shots were fired and the first civilian was killed in Sarajevo, a young Muslim woman and a medical student from Dubrovnik, the country continued a traumatic and irreversible cascade into chaos and system death. And the country itself, former Yugoslavia, for the second time this century could not make the necessary changes to survive in its current form, and radical restructuring was underway using war as a bestial weapon for change.

Whatever form this part of the world takes, it is emergent and struggling to self-organize. Although the Serbian people ultimately dethroned Milosevic while the army and the police passively abetted, the country is far from stable. Bosnia is economically drained and there are few job opportunities. Parts of the former country, especially Bosnia, are heavily mined and the threat of violence is always present. People have been moved from their homes and forced to resettle in other parts of the republic and in other republics. Citizenship is difficult to attain if, for example, you were born in Croatia but had lived in Bosnia before the war. Elders warn their adult children who have settled a world away not to come home. There is nothing to come home to. What was is no longer, and what will be is unknown.

Yugoslavia was a failed exercise in the stabilization and consolidation of a multinational, multilingual and multireligious state in both of its incarnations, first as a monarchy from 1918 - 1941, and second as a communist totalitarian regime from 1945-1990. Each failed to sow the seeds of a democratic community where minority rights were

both honoured and protected. Rather, leaders engaged in power-preserving strategies. For example, the popular belief today about Milosevic is that he would destroy his country and its people before he would surrender power and possibly face the war crimes tribunal in the Hague.

When this war erupted in former Yugoslavia, overwhelming and unmanageable amounts of entropy flooded the country at the fastest possible rate, and due to the intricate interdependence of nested systems, as entropy increases and the rate of flow became overwhelming in one system, it was reciprocally dumped from system level to system level. An incomprehensible and overwhelming experience is created where the outside is experienced as moving inside in a way that neither the self nor the culture can mediate. As entropy increases at the fastest possible rate the limits of energy transfer are reached and the growing tension between force and constraint reaches a critical threshold. The system must shift in some way. "Massive disequilibriums in far-from-equilibrium conditions create recursive forward trajectories of a growth/limitation/transformation cycle of evolution" (Goerner, 1993, p.172).

From the perspective of a dynamical systems model, a shattered and chaotic universe is part of a broad pattern where order and chaos are seen to nest within each other. Nonlinear chaotic models do not see order and predictability as the bedrock of experience. In a nonlinear model linear determinism "becomes just one of a range of possible metaphysical positions" (Dupre, 1993, p.193). What is significant in a nonlinear chaotic dynamical systems model is not how the universe remains ordered but, rather, how order gives way to chaos, how order is rediscovered within that chaos, and how chaos again arises out of order.

The theory of maximum entropy production (MEP) (Goerner, 1993) suggests that the field as a whole attempts to go to equilibrium at the fastest possible rate. All available paths are used as is a selection process whereby different paths compete for the same energy. In former Yugoslavia there was a tremendous push for peace prior to the outbreak of war, where thousands and thousands of people massed in the streets to protest. Energy takes all available routes and the path of energy flow that drains the force the fastest consumes the greatest amount of energy, and so on to the second most efficient pathway, so the system maximizes the rate of energy flow and production. Unfortunately, the path to war became the force that drained the greatest amount of energy flow and the new flows that were driven into being were all about survival. Bifurcations and splits occur quickly and overwhelming energy flow selection causes new and sometimes unimaginable patterns of flow.

Because the new form was war, the outcome for Yugoslavia was all but a given. War seldom results in vast improvements and "enormous losses must be set against any gains" (Vejvoda, 1996, p.255). For more than a decade the country had been sinking into a profound and irreversible crisis. At the end of the war the land of the South Slavs is more ethnically homogeneous in Croatia and Bosnia. One country is now the five independent republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is for the moment comprised of two entities, the Bosnian Croatian Federation and the Republika Srpska, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, comprised of Serbia and Montenegro, and Macedonia. So although the republics have the independence they originally sought, there has been serious damage done to the economics of all the republics but Slovenia, and there is widespread criminal activity in the marketplace. War profiteers and corrupt politicians

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have made immense sums of money while much of the population of the republics lives below the poverty line with little hope. There has been a political cost because those who remain in power have marginalized the opposition, as is the case in Serbia where the official opposition is viewed by the population as diluted and fearful. And, of course, there has been serious damage done to the psychological well-being of the citizens of former Yugoslavia.

Whatever the consequences of this war, the former Yugoslavia can never again exist as it once did. When a system cascades into chaos it ultimately either dies or self-organizes. Yugoslavia, as it existed between 1945 and 1991, is no more. It has failed to self-organize. This does not mean that various parts of former Yugoslavia are not struggling to self-organize. Recent events, which culminated in the Serbian people dethroning Milosevic and the peaceful take-over of a duly elected government, speak to the power of self-organization. However, former Yugoslavia, the country from which study participants fled, is gone forever.

For a system to self-organize into greater levels of complexity it must fulfil two conditions. First, processes must be irreversible, and second, the system must be nonlinear. In nonlinear dynamical systems, time is regarded as an irreversible, unidirectional, real and far-reaching dimension. Strangely enough, "contemporary science, in particular physics, has sought to suppress if not to eliminate the role of time in the order of things. Time has been described as a forgotten dimension" (Coveney, et al., 1990, p.23). There is little theoretical scientific support for the common sense view of time as irreversible. "Newton's mechanics, Einstein's relativity and the quantum mechanics of Heisenberg and Schrodinger would all appear to work equally well with time running in

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reverse" (Coveney, et al., 1990, p.23). Hence, from the point of view of science, unidirectional time appears to be an illusion created in the minds of human beings, and although irreversible processes were noted in classical physics, they were neglected (Capra, 1996).

In classical science the world is determinate and all that happens has a definite cause which gives rise to a definite effect. Theoretically then, if all the conditions of a system in its present state are known, its future could also be calculated. Moreover, because time is seen as reversible it would be theoretically possible, given a precisely detailed understanding of current conditions, to change a system in such a way that it could return to an earlier state (Capra, 1996). That is, the effects of time are seen to be, at least theoretically, reversible. In classical science time can run backward and forward.

An encounter with traumatic energy stands in stark contrast to temporal reversibility and unidirectional causality, although both of these abstractions permeate the way in which we attempt to organize traumatic energy. For example, the classic, "If only" cognitive distortion which every traumatized individual applies to trauma, is rooted in linear models of causality and ordered predictability. When a theoretical scientific framework of reversibility is coupled with simple linear causality, the kind of thinking that permeates traumatic events is inevitable. "If only I had gone home a different way, I wouldn't have been raped." "If only, I hadn't gone out for a paper." "If only . . ." Study participants often stated sentiments such as, "If only I had of been more interested in politics maybe I could have prevented this." Furthermore, there is a tremendous and desperate need to deny the excruciatingly obvious as reflected in the defensive denial that follows an encounter with traumatic energy.

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An encounter with a traumatic event brings this quality of irreversibility into consciousness in an unprecedented way. We inhabit a world where time opens before us and closes irretrievably behind us. Traumatic events bring people into a terrifying experience of nonlinear irreversibility and are, therefore, better understood within a nonlinear model that looks at events not only as irreversible but, due to that very irreversibility, nonstatic and self-organizing. In open nonlinear far-from-equilibrium systems, where systems within systems are interlinked through multiple feedback loops, increasing entropy corresponds to the spontaneous evolution of a system as it evolves through the forward-moving, irreversible dimension of time.

The very fact that dynamical processes are deemed irreversible ensures that more ordered complexity will emerge, as dynamical systems evolve through time, making choices at bifurcation points based on the system's previous history and current environmental conditions. At a bifurcation point, a dissipative structure will either break down or break through to one of several new states of order. Disequilibrium, coupled with the arrow of time, ensures the creation and evolution of new or more complex forms (Briggs, et al., 1989) and is, therefore, a source of order, coherence and organization (Prigogine, et al., 1984).

When traumatic energy is encountered, so too is a bifurcation point. Here tremendous fluctuations, the unidirectional arrow of time, multiple causality and vast amounts of entropy that must be organized, confront the individual or society with the choice of either a breakthrough to a new state of order or a breakdown.

Although the country as it was is no more, it is important to hold a vision for the future for that part of the world that somehow marries the unitarianism of the country to

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the "fullest development of the republic or national traditions" (Vejvoda, 1996, p.251),

and whatever happens with the Pax Daytoniana or the Dayton Peace Accord, establishing

some lasting "peace, trust, confidence, and normality require that those definitely

committed to abandoning violence prevail over those who secretly still cherish it and want

to bring it back. A tired, war-weary population must be allowed to recover its energies and

recover its capacity to voice its needs and interests. The first condition for all of this is

guarantees for human rights strong enough to start to rebuild the feeling of security"

(Vejvoda, 1996, p.259). Without those guarantees the path to war will indeed repeat itself,

killing millions of South Slavs and scattering millions more across the globe, as one old

Serbo-Croatian saying would loosely translate, "like the lobster's children."

Dynamical Systems and the Microscopic Level: The Individuals

From a historical perspective, refugees, who currently number in the millions, are

driven by the winds of war, poverty, and social injustice. They are largely a nineteenth and

twentieth century phenomenon and until the 1950s were primarily European in origin.

Today's refugees, however, hail from the poorest countries in the world (Bramwell, 1988).

Most now come from Africa, Asia, Central America, and the Middle East and they are

arriving in the West in unprecedented numbers. Contemporary political upheavals are

occurring at unforeseen breakneck speeds so that the past several decades have seen a

quantum leap in the "magnitude, complexity, and intractability of refugee crises and

emergencies around the world" (Smyser, 1987, p.vii). International, national and private

institutions that have been formed to deal with refugee crises and emergencies, such as

UNHCR, are strained to the maximum (Smyser, 1987). UNHCR is providing protection

and assistance to 27.4 million people globally and 14.5 million are refugees (UNHCR,

1995). More than three million of that 14.5 million are people who have been displaced by the war in former Yugoslavia.

This influx to the West of Eastern European refugees, although to a much lesser extent, echos the post-World War II era when vast areas of Europe lay in ruins and large numbers of Europeans were on the move. One major difference between then and now, however, is that as host countries, Western nations were then willing to receive large numbers of people and pour vast amounts of money into rebuilding Europe. That willingness to help has given way to a xenophobic animosity and exasperation with the refugee that extends from officials who are involved in providing assistance and exercising control to professional therapists, social workers, and volunteers (Bramwell, 1988; van der Veer, 1992).

The intensity of the antipathy is partially "related to the inability to empathize" (van der Veer, 1992, p.xi). Little in the experience of people in host countries affords them the expertise, knowledge, and perspective that constitute the ability to empathize. The majority of people who are born and raised in countries like Canada simply have no frame of reference to understand the chaos of war. The eerie calm that precedes its outbreak, the lulls between bombings, the deafening noise and acrid smell of explosives, are anathema to most Westerner's world view. It is impossible to align oneself with someone who has experienced the pervasive effects of constant fear, intimidation, and the abuse of power as it is played out in its most grotesque forms. Little is understood about the hasty decision to flee and the chronic effects of trauma and loss. Nor can Westerners sympathize with the colossal effort that goes into adjusting to a new country.

Those refugees who have successfully resettled in countries such as Canada,

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including the 26 participants in this study, are enduring examples of the process of moving from the chaos of war and status of refugee to the self-organization involved in becoming a new citizen. They are a study in the way history, external perturbations such as social and cultural ideologies, and internal factors such as personality and genetic vulnerability to stress, as well as sense of control over life events, weave in and out of one another to create self-organization. These individuals have cascaded into chaos, suffered the trauma of war, and subsequently reorganized the perturbations and uncertainty by creating learning and leverage from the very events and nonequilibrium conditions that were the source of chaos. In short, the chaos was a source of vital information where far-from-equilibrium order was derived from the very conditions of the system's nonequilibrium and disorder. Moreover, they restructured the self, the family, and their world view in such a way that an emergent being of greater complexity resulted.

War destroys any sense of control one might have had over life events. A tsunami of devastation overwhelms all else and everything from turning on a light to making a meal becomes an act of survival. In former Yugoslavia, within days, and in some places hours, after the outbreak of war, grocery stores were empty, there was no water, no electricity, no money, and no jobs. Participants report that immediately subsequent to the outbreak of war they experienced a pervasive sense of shock as they struggled to integrate the enormity of what was happening. All feeling was repressed, except the instinct to survive, which became all encompassing. Within three or four days, however, study participants report the shock began to subside and in time, those who remained in the war zone, whether factory worker, or doctor, or dentist, or carpenter, were foraging for edible plants, water, and wood or books to burn for cooking and warmth.

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As part of our historical record, survival is a pattern of behaviour we inherently understand. However, the constant struggle to survive in the clutches of the violence and fear of war is filled with a chaos so pervasive that it becomes infused throughout the body in the forms of nightmares, waking visions of death and mutilation, illness, and in some cases, especially among the elderly, death.

War creates terrible interruptions in people's lives, and so pervasive is the chaos it creates that fundamental and profound alterations to the sense of self result. The trauma that refugees experience impacts on every structure of the self, from body concept or image, to internalized images of others, to values and attitudes that lend cohesion and coherence to the sense of self. There is a desolation reached in the trauma of war and a level of disequilibrium that drives the individual beyond all critical thresholds and into chaos. Within a dynamical systems framework this rapidly changing world provides the necessary perturbations to catapult the individual into flight and eventually becomes the prerequisite to resettlement and self-organization.

Surviving in war is an encounter with chaotic forces, and in the midst of such disequilibrium self-organization is impossible. This excerpt from one study participant, a student physician who described the massacre in the Sarajevo marketplace, is an indication of the high levels of traumatic chaos that individual survivors of war must somehow, at sometime, integrate and organize.

> "It was May 28, 1992. That was the first massacre . . . in Sarajevo.
> My father was at work. . . . and we spent all night in hallway with
> neighbours. . . . All three of us, mom, sister and me . . . were awakened by
> screaming. So we turned on the radio. We didn't understand what was
> going on. Then we turned on the TV and there was a picture of the main
> street and wounded people, dead people laying there in the blood. And all
> those people rushing, of course, in fear that next grenade will fall. My

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sister and me . . . saw a man who looked completely like my father. He was dead and two people are taking his arms and feet and his head fell behind. And the jacket and the hair and trousers actually matched with look of my father. And we screamed in the same moment. . . . So next things I did, I just put my clothes on, my shoes, and I was running. I was running because I knew there was room with all killed or wounded people. They must come to trauma centre because they want to have good statistics what is going on. I was running there. I stop the first car in the street. There were some soldiers there. I wouldn't do that usually. They drove me there. They give me a ride and then I describe to nurse what I saw. I describe my father and she just did so with her head. . . . She took my hand and I went to the room where there were several dead bodies and the man was . . . everything was so similar with my father except face. I feel relieved but still I wasn't sure that was it. And now I know that I was happy at somebody else's unhappiness. I don't know, most reasonable thing . . . was to run to my father's working place to see is he there. But no, I was checking all dead bodies and I was checking their foots because some of them were already naked. I just check their foots. I didn't have strength to check faces. And then I was running like crazy. There was a big hospital centre in university clinics there. I was running from one place to another and I was reading the list of the killed people, the injured people and I don't know why I did so. How you call where all dead bodies are preserved . . . a funeral home but it was a funeral home that is one big room . . . . And there was like a hill of dead bodies because nobody came to work . . . there. . . . If somebody is injured in all region of town they would just bring him and just took him and put it on the pile. And you can see shoes, purses, parts of the body and it was May. It was horrible. There was lot of insects and there was unbearable smell. I first approach and there was man who was there. He gave me mask but I wasn't strong enough to enter so I went outside and I sat down on the stairs and I had something like asthma attack because I was so excited I was unable to breathe. I was talking to myself and I calmed myself down and I take some deep breaths and I went in and I looked just at first room. I wasn't strong enough to go to the second room. After that I went out and I was like a lost . . . I was thinking what I can do and I decide to go to my work place . . . . There was . . . a lake of blood in the entrance and there was a nurse coming with the bed sheets to soak it up, walking in that blood. . . . All floor was covered with injured people. Everybody was screaming and I wasn't functioning well . . . . I just put a lot of bandages in my pocket and check all people who were waiting for operation to stop bleeding to tie bandages . . . because they are all bleeding. Then I start to be numb. I felt like I don't hear . . . and in next moment I was coming to the emergency room . . . there was nurse. She was sitting on floor . . . smoking cigarette . . . arms were covered with blood up to the elbows. Was dried blood and she was smoking . . .

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Organizing such extreme trauma, a prerequisite to self-organization, involves a tremendous expenditure of energy. Following this level of trauma, there is a protean struggle to create some meaning from the flood of affect, anxiety and fear. Because trauma appears to be without a relationship to the self or the culture, understanding of the self and the social order is thrown into question and known ideas of both are shattered (Ulman, et al., 1988; Caruth, 1996). Emerging from the confusion and widespread feeling that all psychological moorings have been cut, chaos occurs.

Research on the psychology of the survivor (Lifton, 1988) has delineated some of the characteristics of the irreversible, ever-increasing flow of traumatic energy. Five recurring themes characteristic of the experience of survivors of trauma that describe the quality of energy they struggle with are as follows: the death imprint, survivor guilt, psychic numbing, conflicts around contagion and existential meaninglessness.

Lifton's first theme, the death imprint, arises out of an immersion into the depths of death as a reality. Traumatic encounters leave a death imprint (Lifton, 1988), which is an indelible stamp retained by the psyche as part of the residual effect of severe trauma. The survivor can, at any time, experience a radical intrusion of images and/or feelings that signal an immediate threat to life (Lifton, 1988, p.18). Usually, this imprint carries with it images of a grotesquely absurd or sickening nature that are the antithesis of life. Following a traumatic event this imprint can emerge slowly over time or suddenly burst into awareness, but always it is associated with sudden, premature, unacceptable dying. Survivors cling to these indelible images in an effort to master them and assimilate the fear (Lifton, 1988, p.19). There is tremendous anxiety associated with the death imprint and the disequilibrium forces at its core. The death imprint, born in the moment of horrific trauma,

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will eventually coalesce into the symptomatic responses to trauma of intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal.

Survivor guilt, the second theme, addresses both an individual's guilt about surviving the horror as well as self-blame and condemnation for the limited way in which she or he judged his/her capacity to respond during the actual traumatic event.

The third theme, feelings of depersonalization or detachment and psychic numbing, lies at the heart of the human response to trauma and, in fact, the overall human struggle with pain. Under the influence of trauma, life loses its meaning, nothing is of consequence, and the most fundamental psychic processes are undermined. Prior forms of dependency on human relationships are destroyed, thus accounting for the fourth theme, conflicts around nurturing and contagion. Traumatic energy engenders rage and perpetual anger and mistrust in the survivor. Such rage can make the survivor difficult for others to be around as does the survivor's presence as a constant reminder of death and destruction. Anger is one way for a survivor to deal with the anxiety engendered by trauma and is often preferable to guilt. Anger is one way to maintain a psychic lifeline when images of death are ever-present as in the case of war (Lifton, 1988) and torture.

In the midst of traumatic energy, the suffering associated with the experience appears to be meaningless, totally irrational and without end. The experience is not anchored in familiar elements of reality. Within the confines of traumatic energy there is no predictable end to the experience and so intense and hostile is the environment that there is little room for meaningful subjective appraisals of the situation (Kahana, et al., 1988).

This abject meaninglessness drives the individual forward in time and forward into

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further self-organization of the traumatic experience(s). As perturbations increase and this random, colliding, chaotic energy changes to a more coordinated response, a huge jump in energy flow efficiency occurs. The refugee makes the decision to flee, and at least in the case of the participants of this study, finds him or herself in a strange land where all moorings to the known have been cut.

The survivor needs time to integrate such overwhelming tragedy, loss, and trauma. Hence, the transition from refugee to citizen is extremely important to the process of self-organization. It would appear that only once the refugee has resettled can self-organization begin in earnest. It is only after the transition from citizen to refugee to new citizen is made that they have the time and the opportunity to self-organize and restructure their outer and inner realities. In an unusually short time, many become pizza deliverers, labourers, or store clerks, and retrain for a new profession or begin the difficult process of getting licenced in their adopted country. They have babies, buy houses, marry, and revisit their homeland. It is only with time that they heal, self-organize and allow themselves the luxury of acknowledging their rage, bitterness, nostalgia, and disappointment.

The complexity and confusion of long-term adaptations to traumatic life experiences such as war are not adequately captured in the clinical descriptions (van der Kolk, 1996). In spite of that, however, the self-organization that participants in this study evidenced is quite remarkable, a thousandfold more remarkable than inorganic examples of self-organization, such as the Rayleigh-Benard reaction where a simple puddle of silicone oil, when heated and pushed into far-from-equilibrium conditions, self-organizes at a critical point and creates a complex and intricate honeycomb pattern out of apparent chaos (Coveney, et al., 1995). Instead of moving toward greater and greater levels of

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instability, although instability is definitely present, participants in this study spatially and emotionally reorganized.

Precisely because the refugee presents such an obvious example of total restructuring and reorganization, careful and conscientious study may illuminate the processes by which human beings integrate trauma, grow, develop and self-organize. Out of the overwhelming confusion and terror inherent in trauma they recreate the self. Following serious trauma, any individual is likely to exhibit powerful behaviour patterns where the trauma is re-experienced and psychic numbing, avoidance and hyperarousal occur regardless of external or internal factors (Davidson, et al., 1993).

As trauma is processed and organized, however, individuals will experience traumatic symptoms as well as transformational characteristics, and although preference for one set of responses over another may be the case, individuals will adapt and transform and cope and experience symptoms in highly specific ways. Although it is generally accepted that the more serious and lengthy traumatic events are the more an individual will experience symptoms (Pitman, et al., 1987), this is not an invariant connection (Davidson, et al., 1993). Individual reactions to traumatic events vary widely and exposure to severe trauma does not inevitably lead to an individual developing PTSD-like symptoms.

According to complexity theories, individuals and societies will self-organize in unique and unpredictable ways (Baker, 1995). For example, individuals such as Holocaust survivor, psychiatrist and father of Logotherapy, Victor Frankl, endure exceptionally traumatic happenings without long-term complications (Saigh, 1992) while other individuals can be fondled by a co-worker and develop deep and enduring symptoms

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(McCann, et al., 1990). Individuals in this study experienced varying degrees of exposure to trauma and subsequent symptoms. One has been formally diagnosed with PTSD, some appeared depressed and anxious, and all experienced symptoms of PTSD as indicated by the Impact of Event Scale - Revised (Hudnall Stamm, 1996). Although severely traumatized, they have all made remarkable changes and continue to grow and adapt to life's challenges. For example, one study participant whose son was killed by a bomb and whose husband was severely brain damaged due to a grenade, has informally taken on the care of a child living in Sarajevo who is the same age as her son would be had he lived. She sends him jeans and sneakers when she can afford it and has dedicated herself to her remaining two children, her church, and living according to her spiritual beliefs. She also spends much of her time grieving and often struggles with intrusive memories.

From a dynamical systems perspective, an individual, poised exactly at a bifurcation point, can go anywhere within the system parameters (Guastello, 1995). Within a complex dynamical system it is impossible to predict exactly what will happen. As individuals self-organize they are free to move anywhere along the continuum between and within transformational characteristics and symptoms. This is a critical orientation when studying trauma through a nonlinear dynamical systems lens. "In order to recognize psychological bifurcations, we need to identify relatively short-term transformations of the psychological domain that lead to significant long-range restructurings of that domain. This entails understanding what is required to depict complex systems, having a working model of the psychological domain, and devising ways to profile defining aspects of that domain" (Gilgen, 1995, p.143). In this model, what is required to depict complex systems is some understanding of the variability inherent in the interactions of systems nested

within systems. The violent and traumatic energy of war provides the short-term

transformation of the psychological domain where the working model of the psychological

domain is described symptomatically and transformationally. This leads to significant

long-range restructurings of that domain and results in self-organization specifically in

terms of positive adaptation and change as indicated by resettlement. Devising ways to

profile some of the defining aspects of that domain constitutes the methodological portion

of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study of the Trauma of War

A Multistrategy Methodology

Mixing Methods and Linking Data:
A Qualitative/Quantitative Multistrategy Approach

In this study the exploration of coping and adaptation in a traumatized Bosnian refugee population was investigated over time using both qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis techniques. Such an approach is referred to as triangulation (Denzin, 1970), multiple strategies (Burgess, 1984), combined operations (Stacey, 1969), mixed strategies (Douglas, 1976) or methodologies, and multistrategy research (Layder, 1993). These terms refer to the use of a number of different research methods, types of data, or theoretical approaches. They are used primarily as a way of checking validity and reliability, where validity loosely refers to the extent to which the social phenomenon that is being studied is accurately and meaningfully represented, and reliability loosely refers to standardized methods that produce some degree of consistency in the responses. Because these terms are defined differently in qualitative and quantitative work, however, they will be more completely contextually delineated in another section of the paper.

Any multistrategy approach is designed to achieve a dense coverage of the research question in order to generate maximal information and findings which can then be used to create and modify emergent theory (Layder, 1993). The different kinds of data are used to slice into the problem from multifaceted and hopefully, trenchant perspectives. Further, using both qualitative and quantitative methods as complementary ways of investigating one's research question allows the researcher to make more inferences about the data than

might be otherwise possible.

Qualitatively, this study is designed to investigate the trauma of war as well as adaptation, growth and transformation that can occur in the aftermath of suffering and relocation. Only recently have researchers and clinicians begun to document, study and create formulations concerning positive changes and growth following trauma (Tedeschi, et al., 1998; Tedeschi, et al., 1995). Anywhere from two to five semi-structured interviews with each of the participants, demographic questionnaires, a life events checklist, and a life event questionnaire were used to investigate the following broad research questions:

1)   On what adaptive and coping processes do Eastern European refugees rely to help deal with trauma, crisis and relocation?
2)   How would the outcomes of trauma, crisis and relocation be described?

Quantitatively, an exploratory, developmental study design was devised using time-series analysis to investigate patterns and sequences of change as a function of time.

The following research questions underlie this portion of the study:

1)   Are there underlying patterns and associations present in the human response to trauma?
2)   If there are patterns, can these patterns be described?

The Impact of Event Scale - Revised (IES- Revised) was used to operationalize the construct of coping with trauma as defined by the DSM-IV. The IES-Revised measures hyperarousal, intrusion, and avoidance.

Because this research uses a multistrategy approach, neither purely qualitative theory building which derives from a grounded theory (Glaser, et al., 1967) perspective and aims at understanding social phenomena, nor a purely quantitative theory testing approach which derives from a hypothetico-deductive perspective and aims at predicting social phenomena, apply as methodological underpinnings. Hence, in any study that uses

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multistrategy methodology there must be some justification for the integration of data collection methods as well as some logical reasons for why and how the researcher might compile the findings (Mason, 1996). Rationale for linking data through the use of mixed methodology must be supplemented and upheld by theory and data analysis.

While qualitative findings are inductive and begin with the data itself, quantitative findings are hypothetico-deductive and, in effect, work in reverse. In grounded theory, for example, theory is derived from data and illustrated by characteristic examples of the data and "most of the hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of the research" (Glaser, et al., 1967, p.6). In hypothetico-deductive research one reasons toward observations and hypotheses from theory. In a mixed methodology or multistrategy study, a both/and perspective is adopted and research objectives as well as theory can derive from either an inclination to test theory and/or build theory.

From a multistrategy approach, inductive and deductive reasoning mirrors "actual practice where theory and research interact through a never-ending alternation of deduction, induction, deduction and so forth" (Rubin, et al., 1993, p.44). In multistrategy research, a theory is not imposed on the data being researched but allows theory to emerge from the data "in the context of the more general theoretical assumptions about the nature of the links between macro and micro aspects" (Layder, 1993, p.109) of the environment. Micro elements are defined as individuals and macro elements are defined as the context (political, social, and ethnic) within which events unfold (Layder, 1993).

In multistrategy research two fundamental ideas guide the researcher. First, it is understood in multistrategy research that the interwoven, layered and concentric nature of

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social reality consists of macro, meso and microscopic features which interact and integrate to a staggering degree. Second, it is understood that the nature of all social activity is emergent, fluid, and ever-changing and unfolds over time and space. These two overarching research assumptions are highly consistent with the ideas contained within dynamical systems theory and the science of complex systems. Because dynamical systems theory must include some understanding of the vast interdependence inherent on all system levels (i.e., micro, meso, and macro), as well as some understanding of emergent systemic self-organization over time and space, there is a tidy ontological fit between the two.

Within multistrategy research, an individual's activity in the world is viewed as a continuous process that needs to be understood in terms of social processes that stretch out and unfold over time and space. Through the use of multistrategy research, it is possible to explore the various influences of different elements of the social world "such as the context, the setting, the situation, and the individual self" (Layder, 1993, p.10) as a series of interwoven facets and thereby attempt to explicate the intricacy and interdependence of social activity. For example, in order to understand the refugee, we must be aware of the intricate interaction of macro, meso, and micro influences as they unfold and combine over time and space. The emergent and unfolding narrative both envelops and exposes the individual to a succession of contexts, settings, situations, and identity shifts. In turn, the individual impacts on the macrosystem in terms of, for example, social policy and impact on culture and social fabric. This continuous tie between macro and micro elements creates a mutual interdependence of system levels over time that a multistrategy approach aims to define, discuss, and explain.

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Over a 200-day period, 24 resettled Bosnian refugees' adjustment to challenges

and drastic changes in social and political policy, losses in relationships, traditions, family,

and country, and adjustment to resettlement in a new country, were tracked quantitatively

on a daily basis and qualitatively on an intermittent basis. From the experience of war, to

expulsion and resettlement as chronicled by study participants, this study attempted to

examine individual narratives, coping, and adaptation and growth against the backdrop of

war and history as outlined in chapter one. In an effort to include micro and macro

elements, quantitative data concerning change and adjustment over time was combined,

integrated and organized around qualitative analyses of individual narratives.

History or the passage of time represents a further macro dimension and is the

"dimension through which all other elements move" (Layder, 1993, p.101). "By including

a long-term historical component in the unfolding research design . . . one is adding

empirical and theoretical depth to the consequent analysis. . . . (L)arge scale processes of

social change covering an extended time period always leave their stamp on contemporary

aspects of social life" (Layder, 1993, p.196). Any thorough field research on

refugees/immigrants and the trauma of war requires an understanding of the historical

forms, events, and processes that preceded immigration. Moreover, including the historical

dimension through multistrategy research affords the researcher an opportunity for

additional "validity and reliability checks on both the substantive and formal theoretical

elements that have already emerged from the actual field research" (Layder, 1993, p.195).

For example, emerging from the field research is an understanding that the people of the

Balkans cannot be separated from their history. Their identities are steeped in their

historical reality. A large portion of the qualitative data revolved around discussion of

ethnic animosities, the larger political arena, and the difference between life in communist and capitalist systems. Such findings solidify the theoretical idea that one cannot study refugees without understanding the dynamical reality of nested systems within systems.

Multistrategy research aspires to integrate the historical dimension into data analysis not so much to untangle the relationships between micro and macro levels but, rather, to bring to light the complex interweaving of social reality by using as many methodological tools as possible in order to achieve a dense deductive and inductive coverage of the research questions and the larger social issues being addressed. This should not, however, be confused with an "anything goes" attitude. Keeping such potential methodological disarray and confusion contained requires that the process be guided and conditioned by overarching theoretical assumptions (Layder, 1993), which in this case is dynamical systems theory.

Not only do dynamical systems and multistrategy research conform to one another on an ontological level, but from a pragmatic point of view there is also a goodness-of-fit. Quantitatively, dynamical systems theory and chaos and complexity arose out of a hard scientific tradition. In order to represent that tradition, it is necessary to statistically analyze the patterns and dynamics of a system through the collection of observations made sequentially in time, or a time series. Research that uses dynamical systems as its theoretical foundation should, at the very least, honour that tradition by using quantitative time series analysis. Further, like qualitative data with its inductive findings, time series analysis begins with a sequence of measurements designed to "see what the data itself can tell us about the dynamics" (Kaplan, et al., 1995, p.279). Therefore, through time series analysis, quantitative observations can be made that are consistent with the origins of

dynamical systems theory, and time series itself is consistent with the qualitative practice of allowing information and refinements and additions to theory to emerge from the data.

Moreover, an important role for quantitative analysis in the context of multistrategy research is to provide an essential check on the tendency of researchers to find confirming rather than disconfirming instances. For example, although the quantitative data on underlying patterns of trauma in relation to coping and sex, degree of trauma, and time from trauma was meaningful data, it proved to be much more difficult to track adaptation. A further quantitative measure was used to investigate adaptation and transformation, the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI). Some of the data, gathered at three-day intervals, appeared invariant and a number of people answered the twenty-one questions in absolute terms, making the time series data questionable as to its statistical meaningfulness. The PTGI purports to measure appreciation for life, new possibilities, personal strength, spiritual change, and relating to others. Although speculation on what this means is just that, it does provide some disconfirming data. One could speculate on the nature of transformational growth as something that is perceived in the absolute and the PTGI as an ineffective repeated measure.

Qualitatively, however, themes of transition and transformation emerged and it became apparent that transformation was evidenced in participants' lives in a number of ways. They have self-organized and moved from homeless refugee to resettlement in a new country. Many of them have learned, or are in the process of learning, a new language, all had escaped war and resettled in households that contained cars, couches, televisions, VCRs, and computers, some with Internet capabilities. Some have jobs and others have returned to school, to name just a few of the indicators of transformation and

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adaptation. Such a finding is theoretically consistent with dynamical systems and the appearance of novel behaviour at bifurcation points en route to self-organization.

It is generally assumed that quantitative data provides breadth and qualitative data provides depth (Mason, 1996; Sliverman, 1993; Fielding, et al., 1986). Like many other methodological distinctions, however, when etched into a multistrategic picture of the data, such divisions become less distinctive and the fluid and emergent nature of both design and theory allows a multiplicity of perspectives that hopefully generates both deeper and broader theoretical concepts and ideas.

A Multistrategy Approach:
The Qualitative Study

Introduction

The commitment in qualitative research, whether the method is ethnographic or post modern discourse analysis, is to a systematic inquiry within a natural setting where the field researcher learns about a people firsthand (Rothe, 1994). The goal is to isolate and define categories of data while at the same time looking for patterns of interrelationship between categories (McCracken, 1988). Because qualitative researchers strive to understand situations and phenomena as a whole (Patton, 1990), they must develop "an exquisitely tuned capacity for pattern . . . recognition" (May, 1994, p.18). Seeing pattern as it emerges from thousands of pages of transcriptions and field notes is a creative and often intuitive process borne of patience, experience, and an intimate knowledge of the raw data. That knowledge is painstakingly acquired through interviews, informal conversations, recorded notes and impressions, creating accurate word-for-word transcriptions of interviews and conversations, reading and re-reading those transcriptions

with and without participants present and, finally, pouring over the data with the express

purpose of following the threads of emergent pattern.

Recognizing pattern in data analysis is the ability to see similarities and differences

in participants' responses. Exactly how pattern begins to take shape defies meticulous

description. What can be described, however, are the "procedures that set up the

conditions in which pattern was discerned, what attracted the researcher's attention to

these particular areas, and, after the fact, how the pattern is evidenced in the data" (May,

1994, p.18). Pattern recognition is instantaneous in that it is an experience of the data

suddenly revealing something that had been hidden. Accordingly, pattern recognition in

data analysis can be both intuitive and creative and substantiated in retrospect but not

predicted.

Within the paradigm of qualitative research, shifting focus and restructuring

theory, research notions, and ideas about data analysis occur throughout the research

process, because not only pattern recognition, but also design is viewed as emergent.

However, because qualitative researchers recognize that intuitive leaps and the

researcher's relationship to participants and the data they generate influence both emergent

design and data analysis, certain rigorous and critical standards that reflect attention to the

constructs of reliability and validity must be built into the work.

Validity as a Qualitative Construct

Judgements about validity are judgements about whether one is exploring or

explaining what one claims to be exploring or explaining. Validity of data generation

methods and validity of interpretation or analysis are the two main themes in establishing

qualitative validity and is demonstrated in one of two ways. Basically, validity is

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established through linking the logic of one's methods and methodology to one's research question, as well as tracing the routes the researcher used to arrive at interpretations of the data. Strengthening the validity of interpretations depends upon not only spelling out exactly how interpretations were arrived at but also dispensing some sense of how one's analytical and theoretical lens shapes and frames interpretations (Mason, 1996).

From a qualitative perspective there are two forms of validation that are deemed particularly appropriate. The first is comparing different kinds of data as in multistrategic research and different methods (e.g., observations and interviews), to determine whether or not they corroborate one another. Reliability and validity are bolstered in qualitative research through varying methodologies, triangulation, or a multistrategy approach.

This study has used a multistrategy approach in that I have used both qualitative and quantitative measures to explore coping and adaptation in this particular population. Further, I have used a number of different qualitative techniques. Observation, textual-analysis, the interview, and the transcript of naturally-occurring talk are all methodological elements that can bolster reliability and validity (Silverman, 1993).

Observation data consists of field notes. Extensive field notes were made on all participants, demographic information was obtained through questionnaires as well as by asking about their lives in former Yugoslavia, and a life events questionnaire gathered data on events in participants' lives during the course of the study, such as births, deaths, operations, and visits to former Yugoslavia. Field notes were made subsequent to numerous informal visits. These visits were made to participants' homes over the more than six-month period, for the express purpose of making field notes, staying in touch with participants, and exchanging completed quantitative questionnaires for new measures.

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Textual analysis refers to inter-rater reliability in coding and analysis and will be discussed more fully in the following section on reliability.

Lengthy and comprehensive interviews were conducted with each participant. The maximum number of formal interviews conducted with any one participant was five and the minimum was two. The follow-up interviews, which clarified and built on existing information and checked historical and cultural information between respondents (Rothe, 1994), further bolstered reliability. Naturally occurring talk was also taped, transcribed and analyzed.

The second form of validation is respondent validation, or taking one's findings back to participants. It is argued that if participants verify one's findings one can feel more confident about the data (Silverman, 1993, p.156).

For several different reasons this study did not use respondent validity. First, because in any cross-cultural study language presents what can appear to be an insurmountable obstacle to both reliability and validity, I made the decision not to take findings back to participants. I did not know how well either me or the translators could make the ideas I was working with understood. Although some of the participants could have easily grasped the emergent findings, the majority would have seriously struggled. I had no way of standardizing information given to participants and no way to determine exactly who had understood what. Second, because in former Yugoslavia teachers, and in particular university professors and PhD students, are accorded a great deal of respect, I was unsure of exactly how this approach would be culturally interpreted. Respondents may have agreed with findings in order to please the researcher or they may have agreed simply as a way of avoiding admitting they did not understand, or they may have

legitimately agreed with findings. I had no way of determining exactly which was the case. Finally, I know that I asked a great deal of participants. Prior to data analysis they had welcomed me into their homes, invited me to their children's birthdays, fed me, filled out forms, answered questions, taught me snippets of Serbo-Croatian, laughed heartily at my awkward attempts to use those phrases, and otherwise gave me a great deal of their time and energy. By the time the data was ready for analysis I was truly hesitant to ask for anything else.

Reliability as a Qualitative Construct

Reliability or dependability refers to the replicability of qualitative results and the ability to demonstrate that methods are reliable and accurate and have some "degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions" (Silverman, 1993, p.145). But knowledge is contextual and reflects situational, cultural and social affairs in a dynamical way. The underlying qualitative assumption is that the social world is always changing and the concept of replication is troublesome at the best of times as systems are always in flux. Within a dynamical system, changeability makes nonlinearity difficult to calculate and predict and outcomes in such a model are not predictable, in part because elements are believed to mutually influence each other in myriad ways. However, because the system is "capable of self-organizing at certain points in the interaction, there is a relatively predictable aspect within the nonlinearity" (Shane, et al., 1997, p.31) which justifies attempts at replication.

Reliability is categorized as quixotic, diachronic, and synchronic where quixotic refers to the "circumstances in which a single method of observation continually yields an

unvarying measurement" (Silverman, 1993, p.145). However, this kind of reliability can be misleading in that simply eliciting the same response does not make a question interesting. Diachronic reliability applies to the stability of an observation over time, and synchronic reliability refers to the similarity of observations within the same time period through the use of multistrategy research. Diachronically, the intention of this study is to observe the stability and the changes over time and rather than replicability, "time series study involves describing the evolution of a process through time" (Chatfield, 1989, p.7), perhaps in ever-changing but sometimes replicable cycles.

Reliability of data transcripts is ensured through a system of checks and corrections in conjunction with participants who edit and correct their own transcripts (Silverman, 1993). All taped interviews were transcribed as soon as possible and copies were returned to participants to either correct themselves or correct through a translator. Errors were corrected and any pieces that participants wanted omitted were taken out at this time.

Reliability of textual analysis is achieved through establishing some inter-rater reliability in coding and analysis. In this study a form of inter-rater reliability was achieved by asking a colleague to read and code portions of the data and subsequently compare the coding of answers to open-ended questions. The basic coding system was explained. Upon comparisons of coding, they were found to be similar but, as might be expected, my coding contained denser description and a greater number of coded responses.

In naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln, et al., 1985), where a minimum of investigator manipulation and control of the study setting occurs, reliability and validity are

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operationalized under the general heading of "trustworthiness" (Lincoln, et al., 1985, p.301), and the specific constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability comprise the research elements of overall trustworthiness (Lincoln, et al., 1985).

Trustworthiness in Qualitative Data Gathering and Analysis

At the very least, the condition that the researcher has not been careless or slipshod in how the data was collected, recorded and analyzed must be satisfied (Mason, 1996). At most, trustworthiness, like quantitative constructs of reliability and validity, is concerned with establishing a fundamental confidence in the truth of the data (Lincoln, et al., 1985) where truth is defined as the degree to which one establishes confidence in the veracity of the findings in light of who the subjects are, who the researcher is, and the context in which the research was carried out.

Credibility

From a qualitative point of view, however, truth is absolute only in its relativity and reality is defined as "a multiple set of mental constructions" (Lincoln, et al., p.295, 1985). In order to demonstrate truth within a qualitative framework the researcher must show that she or he has represented those multiple constructions adequately. Hence truth is more accurately referred to in qualitative research as credibility, and there are five major techniques that are likely to make the research more credible. Activities that make it more likely that findings and interpretations are credible are as follows:

1) prolonged engagement, where sufficient time is invested to achieve various results and build a relationship of trust with participants, persistent observation which occurs where the researcher spends enough time with participants that the culture itself

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seeps into the researcher's mind and heart, and triangulation, or the use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators and theories;

2) peer debriefing, where external checks on the inquirer's biases are probed, meanings are explored, and the basis for interpretation is clarified and discussed;

3) negative case analysis, or the refining of working hypotheses as more and more information becomes available (i.e., revising hypotheses with hindsight);

4) referential adequacy, where findings and interpretations are checked against raw data;

5) member checking, or checking findings and interpretations with respondents (Lincoln, et al., 1985).

Whether sufficient time was invested to achieve a relationship of trust with participants, is a subjective decision at best. Refugees, because of the trauma they have suffered, are often suspicious and mistrusting. Time and again, participants referred to their inability to trust and the destruction, through war and trauma, of basic trust in self and others. The experience of war and torture threatens more than a way of being. It forces one to see the world differently. For the refugee, mistrust has become a way of seeing the world (Daniel, 1995). I can say that I believe I established a relationship of some depth with participants and this will be discussed further in the ethics section of this paper. Much happened over the 200-day period I was a part of their lives and they were a part of mine. Observations and notes were made and interviews conducted throughout this time. Certainly, aspects of the culture, from food and drink, to the structure and relationships of the family were noted and discussed with participants. I came to understand their humour, and in some small measure their pain, as well as some of their humiliations and prejudices,

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and the different qualities and shades of national pride and ethnicity.

Peer debriefing was established through sharing records and data analysis with colleagues and supervisors as well as seeking therapeutic supervision from time to time to deal with the secondary effects of the traumatic nature of the material. Analysis and coding were discussed with external examiners and the logic behind data coding and analysis explained. Biases were probed and meanings explored.

Transferability

The establishment of transferability, or generalizing results to alternate measures, people, settings, and times is quite different from the establishment of external validity in quantitative research. The qualitative researcher cannot, in the strictest sense of the word, establish real transferability. The most that the qualitative researcher can do is create working postulates along with rich and detailed descriptions of the time and context within which the research took place and the hypotheses were believed to hold. It becomes the researcher's responsibility to provide this richly descriptive base of research participants and context, but judgments about transferability of findings become the responsibility of those who do subsequent research. That is, subsequent researchers, and only subsequent researchers, can ascertain whether or not there are enough similarities in participants and context that some transferability is possible (Lincoln, et al., 1985).

Dependability

There are several ways to establish dependability in qualitative research. The most effective method requires two researchers, one who is called in to audit data gathering and analysis, much like a fiscal auditor would authenticate business accounts. The auditor attests to the process of the inquiry and, therefore, its dependability (Lincoln, et al., 1985).

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There was no formal auditor in this study.

Confirmability

That same auditor also attests to the authenticity of the product or the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations (Lincoln, et al., 1985). This process establishes the study's confirmability. Accordingly, although this study has trustworthiness as defined by credibility and transferability, it lacks dependability and confirmability.

Sample

A) Sample Size, Criteria and Characteristics

Size and Criteria

Twenty-five people from former Yugoslavia, 14 women and 11 men, who met the following inclusion criteria, were interviewed.

1)   Participants were between the ages of 18 and 75.

2)   All participants were from Bosnia in central former Yugoslavia.

3)   All participants consented voluntarily to be in the study and were drawn from a convenience sample.

4)   Participants spoke at least some English. If necessary a translator was used.

The study began with 29 participants. One dropped out a week into the study, another a month into the study, and a third several months into the study. Twenty-six participants completed the study. Due to the fact that one participant became pregnant during the study she refused to do any interviews. She cited a need to stay calm and a need to forget rather than relive the horrors of the war. Therefore, the qualitative portion of the study had only 25 participants.

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Characteristics

All of the 25 study participants who completed the qualitative portion of the study are from Bosnia in central former Yugoslavia. All but two participants, a husband and wife who entered Canada as immigrants after the war in order to escape the post-war depression, are refugees and fled due to war and policies of ethnic cleansing. Ethnic cleansing has caused high rates of post traumatic stress symptoms, depression and other forms of psychological suffering in resettled Bosnian refugees (Weine, et al., 1995). This population presents a deeply traumatized, culturally compatible population where diagnoses of post traumatic stress disorder can run as high as 65 percent (Weine, et al., 1995). Only one member of this study has been formally diagnosed with PTSD and is on medication to alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Sixty percent or 15 of the study participants are Muslims, five identified themselves as Orthodox Serbians, four identified themselves as Roman Catholics, and one was unsure how to identify herself except as the product of an ethnically mixed marriage where her mother was Croatian and her father Serbian. Twenty-eight percent or seven study participants were involved in mixed marriages. Three of the marriages were a Muslim/Serbian mix while one Muslim female participant was married to a Croat whose partner was not part of the study. In total, 64 percent or 16 study participants were husband and wife. Of the remaining participants one was a single male, two were married males, one a single female, two were divorced women, each a single mother of one child, and three were married women all with children.

Ages ranged from 25 to 59 and war experiences or degree of trauma ranged from seeing minimal carnage to witnessing torture and fighting in the war as a soldier. For

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example, one participant spent much of the war living in the basement of her apartment building with her family and later in the war she worked as a translator for NATO forces as she spoke fluent English. She was well paid and thus able to provide for other family members and, for the most part, she was safe from shelling. This is not to say that she did not witness death or did not live in almost constant fear. At the other end of the continuum, another member of the study worked closely with international aid organizations and saw a tremendous amount of savagery and suffering. Two members of the study were confined in Croatian concentration camps and five members of the study lived for several years in a refugee camp in Slovenia.

Because qualitative research implies a commitment to field research (Kirk, et al., 1986) all interviews were conducted in participants' homes. In the process I met extended family members, friends, spouses, and children. I came to know my participants well and understand and accept them as a passionate, creative, generous, sometimes humble, sometimes proud, and sometimes volatile people who have struggled against tremendous odds. Some carry a deep sadness within that I believe no amount of time will eradicate. For the most part, their homes were warm welcoming places, creatively decorated with numerous plants and a distinctly European flair. Food was always offered and interviews were almost never conducted without the eternal cups of strong Bosnian coffee coupled with cakes, cookies, and sometimes traditional Bosnian food such as simica or cheese pie.

Many participants were professionals or tradesmen in former Yugoslavia. Physician, dentist, bank clerk, pharmacist, journalist, machine operator, chef, small business owner, carpenter, disc jockey, travel agent, architect, seamstress, engineer, teacher, and accountant are just some of the professions and trades that constituted these

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people's livelihoods. At the outset of the study none of the participants were working in their field and by the end of the study one was working in his chosen field as an engineer and one physician had been accepted into the Master's program at University of Toronto, not to train as a physician but to work as a researcher. Professions such as journalism that were dependent upon language, however, left people deeply frustrated and working in factory jobs far below the individual's potential.

Every participant in this study has been irrevocably and forever changed because of this war. All have suffered heavy losses in terms of professional status, income, possessions, and family members, either through death or through flight and emigration. Personal suffering fell along a continuum where at one extreme no immediate family members, including grandparents and sisters and brothers, were killed, to the other extreme where families suffered the death of young children, husbands, fathers, and brothers.

As in most cross-cultural studies, language barriers constituted a major limitation and will be dealt with more fully in the limitations section. However, 11 participants were fully conversant in English and seemed to have no problem either reading or writing. Seven were conversant enough that a translator was not necessary, although both participants and I would, at times, noticeably struggle with expression and comprehension. There is no question that somewhere during the process of interviewing my ear became acutely attuned to the manner in which former Yugoslavians expressed themselves in broken English. I also acquired numerous Serbo-Croatian phrases and used them often, much to study participants' amusement. Further, I made frequent use of my ever-present English-to-Serbo-Croatian dictionary, as did study participants. Eight

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participants spoke little or no English and in these cases a translator was necessary. Study participants preferred to use family members as translators and usually it was a spouse or an adolescent son or daughter.

B) Sample Selection

The sample was drawn from Yugoslavian communities of Kitchener-Waterloo and London, Ontario. Information concerning the study was posted at various locations throughout the Yugoslavian communities and at various meeting and gathering places such as St. George's Serbian Orthodox Church in Kitchener, and Bosnian schools. Notices were posted in English and in Serbo-Croatian (see appendix C). As the principle researcher, I visited English as a Second Language programs throughout the Kitchener-Waterloo and London areas in an effort to recruit participants. Recruiting participants also took the form of visiting and handing out information in both English and Serbo-Croatian at the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre and in London at the Bosnian School programs. Bosnian School, like any other ethnic school, is set up by parents and officials of the Bosnian community in order to preserve language and customs. Children attend on Saturday mornings. I also visited government programs such as Working for Work and the New Canadian Program and spoke to people from former Yugoslavia. As well, organizational heads of such programs as the Kitchener-Waterloo Host Program were contacted. The Host Program pairs newly arrived immigrants or refugees with volunteer Canadian families in an effort to foster acclimatization. Participants also came to the study through word of mouth. Further, notices were placed in laundry rooms of various apartment buildings in both London and Kitchener-Waterloo that were known to house a concentrated population of former Yugoslavians. Prospective participants were instructed

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to contact either myself or my research assistant. Permission was obtained from building superintendents prior to posting notices.

Procedure

A) The research proposal was submitted for ethics review and approved.

B) Participants were recruited from the Bosnian communities of Kitchener-Waterloo and London, Ontario areas.

C) Potential study participants were interviewed informally. The study was explained and all forms and measures were explained. This included the consent form, all scales and measures used for both the quantitative and qualitative portion of the study, a demographic questionnaire, an adapted version of the life events checklist, and an adapted version of the Life Event Questionnaire which was administered at the end of the study (see appendix D for all measures). The consent form explained the study in terms of its purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits. The voluntary nature of the study, as well as issues of confidentiality, use of quotations, protection of identity, and a list of contacts were provided in an information package that was left with all prospective study participants. Release forms were included in the general information package (see appendix E). Potential participants were told that either me or my research assistant would be contacting them within the next two or three days to see if they were interested in becoming part of the formal study.

All quantitative scales were reviewed and copies left with participants. Quantitative scales included the Impact of Event Scale - Revised and the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory. Both of these measures will be discussed in detail in the quantitative methodology. It was explained that participants would be expected to fill out the Impact of

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Event Scale - Revised on a daily basis over a 200-day period and the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory every third day. Participants were told that they would receive a dollar a day for filling out the Impact of Event Scale - Revised and the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory. This issue of payment will be discussed further and more fully in the ethics section of this chapter.

The demographic questionnaire gathered information on place of birth, marital status, children and extended family, date of immigration and arrival in Canada, housing, education, employment, salary both in Canada and former Yugoslavia, medical history, medication, and finally, any treatment programs participants might currently be undertaking such as physiotherapy or psychotherapy.

The life event checklist, which was administered at the very end of the study, gathered information on what kind of changes occurred over the course of the 200 days in terms of changes in daily activities, residence, health, finances, family relationships (i.e., marriages, births), spousal relationships and family living arrangements, deaths, personal habits, holidays or vacations, any notable personal achievements, legal problems, or changes in transportation. Changes were noted and dated when possible. Also, a category for miscellaneous changes was included to cover any previously missed eventualities.

The life event questionnaire was filled out during the course of the study and consisted of 20 questions designed to gather information on the degree of trauma suffered during the war and subsequent flight. This questionnaire consisted of questions such as "Did you serve in the military? Were you wounded in combat? Were you a victim of torture? Did you observe rape, torture, mutilation or other atrocities? Were you a victim of torture, holocaust and/or mass killing? Were you a prisoner of war or in an internment or

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refugee camp? Did you lose a loved one in a refugee or internment camp?".

Participants were also informed of the nature of the clinical interview(s), and the length of time they might take, and it was explained that they could say as little or as much as they needed in order to tell their story.

D) Participants were recontacted two or three days later and if they agreed to be part of the study an appointment was arranged and at that time consent forms (see appendix E) were signed and a copy was left with each participant. Demographic questionnaires were filled out and if possible the first interview was conducted at that time. It was made clear to participants that at any time they could drop out of the study. If it was not possible to conduct an interview at this time a subsequent time was arranged. Following the first interview and in keeping with the tenets of qualitative analysis, a possible time was scheduled for a second interview in order to gather follow-up or new information and, if necessary, clarify existing information.

E) All interviews were taped and following each interview a transcription was completed as soon as possible. Transcripts were returned to participants on the next visit for editing and accuracy checks.

F) Upon termination, study participants were debriefed. The impact of the study was discussed and any remaining questions were answered.

G) The life event checklist and the life event questionnaire were filled out and/or checked for accuracy as was demographic information.

H) Participants were paid the agreed upon sum and corrected copies of transcripts were left with respective participants.

I) Data coding and analysis was completed.

<u>Clinical Interview</u>

The purpose of any clinical interview is to allow the researcher "to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 1990). Because the clinical interview can take the researcher into the mental world of the individual where thoughts, feelings, and intentions can be articulated it is "one of the most powerful methods in qualitative data collection and analysis. For certain descriptive and analytical purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing" (McCracken, 1988, p.9). The clinical interview allows the researcher to delve and dig for greater comprehension and understanding. The primary objective is to allow respondents to tell their own story in their own way while refraining from judging and challenging, forsaking one's "turn" in the conversation, listening with an open and interested attitude, and probing for information and understanding (McCracken, 1988).

Interviews can be categorized as oral history, unstructured, semi-structured, and structured (Rothe, 1994). The difference in these interview types lies in the extent to which interview questions are determined and standardized before the interview occurs. Oral histories are the least structured and the least organized of the interview techniques and rely on the spontaneous flow of questions during the course of interaction. In an oral history all questions are kept as open-ended as possible. Although unstructured and informal, the unstructured interview uses probes and follow-up questions to obtain further information and clarify existing answers. This type of interview is more direct and focussed than oral history taking. Semi-structured interviews incorporate a series of structured questions which are developed in advance and an event or situation is highlighted. Some preparation is necessary on the part of the interviewer in order to develop the questions and those questions asked of one participant are asked of all.

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Structured interviews are the most standardized of all the clinical interview forms and resemble structured questionnaires (Rothe, 1994).

The clinical interview used in this study fits the category of the semi-structured interview in that similar questions were asked of all participants. Questions were developed in advance and the events featured in the questions involved the war and relocation. This type of interview is also referred to as the "interview guide approach" (Rubin, et al., 1993, p.374) where the topics and issues to be covered are outlined so that interviews with individual participants cover the same material but the interviewer is free to tailor the sequencing and wording of each question to the situation and participant. The three overarching questions asked of all study participants included the following:

- Can you tell me about your experiences in Bosnia during the war?
- Can you talk about how you adjusted to these experiences and your life after leaving Bosnia?
- Where do you see yourself in relation to resolving the events that occurred in Bosnia and your subsequent relocation in Canada?

Semi-structured interviews are designed to gather in-depth material through the use of probes and follow-up questions as well as foster a connection and rapport between researcher and participant that might not be possible under more structured circumstances. A semi-structured format allows participants to discuss their concerns rather than the concerns of the interviewer as might be reflected in a more structured set of clinical questions. Further, it is the semi-structured interview that is considered the best instrument for gaining an understanding of participants' perceptions, feelings, and responses to events and situations (Layder, 1993; Tutty, et al., 1996), while allowing the researcher to maintain some control over the direction of the interview.

Rather than attempt to reconstruct a journalistic picture of what actually happened

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and instead allow participants to define the significance of events, the interviewing style was informal with the appearance of a conversation or discussion (Mason, 1996). All interviews were conducted in participants' homes, over tiny cups of strong Balkan coffee and sometimes slivovitz, a traditional and very powerful plum-based alcoholic drink. Participants were encouraged to say as much as they wanted on each question and they were interviewed as often as necessary in order to tell their story.

Since one purpose of qualitative interviewing is to enter into the perspective of the other (Patton, 1990), all interviews were conducted, taped and transcribed by me verbatim with no attempt to correct grammar or sentence structure. Following transcription, interviews were given to participants for corrections. Corrected transcripts of all interviews were given to respective participants for their records.

Due to the nature of the material in question it was understandable that the interview process was difficult for many participants. The demands made on participants by many of the questions were considerable and it was not uncommon for them to cry or get angry, dissociate in the middle of the conversation, and/or make the decision to end the interview after a short time and ask to reconvene later. It was extremely important to honour the participant's need to end the interview or move to another subject and allow them to recover when material became too difficult to discuss. Sometimes the participants were able to continue and sometimes they were not.

I constantly made decisions during interviews as to whether to ask direct questions or use more indirect methods and whether to pursue or ignore a topic that caused obvious rage, fear, or deep sadness. I also made decisions as to how much or how little I should ask about certain topics while still getting the information that lay at the heart of the interview

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and at the same time respect the participant's emotional needs. For example, I developed a sense of when participants were couching their answers so as not to lie directly but to in some way avoid answering. Early in the interviewing process I made the decision never to challenge a participant's avoidance and, if I suspected they were not being truthful, I merely noted that in my observations and field notes.

Unlike a clinical relationship which is initiated and driven by the client, in research the ethnographer is the initial "authority and source for structuring the relationship" (Schein, 1987, p.24) in research. For example, one participant who had fought in the war as a soldier was very careful what he discussed and intimated that he would never be able to return to the city where he had lived. Apart from one question on this topic, which he refused to answer, I simply did not revisit this issue. There were many occasions when he asked that the tape recorder be turned off and he censored many names and places from his transcripts. From statements he made voluntarily, however, I began to understand how complex the divided loyalties had been in this war and how people, such as this participant, had been tossed into a seething, uncharted turbulence that left little room for survival let alone moralizing or philosophizing. The more participants taught me about survival in war, the more effortless it became to suspend judgement and genuinely empathize with their impossible plight and the moral, spiritual, physical and psychological ways they had been trapped and ensnared.

One of my imperatives as an interviewer was to extend to each participant and his or her family as much empathetic understanding and unconditional positive regard as my skills as a clinical social worker, a researcher, and simply a fellow human being, would allow. As an interviewer I found it necessary to remain aware at all times that not only did

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I need them more than they needed me, but that I was in the presence of people who had struggled to survive in ways I could not imagine. They had suffered losses and witnessed aspects of humanity's inhumanity that few Canadian-born individuals could understand.

Cross-cultural studies have often been distorted by the perspective and experience of the researcher who is generally a member of the dominant culture (Andersen, 1993, p.40). The semi-structured format, with its emphasis on participants' perspectives, at the very least acknowledged this, and at most did something to alleviate the problem. Unquestionably, however, there are aspects of culture and racial phenomena that are difficult, if not impossible, for an outsider to grasp. For example, I was continually struck by the experiential abyss created between researcher and participant not only as a result of language and cultural differences, but as a result of participants having lived through a war. This was simply outside my experience. As I moved deeper and deeper into the research and spent more and more time talking to participants or transcribing and re-reading interviews, I found that my dreams were often filled with images and sounds of blood and battles. However, I was always on a hill above the battle or watching from a distance, never directly involved in the fighting and never fully understanding what it would be like in the midst of the fray.

Nine of the twenty-six participants spoke English poorly and needed a translator. All participants preferred to use a family member, usually an adolescent son or daughter rather than a stranger or outsider. Suspicion within and among ethnic groups is high. Some participants spoke at length in narrative terms while others struggled with forming their ideas in broken English. Sometimes whole families were present for interviews and other times just the participant. There was no question that language created problems and this

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will be dealt with more fully in the limitations section of the paper. Moreover, the interviewer is a well-educated, white, middle class Canadian-born female who has not travelled extensively and never to Europe, let alone the Balkans. I speak no Serbo-Croatian, German, Russian or other Slavic languages which many of the participants spoke.

From an ethnographic perspective, the approach for much of the study was decidedly etic or outside and alien to the culture. At the study's inception, however, the research team consisted of myself, a white Canadian social worker, and a research assistant, an Eastern European clinical psychologist who is also a Muslim and Bosnian refugee. Such a combination brought both an etic and emic perspective to the early stages of the study. However, in the analysis of qualitative data, etic, or outsider perspectives, and emic, or insider perspectives, are seen as dynamic positions that operate along a continuum. What is crucial in such an ethnographic study is not where researchers and participants are, or move, along a continuum of emic and etic perspective, but that researchers acknowledge, represent and report transitional positions (Sands, et al., 1994).

Moreover, because participants themselves were so diverse in their perceptions and ideas, for example a Serbian told a far different story than a Muslim or a Croat, it was important to treat each participant individually and find an interview style and question format that facilitated open responses to very difficult questions. In most instances this perspective and rapport developed over time. The more I visited and the more we talked, usually struggling with the language and sometimes using a version of mock charades to act out what could not be stated, the more the relationship developed a comfortable richness interspersed with humour and much frantic thumbing through dictionaries.

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Considering the language and cultural barriers we faced, the challenges to creating a balanced relationship between researcher and participant were considerable but not impossible.

As in any qualitative study, one of my objectives was to establish a relationship with each of the participants through visits and clinical interviews that allowed me to understand the depth and the detail of what people were trying to communicate. Further, I diligently tried to capture the images, facts, and feelings about what had actually happened to participants so as to provide a rich description of the people, activities and interactions that took place (Patton, 1990). To that end, it was vital to hear the concerns of the participants, acknowledge what they were doing for me as a researcher, and respect the story they told.

Obviously, however, there is a great deal more to an interview than establishing a rapport between participant and researcher. Eliciting specific information about the war and the impact of that war on participants' lives was the raison d'etre for our coming together. The primary purpose of every question was to translate, into a forum participants could understand, the objectives of the interview, which were to discuss the trauma of war, the suffering and loss people had lived through, and the ways in which they were coping and adapting to the transformational power of that suffering. For the interview to be successful that information, painful though it was, had to be communicated. The interview process is always one of looking both backward to the problem to be solved, that is, how do people from former Yugoslavia adapt and cope, and forward to the specific interview questions that are yet to be formulated. The ingenuity, insight, and experience of the interviewer, all factors in meeting the specific objectives of the interview process, are

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augmented by the interviewer's own experience, existing literature on the issues and problems, hypotheses derived from well-developed bodies of existing theory and research (Kahn, et al., 1997), and careful reviews of any previous interviews. Although I consider myself to be an experienced interviewer, my experience of life in war-torn Eastern Europe is nonexistent so I relied heavily on my historical understanding of the problems, my theoretical understanding of trauma and self-organization, and careful transcription and review of each interview prior to follow-up interviews. All interviews, whether follow-up or first interview, incorporated elements such as probes, effective listening techniques, careful use of silence, explaining questions, observing verbal and nonverbal cues and the mood of the participant, asking for clarification, and always being respectful and mindful of the people with whom I was working. In order to probe for in-depth meaning, subjective perspectives, and information that was consistent with the research imperative, these interview techniques were used simultaneously, recursively and sequentially.

The clinical interview is far from "a mirror reflection" (Miller, et al., 1997, p.99) of the social world of the interviewee. Rather, it is an interactive process between the interviewer and the interviewee where narratives emerge out of the lived experience of the participants. In this case, it was the lived experience of war, flight, and settlement. Capturing elements of that lived experience as part of one's scholarship is creative and collaborative work, and rather than just discovering or conveying information, the interview is an occasion for constructing reality (Holstein, et al., 1997). During the interview, reality is always under construction, as is meaning making, where meaning reflects the conditions of the interview, the rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee, the topics under consideration, and cultural ways of orienting to the topic

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under discussion.

Within the context of the clinical interview, the interviewee and the interviewer are literally fleshed out for one another in that they become active and productive sources of knowledge, insight and emotions which are always emergent and developing. In effect the interviewer, who is an active member of knowledge production and who provides the loose structure within which meaning making emerges, "activates narrative production" (Holstein, et al., 1997, p. 123). And, because construction of meaning is always collaborative, no interview situation, no matter how standardized or formal, is without contamination. All participants are inevitably implicated in emergent meaning making (Holstein, et al., 1997, p.126).

Use of Self in Qualitative Research

In qualitative research the person of the researcher is given primacy. His or her value system, skill with people, biases and perspectives, are as important to qualitative research as research design is to quantitative. The person of the researcher lies at "the root of what, how and why we research" (Kirby, et al., 1989, p.19) the subjects we research. From a qualitative perspective, it is not possible to separate the research from the researcher. Knowledge production is an act of meaning making, and acts of meaning making cannot be separated from the value systems of the individuals involved. Within a qualitative model, objectivity and neutrality are not about the degree to which the findings of an inquiry are determined by the degree of detachment of the researcher. Rather, neutrality is a stance taken by the researcher in relation to the content of what the research participant says (Patton, 1993, p.231). A neutral stance requires that the researcher listen to a participant's narrative with compassion, respect, acceptance, and credence. Further,

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the researcher must place him or herself at the centre of the research endeavour and whenever appropriate openly declare biases, perspectives, and events that impact on the nature of the research and the findings.

The presence of the interviewer in qualitative research is seen to have a profound effect on the material generated and the relationship that develops between the participants and the researcher, as well as on the collection and analysis of data. The interviewer can influence respondents not only by the phrasing of questions and tone of voice, or apparent comfort or discomfort with certain material, but even the clothes he or she wears can impact on the respondent. The researcher's own experience, imagination, intellect, sense of humour, and value system are brought to bear on the research process in varied and unpredictable ways. Qualitative methods recognize the use of the self-as-instrument where the investigator is bound to understand his/her own actions and activities as well as those of the people being studied (Burgess, 1982, p.1).

"Ultimately, science is neutral on the subject of war and peace, but scientists are not" (Rubin, et al., 1993, p.85). The nature of the material being discussed provoked powerful reactions in both myself and participants and the interviewer's apparent comfort or discomfort with material being discussed can certainly influence participants' responses. The most blatant example of this occurred during an interview with participants who had been held in Croatian concentration camps. These elders, a husband and wife of mixed ethnicity, had witnessed, experienced, and survived atrocities. Although the first interview went well in that a rapport was established and both individuals spoke candidly about their experiences, it was notably difficult for them and their daughter who was acting as translator. The exceptional brutality of the account of their war-time experiences,

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their age, their ensuing health problems, and the lasting effects of the events they had survived, coupled with my own unprocessed reaction to the material, had a rather disastrous affect on the second interview.

Two weeks prior to this interview I had set myself a gruelling schedule for transcribing interviews and had left little or no time to process my own emotional reactions to the content. By the time I arrived early on a Monday morning for our second interview, I was physically exhausted, emotionally depleted, and absolutely unaware of either of these problems. As an elder male from the Balkans, strong drink and strong coffee were a mainstay of the husband's means of socializing. By the second visit we had established enough of a rapport that he insisted I have a traditional Balkan drink of plum brandy in spite of my protests. As I finished one drink, he would refill the tiny shot glass with more of the clear, potent liquid. I believe I had three before I passed out. Confused, nauseous, and totally embarrassed, I awakened many hours later. They had simply covered me up and left me to sleep. Following profuse apologies, I stumbled out the door and found my way home. My emotional response to this event was pervasive in that I was absolutely overwhelmed by pain, shame, humiliation, exhaustion, and what I later deemed the effects of secondary traumatization. It was at this point that I decided, for my sake and the sake of my participants, that I needed to create the space within the context of the research to seek more frequent and rigorous exploration of both my own emotional responses to the nature of the material and the ways in which I was conducting myself as a researcher. Subsequent to more introspective work, I discovered that I was actively avoiding a second interview with these elders. I did not want to hear more of their horror stories.

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The following morning, this study participant called and apologized for pressing me to drink. Fortunately, this did not damage the relationship and we had several hearty guffaws during the conversation with his son acting as translator. Although slivovitz continued to be a staple in our interviews, he was henceforth careful to hear my "No, thank you," and give me one and only one.

Further, because this study is phenomenological, in that it focusses on study participants' subjective experience and interpretations, it is relevant to discuss one form of phenomenology called heuristic inquiry. Heuristic inquiry not only looks at participants' subjective experience but also at the researcher's. Here the researcher sheds any pretense of being a detached observer and uses introspection to study his or her own thoughts and feelings while experiencing the phenomenon in question (Rubin, et al., 1993). Following the above incident, which happened fairly early in the study, I consciously adopted a heuristic inquiry approach and spent more time monitoring my own reactions and responses. Developing some sensitivity to my own need to process the quality and content of the material, as well as the needs and requests of study participants, became an important aspect of the study.

Whenever participants made a request for help, information, or just my presence at family functions such as weddings and birthdays I carefully considered the request. For example, one participant asked if I would accompany him to a meeting at his son's school with the principal, vice principal and son's teacher. His son had been suspended for three days due to a problem on an ESL weekend camping trip sponsored and supervised by the school. I accepted his invitation, made copious observations, and learned something more about what it means to be a stranger in a strange land. Several participants asked for

assistance in resume writing and several asked for help looking for work in their field. I made numerous calls to professional licencing bodies for dentists, physicians, engineers, and pharmacists.

I ultimately adopted the position of an observer-as-participant, or one who identifies him or herself as a researcher and interacts with the participants in the social process but makes no pretense of actually being a participant (Rubin, et al., 1993). With each intervention I developed a deeper understanding of, and rapport with, study participants. The kinds of issues and struggles participants faced on a day-to-day basis became clearer the more I became involved in the daily activities of their lives. I marked with cards and phone calls anniversaries of deaths of family members who had been killed in the war. I called each participant when NATO began its bombing of Kosovo and either spoke directly to them or left a message saying I was thinking about them and hoped they were all right. All but two of them returned my phone message, even though I specified it was not necessary. They were grateful that someone outside their community was acknowledging this agonizingly painful reminder of their own experiences of war as well as the fact that many of them had relatives living in Serbia, specifically, Novi Sad, which was heavily bombed at the outset of the war.

Further, and this was an issue I struggled with for some time, I orchestrated the sponsorship of four family members of study participants to come to Canada. One study participant's best friend and cousin and his wife, and another study participant's sister and brother-in-law were sponsored to come to Canada as a direct result of family members' participation in the study and my involvement in their lives. Private sponsorship of refugees to Canada necessitates that five private citizens, who earn beyond a certain

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amount of money per annum, pledge financial support to the refugee. Although I did not directly sponsor anyone, I gathered ten sponsors together, assisted with the paper work, and through group representatives I continue to correspond with the Canadian Embassies in Zagreb and Vienna. The process is lengthy and the paper work was delivered to the respective embassies more than a year ago. The first of the two couples arrived in October 2000 and the second couple has been refused as the immigration official at the Canadian Embassy in Vienna has deemed them unsuitable. Among the more serious reasons cited were that they had lived at the same residence for ten years and that their situation did not seem critical enough to warrant refugee status. There is no direct appeal of this decision.

Much less glamorous but vital nonetheless, I did what I referred to as "The Big Depends Drive" for a study participant's ailing father. He desperately needed surgery to correct prostate problems but as a Croatian in a primarily Muslim city, he was terrified of placing himself into the hands of Muslim physicians. Even five years after the war this is a justifiable fear. He was in great pain much of the time and had lost control of his bladder. There was simply no help for him. He had been given medication but surgery was out of the question, although surgery would have alleviated the problem. Interestingly enough, my own father, at precisely this time, was undergoing surgery for the same disorder. The surgery was successful and he has since recovered fully. The study participant's father, on the other hand, is dead. He died several months ago due to prostate blockages. Approximately nine months before he died, I was able to collect five large boxes of disposable diapers for incontinent adults and through his daughter, get them delivered. He would ration himself and wear them only at night, as they were outrageously expensive in former Yugoslavia, and so corrupt are official systems, including the postal system, that

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unless the carrier was bribed, the diapers would never have reached him.

It is difficult to describe the secondary effects of this level of painful frustration and watch as study participants struggled to tolerate the high levels of helplessness and anguish that is a large part of their lives. As a researcher, it was a relief to set aside the pretense of objectivity and make thorough use of myself as an agent for change and, when that was not possible, simply bear witness to participants' continuing and seemingly endless struggle.

It was a complex relationship that formed between me and each one of the study participants and their families, even those family members that I had never spoken to and never met. When research entails studying a subject as traumatic and impactful as war, then one must take real life and real people as one's starting point, with all the subjective concreteness as well as the social entanglements that encompasses (Fonow, et al., 1991). For me, it was impossible to listen day after day to the stories told and witness the pain, loss, confusion, and courage of the people at issue, without being drawn into their experience and concerns.

Most refugees are marginalized people and "research from the margins is not research on marginalized people, but research by, for, and with them" (Kirby, et al., 1989, p.28).

Data Analysis

Kirby and McKenna define research from the margins as being "on the margins of the production of knowledge" (Kirby, 1989, p.17), and they define margin as "the context in which those who suffer injustice, inequality and exploitation live their lives" (Kirby, 1989, p.33). This research, about the lives of people who have suffered oppressive war-

time regimes and violent involuntary displacement, is about people who live on the margins. They are marginalized not only in terms of material resources but also in terms of knowledge production which is organized around the needs of the dominant culture.

The refugee's sense of marginalization is further aggravated by xenophobic attitudes of citizens of the host country, misinformed officials who strongly advise refugees not to discuss the war and equally strongly advise them to drop their ethnic hatreds now that they are in a new country, and regional social workers who stringently apply all welfare rules and regulations to the refugee, many of whom are suffering the effects of the war. Because there are few, if any, shared reference points it is difficult for the Western mind to decipher or understand the needs of the refugee. They tend to rely on banalities such as the often heard sentiment, "If they don't like it here, why don't they go home?", as a substitute for real human encounters. Often a continuing sense of isolation, problems with language and communication, and differing core values leave the refugee interacting with people from the host country in unsatisfying and superficial ways. Having survived war, and subsequently carrying within images of death and the concomitant loss and grief, they find it difficult to relate to typical Western concerns. Further, many in the host country believe that the refugee is blessed just to be here and any attitude that deviates from unconditional gratitude is judged swiftly and harshly.

Consequently, analysis or making sense of the data, that is knowledge production, must do more than organize and interpret the views of participants. It must also create knowledge that will describe and help to change patterns of thinking that support the status quo and the interests of the dominant culture at the expense of the refugee. Unfortunately, as a member of the dominant culture, I share the internalized prejudices and xenophobia of

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the culture. Perhaps all I can hope for is to reflect the experience and concerns of the refugees in this study and when relevant, expose the hidden side of a society that professes to be democratic and peaceful but can be, in actuality, capable of incredible violence and oppression.

The object of qualitative analysis is to shape the data into categories, assumptions, and relationships as they inform the participant's general view of the world and the specific view of the topic under study (McCracken, 1988). Basically, the general goal for any qualitative data analysis is to locate themes or patterns. Categories of analysis emerge from open-ended interviewing and observations as the researcher comes to understand organizing patterns (Patton, 1990). Connecting these patterns of organization to descriptions and explanations of what or who is being studied is the crux of data analysis and the strategy is to allow important dimensions to emerge from analysis of the individual cases under study "without presupposing in advance what those important dimensions will be" (Patton, 1990, p.41).

In this study, overall patterns of organization were viewed in terms of two overarching themes, transition from peace to war and transition from citizen to refugee. "The analyst should consciously look for a core variable when coding data" (Strauss, 1987, p.35). The theme or variable of transition provided that core and, in keeping with multistrategy research, was informed by theory. This organizing theme, with its bifurcation into transition from peace to war and from citizen to refugee, was central to data analysis and to the research questions: Can you tell me about your experiences in Bosnia during the war? Can you talk about how you adjusted to these experiences and your life after leaving Bosnia? Where do you see yourself in relation to resolving the

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events that occurred in Bosnia and your subsequent relocation in Canada? This core category must be proven over and over again by its prevalent relationship to other categories (Strauss, 1987).

Identifying core and, therefore, interpretive themes in the data upon which analysis and arguments are constructed is one step in an overall analytical schema. Although there are many methods of analyzing data, the method used in this study began with the specific and built to the general. Accordingly, the final step of data analysis was to read the interview from beginning to end to capture an overall sense of the data as a whole, while the first step was to study utterances in the interview transcripts on their own terms, ignoring relationships to other aspects of the text. Page by page comments, ideas, and tidbits of information were studied in detail to determine whether or not they provided an entrance into the assumptions, beliefs, and life events of participants (Tutty, et al., 1996). Using the self-as-instrument is a widely used technique at this stage because the researcher's response to the data delivers insights into the nature of the data (McCracken, 1988).

As in any qualitative research, categories and coding, interpreting and looking for meanings and relationships, all emerge from the data itself. Creating both first and second level coding (Tutty, et al., 1996) of data, reflecting upon the analysis, living with the implications of the analysis, and reworking that analysis add to the integrity of the findings. First level coding involves a straightforward approach where the coding is predominantly concrete and involves identifying properties of data. During the process of first level coding, meaning units, or those segments of information that build the classification scheme, are identified. Category names are assigned to similar groups of

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meaning units, then categories are colour coded. Once the categories have been determined, they are further refined as the analysis progresses. For example, the overall transitional theme of 'from peace to war,'was further subdivided into categories of: survival/war; loss and grief; destruction of family, health, wealth, and individual identity; death imprint and responses to war; ethnic cleansing and the politics of war. The overall theme of transition from citizen to refugee was subdivided into categories of: survival/work; homelessness and homesickness; destruction of family, health, wealth, and individual identity; rebuilding of self; rebuilding of family; and adjustment problems. These major themes that created links between pieces of information then became categories under which all related ideas were grouped. As new themes were discovered, they were added. At this stage of analysis one also actively searches for deviations from existing themes in the event that alternative themes or subthemes might emerge (Rothe, 1994).

As similarities and differences emerged from the data, the method of constant comparison added new information through comparing and contrasting to already coded information. Overlapping themes and categories were compared and sometimes collapsed into one another until, eventually, finer analysis provided a second level of coding. Second level coding is more abstract and involves interpreting the data as to its meaning (Tutty, et al., 1993). For example, the category of survival/war contained subcategories: survival outbreak of war; and escape trauma. Here, the human drama peaked and people went through various understandings of survival at its most base level. As a further example, the category politics of war was further subdivided into: civil war; politics of war and the individual; Tito's Yugoslavia; and post-war conditions.

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The categories were further described by subcategories and linked. These links, or

relationships between categories, were analyzed through an adapted process of "hurricane

thinking" (Kirby, 1989, p.146). As outlined by Kirby and McKenna (1989), the research

questions constitute the "eye of the hurricane" and because these questions are at the

centre of inquiry, categories of data are placed around the eye until those which have the

strongest ties emerge and those categories with less obvious or weaker ties are more

distant.

In this study the overall theme of transition became "the eye" of the analysis and

provided guidance in terms of categorical connections. For example, there is a strong

between-category relationship between survival and its subcategory, survival escape, and

the category of homelessness. The decision to escape to survive is made so quickly that it

is some time before the realization that one is homeless hits. Often the nascent

implications of that realization begin along with the realization that you have only the

clothes on your back. It is even longer, sometimes months, before the refugee clearly

understands the fact that this war will not be over quickly and that home no longer exists,

and that he or she is, in fact, homeless. The category of loss and grief is deeply tied to the

category of homesickness and homelessness. For example, the feelings of homesickness

can be debilitating and part of the debilitating longing is for a time before the trauma and

destruction of war, for what was lost during the war, and for what can never be again.

This process of comparing and connecting categories and defining the relationships

between them is the major task of second level coding (Tutty, 1996) and will be discussed

in detail in the results section of the paper, along with more complete discussion and

descriptions of categories and subcategories. Further, links will be made between

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dynamical systems theory and research categories and subcategories, and the overall

theme of transition. When connections can be made to this degree then a systematically

dense analysis is possible.

<div align="center">
<u>A Multistrategy Approach:</u>
<u>The Quantitative Study</u>
</div>

<u>Introduction</u>

Field research is qualitatively effective for examining psychosocial processes over

time (Rubin, et al., 1993). It is reasonable then, under the auspices of multistrategy

research, to pair it with a quantitative time series analysis. A time series is a set of N time-

ordered observations of a process (Clearly, et al., 1980). "It is a record of the values of

any fluctuating quantity measured at

different points in time" (Priestley, 1991, p.1) beginning with any sequence of

measurements. The objective is to determine what the data itself can reveal about the

dynamics of the time series (Kaplan, et al., 1995). In most statistical problems, one is

grappling with how to estimate the properties of a population from a sample. In time series

analysis the problem is somewhat different in that although it may be possible to vary the

sample or the length of the observed time series, it is usually impossible to make more

than one observation at a given time. However, the observed time series, $x(t)$, is considered

one example of the infinite set of time series which might have been observed. This

ensemble, or infinite set of time series, is made up of individual realizations and every

member of the ensemble is a possible realization of a stochastic process. Stochastic

processes are defined as "a statistical phenomenon that evolves in time according to

probabilistic laws" (Chatfield, 1989, p.27). The analysis of a time series is an attempt to

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evaluate the properties of the probability model which generated the series.

Time series analysis is carried out in the frequency domain and in the time domain. In the time domain, the relationship between observations at different points in time takes primacy (Harvey, 1981). It is generally presumed that "correlations between adjacent points in time are best explained in terms of a dependence of the current value on past values" (Shumway, et al., 2000). In the frequency domain cyclical movement, or how rapidly things repeat themselves, is studied (Harvey, 1981) and periodic variations caused by biological, physical or environmental phenomena are the characteristics under investigation (Shumway, et al., 2000).

Analytical objectives of time series analysis can be classified as description, explanation, prediction, and control (Chatfield, 1989, p.5.) The time series analysis in this study is carried out in the time domain and is primarily descriptive.

Time Series Description: The Impact of Event Scale - Revised

The time series was generated by participants who, on a daily basis, filled out the Impact of Event Scale - Revised (see appendix D). This scale is a 22-item, subjective, self-report measure that looks at the three primary symptoms of trauma as defined by the DSM-IV, intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal. Within this scale the three symptom cluster subscales of intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal are measured by the following items respectively: intrusion is measured by the sum of items 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 16, 20; avoidance is measured by the sum of items 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17, 22; and hyperarousal is measured by the sum of items 4, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21. Item response levels are 0 = not at all, 1 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 5 = often. Examples of statements that measured intrusion would include the following: "Any reminder brought back feelings about it." Or, "I had

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trouble staying asleep." Examples of statements that measured avoidance would include: "I felt as if it hadn't happened or wasn't real." Or, "My feelings about it were kind of numb." Examples of statements that measured hyperarousal would include the following: "I felt irritable and angry.", or, "I was jumpy and easily startled." (Hudnall Stamm, 1996). These three symptom clusters as measured by the IES-Revised provided the real-valued time series used in this study. The grouping over the three variables and the averaging process results in the values being smeared out over the intervals 0 to 5 and appearing approximately real-valued rather than discrete.

Intrusion is defined as recurring and distressing recollections of the event. These distressing recollections include images, thoughts, or perceptions, recurring dreams, and acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring through experiencing dissociative flashbacks, hallucinations, and a sense of reliving the experience. Avoidance is defined as persistent avoidance of anything associated with the trauma as well as numbing of responsiveness. Avoidance and numbing of responsiveness is indicated by efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma, efforts to avoid public places or people that stimulate recall of the trauma, inability to recall important aspects of the trauma, diminished interest in significant events, feelings of detachment from others, restricted range of emotions, and the sense of a foreshortened future. Hyperarousal is indicated by problems getting to or staying asleep, outbursts of anger and irritability, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance, and an exaggerated startle response (DSM-IV, 1994, p.428).

The IES-Revised is the oldest and most widely used instrument for assessing the psychological consequences of exposure to traumatic events (Wilson, et al., 1997). The

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measure is designed to capture the level of symptomatic response to specific traumatic stressors. It is intended as a repeated measure and will track changes in these three symptoms over time.

The IES-R does not derive from "a specific narrow theoretical orientation, but rather stems from the large body of observation of stress response syndromes promulgated by Horowitz and his colleagues and further refined in the diagnostic criteria of PTSD" (Hudnall Stamm, 1996, p.186). In terms of construct validity, that is whether or not the scale taps the particular theoretical constructs that make up post traumatic stress disorder, in depth cross-validation with patients and nonpatients who suffered from pathological grief showed that all items on the IES were frequently endorsed. "This indicates a high relevance of the item pool for responses to traumatic stress" (Wilson, et al., 1997, p.400). Moreover, a Spearman rank correlation (i.e., the tendency of two rank orders to be similar), of .86 (p < .001) was obtained. "This result suggested that the content of experience following a traumatic event, as represented in the IES item pool, was similar across types of events and patient versus nonpatient populations" (Wilson, et al., 1997, p.400).

Using emergency worker personnel, data was collected on the IES-R. The coefficient alpha values for intrusion and avoidance were .85 and .77 for hyperarousal. These data are evidence of highly internally consistent subscales. Test-retest reliability coefficients for 318 emergency workers are .56 for intrusion, .51 for avoidance and .59 for hyperarousal.

<u>Variables and Measures</u>

Variables

A) Symptoms of Trauma

    1) hyperarousal
    2) intrusion
    3) avoidance

B) Sex

In the few studies done comparing men and women's response to trauma,

differences have emerged. Although causes are unclear, the literature would indicate that

women show a trend toward higher rates of post traumatic stress disorder and they tend to,

at least verbally, emphasize and maximize ideas of transformational growth as a result of

trauma (Wilson, et al., 1997). Hence, sex will be a further variable in this study.

C) Marital Status

Married men and married women were plotted over time and compared to single

women in terms of symptomatic trends.

D) Confounding Events or Significant Events Encountered During the Course of the Study

These dates were recorded as significant event dates and included such events as

changing residence, having a baby, buying a car, visiting Bosnia, changing or getting a

job, buying a house, and the NATO bombing of Kosovo.

These above variables were operationalized by the following measures and

questionnaires respectively:

A) Impact of Event Scale - Revised

These variables, intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal, which are defined in the

DSM-IV as the three primary symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, will be

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operationalized using the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R).

B) Demographic Questionnaire

This questionnaire gathered information on sex, country and place of birth, number of years since immigration, number of years in Canada, marital status, family relationships, other relations living in Canada, housing, level and type of education, employment and income in both Canada and Bosnia, and medical information and history.

C) Demographic Questionnaire

D) Life Events Checklist

In order to be aware of any events, including the NATO bombing of Kosovo, that might create confound variance, significant events encountered during the course of the study were monitored. Changes in employment, residence, health, finances, family relations, spouse, nonrelatives, death of significant others, personal habits, holidays and vacations, personal achievements, legal problems, transportation, and miscellaneous events were monitored. It was expected, however, that severe ongoing trauma such as a death of a loved one would create the motivation for dropping out of the study. These events were plotted in individual time series as special dates.

Sample

A) Sample Size

Twenty-four people from former Yugoslavia, 13 women and 11 men, who met the following inclusion criteria were interviewed.

1) Participants were between the ages of 18 and 75.

2) All participants were from Bosnia in central former Yugoslavia.

3) All participants consented voluntarily to be in the study and were drawn

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from a convenience sample.

4) Participants spoke at least some degree of English. If necessary, however, a translator was used.

B) Sample Selection

See above.

<u>Procedure</u>

A) The research proposal was submitted for ethics review and approved.

B) Participants were recruited from the Bosnian communities of Kitchener-Waterloo and London, Ontario areas.

C) See above. Further, use of the IES-Revised and the PTGI was explained and participants were told that they would be expected to fill out the 22-item IES-Revised on a daily basis at approximately the same time each day for the next 200 days and the 21-item PTGI once every three days for the same period of time. Each measure took 5 to 10 minutes to complete. It was also explained that they would be paid one dollar per day at the end of the study for their cooperation. It was explained that if they missed a day, they were simply to write "missed" on the measure and fill in the next day's measure appropriately. Participants were told that daily attention to the measures was an important part of the study.

D) Upon obtaining participants' consent, a week's measures were left with the individual along with my phone number and the research assistant's. Questions were to be directed to one or the other. At the end of the week forms were collected, questions answered, and forms for two weeks were left with participants. As participants became more familiar with the measures, longer time intervals elapsed between visits.

E) At termination participants were debriefed. All remaining measures and forms were filled out and collected. The impact of the study was discussed and any remaining questions were answered. Participants were paid the agreed upon sum.

F) Data entry and data analysis took place.

<u>Data Analysis</u>

Prior to outlining how data was analyzed, the following ideas in time series analysis warrant some discussion and definition: stationarity; and correlational and autocorrelational analysis.

Stationarity

The simplest type of time series arises when a series consists of a sequence of independent random variables that, if stationary, would have a mean and variance at all points in time and the correlation at different times would be zero. A time series is said to be stationary when there is no systematic change in mean, that is, there is no trend, no systematic change in variance, and if strictly periodic variations have been removed (Chatfield, 1989). However, most time series show some kind of systematic upward or downward movement rather than, for example, fluctuating around a constant level. This is called the trend in the data. The trend can be either global or local. If the trend is a global one then it is assumed to hold at all points in time with the parameters of the series remaining constant throughout. If, on the other hand, the parameters are allowed to adapt to changes in the data and relatively more weight is placed on the most recent observations, forecasts can be based on an estimate of the local trend (Harvey, 1981). In this study, the trend would refer to whether or not people get better or worse over time as measured by the symptom clusters in the IES-Revised, and stationarity would correspond

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to someone whose responses, other than random error fluctuations, remain constant over time.

Notions of regularity, which may exist over time in the behaviour of a time series, are closely linked to the idea of stationarity (Shumway, 2000). Anyone who tries to predict the future based on past values must first pick something about the past that is likely to remain fairly stable. These stability assumptions are called stationarity conditions. As stated above, when the mean and variance do not change with historical time and the covariance is independent of time, the time series is said to be stationary (Gottman, 1981). However, in most time series the mean function changes over time and the variation about the mean function as described by the series will be autocorrelated or correlations will exist between the values at different points in time (Priestly, 1988).

Correlations and Autocorrelations

An autocorrelational coefficient in a time series measures the correlation between observations at different distances apart. "Data is called autocorrelated if there is some predictability from the past of a series to its current values" (Gottman, 1981). "These coefficients

provide insights into the probability model which generated the data" (Chatfield, 1975, p.19). In an ordinary statistical correlation where it is determined whether two or more characteristics are related to one another, or covary, the correlational coefficient provides a numerical description of the extent of the relatedness of two sets of scores and the direction of the relationship. Values will range from -1.00 to +1.00 and it may also be important to know if it is possible to predict one score from another. This problem of predicting one set of scores from a different set of scores is approached by using

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regression analysis (Kiess, 1989).

A similar idea can be applied to time series to see if successive observations are correlated. Given n observations $X_1, \ldots X_n$, on a time series, it is possible to form n - 1 pairs of observations, namely $(X_1, X_2), (X_2, X_3), \ldots, (X_{n-1}, X_n)$ "If the first observation in each pair is regarded as one variable, and the second observation as the second variable, the correlation coefficient between X_t and X_t+1 measures correlation between successive observations and it is called an autocorrelation coefficient or a serial correlation coefficient" (Chatfield, 1989, p.19). If, for example, one knew that a value was one standard deviation above the mean at a particular time, t, it would be one standard deviation below the next mean on the next observation at time $t + 1$. This is stated in time series parlance in the following way: "At lag 1 the data have a perfect negative autocorrelation of -1.0" (Gottman, 1981, p.33). That is true because if one computes a correlation coefficient at time t paired with observations at time $t + 1$, or observations one lag apart, the correlation coefficient is -1.0 (Gottman, 1981). Defining the variance between two time points necessitates that one define the autocorrelational function. Data analysis consisted of the following:

Analysis

A) Trauma Variables:

The first step in any time series analysis is to plot the data. Appendix F consists of the simple plots of each study participant's time series over 200 days of recording levels of avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion.

B) Sex

Sex differences were noted in the average response to trauma variables. For

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example, women almost consistently rate one variable as more important than do men. This is a post hoc observation but it is possible to statistically comment on the finding as will be demonstrated in the results and analysis section of the paper.

C) Married Versus Single Trends

Trends over time for married men, married women, and single women were explored. The contribution of marital status and gender over the 200 day period to symptoms of avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion were explored and compared.

D) Confounding Events Encountered During the Course of the Study

Although this is purely descriptive and no statistical tests were applied to these plots, they were constructed (see appendix G) to look at the effects of significant events that occurred during the course of the study. The most significant event was the NATO bombing of Kosovo. This was included simply because it is expected that such an event would impact on participants' level of avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion and it is rare that such an event would occur during the course of a study.

Multistrategy Research:
Ethics

Introduction

Research with refugees evokes ethical issues. Refugees constitute a vulnerable population and, therefore, ethical issues are pervasive in all stages of the research from design, to collection, to analysis, to the reporting and writing of data. Refugees come from circumstances that have left them traumatized, confused, mistrustful, virtually penniless, and often without language, friends, or extended family. Both the personal and political considerations of such research are complicated and considerable (Rubin, et al., 1993).

Personal considerations include issues of time and retraumatization. Both constitute ethically problematic areas. The imposition on people's time and energy, especially for this study, was extensive. Research represents an intrusion into people's lives, thoughts, and feelings and the clinical interviews required revealing information that had been actively avoided for years. In some instances, this was the first time participants had spoken of these events to anyone. Revisiting traumatic memories is difficult and often, to varying degrees, retraumatizing.

Political considerations include issues of coercion and protection of participants' rights, which constitute the two major areas where participants could potentially be treated unethically. Complete or partial coercion occurs either because of the perceived power of organizations or because the incentive to be a part of the study is too strong for participants to reject (Judd, et al., 1991). Because refugees have lived under conditions of extreme oppression, the perceived power of organizations is a real and looming problem. Refugees have learned to distrust people in general and government officials, bureaucrats, and people in positions of apparent power, specifically. Because refugees are usually seeking citizenship and are often living on welfare they may feel some subtle form of coercion to become a part of the study. Often dependent on government agencies for income and help, refugees will understandably be extremely cautious in dealing with people they believe might represent official institutions.

Refugees must be free to choose to provide information and must have some assurance as to how that information will be used. In refugee camps, settlement countries, and rehabilitation centres they have little control over how strangers will use the information they provide (Daniel, 1995). People like me, who probe and question refugees

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for information that is both personal and close to the refugee's heart, receive along with that information the added responsibility of treating it in a way that it will not be turned into a weapon of oppression. When refugees provide officials and strangers with information it must ultimately be used in a meaningful way to liberate rather than oppress. Otherwise, the abiding mistrust the refugee has learned cannot be healed.

A second consideration concerning the problem of coercion, that is the incentive to be a part of the study is too strong for participants to reject, applies to this study as participants were paid a dollar a day. This amounted to two hundred dollars over the course of the study. Although to someone living on welfare this is a substantial amount of money, I do not believe it constituted an overwhelmingly strong incentive, especially given the time involved, otherwise, it would have been far easier to find participants and existing participants would not have dropped out of the study. Clearly, however, deciding to pay participants one dollar per day corrupts the ideal of complete freedom of choice. On the other hand, this study required a substantial commitment of time and a stipend was one way to acknowledge this time and the tremendous exchange of information that took place. Refugees are often exploited by citizens, organizations, and governments of host countries. Many of the programs such as Working for Work, a provincial program that helps refugees write resumes and learn to function in the Canadian job market, find positions for refugees in companies and corporations. As a rule, although refugees gain experience, they are paid nothing. In some cases they are promised jobs that never materialize and in other cases they are simply let go at the same time as the employer would need to begin to pay the worker for his or her time and expertise.

Hand in hand with the problem of coercion is the protection of participants' rights.

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Often they have come from situations where they were stripped of all civil rights and protection. A thorough explanation of informed consent, issues of confidentiality, the right to withdraw from the study at any time, the right to refuse to answer questions, the right to accurate and complete information concerning the nature of the study and how findings will be used, a full explanation of the risks and benefits of the study, and the respect and dignity afforded participants as a result of the person of the researcher, are all ethical issues of crucial importance and consequence. When issues of war, grief, loss, torture, trauma, and oppression are at the heart of the research mandate, all of these ethical safeguards and protection of participants' rights must be in place.

Informed Consent

Participants reviewed and signed the consent form which ensured their right of refusal to answer questions, end the interview at any time, and withdraw from the research at any time for any reason. It was made clear to participants that there would be no questions asked. When people did end their participation in the study, they often offered an explanation anyway. I assured them it was not necessary to explain and I thanked them for their time.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of the respondents was ensured and protected in the following ways:

1) All data collecting instruments and interviews were coded with numbers as opposed to names. Only the research team had access to names and identifying information and no one, other than me, had access to all files and records.

2) All information was stored in locked files.

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3) All transcripts of structured clinical interviews were available to participants to correct, edit, and change as they saw fit. All participants received a corrected transcription of their interviews for their records.

4) It was explained that although quotes would be used, all identifying information such as names and places would be removed.

<u>Risks and Benefits</u>

Participants were informed of the potential risks of entering into such a study and safety measures were implemented to deal with any effects that occurred due to participation in this study. There is always the potential for the retelling of traumatic material to cause added traumatization. If such an event occurred, participants were referred to Interfaith Pastoral Counseling in Kitchener-Waterloo and comparable agencies in London and Toronto. This information was available to participants from the outset of the research project. Further, as the person who did all of the clinical interviewing, I made follow-up calls to participants subsequent to a particularly difficult interview.

Paradoxically, this potential risk is also the largest potential benefit. If a study participant is struggling with traumatic material, participation in the study can open that individual not only to the internal turmoil but also to the possibility of help. Many of the participants commented on how useful it was to tell their story to someone who was willing to listen empathetically without interruption or judgement. In therapeutic situations, what has been referred to in the literature as the "trauma story"(Mollica, 1988) emerges as the centerpiece of therapy. The trauma story is the imprint of at least one traumatic experience that the individual continues to reexperience and most refugees have at least one story that figures prominently in their history and in their nightmares (Mollica,

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1988, p.305). The trauma story is often a hidden secret and can range from something that to an outsider is seemingly insignificant, to an event as catastrophic as mass rape. Telling this story is the first step in creating a new story (Muecke, 1995). Creating a new story occurs because therapy slowly begins to focus on survival, recovery, strength, and virtue. Although research is not therapy, one focus of this research was post traumatic growth. Hence, the research itself dictated that participants move beyond the traumatic aspects of the story and into the strength and courage they accessed to survive.

Moreover, apart from such a retelling being potentially highly therapeutic to the individual, collectively this information can bear witness to the historical events and processes of the survivors.

A further benefit includes the interview transcripts which participants received and, for the most part, seemed to appreciate. One participant spoke of the relief at having such a document chronicling her story. It had been her intention to record what had happened but she had never been able to accomplish the task. She described the experience of having it handed to her, neatly typed, transcribed and stapled, as a meaningful and substantial reminder.

The benefit of this study to the field of social work lies in the creation of information that advances the modest body of knowledge on Eastern European refugees as well as develops some direct practice implications around the processes of coping, adaptation, and resettlement in this particular population.

Limitations

The very nature of the phenomenon under study is a source of major difficulties. Everything from designing the study to approaching individuals who have suffered

through traumatic events is a difficult undertaking. This difficulty is magnified when the individuals in question are also refugees who have an abiding and legitimate suspicion of strangers. The many practical issues involved in carrying out trauma research are daunting and further complicated by the fact that most trauma research is not readily adaptable to the laboratory and control of extraneous variables is exceptionally difficult, especially in a time series study.

There are three major areas of limitation to this study. First, the methodological problems common to all trauma research also plague this research. Second, problems arose in this research due to ethnocultural and cross-cultural differences, and finally, problems arose due to the nature of psychological research which has a theoretical basis in nonlinearity and self-organization theory.

Methodological Problems and Trauma Research

Methodological problems stemming from the retrospective designs, which predominant in this field of study (Norris, 1990), are common to all forms of trauma research. Baseline adjustments and other pre-event factors are rarely known. Moreover, because manipulation of traumatic experiences is unthinkable, research on the effects of trauma is necessarily nonexperimental whereas research on treatment effects, for example, can be experimental or quasi-experimental. Further, existing trauma measures, including the IES-Revised which was used in this study, generally ask about a single traumatic event and the subsequent impact. However, trauma histories are often complex and multiple stressors can be a part of an individual's trauma history. For example, one study found that 33 percent of college sophomores were exposed to four or more highly traumatic events (Solomon, et al., 1996).

Further, instrumentation on adaptation and transformation proved to be genuinely problematic. Development of such instruments is in the early stages and although this measure has other strengths, the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) (Tedeschi, et al., 1995) ultimately generated suspect results. Every third day participants were asked to fill out the PTGI, a 21-item measure that purports to track appreciation for life, new possibilities, personal strength, spiritual change, and relating to others. As stated previously, some of the data appeared invariant and a number of people answered the questions in absolute terms, making time series analysis statistically meaningless. Although internal consistency of the PTGI is .90 and alphas ranged from .67 to .85 and test-retest reliability over a two-month period was .71 (Tedeschi, et al., 1995), the major weakness probably lies in the fact that it does not track change over time and should, therefore, not be used as a repeated measure.

Cross-Cultural Problems

The second, and possibly most compelling limitation of this study, concerns the ethnocultural difficulties that plague all cross-cultural research. Differences in language and culture between the researcher and the participants create formidable challenges to the researcher. Limitations in this area fall into two major categories: 1) problems due to instrumentation; and 2) difficulties posed by cultural and linguistic barriers. Although in recent years there has been a tremendous amount of attention paid to creating reliable measures of trauma, the majority of these measures have been standardized on white, Anglophone North American populations and only a few measures of traumatic symptoms and adaptation to trauma exist that have any cultural sensitivity and none exist that are specific to Bosnian refugee populations (Westermeyer, 1985; Weine, et al., 1995).

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However, studying trauma across cultural boundaries has become a matter of great practical importance and as the number of refugees fleeing to North America increase both researchers and clinicians must develop cross-cultural instrumentation, techniques, skills and conceptual frameworks that serve specific ethnocultural populations.

Those participants who did not read English found it necessary to translate the measures into Serbo-Croatian. The translations were checked for accuracy and consistency and it was determined that the IES-Revised was far easier for participants to understand and translate than the PTGI. This provided a further reason not to use the information generated by the PTGI. The most damaging problem, however, concerns the fact that translating a measure from one language to another renders existing reliability and validity coefficients of the test meaningless. However, because no measures exist in Serbo-Croatian and it was impossible to create a measure along with meaningful coefficients in the time allotted, translated versions of the IES-Revised were used. From a purely quantitative perspective, this constitutes the major weakness in the study.

Qualitatively speaking, physical and social characteristics of the interviewer do affect the participant's answers. Sex, age, language, socioeconomic disparity and race or ethnicity are all variables that impact on the clinical interview. Disparity in age between interviewer and participant can activate the biases of either, and sex-linked patterns of relating shift according to subject matter and context. For example, participants who have been raped find it much easier to talk to a same sex interviewer. Matching the interviewer and participant in language and accent and ethnicity has been found to be of considerable importance in establishing a rapport, and socioeconomic disparity between interviewer and participant has been shown to produce biased data (Gochros, 1989).

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In cross-cultural research all of these factors operate but they share the stage with more basic and pervasive differences. Vastly differing culture or world views, along with being unable to share language, let alone a similar accent, severely inhibit the research process. Vocabulary and syntax should offer maximum opportunity for complete and accurate communication of ideas between interviewer and participant (Kahn, 1997). When interviewer and participant are reduced to charades in order to understand one another, the reliability, validity, and integrity of the research must come into question. Fortunately, however, the question is not whether the shared vocabulary is large or small, but whether or not it is adequate for communication on the topic in question. Judging by the thick, rich descriptive interviews obtained, we did manage to understand one another.

During the course of the research I developed a sensitivity to what I often referred to in my field notes as "the grand divide". I would experience this divide as a profound feeling of free floating confusion. In the beginning stages of the research, unable to articulate what was happening, I would simply struggle through the awkwardness of the moment as did participants. As I become more adept at defining these moments, however, I was able to attenuate the stiffness with humour. The people in this study, for the most part, love a good laugh. Their humour is sharply irreverent and ranges from an appreciation of sophisticated puns to slapstick. For example, at precisely the right moment in the conversation I would purposely confuse the word for small and the word for cheese pie which are similar. This would always get a laugh. I had also been taught a word which loosely translates as "aw, screw it". Depending on who I was interviewing, again, at precisely the correct moment, I would toss this particular word into the struggle. It never failed to bring down the house. Jack Benny timing notwithstanding, language is an all-

pervasive component of human systems (Borden, 1991) and the linguistic divide between participants and researcher could at times be crossed and at other times seemed totally impassable.

Because many of the participants understood English better than they spoke it, I was able to encourage conversation by merely repeating what I understood them to say. This usually led to more information and a greater depth of understanding. I was always carefully constructing questions so as to minimize rather than emphasize the social distance between us. Using vocabulary that was either too simple or too complex for individual participants was a constant judgment call because the problems of oversimplification, which can be construed as insulting, and over complication, which can impact on obvious difficulties in understanding and motivation to respond, are equally serious (Kahn, 1997). I also had to be exceptionally careful of colloquialisms and slang expressions.

Generally speaking, specific communications differ in the extent to which they must be interpreted by the listener. The more fragmentary and ambiguous the question, the more the individual has to draw on his or her own experience, point of view, and attitudes to give the question meaning (Kahn, 1997). Hence, if a participant clearly misunderstood what I had asked I listened carefully and without interruption to the answer in order to determine how the participant had interpreted the question. In this way I was often able to discern more about the participant's frame of reference and rephrase the question in a way that participants understood its contents more fully.

Language supplies the necessary cues to both interviewer and participant as to important aspects of the nature of the other. When that cue is impaired, all available

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ethical avenues need to be explored to both create and maintain a relationship. Involvement with participants that appears less than scientific because it is more emotional and engaging becomes an important addendum. Research that takes an observer-as-participant stance is not passive. Researchers are constantly confronted with issues in the field that necessitate a response if the researcher is to maintain the relationship with the participants (Dennis, 1993). What seems to be most helpful in such situations is to violate the usual admonitions made to social science researchers to remain objective and disengaged. Answering questions about who I am, my background, my children, my partner, my religion, my ideas, and often my thoughts on just who I believed the people of the Balkans to be, seemed only fair in light of what I was asking of them. Further, marking special occasions such as the birth of a child with an inexpensive gift, or marking the day citizenship is granted with a congratulatory phone call, is hardly scientific but it was deeply meaningful to the research relationship.

Establishing relationship provided methods of cutting through the limitations imposed by differences in ethnicity, language, and culture between the researcher and the participants.

The Problems of Theory and Time Series

Finally, there are tremendous limitations to time series analysis when working with social science issues and populations. Due to these limitations it is used infrequently in research with human subjects. Within the research paradigms of current behaviour theories, there is no question that applied methods and data analysis have been largely devoted to identifying stable linear relationships (Heiby, 1995) that are captured either at the moment of testing or through pre and post testing using experimental or quasi-

experimental designs. However, "if the stable versus transitional nature of a behaviour is unknown then frequent measurement would be necessary so that the possibility of irregularity is not overlooked" (Heiby, 1995, p.10). Irregularity in behaviour has tremendous implications for both learning and creating abrupt, spontaneous and dynamic change.

Looking for temporal sensitivity through some form of continuous measurement presents formidable challenges to the researcher and to the participants of the study. A lengthy and time-consuming commitment is required and participant compliance over such a period of time is time consuming and difficult to sustain. Further, there is no way to be sure participants are filling out measures daily. It becomes a matter of trust. A typical pattern over time was an initial period of variability followed by a more predictable, less variable pattern when filling in measures. This could be due to habituation to the measure, filling in many days at once, or unconsciously beginning to copy oneself, and there is no way to determine the answer.

The perfect time series measure would guard against all of these problems. Self-monitoring scales that are sensitive to nonlinear transitional data patterns are nonexistent. The best one can hope to find under the current state of affairs is a solidly constructed, well-tested repeated measure such as the IES-Revised. Ultimately, however, such a paper and pencil measure may prove too gross to capture the irregularity of chaotic behaviour and the learning phases that are associated with bifurcations and nonlinear dynamical change.

Suggestions for future research methodologies that measure dynamical change would include implementing the following: 1) measuring a behaviour continually until a

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bifurcation point is observed, thus establishing a historical context where the duration and frequency of observations is extended through bifurcation points and instability into a period of stability, and so on; 2) direct observations, physiological indexes, and self-monitoring devices such as self-report measures; and 3) application of nonlinear dynamical modelling to the time series (Heiby, 1995).

A further limitation to this study lies in the study design in that there are no comparison or control groups. A great deal of thought has gone into this aspect of the study. There is no question that the lack of a comparison or control group weakens the quantitative aspects of the study. However, neither of the measures used in this study accommodate a non-traumatized population. In order to circumvent the problem of changing instruments, I would have to include a third neutral measure of adaptation such as the Positive States of Mind Scale (Horowitz, 1987) that would be relevant to a non-traumatized population. Because this study was time consuming for participants it would have been unrealistic to expect them to fill out yet another measure. Moreover, there are many difficulties inherent in matching controls to the experimental population. This design problem does, however, provide a direction for future research.

Last, from the perspective of theory one must be cautious about drawing analogies between the characteristics of social systems and mathematical chaos theory. Chaos theory, at best, serves as a metaphor for the workings of social systems. Confusing and confounding the popular usage of the word with the pure mathematical definition of the word is replete in the social science literature. That confusion exists in this paper also, although throughout, the word consistently refers to the fact that underlying apparent chaos in open, far-from-equilibrium systems is the potential for self-organization and

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emergent complexity. In pure chaos theory the objective is to mathematically express the regularities that appear in apparently irregular behaviour. Human systems, on the other hand, are the result of numerous interacting coordinated, uncoordinated, determined, and random events rather than the result of strictly directed and determined positivistic laws. However, modeling these events is still in its infancy and even though computer modeling of such systems as economic systems, "has become quite sophisticated, it is only possible to make limited projections based upon the parameters and assumptions build into the models. Most of these are linear and they rarely incorporate the feedback effects that are critical in the modeling of mathematical chaos systems. This is partly because social scientists still have inadequate measures of the many behavioural variables that enter into the system" (Richmond, 1994, p.16). Further, the mathematics that have been used in the quantitative portion of the study are linear in nature. The metaphor of chaos is intended only to analogously shed some light on the social behaviours that are associated with trauma and stress.

Chapter Three

Analyses and Discussion

Qualitative Study:
Analysis

Introduction

Transitional Themes, Categories, and Subcategories

Locating themes or patterns within the data, as well as shaping data into categories,

assumptions, and relationships as they inform the participant's view of the world

generally, and the view of the topic under discussion specifically, are the primary

objectives in qualitative analysis. The qualitative data from participants in this study has

been analyzed under the overarching theme of transition. This theme was further

subdivided into the themes of transition from peace to war and transition from citizen to

refugee. Using the metaphor of dynamical systems theory, these transitional themes

become transitions from order to chaos and from chaos to order. Such a process

exemplifies conceptualizations of the transcendent function (Butz, 1992; Jung, 1966) or

the emergence of evolutionary complexity. It is an essentially nonlinear process where an

initial encounter with a traumatic event leads to the appearance of chaos, movement into

systemic self-organization, and, finally, a new and emergent evolutionary complexity.

Each of these overarching themes was further subdivided into the following

categories: under the overall theme of transition from peace to war, or order to chaos, the

following categories emerged: survival/war; loss and grief; destruction of family, health,

society, and individual identity; the death imprint and responses to war; ethnic cleansing;

and the politics of war. Under the overall transitional theme of transition from citizen to

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refugee, or chaos to order, the following categories emerged: survival/work; homelessness and homesickness; destruction of family, health, society, and individual identity; rebuilding of self; rebuilding of family; and adjustment problems.

Further, each of these was divided into subcategories. The subcategory survival/war was divided into the following subcategories: survival outbreak of war; survival escape trauma; and survival acts of degradation and torture. Loss and grief was a category that did not subdivide and neither did the category destruction of family, health, society and individual identity. Out of the categories of death imprint and responses to war, and politics of war, however, numerous subcategories emerged. Out of the category death imprint and responses to war, the following subcategories emerged: acts of love and courage; acts of fear, suspicion and cowardice; shifts in values; shame and depression; children's responses to war; relationships and alliances; extreme helplessness; and learning. Out of the category politics of war, the following subcategories emerged: civil war; the politics of war and the individual; Tito's Yugoslavia; and post-war conditions. Ethnic cleansing remained a category unto itself.

Under the transitional heading of transition from citizen to refugee, traditions emerged as a subcategory of homelessness and homesickness. Children and parenting emerged as a subcategory of rebuilding of family. Under the category of adjustment problems, the following subcategories emerged: citizenship; capitalism: differences between a Communist and capitalist way of life; and the NATO bombing of Kosovo.

In the following discussion each of these categories will be defined, analyzed and explored in light of connections within and between categories and subcategories.

Transition from Peace to War/Order to Chaos

Survival War

During war to survive is to cope with an impossible world where what was mundane yesterday has today become an impossibility. Every act is a categorical imperative that commands some response (Richmond, 1994). No food, no water, no electricity, and no safe space changes life in unimaginable and ineffable ways. Life as one knew it comes to a standstill and every ounce of energy, once the initial shock has worn off, is focused on surviving. To survive is to adjust to life in a world where everything is contrary to what one knows and expects. One participant described it as boiling a pot of rotten vegetables. What reeks and rots at the bottom of the pot ultimately rises to the top. The predator is far more successful in war than the pacifist.

> At the beginning of war we didn't get any food, so we used all we had. . . . Humanitarian aid was still not coming. It was beginning of May or June, 1992. . . . My sister, she is conductor and she is always in music in the clouds. I had ten kilograms of flour, . . . and when war started she really didn't have anything. Between our buildings was street. It was wide, wide boulevard. . . . but from the top of the surrounding mountains . . . it was the enemy with sniper guns, so we couldn't cross the street and one day she called me. We could call just in our part of town, not to my parents. . . . She said, . . . I have nothing . . . to eat. I said to her, 'During the night I will try to cross the street. . . . Today, you try to survive and I'll explain how. Try to get a bird. I explain.' . . . My grandfather, he . . . taught me how to catch the pigeon. You have to put a little bread with some rope and leave window open and when they come in you just pull the rope. . . . You know, they did it . . . but no one could kill the bird. Four of them, and no one could kill him. At evening, they said, "He is here, and we are looking at him and he has so sad eyes. We cannot do it." (P 28, p.7- 8).[1]

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[1]

All quotes taken from participant's transcripts have been recorded verbatim. No attempt has been made to correct grammar or sentence structure as corrections might somehow change meaning and intent. Because some participants spoke English better than others, quotes will vary in fluency.

Those who were capable of murderous hatred, theft, and exploitation fared much better than musicians who could not kill a pigeon. Gangsters, murderers, and corrupt politicians and army officials made a fortune. Profiteering, black market trade, and exploitation were rampant. The extent of the corruption in this war was, by all participants' accounts, beyond imagining. Participants said they paid anywhere between $650 to $800 or 1000 German marks for 50 pounds of flour. One liter of shampoo went for $30. Several participants paid huge sums of money to leave Bosnia during the war and travel to an independent Croatia. Officials, knowing these people would never return, pocketed the money. Cellular phones brought in a fortune in that people were charged five to eight dollars a minute to talk to loved ones in another city or another state. Gasoline was so scarce it was usually bought on the street and a purchase might consist of two inches in a plastic Coca Cola bottle. Humanitarian aid items such as food and clothing appeared with great regularity on the black market at hugely inflated prices and aid deliverers and so-called protectors exacerbated the problems of victims. Peacekeepers around Sarajevo have repeatedly been reported to have engaged in smuggling, recruiting women for prostitution, and selling aid shipments illegally (Mehic, 1995). Cattle were sold and slaughtered immediately in the streets of Sarajevo and abject lawlessness reigned. This was a time when dentists ended up in jail and war mongers made a killing.

Gangsters would buy a truckload of food and gasoline from the Serbian forces and in one night make 100,000 German marks (or approximately $70,000). Independent warlords attempted to set up their own little kingdoms by making deals with the enemy and it was at these junctures that intra-ethnic killing became commonplace. If you were traveling to any part of the country where someone might have a relative, you could be

handed $1,000, $500 for yourself and 500 for the family member. As there were no legal channels for sending money there was, of course, no way of knowing if the money ever arrived at its intended destination. However, worried family members were helpless to do anything else. People were torn from their homes, including two participants in this study, and placed in concentration camps, while their cars, houses, money, and other possessions were usurped by enemy factions. Homes were invaded and searched constantly and something as commonplace as a lamp could be considered subversive and grounds for imprisonment. If one's apartment, furniture, and goods were of value, the owner of the lamp would be accused of using it to signal Serbian forces on the surrounding hills. His or her goods would be confiscated and he or she murdered or incarcerated. Who entered your home, why they entered and what they did once there was absolutely out of your control. Academics, wealthy individuals, and anyone deemed even remotely "other" than the current ruling faction was at terrible risk all the time. One participant tells the following story of her father's arrest and detention at the huge sports complex that only a few short years ago had been used for the Olympic games but was now a mass grave and detention centre.

> They arrested about 700 people and they put them in the stadium, sport centre stadium. They put them in big rooms underneath and my father told me that he was praying to be killed by the bullets, not to be tortured. There were lots of people there. From the family houses they arrested the whole family . . . . Some people start to panic, to show documents that they are Croats, not Serbs. Some soldiers start to play games and some people are beaten and taken away and the one that approach my dad, he said, "Oh, you look like an intellectual man, you must be some director somewhere. When we start killing, you will be first.". . . After that we felt like pieces of meat which can be used for exchange, for blackmail, for revenge (P29, p.11).

These crimes unfurled under the massive and senseless banner of ethnic war.

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Paradoxically, every act of survival in war is organized around death itself and the constant warding off of death and death anxiety. Moreover, to survive in a war is a tremendous accomplishment (Wilson, et al., 1988) because death is quite literally everywhere. Survival in war is a paradox of the darkest existential kind. You are alive in the midst of constant and pandemic death.

> It wasn't good to hear when the bombings were coming . . . . Every people, I, my wife and children think, "Who is dead? Who is next? Who died for this grenade? Are we going next?" (P13, p.3).

Participants who lived in cities such as Brcko or Bosanski Brod, located on the border between Croatia and Bosnia, lived through six years of war, constantly confronting the deadly monotony of daily bombings. Bombing as many as sixty kilometers away would still shake the ground and deaden the hearing. One participant talks of hundreds of hungry, wretched, cold and homeless men, women, and children passing her house daily in a never ending, never changing picture of human suffering.

Participants in this study and their family members survived in basements for months, never showering and barely eating enough to stay alive. Pasta would be soaked in water for days in order to soften it enough to eat. Nail polish remover was used as fuel. Every ounce of wood that could be scavenged was collected and hoarded. Children lived for years in single apartments or basements with no toys, no books, no warmth, no television, no electricity, little food and the almost constant sounds of explosives. Water was a vital commodity that was always needed and rarely available except at some risk to one's life. Containers of all descriptions were filled at a common pump sometimes 10 or 20 times per day depending on how many people were inhabiting a basement, house, or apartment. Toilets were flushed by pouring water into the bowl, and cooking was often

done by the women for anywhere from 10 to 25 people. In times of imminent danger sometimes as many as 50 or 60 people would be huddled in one basement. Over and over, participants shook their heads and openly wondered how they stayed alive. Unable to articulate how, they would simply shrug and affirm that, indeed, they had while hundreds of thousands of others had not.

> We lived for two years with no power, nothing. You still eat. You still cook. You still live. We went to bed at seven o'clock because there was nothing else to do. You can't watch TV. You can't read. We used candles and you really had to save them because they were expensive and sometimes you couldn't even find them to buy. You would just look at the candle and say, "Oh, this much left. Let's go to bed" (P16, p.25).

Survival was all encompassing. In spite of the overwhelming chronic stressors the participants in this study lived with from moment-to-moment, and the suffering they witnessed, their resilience and indomitable spirits clung to survival. Unfortunately, one of the legacies of survival is survivor guilt, or that guilt and shame about remaining alive when so many died. No matter what the refugee retains as correlates of survival, whether it is guilt, depression, or anxiety, survival is not a pathological construct. To fight to survive is to behave normally in an insane situation. Further, to survive during war is an achievement of some magnitude. However, under the influence of survivor guilt the refugee is not always predisposed to view survival as normative.

For example, following the 1992 massacre in the Sarajevo marketplace, one participant, after a grueling day and night of witnessing countless chilling atrocities, found some seed onions on her way home. Even the intense aversion toward life engendered by the massacre and the events that followed could not obliterate her will to survive.

> I was going home and it was like a dead city. There was a wonderful sunrise and it was so nice and warm and so quiet. Just the birds

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and . . . I took a short cut through the marketplace and I found some rotten little onions. Seed onions. In that situation, after all that, I just kneel and I was choosing which seed onions is still good to eat and not all rotten. I had my pockets full of that and I came home . . . and we were just sitting, unable to talk. That was that day. Horror. (P29, p.8).

It takes some time before this survival mentality begins to soften, and although the overt behaviours might change, remnants can remain for a lifetime. The effort to survive under conditions of war accumulates in the refugee as physiological hyperarousal, intrusive memories and images, and efforts to avoid any reminders of the war. One participant who spent some time in Germany, when confronted with the ancient castles that dot the countryside, would have a single prevailing thought: "Oh, that would be a good place for hiding." Upon leaving a war zone people would continue, sometimes for months, to hit the ground when planes flew overhead. Because civilians waiting in water lines were always a favorite target for enemy fire, something as apparently innocuous as open spaces cause a great deal of anxiety that, at least for one of the participants, remains to this day. She struggles with hyperarousal and intrusion if she should find herself in an open space and quite intentionally avoids them. Furthermore, several of the participants are still troubled by nightmares. One participant, for example, was plagued almost every night by a recurring dream. The dream would open on a familiar bridge in Brcko. Every day of her adult life she would cross that bridge on her way to work. Following the outbreak of war fifteen minutes after she stepped off the bridge it exploded under Serb fire.

For some participants, the bombs came right into their living rooms, injuring children and elders. As a Muslim in a Serbian controlled area, one participant lived in speechless fear at all times. High levels of chronic fear resulted in ongoing anxiety,

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headaches, stomach aches, and weight loss.

> . . . My youngest daughter broke face, broke arm and she had . . . too many glass on the head. Head little bit broken and blood and I took my youngest daughter and we went everybody in basement because in this bomb, detonation . . . but after I am get afraid and I am get stress and I am always cry, cry. . . . My father is broken in the head and I . . . (P22, p.15).

In Serbian held areas, to be a Muslim or a Croat and to be caught outside after curfew was almost certain death. Serbian soldiers frequently came to the above participant's door. Her Muslim husband, because he was male and would surely be shot or taken to the front lines, always hid in the bathroom. It was her father who dealt with the Serbian soldiers.

> One day . . . my family and I sit down and just talked about war. How? When finish? . . . and knock, knock on the door. Oh my God. And my father open the door and Serbian man is there. Soldier . . . clothes and gun and knife and headband . . . and . . . so drunk. "Do you have cigarettes?". Oh my God. . . I don't have cigarette . . . but my husband prepare three cigarettes in one second. . . . The soldier told me, "I come tonight, 10 o'clock and I bring." No. No. No (we said) . . . . No bring. . . . It is okay (P22, p.8).

Psychic numbing and dissociation, defenses that are at the heart of the trauma syndrome, are a direct result of living in such extreme fear for long periods of time. Extraordinary demands are placed upon individuals physically, emotionally, and psychically under such conditions. Living in mortal fear is one form of psychological torture (van der Veer, 1992). However, because the fear cannot be blocked out or integrated, it is burned into memory and relived as nightmares, flashbacks, generalized anxiety, and other forms of intrusion. Even when people believed that fear was a thing of the past and they had, in fact, become enured to it, upon reaching safety they invariably realized just how terrified they had been. Hence, an individual can live immersed in a

world of constant danger without being consciously aware of that fact or aware of how it is impacting on the structure of the self.

> Maybe first three, four, five months I was very afraid for my life and the life of my family because I live with my parents and my sister, but after five months, I didn't (feel) afraid. Actually, I was but not so much. But after fifteen months, when I escaped from Bosnia, I recognize that I was afraid and that everybody was afraid (P23, p.3).

If one is to survive under such circumstances, then shock must progress to psychic numbing. At the outset, shock is a common and necessary response. However, add to that initial shock daily doses of bombings, the bodies of friends, neighbours, family members, and the destruction of one's home and society in a war that apparently has no end, and what began as a temporary measure to ensure survival turns into psychic numbing and a way of self-organization in an impossible reality.

> In the start, of course, everybody is in the shock situation. If you are shocked plus you got bodies who is dead . . . that was extra shock. But, after the 20, 50 bodies who is dead, and after war comes one, two, six months, one year, two year, it is like drinking the coffee. (He claps his hands and throws them over his head in a futile gesture.) . . . Whatever, somebody's dead (P 7, p. 9).

Within this overwhelming swiftly changing world, participants descended into a chaos from which they did not emerge, except to experience pockets of order now and again, for many, many years. Survival is accompanied by a powerlessness to effect any change in levels of chronic stress, and concomitant with the understanding that one is in fact, alive and surviving, a "learned helplessness" (Krystal, 1988; Giller, 1990) can result. Chronic stress is related to a stressor's capacity to create a state of ongoing helplessness. This helplessness is critical to the formulation of permanent psychobiological systemic changes. Because one's initial response to inescapable stress is alarm and escape, when the

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stress or shock continues, a conditioned alarm state occurs. This is followed by a "helplessness" characterized by impaired avoidance learning, failure to use previously successful escape strategies, and depression (Giller, 1990).

In war, everything is an unknown. Managing the chronic high stress levels in a totally unpredictable world is a moment-to-moment activity where the individual alternates between psychic numbing, avoidance, dissociation and hyperarousal. The goal, however, never changes, survival of self and those one loves is a constant. There appears to be, however, two distinct points in time when the will to survive usurps all available energy. Outbreak of war and escape from the war zone emerged from the data as pivotal aspects of the survival category.

Survival: Outbreak of War

Memories of the outbreak of war were potent, eidetic, vivid and exact in imagery. At the outbreak of war people were plunged into shock and respond with psychic numbing. One participant, when asked what she felt when war broke out, replied,

> Nothing. First day was like a shock. I remember that day very well, first day of war. I was home but you smell something in the air . . . we wait for what is going to happen . . . after 6 p.m. . . . because politicians try to make some peace by the 6 p.m.. If they don't make, everything blew. . . . By six they say, it's okay. Don't worry . . . but in ten minutes it start. . . . It was panic (P6, p. 3).

Some, anticipating trouble, had taken refuge in a school basement near this participant's home. Once politicians announced that peace had been achieved, men, women, and children breathed a sigh of relief and left the sanctuary of the school basement. It was at this time that Serbian soldiers opened fire.

> They goes left, right, screaming, crying, shocking . . . . In the next ten minutes . . . Serbs use all the arsenal . . . bombing, guns, short, big, large,

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small. . . . I don't think nothing. I don't feel nothing. . . . It was the rain of bullets (P6, p.4,5).

Nothing in her life up to this point compared with or prepared her to deal with the impact of war. It was "three or four days" before she began to think and feel, and several days after the outbreak before she began to assess her situation. This pervasive shock and unpreparedness was a common response and most of the participants expressed a similar sentiment.

> This war was just city by city. . . . Everybody was unprepared, except these people who plan to make this war. Everybody else was just surprised by that. Nobody . . . believe, . . . people who I live with, my friends, my family, my neighbours. . . . We couldn't believe it or understand it. . . . You have to experience it. . . . That morning, we went to our job. . . . the first thing I noticed was that it was so quiet. So peaceful. Nobody on the street. . . . You can feel something in the air. But, you don't believe it (P.4, p.2).

This sense of disbelief, coupled with an unnatural calm that permeated the air before the outbreak of the war, was described by almost every participant. Even those members of the para-military groups who banded together before the outbreak were not prepared for the actual opening rounds of gunfire.

> Who put that first shot, I can't remember but it was hell. In that moment I am just lying on the ground . . . that smell from the guns . . . I can't tell you . . . it is like a joke but not a joke. Person who say he is a natural in that situation . . . he is the liar. Big liar. . . . Everybody react differently but in that moment I make pee-pee. Couple mans make caa-caa. Somebody is crying. . . . and in that moment I am trying to survive. From that moment, I start fighting to survive. . . . It is not possible to give somebody else that vision. You have to be in that moment to feel and see (P7, p.5).

Not only was this Muslim participant fighting to keep himself alive, but he was trapped in a Serbian held portion of his city and as he and his comrades moved slowly through the darkened buildings, from the shadows Muslim women and children began to

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emerge. He and his paramilitary comrades flanked them and took them to the Muslim-held portion of the city.

> I am going to leave these people . . . ? Who knows who is going to catch them? We are taking the women and children all together to protect the left, right, front, and back . . . and we go. . . (P7, p. 6).

At the outbreak of war, people who were celebrating birthdays, eating in restaurants, or just walking in the park, were thrown into instant chaos. Contact with family members in neighbouring cities or even different parts of the same city was broken almost immediately and, in some cases, not reestablished for the duration of the war. Hence, one of the major concerns shortly after the outbreak was the inability to contact parents, siblings, and other relatives. For the duration of the war many participants did not know the fate of their parents and other family members. In some cases, participants could feel and hear neighbouring towns where relatives lived being pummelled by enemy fire. They would also receive news that areas where family members lived had been taken by enemy forces and were now under enemy occupation. Others, compelled by a sense of dire urgency, made it to relatives' and parents' homes and often that was where they remained for the duration of the war, trapped by surrounding enemy forces.

People were immediately out of work, and often money, and within hours some were without a home, clothes, food, and gasoline.

> It was maybe five o'clock. . . . all of a sudden it started, like machine gun or something. It was so close. So I just run to the window and when I took a look through . . . I saw a few people in the back yard with the guns. . . . They weren't my neighbours, I never see them before. They were coming to defend the town . . . Serbs had a tanks and everything surrounded . . . which I didn't know. All of a sudden they just started to bomb . . . it was going on and on and on. . . . I didn't go close to windows. I didn't know where to go. . . . The fire was so loud and you don't know . . . after I knew, but in the beginning . . . I never heard it before. . . . So I picked up

the kids and went down into . . . garage . . . . were we kept the wood for fireplace. I was very scared . . . (my child) was sick and the fever was higher and higher. . . . After eleven o'clock I said, I don't want to be here alone anymore. . . . (P16, p.4).
During a lull in the gunfire she ran to a neighbour's basement.

She was immediately sorry. More than twenty people had the same idea, some having panic attacks, some crying and no one able to hear anyone else over the explosions. By midnight the power and water were gone and there was one bathroom for twenty people. Serbian forces were moving closer and there were perhaps three occupied houses left on this side of the river. Someone in the basement had a cellular phone. News arrived that the Serbs were advancing. A small truck arrived to take whoever would leave across the river to Muslim-held territory. Too scared to leave, this participant, her husband and two children stayed for another day. But that evening, amidst intense enemy fire, the remaining three Muslim families decided to flee (P16, p.5). And so the now refugees, who had no idea that this label would cling for years to come, were given an overwhelming shove into homelessness and flight, that pushed them "midway to nowhere" (Kunz, 1973).

Survival: Escape

All 26 participants in this study ultimately fled their homeland. Some fled at the outset of the war, while others remained, either by choice or because they were trapped. Many participants attempted escape numerous times before they were successful. Others chose to stay to be close to aging parents and husbands who were fighting in the war. Still others stayed until it became unendurable and flight appeared to be the only possible way to survive.

If the decision made is to escape immediately, the family is often forced to

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separate, some stay, some leave, some are killed during the escape. As well as forcible separation from family members, this "flight response" (Cole, et al., 1992) has psychological costs. The involuntary nature of the decision to escape constitutes an essential element of being a refugee. Immigrants are pulled to a new land because of perceived opportunities, while refugees are pushed out by war and persecution, and death is again the central issue. Paradoxically, however, one is alive and running to get out of harm's way.

The decision to escape is often made within hours, and the sense of urgency is so great people leave unaware that they have only the clothes on their backs, a fact that becomes painfully obvious only once the immediate danger has passed. For example, one study of Vietnamese refugees found that 85 percent made the decision to flee their homeland two days to two hours before their departure (Stein, 1986). It is impossible for an outsider to understand what the refugee experiences in terms of the depth of the fear, the urgency to flee, and the hysteria that constantly threatens to surface. The following participant, after being called home from work by his wife, made the decision to flee within about a 20 minute period. On the morning of April 21, 1992, the same day that war broke out, he locked his front door, drove away, and did not return until the summer of 1999, seven years later.

> I got home (from work) and probably 20 minutes after this I couldn't go anywhere with the car because whole city was blocked. . . . We felt trapped. . . . You can't go anywhere unless you want go through the wood or something like that where you have never been. . . . The only road that was open was in opposite direction that we want to go so we just sat in car, children, father, mother, wife and me without saying anything. Just sit in a car and get out from garage. . . . You don't see people but you feel they are behind the windows. They are looking and we were just a little, I wouldn't say scared. . . . We are ashamed because we are leaving this place

. . . we are . . . escaping. We just locked the door. That's it. That is the last time when we are there. From there we are in Canada. Never back. Nothing. Just clothes on back. That's it. Just nothing. Just nothing (P4, p3).

The family escaped to a cottage 22 kilometers away and when the shelling started at six in the evening in the city they had just fled, they heard it like they were sitting in their living room. As a Serbian married to a Muslim woman, this participant was particularly vulnerable. Mistrusted by his own people because of his wife and hated by the Muslim factions, he had little recourse but to flee. Knowing that eventually he would be forced into military service but unsure as to how to flee the war zone, he hid for six or seven days before his mother secured permission for him to go. Through a quirk of fate, which appears to pervade participants' stories of escape, his mother knocked on the door of one of the worst fanatics in the Serbian party. She was told that the Serbian party knew of her son, they knew he was married to a Muslim, and they knew where he was hiding. She was also told that she could have permission for her son and his family to leave if they got out immediately.

What the family determined later was that she had knocked on this man's door as he was dealing with his own family crisis. His daughter had left the household in protest and made it clear to her father that she neither agreed with his fanaticism nor would she support him. Perhaps this event, along with the sight of an aging mother begging for the life of her son, softened him. At any rate, she returned to the cottage distraught and crying, but with the permission for her son to leave clasped tightly in her wrinkled old hands. Leaving his aging parents behind, this participant and his family left for the airport in Banja Luka.

> There was thousands . . . trying to escape Banja Luka. Just a mess.
> Unbelievable. I didn't see that somebody is divided by Muslim, Croat.
> They were just people trying to escape. Just a huge mass of people. . . .
> There was no planes. Just one . . . coming a day . . . and later we realize, . . .
> people are coming from Serbia to fight in Bosnia. I would say professional
> soldiers who are paid by somebody. They are coming from Belgrade to
> Bosnia, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. They made a mess, kill a lot of . . .
> Muslim people, and then they left Serb people, who didn't do anything
> wrong, to live with this. . . . When this plane came from Belgrade there was
> thousands of people . . . screaming, yelling. But it was quiet when those
> soldiers came from airplane. Nothing. . . . Quiet. . . . They were armed,
> heavily armed with guns. To look at them I was so scared. Full plane of
> those professionals. . . . People just made a corridor for them to pass (P.4,
> p.7).

This terrifying specter of a massive human killing machine, heavily armed and wearing large Orthodox crosses around their necks, is a picture that will remain with both this participant and his wife for the rest of their lives. (During the process of gathering study participants, I made the mistake of wearing a large Celtic cross I had received as a Christmas gift. To me, it was an attractive piece of jewelry. To the Muslims I was going to talk to, I was told, it represented something far more sinister.)

Because family members are often left behind during escape from a war zone, an unbearable inner conflict can develop that can impede escape plans and actions. Driven to flee on the one hand in order to save her children, the following participant was also leaving behind a husband who was fighting a war. She had no idea where he was, if he was alive or dead, she had no money, and she had no idea where she was running to, only what she was running from. She was leaving her parents, whom she had not seen in two years, although they lived in an apartment building she could see from her own apartment turned prison. This was the last, and obviously most successful, of numerous attempts to flee Sarajevo. A tunnel had been dug under a building close to the Sarajevo airport which

lead directly into independent Croatia. Constantly bombed by Serbian forces and like a

dangerous, dark, and cramped metaphor for birth, this tunnel was the route to freedom for

many war-weary Sarajevans desperate to escape.

> I went with my children under hole where is airport in Sarajevo. It
> is tunnel . . . but small. I can't stand up. That was underground . . . was so
> scary. . . . On other side was hill and we can go to bus . . . but it was night
> and we don't nave light. . . . In middle of hill I say, "I can't." I want just to
> sit down and say, "I can't." I can't explain. I don't know where is my
> husband, my parents. They are staying Sarajevo. We went and I don't know
> what to expect (P11, p.6).

Because escape was so difficult, virtually every participant in the study shared a

harrowing story of flight. These stories, always rich in detail, emotion, and drama, had in

some cases never been shared. For the majority of participants, seizing the moment to

break to freedom was always agonizing, dangerous, and, as a rule, happened only when it

was painfully clear that all other avenues were closed. It was as if one was squeezed,

pushed, pulled and painfully stretched well beyond any reasonable limit. The very act of

fleeing the past plunged one into a future of homelessness, and before any awareness of

this could penetrate, the individual had become one of the mass of displaced people that

just a few short days ago had what appeared to be a solid identity.

Sometimes the decision to flee was delayed for as long as possible. Flight is not

undertaken until it became all too clear that escape was the only possible way out. One

participant who worked in Sarajevo's hospitals for much of the war recalled the picture

that sustained her decision to flee.

> We were walking from the place where we were married to our
> office and there was such a cloudy sky and a strong wind and along street
> all trees were cut. Just the big holes, empty holes in the ground where are
> the places where trees were before . . . people they took all roots, all parts . .
> . . Some black birds were flying and making a terrible noise and there were

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. . . tanks going on the streets and there was so much dust because the streets were not cleaned for two years and I found myself in this smell, walking and being pregnant, and planning to leave. This town, the city, the country. It seems really unreal and I just memorized that picture and I told myself, *"This will be a picture of Sarajevo for me!"* . If I ever left and I felt weak and I wanted to go back I would just evoke this picture and say myself, this is why I left (P29, p.14).

The aversion to staying became greater than the fear and loneliness of flight.

Survival: Acts of Degradation and Torture

Forced displacement disconnects an individual from all that is familiar: home, culture, country, and social networks. Torture disconnects an individual from all that individual perceives as self, and can prevent that individual from reconnection and renewal. Of the world's 40 - 42 million refugees, approximately 11 million have experienced torture (UNHCR, 1993). Given the rapid rate of increase of refugees around the world, this number is probably conservative. In this war much of the torture took place in makeshift concentration camps that appeared to have three major purposes. The first was to intimidate other ethnic groups into leaving the area and the second was to intern men of fighting age and local leaders so that resistence forces could be stopped before they were formed. "The pattern was that soon after the seizure of power in any given region camps were opened" (Judah, 1997, p.229). The third reason had little to do with politics and much to do with avarice and greed, cruelty and hatred.

> This war is about thieves. Nothing else. Just to stole things. . . . Lots of old people, specialists, doctors, engineers, professors, were there (in the concentration camps) . . . everybody, for no reason . . . just to get them out of their houses and take what they had. . . . The dean of Mostar university was in that prison (P27, p. 6).
> Serbs were not the only ones who ran concentration camps.

The participants in this study who were imprisoned in camps were imprisoned by Croatians who took territory near the border city of Mostar. Four or five armed Croatian soldiers simply appeared at the door and took family members to nearby camps. Money, watches, rings, televisions, furniture, automobiles, and houses were taken, and once inside the camps, people were tortured, murdered, beaten into unconsciousness and forced to eat feces and grass.

Acts of degradation and humiliation, such as temporarily attaching artificial sex organs to an elder woman's breasts and taunting her with derisive laughter and picture taking, were juxtaposed with acts of vicious and deadly cruelty such as burning people to death and fastening them to the bars of the prison for a slow and torturous death. Beatings were often carried out with baseball bats, and torture sometimes consisted of inflicting hundreds of knife cuts and wounds along with cigarette burns, then dousing the individual with fuel and setting him or her on fire. Study participants talked about the chilling screams that came from various areas of the camp. One study participant, talking through her daughter as a translator, said the following:

> We tried every way to survive . . . We had one meal per day and . . .
> it was a cup of water with three beans in it. . . . That was the meal. They
> forced me to wash bloody clothes of soldiers . . . and the way to survive . . .
> was thinking to be connected with my children . . . It was hard for me to
> say, "I am going to kill myself". . . . To be connected to family that was
> only thing that kept me going (P26, p.5).

Because torture is an experience of total disconnection from self and others, it is not surprising that the only thought that kept this participant going was to be reunited or connected to her family and children. She would imagine being with them, seeing them and would hold those details as clearly as she could as a means of warding off her extreme

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levels of stress. The purposes of torture are to degrade, damage the personality, erode ego functions, engender dependence, and destroy the victim's belief in humanity (McIvor, et al., 1995), all of which is accomplished through unimaginable, ongoing brutality and constant degradation.

> There were people with broken arms, legs, ribs. . . . They forced us to call the guards . . . something like Mr., but more a title of respect. They forced us to sing World War II songs about idiots who killed a lot of people. . . . The dentist I was speaking about . . . she was mother of three kids, toddlers. . . . She was young and pretty and intelligent and they put five people each night to rape her and other prisoners were forced to watch . . . listen to screams . . . watch her kidneys lose function . . . I forced her to think about her kids . . . . Male and female prisoners had separated prisons but we could listen from the male what screams were coming. And seeing on the windows, bars, people tying up . . . one lost nose, ears, everything. They cut everything. . . . (P26, p.7).

The "concentration camp" this participant was housed in was an abandoned airplane hangar with concrete floors. Prisoners slept on newspapers with no water, electricity, bathrooms, or heating. By sifting through lists complied by the Red Cross and placed on the Internet, her daughter was able to find her, and upon her release the family was reunited. As part of a prisoner exchange, this participant was released and made it to Belgrade, along with her husband, who was also a concentration camp survivor. However, as a Muslim married to a Serb and vice versa, there was little relief to the persecution. Little wonder that this couple have no desire to return to Bosnia and have begun from less than nothing to create a life in Canada. Both of these participants have troublesome health problems that persist today and upon release they were emaciated, with clothes many sizes too large hanging off their bones.

Both participants spent four months imprisoned and both witnessed and experienced countless acts of torture and degradation. Their strategy for survival now is

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"to forget". Sometimes, however, forgetting is impossible. The memories intrude, unbidden and unwelcome,

> "Sometimes in a moment, it is just a minute or two, we remember. Each story is like a heavy book. It is like a bad dream and like it happened to someone else" (P.25, 26, p.9).

They often talk between themselves about what they suffered. Then they try to forget, firmly holding to the fact that if they do not, they must surely kill themselves. Considering what these participants have to "avoid," the clinical category of avoidance as part of the symptom cluster of post traumatic stress disorder hardly seems to capture their experience. Avoidance, as these participants define it, is part of their survival strategy not a symptom. These two refugees are both almost sixty and they will live out their days and be buried in a strange country where they do not speak the language and most of the inhabitants have nothing in their repertoire of experience to understand what these elders have survived. And, as elders, they are somewhat isolated in that they are not representative of the refugee population, which tends to be strongly biased in the direction of higher skills, education, occupation, and youth (Stein, 1986).

The experience of torture can be organized under four major themes, namely, incomplete emotional and cognitive processing, losses and concomitant depressive reactions, somatic/physical symptoms, and the impact on personal meanings and value systems (Ramsay, et al., 1993). These participants struggle with all of the above, and when their daughter suggests that they came to Canada with nothing and began from "zero," this would include the psychic as well as physical domain. Torture shatters the individual on every level. Psychic decomposition or disintegration of the self-concept occurs alongside physical injury. From a psychodynamic perspective, defense mechanisms are

automatically triggered when the ego becomes conscious of anxiety. So intolerable is the

anxiety in such situations, however, that even primitive defense mechanisms such as

denial and splitting provide little long term relief from ongoing, overwhelming stress,

physical pain and suffering, loss of dignity, shame, hopelessness, fear, uncertainty and

grief.

Loss and Grief

Grief is one of the core emotional responses to the amount of loss that the refugee

has undergone. Its effects are pervasive and can impact on the refugee's physical,

psychological, spiritual, and relational health. Because the refugee's grief is so pervasive

and the losses are so large, several study participants talked about the fact that they felt

paralyzed to mourn the big losses for fear of being overwhelmed or flooded with grief.

Only the "little things" could be dealt with.

> I remember just little things. You know, just little
> things in my mind come. . . . These things hurt me. . . but
> not big things. For me, I can't cry for big things. I can cry
> only for little things (P11, p.12).

These so-called little things, however, often turned out to be moments of frozen

trauma-soaked memories that, although seemingly trivial, appeared to create a manageable

holding environment for grief and loss. This same participant talked of her life in Sarajevo

with two young children during the war. She spoke of her harrowing escape from this

besieged and beleaguered city. However, the moment she had the most difficulty

discussing, and the story she had never told anyone, was seemingly inconsequential.

> I was so scared. I don't know. When we came Croatia, Zagreb, I
> had just phone number from friends of my husband's but I don't have
> Croatia money. I can't call anybody. I just take cab. That was really
> terrible. I don't know this town, I was maybe two times in this town. . . . I

can't forgot taxi driver. . . . He look at children and me and he look at our shoes and he say, "Oh, carefully." That's all. I can't explain. We didn't have dirty . . . we don't have . . . (P11, p.6).

At this point in the narrative she began to cry and through a tight throat managed to say,

> He looked just like dirty people at us. That is not important, but for me was so . . . I can't explain (P11, p.6).

Another study participant, whose wife claimed he was unafraid during the entire war, spoke about his experiences much the way a gifted storyteller would. Our hours of interviews consisted of narratives full of drama, excitement, and suspense that in spite of his problem with the language sometimes had me sitting on the edge of my chair. The extent of his losses was great. About the only loss he did not suffer was the loss of an immediate family member. He lost his professional status, home, all material possessions, wealth, country, culture, extended family, and hopes.

At the end of one of our interviews he showed me pre and postwar pictures of his home in Bosnia. From the architectural plans to the large wire spider web hanging between the eaves trough and the wall of the second floor, this was a house he had primarily created himself. Like many of the homes I had seen in participants' photo albums and video tapes, it was a typical Bosnian-style house, except larger. An exquisite exterior of terra cotta roof tiles and white stucco walls contained a breathtaking interior decorated in beautiful solid oak woodwork, custom-made furniture, Persian rugs, and ceramic tiles and hardwood floors. In the postwar pictures the devastation was heartbreaking. The house had been bombed until the roof was all but gone. The interior had been gutted and ruined by rain and wind. THIS IS SERBIA had been scrawled in

Serbo-Croatian across the walls, and except for the white stucco walls it was unrecognizable.

> I did lots of work on that house. I put wood floors,
> ceiling, fence on balcony. I made it myself and I can never
> have what I had (P17, p.23).

However, this story of loss was delivered in much the same matter of fact way he told lots of war stories. The only story that really appeared to have an affective impact concerned his son's loss rather than his own. While huddled in a neighbour's large basement, seeing fires burning and hearing large explosions, his young son asked what would happen when his bicycle burned. Ten days ago he had bought a new bicycle for his boy's birthday. As he told this story, this participant's voice choked and he was obviously revisiting a painful memory.

> He was thinking, "What's going to be left when bicycle burned."
> Nothing. Just iron (P17, p.13).

In order to deal with their grief, refugees must have time, energy, and certainly some degree of security. Hence, until the refugee has settled somewhere, grief work is difficult if not impossible. Further, some losses are so unbearable that recovery may simply not be possible. The extent of the loss affects both outcome and degree of anxiety and many of the symptoms in the traumatic syndrome have to do with impaired mourning, or what has been referred to as "the inability to mourn" (Lifton, 1988). One study participant has, for all intents and purposes, lost her husband to a brain injury. Although he is alive and immigrated to Canada with her and their children, he is not the man he was prior to the injury. Like many brain injured patients, he is emotionally labile with outbursts of anger, anxiety and frustration, lacks concentration, suffers severe and frequent

headaches, and, of course, suffers from impaired functioning.

> Ten or fifteen parts of shrapnel came in his head and destroyed left eye and this part of head (she indicates the left frontal lobe). The biggest piece destroyed part of his brain and all other parts (of shrapnel) are still in his head. . . . Doctors left him because there was no electricity to make X-ray. . . . They were waiting until four, five people being injured and then they would put gas in and make X-ray, but for one man, it was not necessary. So in the morning he was still alive, throwing up blood . . . I didn't recognize him because it was swollen. Everything. You can't imagine. . . They did first surgery that day and . . . after three months they did the second one because metal part started to go to brain. . . . I bring just five litres of water and I wash his face. All the other patients they didn't have anyone so I bring ten litres . . . Doctor then suggested him to go out of the country. . . . Switzerland because they do silicone. They had to fill this space where eye was before putting artificial eye. They had to prepare the space for artificial eye because everything was empty. Everything was gone. They told me, "You were here all the war. It would be good for you to go." I didn't want to leave my parents so I couldn't decide. I made passport with all my three kids so it was already summer 1994 and, on 7 September, my son was killed. And we had our escaping already planned (P28, p.10).

Grief is something this participant carries with her every minute of every day and she will for the rest of her life. A devout Christian, she listens every morning to televised Mass from St. Michael's Cathedral in Toronto. There is a boy who sings in the church choir. He is the same age her son would have been had he lived and he has the voice of an angel. He has black hair, brown eyes and long eyelashes.

> My heart stops for a second and I know somehow that I have to go on. I take my youngest son to school, try to keep busy, put laundry away and write a letter that I have no time to finish. . . . I know that one day, for sure, I'll find the way to adopt a child who lost both parents in the war. There are plenty of these kids in my country (P.28, p.13).

This participant struggles continually with intrusive memories of her son along with separation from parents, siblings, and extended family. Death is so central to the experience of loss and grief. Another participant made his escape from a Muslim-held

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village with three friends. Four of them set out from the town they were born in and only

this participant is alive today. He said that literally hundreds of his friends, acquaintances,

and relatives are dead, killed in the war.

> But I didn't feel. I didn't feel so many sadness because this
> catastrophe was general. When it is peace and somebody you know die . . .
> everybody has very hard experience. Hard to manage. But when it is big
> catastrophe then you can't cry for everybody because otherwise you will be
> crying until you are dead (P.23, p.6).

In war, to be debilitated is to die. Grief is debilitating, so that must be suspended

along with the four primary tasks of grieving. Accepting the reality of the loss and

experiencing the pain of the loss, important tasks in grief work, give way to large doses of

psychic numbing so the individual can function. Adjusting to a world without the lost and

missing loved one is a confusing task for the grief-stricken because their world is often

changing at the speed of light and with the force of an explosion. Reinvesting emotional

energy in other relationships, a fourth grieving task, is impossible as all available energy is

going into staying alive.

Loved ones, homes, country, and social order are all lost to the refugee. As one

participant stated,

> "The war killed us in many ways. . . . We lost everything". This
> sentiment was echoed over and over by different participants. "We lost
> everything. . . . We had to leave everything. . . . And Canada is . . . far away
> from Yugoslavia."

A further loss, and one that is not as tangible as a home or a country, is the loss of

time. War is an interruption in the natural flow of one's life. Careers stop, education stops,

and the thread of one's life is often not picked up again for years, and sometimes never. As

one participant said,

> I was 20 when the war started and now I am 27 and I am . . . again almost nowhere. Whole new start . . . (P2, p.26).

His partner echoed his sentiments.

> . . . I didn't have a chance to finish (school) and I didn't do the job that I was trained for. . . . I lost part of my life. . . To me time is a treasure. After the war we lost four, five, six, seven years doing nothing . . . I have to catch up. . . . By 30 I hope I have a job and a normal life. . . . Right now time is really important to me (P1, p.23).

And not only is time lost in the war, but it is lost because it stops for the refugee at the point of departure. Family members are remembered as they were when the refugee left and deaths, births, and changes that occur after the refugee leaves have an unrealistic quality about them. Several participants had relatives die during the course of the study and many of them experienced a stark sense of unreality about the death. An inability to grasp the fact of the death was experienced by some participants. One participant's grandmother died shortly after she left Bosnia but she still thinks of her in the nursing home and believes that if she could only see her grave it would become real and somehow more acceptable. Participants are unpleasantly surprised at changes in aging parents and growing nieces and nephews whom they have not seen in years and may never see again. Videos are particularly painful, as they are proof of the passage of time, time that is gone and cannot be recovered. Family videos can plunge a person into waves of grief. This loss and grief, decidedly felt on the conscious level, can also be expressed in dreams.

> Last night I watch (the video) and after I dreamed and again, I am in my mother's house. . . . I am very excited but I am crying very hard. I didn't sleep and when I did I dreamed. . . . Everyday change, new things. Every day, every year, every month, change (P22, p.18).

This recognition of the passing of time is an acknowledgment of loss of time with loved ones. Holidays and birthdays are difficult and even births, although still a grand celebration, are also a reminder of the loss of extended family. To have a child that one's family has never seen is almost unthinkable to the often tightly knit families of the Balkans.

Painful but intangible losses such as time, or faith in the normalcy of one's life and one's capacity to lead a "normal" life, are perhaps some of the most difficult challenges a refugee must face. So much that the refugee counted on and took for granted has been destroyed that the only defense appears to be a systemic shutdown. "We are like ice," said one participant. "Our feelings are gone. Dead." Under the strain of war and emigration, values shift, change, and are sometimes lost. One's identity and images of the self and others as knowable, trustworthy human beings are shattered. Apart from the loss of a family member, in particular a child, this loss and destruction of faith or trust in the normalcy of self, others, and a universal goodness, is perhaps one of the most devastating losses the refugee must grieve.

Destruction of Family, Health, Society, and Individual Identity

The destruction that the people of former Yugoslavia have suffered undergirds their grief. Juxtaposed to the life they once lead in one of the wealthiest and most freedom-conscious of Communist countries, this grand-scale destruction is all the more painful. Virtually every participant talked about the beautiful land and lives of the South Slavs that disappeared as quickly as some dark magician might perform a slight of hand. As one participant said, "One minute I had everything and in another minute I didn't have anything. I lost my life, home, friends. There isn't a worse thing in the world" (P24, p.1).

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Family

The destruction of the extended family was common to all participants and the

destruction of the nuclear family usually happened along gender lines, in that men fight in

war and women are left to feed and care for children. For participants in this study, often

women and men separated along gender as well as generational lines, in that mothers and

daughters escaped before fathers, boyfriends, and husbands. Bosnian Serbians joined

relatives in Serbia and left family members in Bosnia, and Muslim families joined

relatives in Slovenia, leaving husbands to fight the war. Some families separated at the

outbreak of war. Some women and children fled to Germany, only to return to the war

zone because they could not bear being separated from husbands and fathers. At the outset

of war family members hustled to make it home and sometimes they were just too late.

> That was 21 April when war started in my town. On 17 April my
> uncle drove my aunt and his children to train station. That was maybe last
> train from Sarajevo. . . . War started and they had shells and snipers. His
> children and my aunt came in my town 17 April and were with us all
> wartime. He didn't see his children all war, three-and-a half years (P2,
> p.20).

Marriages were celebrated and were truncated almost immediately due to death.

One participant talks about a young couple whose marriage lasted 14 days before the

husband was killed. The bride refused to stay with the husband's family and, much to the

heartbreak of her father-in-law, who was reluctant to let this connection to his beloved son

leave, sobbed as she walked out the door. Infidelities and divorces occurred as couples

were separated due to fighting, capture, and sometimes internment in a refugee camp.

Every time father or husband would leave for the front, the family was left with a

clear understanding that he might not return. Family members, usually brothers, risked life

and limb to retrieve the bodies of their siblings in enemy territory, and sisters traveled into areas of heavy bombing to get food and supplies to siblings and their children. Throughout the war family members living in Croatia or other parts of Bosnia were constantly trying to get money and supplies to family members trapped in areas where fighting was heavy. Sick with worry they would wait at known drop points, anxious to send supplies any way they could, by taxis, ambulances, buses, or UN vehicles.

> I packed up everything I could and I went to Bihac . . . to visit my sister and take her some food. . . . They were bombing Bihac all the time. I wasn't scared. I even took my daughter with me. She was six. We were walking, maybe twenty miles to the border . . . There were so many people waiting to get the food . . . There were cabs waiting to take you wherever you wanted . . . but they were charging megabucks . . . thirty dollars for a few kilometers. . . . I stayed with my sister and then they really started bombing. Then I was really scared (P23, p8).

Worried that she would get cut off from her son, she left her sister to return home, which in fact, wasn't home but a house that belonged to a family working in Germany, a house that she eventually had to vacate because a relative of the family's threatened her if she didn't leave. She eventually made her way to her parent's apartment in Croatia only to be forced to leave again, but this time, she would settle an ocean away. Often part of the impetus for emigration lies in the fact that most of one's family either is dead or have emigrated or moved to another part of the country. When one emigrates as far away as Canada, the sheer physical distance is far more daunting than a move to Germany. It is truly a world away. This decision is seen as major and, for the most part, permanent separation from other family members.

> I was walking home and looking at this (immigration) paper. I didn't know what to do. Should we go or no? So far away. A place I never thought I would go. As soon as I saw my mom I started to cry. . . . They told us the day we were leaving. . . . In the last month I was crying every

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day. Crying when I get up. Crying every time when I look my mom or my dad . . . It was the toughest time before we were leaving. Then I knew that we were not going to come back (P23, p.15). . . . When we left at the airport in Croatia I remember *I never see my dad crying so hard* and I am thinking, "What did I do? How could I do that? (P23, p.18).

This extreme parental grief when an adult child makes the decision to emigrate was described by several participants. Each of the participants used a phrase similar to, "I never saw him like that." For the often close-knit families of the Balkans, where generations live together for much of their lives, war and/or emigration can herald the first permanent separation in the family's history.

Health

Health issues loom large across refugee populations and physicians are usually the first people to treat the refugee. Substantial weight loss is common, as are stomach and digestive problems. Headaches, sleep disorders, breathing problems, anxiety, depression, and emotional lability are common physical and psychological concerns among study participants. Participants talked about rapid aging and energy loss, along with an inability to concentrate and focus. One participant stated that when the war began she was 30 but felt and looked like she was 23. She recalled being able to run and work all day and never feel tired. A few hours sleep and she would be "jumping" in the morning. Now, however, she is always physically, mentally, and emotionally tired. She is depressed and on some days the depression is better than others. On some days it is manageable and on some days it is not. From her perspective, she "got old overnight". She feels like she is "sixty-five," and the thought of 25 more years of work is too exhausting to even contemplate.

Several female participants suffered from menstrual disorders such as early cessation of bleeding or constant bleeding and two study participants developed diabetes

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following the war. Beatings inflicted during incarceration in concentration camps, or simply inflicted at the whim of an enemy soldier, often led to severe head and chest injuries. Hair turned from black to completely grey in the space of two years and back problems were also common.

Social Order

When you can be imprisoned for no reason, pulled from your home and placed in a concentration camp, or when the dean of Mostar University is regularly being beaten by camp guards and the university becomes a police station, the social order has been overturned. When your home can be deconstructed board by board or lit on fire at the whim of a drunken soldier and your car can be taken at a moment's notice, there is nothing and nobody one can trust. When graceful aged cities like Mostar can be demolished, and ancient Orthodox churches can be defaced and stripped of their crowning golden crosses and white marble icons, and you can be murdered on the streets by a sniper, you begin to understand something of the nature of living without government and without law.

> The first thing in war is that you don't have any dignity. Anybody can kill you on the street . . . because you are nothing. You have no state. My friend used to say . . . I can live without my brother but I can't live without state. Who are you without a state? If you die, who will bury you? If you are sick, how can you go to hospital? (P23, p.8).

When the state is at war with itself, there is no law. There is no order and citizens are living in the midst of anarchy. Eventually, politicians, police, and criminals all conducted the business of war to their own highly lucrative advantage. Men like Arkan, razed villages, killing hundreds and hundreds of people, and physicians charged exorbitant amounts of money to fake medical exemptions from the war. In the wake of the destruction of the social order, a new order was formed where new rules applied, and those

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rules were all about who you were connected to, how much you paid and to whom, and the wanton destruction of the fabric of normalcy. Most participants, with the exception of two soldiers, soothed themselves by clinging to the belief that war would never break out, even while military maneuvers were occurring in the hills around them. When it did break out, people told themselves it would be over quickly. Very few were able to envisage the absolute destruction that was to follow. During this study, United Nation forces were still uncovering mass graves in and around what had been the primarily Muslim city of Doboj. One study participant from this area recognized the burial site as it flashed across her television screen.

Dogs were shot because their barking could alert the enemy to your whereabouts. Mice invaded homes that had been damaged by shelling and participants talk of a grand exodus of forest animals when war broke out in Bosnia, a grand exodus that was echoed by millions of people who were displaced within the boundaries of their own country. Muslims crowded into primarily Muslim territory, and Serbs or Croats moved into abandoned Muslim homes. As in many Balkan wars, rural folk moved into the cities, bringing with them their goats, cattle, and chickens, and, of course, the inevitable waste that farm animals create.

> I looked up on the balcony. They put chicken on the balcony, on the 10 floor. I saw the goat on the fourth floor in the building where live my sister's best friend. . . . I saw on her balcony goat. . . . In front of building they start to make back yard for goat, chicken and cow and to put garlic and onion. . . . These people never live in buildings. They have the house in the village (P21, p.32).

Individual Identity

Wars require that we change our identities (Wilson, 1988). Who we believe ourselves to be, the fantasies, the images, the beliefs we hold about self, others, and the world we live in, our very construction of reality, is shattered in war. The self, that multidimensional psychological construct reflecting the totality of a person's experience of mental being and physical existence, is shattered in the wake of trauma (Ulman, et al., 1988). Fundamental restructurings shift for both soldiers and civilians. The most fundamental restructuring of the self that must ensue for the soldier involves the reorganization of the basic societal value of life enhancement to life taking (Laufer, 1988). Interestingly enough, of the six soldiers in the study, none admitted killing anyone. All six insisted, unbidden, they had not killed anyone. Being part of an organized unit that legitimizes the taking of another's life fundamentally alters an individual's self-concept. Civilian identities are forged within a social structure that revolves around a life-giving principle and, they too are unprepared for the reality of a society that has restructured itself around the death principle.

Mass deportation sites, for example, could become brutal, and full of blood, murder, and extortion.

> Four, five soldiers came and saw . . . boy . . . who had maybe 18 or 17 years. Muslim boy. They say, "Where is your ticket?". The boy show ticket. "Where you go?" He say, "I go to other city." Oh, they beat him . . . face and chest and everything blood. No help. I can't help. I help and they kill me and other people (P22, p.20).

In wartime, this level of traumatization is repetitive and continues for years. It is incumbent on the individual in such a situation to develop a self that can function around the death principle and in direct opposition to the prewar self. In warfare, an individual

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"must cease to exist in a normal developmental sense" (Laufer, 1988, p.42) and must cut known moorings to a self-identity in order to survive in an environment that is immersed in the death principle. This negative self, or war self, must acculturate to a lawless world. "The self-system must seek a structure that offers some hope for survival while at the same time accepting death as possible, logical, and even necessary, or finally, as a meaningful release" (Laufer, 1988, p.48) from relentless persecution and hardship.

This war self develops in response to the death principle and derives its power from the very fact of survival in the face of death. It survives in a timeless, biographical dimension and cannot "evolve, integrate, or disintegrate" (Laufer, 1988, p.49). Part and parcel of the development of this war self is the discovery that, as one participant put it, "I am one hundred percent capable of killing another human being". This negative self, bereft of an anchor and created in war, exists in a vacuum and not only cannot be used to validate subsequent stages of life span development (van Dyke, et al., 1985), but interferes with development anytime the individual is under stress. Further, it is hypothesized that not only does it interfere with developmental transitions, but it interferes with the development of an adaptive self that diligently works to forget the war, move on with life, and reinvest in all that is lively and joyful.

War creates a developmental crisis in adults because it is an assault to the self where known boundaries are shattered and one is lost in the suffering. War attacks the child and the adolescent identity by forcing a premature encounter with death (Laufer, 1988).

> Soldiers try to take my youngest brother. He is sixteen but he was very tall and if you saw that person he looks older. But mother took some paper to prove that he was only 16 and mother take the one, maybe left or

right hand, and soldiers take the other and he push in his way and mother push in her way. He was in the middle and that moment, that period in the life, my brother remember very well because that was the shock and two days after in some safe place he had . . . reaction. He passed in coma and his eyes got wide and he shake and (drool). . . . Today he is twenty-five, two children, one wife. . . . He got some reshock (today) and . . . some depression. Sometime he got too much kilogram and sometime he lose some kilogram. Sometimes he is smoking, sometimes drinking. He looks everything normal but . . . (P7, p.14)

One study participant, after a harrowing escape from a Muslim-held town, describes her reunion with her family as follows, "In that moment, I start to cry. Everything was broken in me." This description of a shattered self is brief but clearly articulates the idea that the meaning of the occurrences this woman experienced changed the experience of self in intolerable ways. Meaning structures have crumbled and the self is experienced as "broken". The impact of trauma so shatters organizing principles and structures of the self that restitution of the self as one knew it is impossible.

Death Imprint and Responses to War

The Death Imprint

The death imprint (Lifton, 1988), a residual effect of severe trauma, is described as an indelible stamp retained by the psyche where one is haunted by images or sensations of a grotesquely absurd or sickening nature that can neither be integrated nor cast aside. This imprint can emerge slowly over time or suddenly burst into awareness. Shortly after war broke out, participants noticed the cessation of feeling, because there is "so much death, nothing else. In the air is death. You are covered in that. Covered."

> One time we had big explosion . . . that was airplane. Bosnian army shoot airplane and that pilot, he turned airplane in one building. He knew he was going to be dead and he turn that airplane in one building. And I think five, six bodies were there. One little child was burned. And that pilot was in pieces. On his seat was head. . . . On other side was hand, outside. . .

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. and wheel that airplane went through two walls of house and killed one woman. Wheel went through her stomach. . . . (P1, p.13). . . . I saw so many people in pieces. The girls who wanted to go in school. They had backpacks without parts of their head. School children (P2, p.8).

The degree of unacceptability of death which is contained in the image(s), is important to the maintenance and isolation of the death imprint from the larger experience of the self. The images are bound to the survivor with an indelible quality for three reasons. First, the survivor struggles to master and assimilate the images. Second, the images reopen questions and experiences about prior separations, breakdowns, beginnings and endings. Third, the death imprint undermines our sense of invulnerability by bringing us face to face with the awful reality of death. We can no longer maintain illusions of immortality and "the result can be something resembling illumination" (Lifton, 1988, p.19).

The death imprint is tightly bound not only to the horrifying images of death but also to some inner plan or schema for action (Lifton, 1988), a plan that would either save or somehow relieve the suffering of the dead, get back at the enemy, or help in some way. Unfortunately, none of these options are usually possible. And in fact, one cannot even allow normal feelings of compassion or rage. "One feels responsible for what one has not done, for what one has not felt, and above all for the gap between that physical and psychic inactivation and what one felt called upon to do and feel" (Lifton, 1988, p.20).

Very hard experience was the death of my first patient. He was maybe my age. He start to feel better, but that happen to many patients, many soldiers. He develop a stress ulcer and it happens so suddenly. They start to bleed in all gastrointestinal tract. . . . His agony was so long. . . . I was running in the hospital asking surgeons what to do. . . . There was one old surgeon telling me, "He is dying." But I wasn't able to accept that. . . . I have memory of his eyes. His dead eyes. . . I was talking with his family. It was my fault to be in situation with his family. . . . They (his parents) ask

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me something about how is he, and they just saw in my eyes. Both them scream (P29, p.6).

This participant felt absolutely responsible for this soldier's death, and regretted what she could not and did not do. And she mourned, not only for the loss of the soldier, but also for what she was incapable of effecting. And she mourned the gaping space between what she wished could have happened and what did happen.

Responses to War:

Acts of Love and Courage

Inasmuch as war is filled with stories of horror, it is also filled with stories of love and courage where strangers connect with one another in unprecedented ways. After the massacre in the Sarajevo marketplace, one participant recalled, that although it was a dangerous journey through the city and Serbian soldiers launched bombs and grenades where they knew large gatherings were massing, people poured into the hospitals to give blood. The participant mentioned earlier told the story of her futile attempts to get food to her sister, and the poverty-stricken gypsy, living with his two children in the basement of her apartment, was an unlikely hero, but it was his efforts that finally delivered supplies to a family that could not kill a pigeon.

> When you work and it is peace no one knows each other. But during war people didn't work. We stayed together, locked in basement for days, for weeks, for months and we started to know each other and he (this gypsy) was so honest. I will never forget him because he didn't have anything to eat and he gave it all to her (P.28, p.8).

Because people were closely confined, some contrived ways to work with one another amidst others who were killing one another. Three of the participants began children's clubs or crude daycare centers. People risked their lives to deliver messages

across ethnic boundaries. People tried to feed each other from their own meager supplies, shared blankets, and stoves. People from Germany and Italy brought blankets, clothing, and supplies and handed them out liberally in hospitals and on the streets. On the border between Slovenia and Italy people set up distribution headquarters for blankets, clothing, and pillows.

One of the jobs of concentration camp survivors was to go through abandoned homes and remove woodwork and other valuables. Before they had fled, people had stocked soap and other hygiene products and food for survivors to find and smuggle back into the camps. In the camps themselves many prisoners did their best to care for each other. One elder Serb who was captured by the Croatians, beaten, starved and placed in a concentration camp, was told to shoot another prisoner in the head or he would be shot. He could not do it and the price he paid for his humanity was for the guard to place that same gun in his mouth and pull the trigger. The gun, however, was only partially loaded and a game of Russian Roulette ensued. Many other elder parents sent their grown sons and daughters abroad and offered themselves up as soldiers so their sons could escape. One participant's sixty-year-old father entered the reserves while scrambling to send his three strapping sons to Serbia and freedom.

Total strangers picked up escaping people and drove them free of charge to the nearest safe space.

> Airport was thirty, forty kilometers away from Belgrade where we are going. . . . We try to get bus and suddenly one car stop. He drive by and turn around and ask, "Are you from Bosnia? . . . We say yes but we are so scared. Why is he asking us? You don't believe anybody, you know. . . . He said, "I want to drive you to Belgrade." (P4, p.9).

Believing this was going to cost a fortune, he was surprised when this man shared

the fact that he had a sister in Bosnia that he had not been able to contact and that he was worried about. Driving them to safety was one way to deal with his worry and fear.

Acts of Fear, Suspicion, and Cowardice

In some towns, Muslim study participants noticed that their Serbian neighbours would leave at night and return in the morning, and although they knew something was brewing, they did not realize that an all out assault was being mounted. Everything appeared normal even down to the neighbours visiting for coffee just as they had always done. Three days before war broke out, Serbian neighbours were having coffee with Muslim neighbours. To accept the fact that one's neighbours are trying to kill one and have, in fact, been preparing to do so for some time is, in itself, traumatizing. To then helplessly watch them loot and burn your house is unthinkable. This civil aspect of the war was extraordinarily difficult for all participants to accept.

> I was sitting and watching with my mom. It was terrible. My neighbour was married a Serbian. He was in Serbian army. She just left her house. . . . They break the lock and take meat from her fridge, . . . some woman take plant. She has beautiful plant and when they (neighbourhood looters) finally left in her house just stay bed, couch, sink, stove, table and chairs. They take everything what they can carry. . . . And then one Muslim family moved into her house. . . . When I left my city they were there. It was such shock for me (P21, p.15).

Shifts in Values

War changes people in fundamental ways and, therefore, shifts occur at the level of basic values and beliefs about how the world operates. People were forced into communal living and in the words of one participant, learned that "we had not learned to appreciate the community and the values of community."

In a country where the state created the rules about what constitutes community

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and how it operates, unity and brotherhood did not extend to religion. To the Serbians and Croatians it appeared that all of a sudden their Muslim friends were using traditional Muslim greetings and saying traditional Muslim prayers. One study participant was shocked that her Muslim colleagues knew how to pray in Arabic. Under Tito, people were Yugoslavians, not Muslim, Catholic, or Orthodox. To a large extent, religion and ethnicity had been relegated to the underground only to surface in the bloody mess of the 1990s Balkan wars. The advantages of ignoring diversity were that differing faiths lived side by side quite happily. The disadvantage was that people were not able to develop an openness toward diversity because the myth was that it didn't exist. Prior to the war one participant lived in an apartment building that was about half Muslim and half Christian. By the end of the war she and her family were the only Christian family left.

Several of the Muslims in the study credited this war with the restoration of their faith and pride in being Muslim. Prior to the war, many of the Muslims in the study had no particular affection for their faith and had never been inside a mosque. However, when it became apparent that this faith, a faith they had never practiced, could cost them their lives, they began to take it more seriously and incorporate it into their identities and self-concepts. One study participant, although being clear that she still loved many of her Serbian friends, said that the war has taught her that marrying outside her Muslim faith would be a mistake. "I saw what happened to those marriages. Lots of them were destroyed and I wouldn't let that happen to my kids" (P1, p.21).

Further, in the midst of mass death, people paradoxically come to value life and birth in ways they would not have been capable of prior to the outbreak of war. One participant spoke about his life prior to the war and described himself as a superficial

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playboy out to conquer as many women as possible. The war changed all that. Because

death was such a major part of this man's war experience he began to focus on what kind

of legacy he would leave if he were to be killed and decided that without a child, there

would be no legacy. Shortly thereafter, he met his current partner and during the war they

married and had a child. In war the urgency to procreate takes on an almost obsessive

quality. One participant went so far as to describe her desire to have a child in the midst of

all this death, as nothing short of pathological. One false pregnancy, one miscarriage, and

one near miscarriage later, she now has a son who is her main priority. What she wants

now is simply "to make life better for me and my son".

This theme of shifting priorities to one's immediate family and children and

dedicating oneself to making them happy is one expressed by several participants. The

wish is to in some way compensate them and oneself for the horrible suffering they have

survived. Over and over, participants reiterated that what is important are those you love

and those who love you. Further, after living through a war, immigration to a country such

as Canada lends a stark contrast to one's values as they have been defined by war and

those values of members of the host country.

> . . . some people, their views, their values . . . sometimes I am
> sitting there listening and I am not going to comment, of course, but I mean
> the things I went through . . . We lived for years with so little food. . . . and
> here you have everything and some people they don't know what to do with
> that . . . They want more (P1, p.27).

Shame and Depression

Shame and depression are two powerful emotions that refugees must cope with.

One participant talked with great distress about her father being taken away by soldiers.

She was shocked at how effortlessly soldiers took him from his house. He left without a

fight like "the animal for sacrifice".

> ... So my father stayed maybe four or five hours and ...
> came home and he was shaking. It was such a shame (P29,
> p.33).

Witnessing her father being led away like a lamb to slaughter invoked shame in this participant, as did witnessing acts of looting and brutality. Many participants talked about their feelings of shock and shame as they watched people loot their neighbours' abandoned homes. Further, many former Yugoslavians are warned in English as a Second Language classrooms that there has been trouble in the past between ethnic groups and that it will not be tolerated in future. They are lectured about zero tolerance levels for violence and even this generates high levels of shame in study participants.

Women risked the shame that accompanied the title of "soldier's whore" for the protection the relationship afforded them. When women lived with and married a soldier, it made life much easier but the price was shame and depression and in one participant's case, eventual divorce. Shame is a pervasive emotion in war and can be engendered by something as natural as fleeing. The stigma attached to running is both an external and an internal event in that friends and neighbours did judge people harshly for leaving. Participants themselves were inclined to judge people who left early in the war harshly until their own lives had deteriorated so thoroughly there was no option but for them to flee themselves.

The isolation that many refugee women experience often results in depression. Almost everyone in the study described some version of psychic numbing and "a deep sadness way inside". Several participants discussed a "pressure" inside and a poverty of affect that impacts on their roles as parents and partners. Usually, for both men and

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women depression was not a problem until participants escaped the war zone and had time to assess their inner landscape. As is sometimes characteristic of depression, participants were also prone to outbursts of irritability and anger, often directed at a partner.

> He knows that it is hard, more hard for me, in Canada. He will do everything that it will be easier. But there are so many big awful things that happen with us. . . . I can't feel anymore truly happy. Truly happiness and sadness. Like dead man. . . . right now everything is nothing. Nothing. . . . If you sad you can cry. If you happy you can sing . . . but I can't. Neither of them (P24, p.9).

Children's Responses to War

Because many of the study participants had children, ranging in age from infancy to middle adolescence, and some used their children as translators and interpreters, an unexpected outcome of the study was information on children's responses to the war. It would appear from a preliminary perspective that participants' children's responses to war differed in some ways from that of their parents. For example, some of the children reported never dreaming about the war but, rather, dreaming about their former friends, whom they sorely missed. Another reported memories of the outbreak of war but only of watching it on television. A third, now a young woman intending to enter university, who lived in a Slovenian refugee camp for three years, remembers the camp as "fun". She made numerous friends who lived just down the hall or even in the same room. Although she was aware of the family's dire straights and her mother's intense unhappiness, she also remembers the fun involved in living communally and in such close proximity to friends. She was quite distraught when the family left the camp. These more positive memories seem to be more accessible to children. However, this same young woman was also quite aware that she had to avoid memories of her homeland, her grandparents, and the war.

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When triggered, they caused her to fall into a depressive and anxious state that lasted for several weeks and interfered with her life, her grades, and her ability to stay focused on her goal of becoming a physician. Hence, I am not suggesting that children do not have traumatic memories, simply that they express more of their positive memories than do their parents.

It was also noted that many of the study participants' children, in particular the three late adolescent females, were high achievers with good grades and solid, substantial goals, whereas the two late adolescent male children seemed to be less motivated to achieve and carried the prejudices of the war more openly and arrogantly. They were far more troubled and this manifested as skipping school, being disruptive at school, and traveling in ethnically pure gangs with other adolescents from former Yugoslavia.

Some study participants' children were injured, killed, and suffered psychological trauma. Some of their children suffered from night terrors and would wake up screaming about being killed and about their fathers being killed. In one case, the nightmares were always followed by a period of hysterical laughter. Another participant's then two-year-old son, who was seen for a year by a psychiatrist in Germany following the war, still lives in profound isolation in that he plays alone and has no friends. He is possibly developmentally delayed due to his confinement during the war. Almost from birth, he was without lights, books, fruit and nutritious food, toys, and Nintendo, a game he now constantly plays.

The power and noise of explosions, the constant and high level of terror, as well as the lack of nutrition, had serious and deleterious effects on children. Children often reacted with severe physical and psychological responses. Upon reaching a safe city, children's

reactions ranged from somewhat pervasive developmental delays as described in the above case to temporary problems. In one participant's child, trauma manifested as constant shaking which lasted for five months, and autonomic muscle contractions in one eye that lasted for eight months.

Relationships and Alliances

Closely linked to the category of survival is this subcategory of responses to war. Alliances, marriages, and allegiances were created in order to ensure survival. For example, one participant who came to Canada as a refugee, with her now ex-husband, married him because he was a policeman during the war and, therefore, able to protect her and her family. Being considered a "soldier's whore" was a small price to pay for the protection that his uniform and his guns afforded her and her family.

In some areas, Serbs, Croats, and Muslims spent much of the war hiding together in basements. One participant talks of an elder Serb and Croatian couple that she came to love dearly, who hid in a predominately Muslim building for most of the war. And in an attempt to heal some of the damage caused by the bloodthirsty crimes that one ethnic group inflicted upon another, several former Yugoslavian writers have recently researched and published books on cooperative interethnic relationships and allegiances that formed during the war, thus saving countless lives.

Extreme Helplessness

Because literally all study participants had been thrown unprepared, unarmed, and terrified, into a chaos they had never before experienced, there was nothing upon which to rely for guidance. Feelings of extreme helplessness reached alarming proportions. Not one study participant wanted this war. In fact, many hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavians

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had been protesting in the streets in an effort to stop the onslaught, but to no avail.

Transcripts were replete with statements such as, "People can't change anything."; "If politicos want war then there will be war."; "I saw too much, too much dead, too much people with no feet, too much. . . . I am there and I cannot help and nobody can help me." The pervasive and enduring belief is that no one can or will help and as an individual you are helpless to effect change. This seems to result in a belief in absolute self reliance born of a deep cynicism and depression about the nature of human kind.

> You just don't want to get up in the morning . . . because you don't
> have anything new. It's another nightmare but you don't have any other
> solutions (P2, p.8).

Learning

Learning in war time is closely linked to survival. Sometimes the learning is growth oriented and embraces the goodness of humanity, but in war, for the most part, it is trauma-based learning that results in a loss of faith and trust in the capacity of human beings for goodness. A generalized skepticism about people is a natural outcome of war but because this was a civil war the levels of distrust, disillusionment, and disappointment were overwhelming.

> When I saw that my good friend had the gun and he is walking
> through the town and he couldn't or didn't like to say hello to me,
> suddenly, you can know that is because I am Serbian. . . . I was
> disappointed in people and I was disappointed in my people (P23, p.3).

During this war people learned to hate and distrust each other, and look with absolute suspicion upon members of other ethnic groups. The expectation was that when the war ended life would return to normal, but the longer it went on, and the more vicious it became, the more difficult it was to undo the learning of distrust and ethnic hatred.

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>Before the war I think that everybody in Yugoslavia is safe because
>I looking at the people . . . just look at the person. I never didn't believe
>that friends will shoot friends or neighbour will kill the neighbour. . . . Now
>I don't trust the people so much as I trust before. That is going to be hard to
>bring back. Everything else like money I can bring back, but that, no.
>Everything was much prettier before (P13, p.10).

Learning to live with peace after living for years in a war zone is often a difficult

adjustment. On arriving in a city that war had not yet hit, one participant described her

experience.

>It was shock for me. I went outside and I was afraid. It is
>unbelievable. People are dressed nice, happy, with make-up. I was so lost.
>The car was going up and down and the traffic light was working and green
>market was full. . . . I don't know how I can walk normal. I am afraid of
>any sound. . . . I bought banana and other fruit and vegetables for first time
>after two years (P21, p.18).

People learned to survive in conditions of extreme scarcity. They adapted and

learned to deal with the constant sound of sirens until it felt like they were born hearing

sirens and there had never been a time when they had not sounded. What happened was so

completely out the realm of even their wildest imaginings that people came to believe that

anything was possible. Several voiced the sentiment that if anyone had told them ten years

ago that they would be living in Canada, it would have been laughable. And with that

learning comes the understanding that life offers up many more uncertainties than

expected. One's sense of security and safety is no longer intact. This war made

participants "harder and stronger" and even more resilient, while at the same time making

them more vulnerable to stress and emotional lability.

Several study participants learned that they had it within themselves to kill

someone else and even more chilling was the fact that someone out there had it within

themselves to kill them. Most study participants spoke of this war as deeply corrupt.

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Money became God and greed was prioritized above all else. This war, like all wars was a "dirty war," and many participants clearly believed that to understand one war was to understand them all. There is a sameness, a repetitiveness, about war and the experiences it affords. According to participants, if you have not experienced it, if you have not moved through the horrifying energy of war, then you simply cannot understand nor can you empathize with others who are living in similar war-torn parts of the globe.

Politics of War

Repression, as it is practiced by a terrorist state, whether it is former Yugoslavia or Romania or Georgia or Ukraine, is fairly consistent across borders. Rape, imprisonment, torture, disappearances, forced relocations of people from their homes and communities, verbal and written death threats, and extrajudicial executions by government security forces or paramilitary death squads are the most common forms of repression (Cole, et al., 1992).

Because in war all available energy is dedicated to war and the state's military needs take primacy, men were recruited to feed the war machine of former Yugoslavia. Young, old, and middle-aged men were given their marching orders and they either marched to the front immediately, paid someone such as a physician or official to exempt them from military duty, escaped to another city or country, or hid until they were found out and forcibly taken to the front. If escaping the war was part of the plan, it had to be implemented almost immediately or active duty was assigned and escape became much more difficult, if not impossible.

Men were picked up and taken to the front lines, which usually coincided with one of the country's many rivers, with no warning, no training, and no opportunity to tell their

families where they were going or how long they would be gone. Family members were left to figure it out or assume the missing loved one was dead. From the perspective of study participants who had seen behind the scenes, this was a war about money, extortionism, and crime of the worst and most vile kind. Money, large sums of it, bought everything in this war from protection and freedom, to food and clothing, to the return of a captured sister, brother, or child. The corruption extended its tentacles into every aspect of the social, political and military domains. The corruption was not limited to the Yugoslavians, but extended to the United Nations peacekeeping forces. Humanitarian aid packages were openly sold on the black market and no attempt was made to hide the fact that they had originally been intended as aid. Participants speak of buying a block of cheese for $300 on the black market clearly marked as "Sale Forbidden, Humanitarian Aid".

The ideals of war, as espoused by one participant whose father led part of the Muslim defense, were lost in the greed. She quotes him as saying, "When I decided (to go in the army) it was different. It wasn't to be ready for this war but to be ready to defend our people. . . . I came into this war only because of my family. I had to defend my daughters, my wife, my family"(P1, p.11).

In this war, the relief that people felt when they saw the peacekeepers was totally unwarranted. At almost every pivotal point the peacekeeping forces did the wrong thing. In November 1992 the people of Bihac were thrilled to see what a young single mother describes as

"... many soldiers with Canadian flag. We feel much free when we saw the soldiers from Canada (P21, p.17).

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Bihac, a UN safe zone, was shelled mercilessly by Serb forces. The UN entered

into this venture broke, largely because the United States would not pay its almost billion-

dollar arrears. As a result, peacekeeping contingents had to rely heavily for resources on

their own countries (Off, 2000). Ludicrous situations were created whereby starving

Bosnians were trying to feed peacekeeping forces from Somalia who had arrived with no

warm clothing and no food. Ukranian troops and generals were often drunk and with the

exception of some, not all, of the North American and British troops, the lack of

professionalism was profound.

Civil War

From its outset, this war was presented to the world as a civil war where brother

killed brother and neighbour killed neighbour. Ultimately, this did become the force that

propelled the war into its ugliest reality, but it was not the impetus for its outbreak. This

was a war created not by brothers and neighbours, but by political leaders such as Serbia's

Slobodan Milosevic and Croatia's Franjo Tudjman. They intended to carve a Greater

Serbia and a Greater Croatia out of Bosnia. This image of brother pitted against brother

was further exacerbated by the press and by men like Major General Lewis McKenzie, the

Canadian sector commander in Sarajevo. His name has entered Bosnians' lexicon as a

pejorative word for peacekeeper. McKenzie saw it as his responsibility to tell the world

and the UN to "do what it was already predisposed to do - nothing" (Off, 2000, p.5). It

was McKenzie who delivered to the world the message that this was an ugly ethnic war

unworthy of peacekeeping forces' attention. He said dealing with the Bosnians was like

dealing with three serial killers. He is reported to have said, "One has killed fifteen, the

other ten, the other five. Do you help the one who has killed five?" (Off, 2000, p.5).

Such a philosophy was no help to the civilians who, like the participants in this study, got caught in a fervor of chauvinistic nationalism. The Serbian elders who spent five months in a Croatian concentration camp, the young Croatian mother who held her child close as she struggled across the Una river to freedom, and the Muslim soldier caught in a world gone insane, were left to fend for themselves. Some participants prayed every night that the United Nations would come to their aid and it never did.

The nature of this war, as to whether or not it was a civil war or a war of aggression, has been hotly debated. If it was a civil war then it would be unwise for other nations to get involved and there is no international law that provides for one country to meddle in another's internal business (Mojzes, 1994). As a war of aggression, all fingers were pointed at the Bosnian Serb paramilitary forces being supplied by Serbia. There is no question that the Serbian forces had the bulk of the weapons of war, airplanes, guns, and tanks and that they were massing for war, some would claim, for years before the outbreak. Serbians in the study were understandably defensive. They lost this war and history is never kind to the vanquished. They tend to blame outside influences such as the United States for the cause of the war and point to the Serbian expulsion from Croatia as an example of oppression against them.

> I would like to say to United States, where you were when I was refugee? I am refugee too and I was scared when I left my town. . . . Some soldier put gun on me and I was afraid, too but nobody say, oh, I am sorry about you. . . . (P23, p.11).

The armed forces were so mixed at the beginning of the war that participants were totally confused about who was who, as they all wore the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) uniform. Two study participants were professional soldiers. The confusion they

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experienced at the beginning of the war as to where to place their loyalties was eventually decided when they abandoned the JNA and retreated to Bosnia to join the newly forming Bosnian Army. The three armies, Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian, were by no means homogenous, however. One participant talked about a Croatian friend who was in the Serbian army because he had a Serbian wife and many Serbian friends. His brother, who was also married to a Serb, was in the Muslim army because they lived in a town that was 99 percent Muslim. The third brother was in the Croatian army.

But whatever the composition of fighting factions, this was a vicious war and it would be two hundred thousand deaths later before NATO would intervene with force and bomb Kosovo.

The Politics of War and the Individual

In the atmosphere of war, individuals were able to act out old grudges against neighbours and colleagues. One participant told the story of a friend who owed him the equivalent of $1,500. Having lost everything, he approached this man and asked for his money. Unlike the study participant, this man had not lost his home or his livelihood. He refused to pay the monies owing and paid a physician the $1,500 to exempt him from military duty.

> I lost everything . . . and that guy came in hospital to ask that doctor
> to save him for two weeks from front line and he paid him with my money.
> I felt so bad, so angry, and I told somebody something in connection with
> that and they hated me more. . . . I was forty years old and somebody was
> twenty and healthy and huge big guy, strong. They made money to pay
> doctor and I had to go front line. . . . It was terrible (P17, p.41)

Relationships such as marriages that survived the war were strongly committed prior to the war. Although they were often stressed, they stayed intact. Those that were

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formed during the war or shortly before the war, tended to disintegrate. One participant talked about the painful alienation that took place between her and her husband. She chronicled his increasing selfishness and rejection with obvious pain and maintained that although this was always a piece of his character, it grew to unmanageable proportions during the war. Generally, this research would appear to bear out the idea that the values, or lack thereof, that an individual cultivated prior to the war became exaggerated in the lawless energy of war.

> I was sitting with my husband in front of my house. I told him I am going with my daughter and I don't know how long I am going to be there. Do you know what he asked me? He ask me how much money I going to leave him. It was the hardest moment in my life. . . . At that time, my heart was like a rock . . . (P21, p.10).

Family members reacted differently to the war. When the shelling started some would hit the floor "quick as a tiger" and others would refuse to lie down. Some categorized themselves as fighters and other family members as avoiders. Serious depression and trauma caused family members to become estranged and distant from each other, while in other cases the family was pulled closer together only to have one of the family emigrate to Canada.

Tito's Yugoslavia and Post War Conditions

Without exception, Tito's legacy of stability, although it had begun a slow process of deterioration following his death and disintegrated completely during the war, was deeply mourned by study participants. Sentiments such as the following were expressed by everyone.

> "We lived good life me and my family" (P.12, p.35), or "I was never thinking I would leave. I had friends, all my relatives were there and I had a good life" (P30, p.15) , or "Country was so beautiful" (P24, p.11).

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Many former Yugoslavians, but not all, have great admiration for Tito precisely because he held the country together by the sheer force of his presence, and when he was gone, so was the unity. The day he died is still etched in one participant's mind.

> Everybody was crying. We were all crying. It was like somebody in your family. . . . I know people who couldn't get over it for days. Teachers and everybody . . . we were all crying. . . . Everybody was sad and in shock. People were coming from all over the country to go around his coffin. I get goose bumps now when I am talking about it. Years and years after it, every day on the day and at the same time that he died . . . all factories stopped, . . . everything would stop every year wherever you are. You are in the middle of the street and the person that you see next to you was crying (P24, p.64).

Under Tito, study participants saw themselves as free agents in a liberal country, albeit communist. "Actually," stated one participant, "It felt just like here. I never thought of Communism that way (as the West thinks of it). I never even knew it was Communism to be honest. And then, suddenly, the war started" (P1, p.1). In spite of the total devastation the war caused and the chaos that was just beneath the surface of their ordered existence, capitalism generates far more feelings of insecurity and vulnerability for them than Communism.

> I have a feeling here in Canada. I never know what is going to happen tomorrow. You have a job today and you might not have it tomorrow. . . . Something can go wrong and you can get sick and have no money. Over there it wasn't like that before the war. You knew. You have your job and you will have that job until you retire. There were people working in one factory for years and years . . . but nobody ever made an effort to go and look for another job or change the job (P24, p.50).

However, post-war conditions have changed all of that. Some study participants' family members who stayed in Bosnia the entire war, vowing they would never leave, are now trying to emigrate to Canada. Siblings, aunts, cousins, and adult children are all looking for ways to bring their extended families to Canada. Post war former Yugoslavia

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is a land without much hope. Nepotism and ethnic hatred are rampant and people of mixed

marriages and certainly their children suffer substantially. As one participant stated,

"There is still war. Not with gun and airplanes, but still war." This small country has been

subdivided even further and people are forced to live in much more homogenous groups.

Jobs are very difficult to come by, the land itself is dangerous and dotted with

explosives and even more disconcerting, through death and emigration, Bosnia has lost

many of its promising and loving sons and daughters.

> Deep down inside of me I am sad. I am so sorry for Bosnia because
> I love Bosnia. Bosnia is my country. . . . But people are leaving (P1, p.31).

The forced displacement of so many people from their native cities has created

grave difficulties. One participant talks with deep grief about her elder mother and father

and her youngest brother. Currently, the three of them are living in a bug- and-mouse

infested single room. They share the washroom with another family and because there are

no jobs, none of them work. So much has been devastated. Prior to the war this family

lived in a three-bedroom apartment, but now, like many, they have no future, no hope, no

money, and no satisfaction. Reminders of the recent destruction are everywhere and there

is little leadership or motivation for large-scale restoration.

Ethnic Cleansing

Prior to the war, during the war, and following the war, ethnic identity and social

conflict took on differing levels of consciousness and intensity. Prior to the war, ethnicity

was not a huge focus for many of the study participants. "We were all Yugoslavians," said

one young woman, "nobody cared if you were Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox." People of

mixed marriages, which by definition are less invested in ethnicity and religion, and

Muslims were far more likely to resonate to Tito's philosophy of "Brotherhood and Unity" than Serbs, Croats, or Slovenes and were far more likely to identify themselves as Yugoslavians.

During the war ethnic hatred reached outlandish depths of turpitude. "The term ethnic cleansing has entered our vocabulary although pogrom, genocide, and extermination would be more apt descriptions of what has happened . . ." (Richmond, 1994, p.xv). At least sixty-five ethnic conflicts were raging around the world in 1993 and more have ignited since that time. Although there are numerous differences between them, the common denominator is the use of vicious and widespread violence (Richmond, 1994).

Following the war, the hatred it and other wars generated crossed the Atlantic with waves of former Yugoslavian immigrants and refugees. Post war conditions are difficult and many are scrambling to leave. As a result, refugee receiving societies are going to catch the spillover of recent and long-standing ethnic conflicts. As one participant said,

> Everything that happens in the past is in my head and is hard to forget. . . . Here . . . in Canada is lots of people from former Yugoslavia and everybody speaks . . . but they don't speak about the war, they speak about how much they hate each other. . . .You can't forget the war and you can't forget the hate. . . . It is going to take longer time for people now in Canada from Yugoslavia to start to be together again . . . maybe three generations (P13, p.10).

In former Yugoslavia the people have a long history of both living together and dying together. Under Tito there was no opportunity to possess and digest that history. Ethnic groups have been killing, torturing, and warring with one another for much of the twentieth century and the depths of the cruelty has taken on mythic proportions. For example, the most extreme fascist Croatian politician, Ustasa Ante Pavelic, who took

power on May 15, 1941 is reported to have killed anywhere from 300,000 to a million

Serbs. The generally accepted figure is somewhere between 500,000 and 700,000

(Vuckovic, 1997). The crimes of the children are built upon the crimes of the fathers and

grandfathers. As one participant said, "If there was to be war, I knew it would be bad."

Prior to the War

Prior to the war, for many participants the entire idea of ethnicity was somewhat

redundant and some would have gone so far as to say there were no real distinctions

between Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. At the end of this war few people were espousing

similarities. Repression of ethnicity relegated issues of ethnicity, diversity, and difference

to the unconscious in some, and the merely unspoken but smoldering in others. One

Serbian participant remembered one of his earliest memories of ethnic tension.

> . . . He is Croatian. . . . When we grow up here, we are neighbours
> and we are same age and go same elementary school, same class for eight
> years and our fathers know each other for many years . . . When we were
> four years old, he said one day, "I won't play any more with you. We are
> not same." Four years old. . . . My mother said that I came crying to home. .
> . . (P30, p.7).

In this recent war this participant's father was captured by the Croatians, held in a

concentration camp, tortured, beaten, humiliated, and physically and psychologically

forever changed. Now, in this generation as in the last, there is much more than hurt

feelings to overcome. Coming to terms with either an individual or a collective past,

requires that at some point it be relegated to the past. During this war in Yugoslavia

reporters were often not sure if the atrocity story they were being told happened in 1993,

1941, 1841, or 1441 (Ignatieff, 1998).

Reconstruction and brutal deconstruction of national identities and dreams appears

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to be a pattern in the Balkans. The reconstruction and nation building that followed the

Second World War was based on the visions and the ideologies of Tito and was expressed

through the Communist Party. Unity and brotherhood were kept alive under Tito's

authoritarian rule and interethnic mixing, marrying, and multiplying were synchronous

with Tito's underlying visions of a strong and unified Yugoslavia. Under Tito, Muslims

were best friends with Serbs, Muslims and Serbs were engaged to be married, and

Croatians and Muslims married and had children, who like all the other children they

played with, were Yugoslavian. Attempts were made during this time to downplay the

blood feuds between ethnic groups. A participant recalled learning much later in life that

her grandfather had been murdered by Muslims. Her father had specifically kept silent

about this in order to avoid creating prejudices in his children.

Tito's death, however, was an opportunity for major ethnonationalists such as

Franjo Tudjman in Croatia, Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia, Milan Kucan in Slovenia, and

Alija Izetbegovic in Bosnia to fan the flames of the growing anti-Yugoslav sentiment.

"The most serious manifestations of ethnic conflict in contemporary post-industrial

societies arise from long-standing grievances and feelings of deprivation or oppression

experienced by indigenous populations" (Richmond, 1994, p.111). Substantial numbers of

all four of these nation states have for several generations harboured nationalistic

aspirations for political autonomy, self-determination, and for some, domination over

others.

Generally speaking, the further north and west one travels in former Yugoslavia

the more solidly the population is Catholic. The further east and south one goes, the more

solidly the population is Orthodox. The central part of Bosnia-Herzegovina is where it all

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came together. Bosnia-Herzegovina was often referred to as "Little Yugoslavia" (Crnobrnja, 1996) because it was here that the tremendous diversity of religious, linguistic, and national identities merged. It was here that the fires of diversity burned the brightest and eventually, the hottest. The mixing and matching of ethnic backgrounds was the most complete and intractable in Little Yugoslavia and, paradoxically, it was here at the world's great crossroads that people were both the most aware and the least aware of the social tension that diversity engenders.

Many of the Serbs knew this war was coming and just prior to its outbreak Serbians often left primarily Muslim towns without saying goodbye to friends and neighbours. One morning their house would be deserted except for those items that were too big to carry. One participant talked about her Serbian neighbour who simply disappeared two days before war broke out. This participant, sensing something was wrong, had asked, "What is happening? Something is happening." Her neighbour replied, "I can't tell you. Don't ask me." Serbians fleeing Bosnia several days before the war was a common occurrence, according to several participants. One participant talked of a Serbian officer who lived in her city and who sent a helicopter from Serbia to pick up his family shortly before war broke out. Angry and hurt at what she perceived as betrayal of the worst kind, this participant was shocked when old friends fled prior to the outbreak of war and then wrote her affectionate letters about how much they missed her. During the war, study participants appealed to friends they knew who had fled to safety in Austria or Serbia. They asked for food, clothing, and money, and were deeply hurt when the response was simply no reply.

One of the most difficult events for many of the Muslim participants to address

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was how anyone could, on the first day of war, pick up a gun and begin killing for no reason other than a Muslim sounding name. There is a tremendous distinction between many of the European Muslims from former Yugoslavia and Muslims from Turkey, for example. Under Communism, Yugoslavians were not encouraged to develop or observe their Muslim faith, although several participants remember their grandmothers observing Muslim practices. Theirs was a more secular faith. None of the Muslim women in the study wore traditional Muslim dress, fasted, or abstained from drinking and eating pork. Hence, although they are Muslim, they have far more in common with their Serbian and Croatian countryfolk than with Muslims of Turkey or Iran.

During the War

Inasmuch as prejudice, oppression and hatred between ethnic groups was repressed during Tito's era, they were enforced during the war. Ethnic purists and politicians would broadcast radio propaganda during the war suggesting that children of mixed marriages were not normal and needed special assistance and help. People whose only crime was marrying outside their race and their faith were placed in concentration camps. Any kindness to an opposing ethnic group was punishable by death.

> In forest I find Serbian soldier. He not die but just a little die. He beg me, "Help me." He was young, 17 years. What can I to do? I only give water, but my friends see me give him water they shoot me here (motions to his head). One hundred percent dead (P11, p9).

Croatians, living in predominately Muslim towns and cities, were officially refused the right to work, as were Muslims living in predominantly Serbian cities. One participant, a Croatian, talked about applying for a job as a teacher. After a ten-mile walk to the school and a lengthy wait for the principal, who turned out to be an old high school friend, she

was shown official documents from city hall in Bihac stating that only Muslims could be employed. In a city she had been born and raised in, she was insulted and humiliated by strangers, who felt bound to expel her. When she escaped to Banja Luka, a primarily Serbian city, she was equally unwelcome as a Croatian.

Muslims were offered money to kill Serbians and vice versa. Serbian soldiers who were fighting on the Muslim side or Croatian soldiers who were fighting on the Serbian side or any combination of these three were highly mistrusted. Sometimes they were killed by their own comrades-in-arms or locked up with captured soldiers of a similar ethnic persuasion. As a rule, these ethnic anomalies performed menial tasks such as digging trenches.

One of the most difficult things for participants to integrate during this war appeared to be the betrayal and the total absence of compassion and ethic of care between ethnic groups. It was as if the last fifty years of a united Yugoslavia had never existed. The manner in which one ethnic group aggrandized its killers, was met with shocked disbelief and rage from other ethnic groups. With alarming frequency local governments freed jailed criminals, issued them arms, and set them loose on an unarmed population of ethnic minorities. The very fact that your neighbours could actually kill you was unthinkable.

> ... When it came (to us) that our neighbours are killing us, it was really shock. You just couldn't believe it. How can somebody that was just friends with us yesterday shoot us and kill us ... (P18, p.4).

In Serbian occupied towns, Muslims were kept under lock and key. Their movements were tightly controlled by curfews and most of the men hid while the women searched for food and fetched water. They quite rightly feared for their lives and every knock on the door was an unimaginably unnerving experience. Terrified to respond to a

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knock and terrified to ignore it, they lived in some sinister twilight zone, suspended

between life and death. Even humanitarian aid organizations run by religious orders towed

the tightly drawn ethnic lines. Christian organizations refused aid to people of mixed

marriages or different ethnic/religious backgrounds even when one of the partners was

Christian. Muslim organizations helped only Muslims and Orthodox organizations helped

only Serbians.

> There were three nations in our town. There were Serbs and there
> were Croatian people and there were Muslims. . . . Catholics and Muslims,
> they were running away together, but Serbs were attacking both of us (P18,
> p.3).

Bosnian Serb civilians were targets of frustrated loathing during the war. One half

Serbian, half Croatian participant was openly humiliated and targeted by colleagues. In

hospitals Serbian soldiers would switch identities with more seriously injured Muslim

soldiers so as not to be maltreated. There was always the danger of being mistaken for a

Serb and treated, or mistreated, accordingly. Participants saw doctors who refused to treat

patients because of their nationality, and that is still the case.

At the outset of the war, Croatian Serbs and Bosnian Serbs that were close to the

Croatian border were particularly vulnerable. One study participant, a Serb who appeared

to have been especially embittered by the war, said that he now understood how

thoroughly ethnicity defines a person and subsumes personhood.

> If a man in Bosnia is Croatian then he is Croatian first, then man. If
> he is Serb then same thing. If he is Muslim, same thing. Or Jewish, same
> thing. This is very, very simple to say but it is very complicated. . . . In
> Bosnia between those people is the big, big, wall forever. It was before but
> I didn't know. . . . (P23, p.3).

Following the War

Ethnic hatred is one of the reasons people chose to emigrate. This was especially true of couples in mixed marriages. They suffered both during the war and in post-war Bosnia as there is little place in an ethnically pure-minded world for those of mixed unions and the fruit of those unions. This war did a great deal to stimulate ownership of ethnicity. What had been relegated to the underground and subject to swift and unyielding punishment under Tito was unleashed like some heinous hound of hell to create wanton destruction. And, as stated earlier, several of the Muslims in the study credit this war with the restoration of their faith and pride in being Muslim.

Clearly these ethnic hatreds spill over into Canada, Sweden and every other country to which the refugee flees. One of the participants, a Muslim, recalled an incident that occurred in an English class.

> I was in school once . . . how can I say this? . . . When they fire on Srebrenica and people couldn't move and they dying . . . they made laugh of that. I saw them. Serbs, 17, 18 years, they made laugh. . . . This really hurt. Nobody can understand. . . . (P12, p.8).

Many of the Muslims and Croatians in the study perceive the majority of Serbian people as aggressive, hateful, and totally responsible for the destruction of former Yugoslavia. When approached by Serbian people they feel angry, confused, and hurt and want nothing to do with overtures of friendship.

> You have some people here in Canada, Serbian people . . . and they say, "Hey, where do you live? We are close. We are neighbours and . . . they try to talk. Do they know what is shame? What they did? Yesterday, he fired at me. He tried to kill me. Today he want to talk to me. How? How can I talk to him? How is it possible? . . . (P11, p.14).

These feelings are fueled by history, experience, and stereotypes. This participant thought of the majority of Serbs as people who like to steal, never work hard, and are violent and enamored of weapons. Much fear exists between the warring factions. One participant said that even the thought of talking to Serbian people frightened her. It was their fault that she was here in this strange land where immigration officials carelessly put a newly arrived Muslim family with a Serbian translator, and all factions were advised to get over their problems, put the past into the past, and go forward into their new lives. Unfortunately, this was not unlike Tito's approach.

> All those counselors try to get us together but we haven't been prepared for that. . . . I feel sad because . . . I saw some difference between us . . . and Serbian people from Bosnia. . . . I can't explain what is the difference. . . . People in immigration they didn't understand what has happened. They are always telling us, "You have to forget." . But I can't forget what has happened. We are people, we have a blood, we have a mind, we have a heart inside. This is life we can't forget (P10, p.37).

The main historical force determining the Balkans in the last two centuries has been ethnic nationalism and by and large these ethnic groups have been unable to reconcile divergent national ambitions (Mojzes, 1994). After this bloody and brutal war and the mass exodus of Bosnians to Canada and other parts of the world, reconciliation appears to be impossible. Some authorities (Mojzes, 1994) maintain that never again will all the former states of the union gather together into one country. Perhaps the best that can be hoped for is that these tiny independent republics all become part of a united Europe. However, whatever happens, it is unlikely that participants in this study will play much of a part in that reconstruction. They are left to carve out a new life, in a new land from a starting place of nothing.

<u>Self-Organization:</u>
<u>Transition from Citizen to Refugee/Chaos to Order</u>

Introduction

The survivor needs time to make the transition from citizen to refugee to citizen. Time is an exceptionally important element in self-organization. Further, refugees need a place to hang their hats and let the dust settle before self-organization begins in earnest. It is only after the transition from citizen to refugee to new citizen is made that individuals have the time and the opportunity to self-organize and restructure their reality. An essential piece of that restructuring is the integration of the fact that they are refugees and survivors of war. In the following section of the paper I will look at the categories of survival/work; homelessness and homesickness; destruction of family, health, society, and individual identity; rebuilding of self; rebuilding of family; and adjustment. It is in the latter four categories that the refugee begins to self-organize in earnest. The category of destruction of family, health, society, and individual identity is common to both the chaotic and the self-organizing patterns of refugees.

Survival Work

The Canadian government encourages well-educated, highly skilled individuals to immigrate, however, there appear to be tremendous obstacles in both recognizing foreign credentials and accrediting foreign professionals in this country. "The problem of credentialism has been a persistent source of difficulty for wave after wave of immigrants in Canada who find their university degrees discounted, their professional qualifications unrecognized, and their trade diplomas useless" (Richmond, 1994, p.126). Refugee doctors, nurses, dentists, teachers, social workers, and tradesmen all face barriers, but

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physicians have been particularly discriminated against. Even if they pass the licensing exams they are often not allowed an internship, which is necessary to practice.

Many refugees experience a loss of dignity because their professional or trade qualifications and skills are not recognized by the host country. Years of education and experience go unacknowledged and, in effect, the physician from former Yugoslavia is treated exactly like the farmer from the mountains of Laos. This was a common complaint of study participants. Regardless of their educational level or former position and profession, they were all treated the same. This loss of dignity was exacerbated by barriers to economic opportunity, social acceptance, and full incorporation into the host country, and this research would indicate that the barriers are felt most acutely in this area of meaningful work. Racism is a fact of contemporary society, but participants did not appear to face a great deal of overt racism. The racism they described was more covert and systemic. For example, several of the participants became embroiled in the legal system for various reasons and all three felt their refugee status compromised the level of justice and fairness which they were accorded.

Finding meaningful work, was an ongoing struggle for many participants. The physician in this study who left Sarajevo in 1994 found herself in Germany working as a cleaning lady responsible for one restaurant and four houses. She got chronic eczema on her hands from the products and was fired, she believes, because she ventured some medical advice to the restaurant owner concerning his painful back. After her arrival in Canada she became pregnant and, following the birth of her son she began a study campaign in order to try to pass medical licensing exams. The amount of study needed to prepare for these exams is extensive. Colleagues warned her that licensing in Canada was

a frustrating and nearly impossible task. Further, she needed a ninety percent average. The one successful model she had for this process spent fifteen hours a day studying. Almost solely responsible for her young son, she had no chance to find that kind of time. Although married at the time, her husband was working long days trying to launch a carpentry business. She considered going home but was told by her Serbian friends that employment for a minority group was difficult there, too.

Job interviews can be a harrowing, self-esteem battering experience for the seasoned job hunter. For refugees, who carry large doses of trauma and huge gaps in their resumes due to the war, the experience can be totally defeating. Further, in Bosnia, people did not write resumes, do job searches, and compete for jobs like they do in Canada. In a Communist system, people's relationship to work is far more secure than in a capitalist society. Further, in a capitalist system refugees are used and abused in that they are given jobs through agencies such as Working for Work or New Canadians in an attempt to acclimatize them to the Canadian job market. At least one participant, a mechanical engineer, was quite willing to work for nothing for three months but with his employer constantly dangling a possible job before his eyes, he stayed on for another two months. His employer used this participant's ideas, skill, time, and energy for five months and paid him nothing. The same thing happened in Slovenia to another participant. Refugees were flooding in from Bosnia, labor was cheap, and employers took full advantage of the refugees' situations. This job market in Slovenia and Canada was new to many of the participants and quite unlike the job market in Bosnia.

> What is different here (in Canada) is that . . . you have to struggle
> for work, any job position. . . . (In former Yugoslavia) no. No references,
> no resumes, nothing. Here you have to knock on all these doors and be

prepared to be refused one million times and get back again and not be hurt.
. . . I would say what I am doing here for work, it is temporary. I am doing
something on behalf of my family to improve type of living and nothing
else. Especially that I am not doing anything what is close to my
profession. . . . I am doing what I have to because of this check every
Thursday and that is it (P4, p.25).

Work is as pivotal to survival in the new world as psychic numbing is to survival
in war. According to many of the participants, obtaining work, especially meaningful
work, coincided with making a giant leap in adjusting to life in Canada. They knew they
had made a shift when they found a job. Work serves many functions. It restores some
dignity and structure to the refugee's life. It affords them a paycheck which makes for
more palatable dining than welfare, and it gives them something to do besides think about
what they have lived through and lost. Sometimes the change was felt immediately and
other times it happened slowly over time.

When I got a job it changed things a little bit. I was still sure I
wanted to go back. I didn't want to stay here but I started with the part time
work and I was busy, busy . . . working every day. . . . I really like the job
so I was starting to think about that when I got home. I was thinking about
what I was doing. I was reading something that I wanted to learn. This . . .
takes my mind away from thinking about the past, about my home, about
my parents (P16, p.18).

Without work there is too much time to think and grieve, and although this is
necessary, the fact that the refugee does not have work and has no idea if she or he will
find work, adds a new layer of depression to an already multilayered problematic situation.
Work is critical to adjustment, healing, and self-organization. Self-organization theory
suggests that given the right conditions systems will structure themselves (Goerner, 1995).
All living self-organizing systems are inherently creative and internally motivated to take
charge of those conditions that order and control system behaviour, change, and evolution.

Refugees can and do order and restructure their lives. However, the more open the host society is to creating the "right conditions" for interactive dynamics that foster creative internally motivated self-organization, the easier it will be for refugees to accomplish the daunting job of restructuring their lives. Nevertheless, it would appear that for the most part, finding work is a vicious job for the refugee and because Canada is often the last of several attempts at resettlement, the struggle is familiar. This may be the first time, however, that the refugee is scrambling to learn a new language.

> I noticed there won't be anything with my diploma and government help us first year and we are appreciative for that. After, we went on social assistance, welfare, and we find out it is going to be very hard to make a good life and we start looking for job. At that time we don't know English but we start looking for job. We get some part time job and go in school for learning English. But, you know, after 40 years it is hard to learn another language, especially English. I guess it is the most difficult language in the world. Everything is different from Slavic language. I could speak most of the Slavic languages. . . . (P9, p.41).

As a man whose job in former Yugoslavia depended on language he had no choice but to take a noisy, dirty factory job which he now cannot leave, as his wife is retraining and his sons are in high school. Now in his mid-forties he wonders if it is possibly too late for him.

> In Canada there are many ways but you have to study hard and find the time for learning. . . . I am always trying to improve my language. That is only way. . . . but maybe it is late for me. . . . (P9, p.41).

At forty years old, several participants felt it was too late to restore what had been destroyed. Foreign diplomas and degrees are virtually worthless by official Canadian standards. As a former high school gym teacher and coach, one participant found it difficult to even look at a field of high school kids playing soccer. He said this part of his life is finished, past, and it cannot be retrieved. After twenty years of coaching sports, he

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said he has much to offer this country but there are no takers. As he put it, "We are full of experiences that we can't show to nobody." (P13, p.33). And, because this participant's language skills are less than proficient, nor can he tell anyone.

In Canada, some job applications and all university and college applications require an English language proficiency score which must be over a certain level. However, even without this added encumbrance, the work of looking for work is incessant. Several Serbian study participants fled to Serbia before and during the war. Even though they were Serbian, they were looked upon with disdain and became targets for xenophobic attitudes. Displaced Bosnian Croatians received much the same treatment in Croatia. In Croatia you cannot legally work if you are not a citizen. All that is possible is to receive humanitarian aid. Non-Croatian children work from different text books in school than Croatian children, and they receive a report card, while refugee children are given a loose piece of paper with the marks recorded. Work in Germany, although plentiful and often well-paid, is usually difficult manual labour and it is almost guaranteed that you will not be granted citizenship. Landed immigrant status must be renewed every few months and whether you remain in the country or not is entirely at the whim of the German government. And although Canada is much more generous in terms of offering landed immigrants citizenship status, work is not plentiful, well-paid, or as easy to find.

> Back in Bosnia we had jobs. In Slovenia it was very hard but we
> had a job. But when we came here, no job, so it is hard for us. We were
> hard working wherever we went and . . . when we came here it was
> different. We have nothing to do (P18/19, p.8).

It is apparently particularly difficult on Balkan men. Some families in the study mirrored the traditional Balkan family structure of the male at the head of the family.

Within this traditional role of the provider it is incumbent on the husband to go to war, protect his house and family, and be a provider in the new world. All but two of the sixteen participants who were living on state assistance at the outset of the study were anxious to be removed from that roster. Of the two participants who were not anxious to work, both had suffered severe trauma in the war. One had a great deal of trouble concentrating and did not believe that she was psychologically well enough to maintain a full time job and the other, a young male, had been diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder.

Under the current climate in this province, the one thing such a refugee needs is the one thing he is not allowed. The current "workfare" program insists that people receiving state financial support do some kind of work. This participant had been told he must take any work that is offered and, further, he was told he had to accept the province's mandate that he accept temporary work on a farm as part of the workfare program. He refused.

> I am not killing nobody. I am not criminal. I don't have the drugs. I am try to do my best here. Leave me alone for a couple of years. No push me like that. You say, "Give me resume", okay, I give you resume. But, what you are going to do with that resume? . . . Send me on a farm (P7, p.31). . . . Self reliant for me is very important thing. I work for eight years as economist. But now I don't have self-reliant. If I will have the time, I will have best future, but I need the time (P7, p.34).

In addition, this participant holds the West responsible, at least in part, for the war in his country. Although he willingly shares in that responsibility, he attributes many of the problems in Eastern Europe, including the Cold War and the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, to Western interference.

> Some people is scared talking about these things. . . . But West civilization put East civilization down . . . actually Communism down. No you, no ordinary people, but government. Politics. . . . Now, here (in

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Canada) . . . if somebody is going to push me down, if somebody try to destroy me . . . like to put me on a farm . . . I am not going to do that. . . . West have a little bit responsibility about my war in my country (P7, p.27).

As the only participant in the study who voiced this kind of sentiment, it is difficult to know how many others were thinking along similar lines. This participant was uncomfortable sharing this contentious opinion but he clearly believed that the West, including Canada, owed him, at the very least, the right to live on welfare. Well aware that he needed meaningful work, he was also aware of the affront to his professional dignity. As an economist and Internet expert, he was understandably angry and defensive at the government's insistence that he work as a manual farm laborer.

Many good things is here. Many, many, many, many. In the end, Canada is good place to live. . . . Canada is number one country. . . . Canadian government have a good program for the immigrants here but government have to create, design, good jobs for that people. For me that is important. If you don't have the good job you have the trouble (P7, p.31).

And indeed, trouble he had. Close to the end of the study he alienated his case worker and she discontinued his social assistance benefits. He was attempting to change his status from social assistance to disability, as he was being formally treated for PTSD. Receiving disability benefits in Ontario is a lengthy and complicated process and in the current climate people are routinely turned down. About 60 percent of those who appeal, however, are awarded disability. By the end of the study, this participant was still without funding.

Because work is so central to the self-organization and well being of the refugee, it is an area that warrants considerable attention by the host nation. If Canada is going to accept the skilled and the skillful from the available pool of refugees then it must also accept responsibility for finding those individuals appropriate work. It is unconscionable to bring highly trained physicians, pharmacists, and teachers into the country and relegate

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them to cleaning toilets in a local hotel. Even though the province of Ontario is in desperate need of physicians, and foreign-trained physicians are lobbying to make it easier to practice, it would appear that to date nothing has been done to change existing regulations.

One participant, a music teacher with perfect pitch, who has been in Canada for three years has resigned himself to the fact that he will probably never work as a teacher again.

> I am realistic person. Sooner or later I will go to factory but I will not be unhappy because that is my reality and I am ready for that. . . . If I can go on vacation, have good health, good car . . . I don't like to have big money. . . . I like to have just normal life. . . . If I stay in my country, if we imagine that there was not war . . . I will teach the school and after I will go in summer to Adriatic Sea. . . . and after maybe twenty years the state would give me pension and apartment. . . . I would have had a normal life. . . . (P23, p.27).

At this point his partner, also a teacher, adds the following:

> Here, we just don't have so many choice. . . . I think for me it will be hardest thing to find pretty good job. . . . I am afraid about job here because many people tell it is very hard to work in a factory (P24, p.27).

Work is necessary for survival but, paradoxically, it is an abundant spring of both hope and dread. One participant who has been in Canada for three years, and is possibly the most unhappy individual in the study in terms of living in Canada, after much effort and training found employment with The Bay.

> After, I took this course for salesperson at The Bay . . . I just wanted to quit. I don't have nothing more . . . I don't have energy. . . . Especially when I go my placement . . . I was so nervous . . . so depression. My English is so bad. The customer doesn't know I am just student. I was so scared. They ask me some questions. I will do everything, just please don't speak English. Just go away from me. . . . Sometimes I have to speak to people . . . I say, "Sorry, I am just student here". But every day, every day you can't say, "I am just student". . . . It is just too stress for me. . . . Some

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days when I go to work, I don't know why, but sometimes I got so nervous.
How I will do this day? Sweating. . . . I have to (psychologically) prepare. .
. . A panic starts inside of me (P15, p.20).

However, she has to work. She has to deal with customers and she has to carve out a life

for herself in a foreign land. Living in a country that does not recognize foreign learning,

she is relieved she never finished her engineering degree. Many refugees will take any

kind of work. For example, a pharmacist in former Yugoslavia, came to Canada and

cleaned hotel toilets.

On Friday, when you were here . . . that was when we talk . . .
afterwards . . . I cry. . . . When I work in hotel and when I work on
something I don't enjoy . . . I am feeling so bad (P11, p13).

Work is intensely connected to self-esteem and, therefore, intricately involved in

self-organization.

. . . It is problem if I don't have a job. If I just sitting here in four
walls around me, this is stressful. I have a time much more than I should
because I am 33 years old and I have to do something for my life. I am not
handicapped to stay at home but I feel like I am not useful for anybody
(P21, p.37).

This land does little to remove higher-level obstacles for the refugee. Subsistence

living is awarded, English is taught through English as a Second Language courses, and

basic health care is provided after six months. For some, given enough time, this is

enough. Throughout the study, participants made significant changes in their lives. For

example, the refugee, who is a single mom and physician has since been accepted into a

Master of Science program at the University of Toronto. She is doing well and working

hard. She is chipping out a life, for herself and her son. The pharmacist is no longer

cleaning hotel toilets but is working as a pharmaceutical assistant in a drug store and

contemplating the arduous process of becoming licensed in Canada. But for those who

come to Canada with children, a professional degree, a debt to the Canadian government for bringing them here, and a partner whose earning capacity is minimal, upgrading is not always an option. The professions themselves place enormous obstacles in the refugee's way. For example, it costs thousands of dollars for a foreign dentist to write licensing exams in the province of Ontario and it takes hundreds and hundreds of hours of study. However, I saw the Balkan women and men in this study as resilient, independent, and competent, juggling all the same balls as Canadians but with the added linguistic, educational, occupational, cultural, and psychobiological complications concomitant with being a refugee.

Homelessness and Homesickness

Homelessness

The essence of being a refugee is homelessness. The refugee is a forcibly displaced and uprooted person who is in flight from a deadly environment. This forced displacement creates profound disconnection from country, culture, extended family, social networks, and the self. One's refugee status emerges slowly. It begins with the decision to flee and ends with the decision to emigrate, either to a different part of the country or to a new land altogether. Once the initial realization that one is homeless has been accepted, it appears that the country one chooses to emigrate to is simply the lesser of all evils and the one door that appears to open most easily.

The flight itself is chaotic. Resources and savings are squandered in the search for security and payoffs to corrupt officials. Families are separated and movable property such as furniture or farm animals are lost, stolen, or sold. Tools of a person's craft or trade are often lost or stolen. The structure and size of households change as do gender roles. While

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in flight, children's developmental progress is arrested due to lack of nutrition, warmth, security, health care, and possible separation from family. Only a small percentage of refugee children worldwide attend school (Cohen, et al., 1998), and most of those schools are provisional as is everything else in the refugee's life, from the bed he or she sleeps in, to the country in which he or she is provisionally residing.

These provisional measures can last for years. Often there are numerous stops and attempts at putting down roots before resettlement actually takes place. In this study, for example, people fled immediately to nearby countries such as Germany, Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Holland, and Slovenia. Several participants lived for as long as three years in a refugee camp in Slovenia before emigrating to Canada. As a rule, people arrived at the camp with nothing, including identification papers. After living in a war zone without electricity, the lights of the refugee camp looked inordinately inviting.

> I saw the many windows in the refugee camp, open, closed , . . .
> lights from the rooms. Some life and she (sister-in-law) came out to give
> me a hug. After two years living . . . without the lights . . . I saw the lights. .
> . . I was all the night walking and looking at the lights . . . different colours,
> different dimensions (P6, p.6).

This childlike wonder and appreciation of light and life was a sentiment often expressed by the refugees. However, it was not to last long. Life in the camp, at least for the first year, was intolerable. They were treated "like animals" (P18, p.10). All basic human rights and freedoms were revoked. The food was described as inedible, there was no privacy because many people were billeted to a room and there was no freedom, as refugees were allowed out of the camp for only one and a half hours at a time before they were rounded up by police. There were 600 people, two showers, and the only thing there was an abundance of was water. Their plight was further aggravated by the fact that they

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could not go home because as a rule it has been destroyed.

This refugee camp in Slovenia was the launching pad to Canada for four of the study participants. All four of these participants emigrated first to Quebec, which has its own immigration department and special criteria for admission. An intense program of "francization" (Richmond, 1994) took place where refugees were taught French and French-Canadian culture. However, deeply unhappy in Quebec, all four study participants and their families moved to Ontario. By the time they reached Ontario they had tried to learn Slovenian, French and finally, English. Two of the study participants, a brother and sister, applied from this refugee camp in Slovenia to come to Canada along with their extended family. Their elder parents were refused entrance to Canada. Hence, they were placed in the difficult position of choosing between immigration and separation from the extended family, remaining in the refugee camp and beginning the immigration process over again but to a different host country, or returning to a war-torn country where what was considered home has been annihilated.

> . . . (It was) very hard to decide what is going to be the best for me, my family, my relatives and I make decision but that was hard. First of all for myself, second of all for the family, and third for the people around me. . . . And before I go to Canada everything looks fine but after the couple of months they tell me on the phone, Canadian Embassy, that they can't accept the father and mother. . . . (P7, p.9).

For this participant, it was not until he was in the refugee camp that the full impact of his status as a refugee broke through his awareness: "In Slovenia I say, 'We are now a refugee'." (P6, p.8). Contributing to the already high levels of stress that result from being a refugee of war and homeless, is the added anguish of separation from extended family. One young single mother described her departure from Bosnia in 1994:

> We was on the street and we had to go by bus to Hungary and it was
> very, very sad. So many my friends came to say me goodbye. . . . so many
> people around me was crying, crying, crying when we went on bus. I start
> to cry in bus and I came to Hungary and I cried. It is like a piece of my
> heart stayed there (she is crying now as she shares this story). . . . My
> middle sister was there, she was pregnant, and my other sister. She came
> from Croatia to say goodbye. . . . (P21, p.22).

The economically advanced countries of the world have welcomed temporary and

permanent refugees when it has suited them. When in need of cheap labor sources, the

borders open. However, as domestic nationalism, racism, and xenophobia experience a

resurgence, those borders are becoming more and more closed to the refugee. Britain,

Canada and most other Western countries' response to the refugee crisis has been to

impose legal restrictions and adopt highly selective criteria for admission (Richmond,

1994).

In New Zealand, for example, the refugee must have $10,000 before applying to

enter the country. Several participants chose to emigrate to Canada because it was the only

country willing to advance the family a loan and most did not have one dollar, let alone

$10,000.

Being homeless means having little choice about where one lives. People live with

distant relatives they barely know, a father's second cousin whom they have never met, or

siblings who have moved abroad. But, wherever they live, few people understand what

they and their children have been through. And sometimes lack of understanding was the

least of their problems. While living in Croatia one participant and her family shared a

large house with the homeowner's son. The couple who owned the house lived and

worked in Germany. The young man was a needle-tracked drug addict who slept all day

and brought prostitutes home at night. This participant lived in the house with this young

man. She cleaned up after him and tried to protect her two young boys. So uncomfortable did the living arrangements become that the family decided, after trying to stay in Germany and then Holland, to apply to the Canadian Embassy. At this point they had migrated from Bosnia to Croatia, to Holland, to Germany and finally, back to Croatia and from there to Canada.

Refugees are always open to rejection and they carry within a certain amount of shame at their plight, their poverty, and their loss, and can go to great lengths to hide the depths of their need.

> When we were in Germany on first month I didn't work and we were with sister-in-law. I didn't go downtown maybe three, four months with my children. I didn't have money and I didn't want my children saw all things they cannot have. That was terrible time. Really terrible. I don't have job . . . my husband come after six months. . . . I didn't have nothing. Nothing (P11, p14).

Refugees arrived in this country tired, lost, full of uncertainties, and at some point within the first few days, often during the first night, there was a tremendous urge to stop the process and return home. Every one of the study participants experienced this desperate longing to return home. One participant phoned his parents and said they were returning. But the truth was, they had no way to return. First, they had nowhere to return to because their home was now in Serbian territory and his parents were now living in one room, and second, they had no money for the return flight. Canada becomes home by default. Even the two participants who emigrated after the war still had tremendous misgivings.

> We were in bed in Vienna. . . . the window was open and you could see the sky and we were laying down looking at the European stars and he said, "Why are we doing this?" I said, "I don't know." I pictured all the faces of my family, of my baby sister grabbing my hand and telling me, "Do not go to Canada." . . . Then we came to Toronto and we are still thinking, "Why did we come?" (P1, p.25).

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Homesickness

Once emigration plans have been finalized, homesickness sets in, and by and large never really goes away. It is experienced as a despairing nostalgia and engenders an extreme sense of lack of belonging. This is exacerbated by the fact that the refugee has been forcibly ejected from his or her world. In time the despair softens but for the participants in this study it never disappeared completely. The first stage of homesickness is experienced as an urgent need to return home. The anxiety and the sense of urgency are almost unbearable. As the acute anxiety passes it leaves in its wake a dull ache and an awareness of loss and lack of proximity to family. In time, there is an acceptance of this loss but more acute feelings can be reactivated during holidays or if a family member dies and it is impossible to return home.

Although the need to be with the extended family never disappears, there are some benefits in being an ocean away. It sometimes helps resolve or change one's perspective on long-standing familial problems. For example, one participant who believes she is a more competent and independent person because of her life in Canada, has learned to differentiate from family in a way that would not have been possible had she remained in former Yugoslavia.

> When I living in Canada I change myself maybe eighty percent. . . .
> I change my language, change my habit, change my personality. I am much
> stronger now. I was so weak in my country. I am the youngest child in my
> family and my sisters take care about me. . . . We have great connection but
> they always try to tell the best for me. . . . When I came in Canada this
> connection between my family and me . . . change. . . . They try to still
> make decisions on behalf of me over the phone. . . . Maybe after one year
> of living in Canada I start to speak. I start to say, "No way." I have my
> child. I have my money. I live alone. Nobody help me. Finally, I am
> independent person. Leave me alone. I know I am now different person. . . .
> Now I have private life and I can put line between my private life. And this

is one good things we learn in Canada. In my country is different.
Everybody have a right to put their fingers in your private life. But here is
different. Here is more private. I like more here than I do there (P21, p.27).

The agony of losing family can also be contiguous with a sense of independence from

family, along with a growing feeling of self-reliance.

The homesickness that results from lack of family can also, however, be powerful

enough to prevent the refugee from ever being able to experience sustained happiness. As

one participant who left behind her older sisters, parents, and her two-year-old baby sister

who was born in the war said, "I miss them too much to be really happy." Two

participants described this country as being "like a jail," a "very polite jail" but a jail

nonetheless. They had all the space they could manage but for financial reasons they could

not leave. Memories of "home" constantly threaten to intrude.

You cannot just come to live happily in this good country. . . . You
still have close relatives, parents, good friends there. Even if you put strong
line, never come back to live there again, you cannot not think. It is like
you live in a double minute. While you are driving by bus to your ESL
class you think on never ending war and whole life there, or cooking your
favorite national meals. . . . Shortly, your kids can speak English without
accent and learn perfectly to play baseball but you cannot. I cannot cut my
roots. It seems we are a lost generation. Lost in deep ocean between two
continents. We cannot live here without thinking, talking, going there and
we cannot live there anymore because of the war . . . (P28, p.14).

Living in a "double minute" is an apt way to describe the constant barrage of

memories that sit just at the edge of the refugee's awareness, ready to intrude at any given

moment and which are often superimposed on life in Canada. People do find solace and

comfort in members of their own country and community, but this shared past is tainted

with not only trauma but with a rivalry or competition between refugees that inhibits their

ability to help one another or alleviate the homesickness. Several participants discussed

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the fact that other refugees from former Yugoslavia lied to them, refused to help them, acted jealous when something good happened to one of their community, withheld information that could have been helpful to newcomers, and spread damaging gossip about each other. One young, attractive participant who was able to put the money together for a trip to former Yugoslavia heard through the rumor mill that she had obtained this money by working in a strip bar. Unable to counter or contend with these rumors, this participant made the painful decision to isolate herself from the larger former Yugoslavian community.

> I will be alone but I have Canadian people, people from another country. People like me. Peaceful people. I don't have to put this Croatian flag, red and white, to show who I am. . . . I know who I am within me (P21, p.23).

Constant comparisons not only afflict inter-relational landscapes but also afflict intra-relational landscapes. Comparing countries, relationships, achievements, and way of life tends to highlight losses and displacement rather than help the refugee adjust.

Traditions

It doesn't take long for refugees to realize that the longer they are here, the less likely they will be able to return home. Their children will have grown up as Canadians, and will speak primarily English in a way they never will. Only a few people will remember them back home, and the landscape will have changed dramatically. They come to realize that if they are going to stay then they must honor the old traditions as well as build new ones. Inasmuch as traditional holidays can be painful, holidays that are unique to the new world such as Thanksgiving are adopted with genuine pleasure, and a sense of curiosity and openness.

Participants have adopted a number of ways to deal with homesickness. They make videos, they send photos home, they send ten-page letters which are read over and over when phoning is too painful, and they send their parents their children's homework exercise books. They begin to make a life for themselves here, in that they find a house or a boyfriend. They get accepted to university. They have a baby. They resolve to try to get family members to Canada, including aging parents.

> Last year, health went down for both of my parents. All
> grandchildren and my sister and me, everyone is out. They are completely
> alone. Completely. I have to find a way to help them. . . . Our house was
> always full of little students, just giving instruction here and there in
> groups. Now a whole month can go and no one is knocking on their door. It
> is so sad. Too sad. I am on social assistance and I cannot bring them here
> but I will try. I try something through some refugee committee. I try my
> best and I am never giving up. Never. Never. Never (P28, p.3).

Holding on to the hope that togetherness is possible, and realizing and accepting that home does not exist anymore and never will again, seems to remove part of the sting from the powerful feelings associated with homesickness. Further, although it is an added pressure, being able to send even a token amount of money home helps the adjustment process and the feelings of homesickness. To be able to help those back home, even if you cannot see them, is important to the refugee's well being. If it was not possible to maintain this tradition of sending care packages home, refugees appeared to soothe themselves with the knowledge that their safety and the safety of their children afforded distant family members some peace of mind. Ties are binding in families from former Yugoslavia and the question of who will care for aging parents is one that gnaws at many of the participants. Even from the refugee camp in Slovenia, study participants tried to send money, food, and other supplies to parents and siblings in Bosnia. For some, the

motivation to come to Canada was strongly influenced by the fact that they believed this move would not only help them but also afford them the means to send money and food home.

Further, they fall in love, get married and, of course, they manage to find their way back for a visit. The visit home is always a psychic jolt, compelling, powerful, and capable of dictating the emotional tenor of one's life for some time to come. Of the three participants who made the journey, one reaffirmed her decision to immigrate and felt "in some way calm" upon her return to Canada. And the other two sunk into a deep depression over the losses they had experienced, the opportunities they had missed, and the people they loved and would not see again for some time. For the following participant the return to Canada was unbearable and it was leaving family again that made it so painful to return to Canada.

> I spend very, very nice time. I make great connection with my sister, with all my friends, with my mom. When you wake up and somebody give you kiss and give you hug and my mom made coffee and breakfast for us and we were sleeping together and we walk together and it is something I really miss (P21, p.35).

Another participant said,

> Doesn't matter how worse it is down there. Whatever situation, political or economical, you always will belong there somehow, more or less. Because of family . . . brothers and mothers and fathers, because of this you are more closer to that country than you would be otherwise (P4, p.22).

The last participant who returned home, and was delighted to be back in Canada, had only an aging mother and father left in former Yugoslavia and everything had changed. Buildings that had been destroyed were rebuilt but unrecognizable. The people were different and she did not find one friend, even though she called 50 phone numbers.

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With the exception of tragic memories there was nothing left in that land of war, ghosts, and pain. In an attempt to revisit the most tragic moment of her life, she tried to return to the scene of her son's death.

> It is late evening and it is becoming very difficult to handle my emotions. I get the feeling that I am drawing in a mood of memories. My feet cannot step close to the corner where my angel was killed. I am stone. My face is in tears. I close my eyes, turn around, and walk away. It is so difficult to meet the people who knew my son. Mention or not, look or not at his friends from class, now thirteen and fourteen, all boys and girls. What and how to say anything. Tonight I am thinking on two of the most difficult moments during the war. First, losing my mind trying to stop the time on 7 September, 1994 at three o'clock in the afternoon and turn back just few minutes ago when my child was smiling on me asking after finishing his last homework to play with kids outside. I really don't know how I survived that first second and all time later. The second (difficult moment) was spring 1992 in first days of war. They on the hills were bombing us in the valley for the whole morning. I was squatting in the kitchen corner praying the Rosary trying to be far from open holes: windows, glass, balcony. I heard crying of pain, terrible voice of wounded man. He was screaming to sky to allow him to die soon. None was able to go out to help him. After a few minutes he calmed down and his soul went to God but his screams stayed forever in my ears (P28, p.18).

Powerful images and feelings associated with war can act as an antidote to homesickness, and perhaps the only way to heal from such enormous tragedy is to put an ocean between the present and the past, even while the past stays with you whenever and wherever you go.

Destruction of Family, Health, Society and Individual Identity

Within this category lie the seeds of transformation. This category emerged in both the overarching transitional themes of Peace to War and Citizen to Refugee. After the stark and total destruction the refugee has experienced due to war and flight, resettlement in a new world holds some promise for the reestablishing of meaning and the reconstructing of the various dimensions of the refugee's life. However, what the refugee

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actually encounters is something quite different. The old war has often followed them to the new world and rears its head in English or French language classes, in apartment buildings with high concentrations of people from former Yugoslavia, in schools, and at multicultural gatherings. Finding employment is a nightmare and relationships are tested to the breaking point and beyond. Trauma symptoms can emerge with a vengeance and everything from going to the store to picking your children up from school is relentlessly tiresome. Most refugees lack any of the amenities. They cannot drive and, therefore, must bus everywhere in a city they are unfamiliar with and, since they cannot speak the language, cannot ask for directions.

At this low point, however, refugees appear to begin the process of rebuilding and self-organizing. For the first time in many years they experience peace in the land and they receive a nominal amount of money from the government if they attend English as a Second Language classes. They begin the arduous process of learning another language and they make contacts within their own ethnic community and the larger network of Canadian society. They begin to grapple with some of the suffering they have endured and they begin to assess and redefine their space and place in the world.

These survivors walk among us every day, carrying within the long-term physical and psychological sequella of living through a war. But because they are once again living in peacetime, they can connect to the very strengths that kept them alive in the midst of death and sane in the midst of utter insanity. They have the time to begin to claim their experience, to own the horror of what has happened and assess the materials they have at hand to begin to rebuild. As one participant stated,

> It is very difficult for me to speak about this but . . . this is my
> experience and I will take something (from it) for the rest of my life. It is
> very hard . . . but it is my experience and I have to live it. I don't like to run
> away anymore. . . . (P21, p.2).

When the decision is made to stop running and confront one's situation, some measure of

acceptance follows, and in that acceptance lies the potential for growth, adaptation, and

transformation.

Family

When a system senses the need for change, chaotic activity begins, but the chaos

that is experienced in the new world juxtaposed to the chaos of war is minimal. Because

this emptiness exists at more manageable levels in the new world, the space where parents

and siblings should be is never quite replenished, but nor is the emptiness totally

debilitating.

> About my life in Canada . . . my choice is, I would like to be with
> my family but I don't know if it will be possible (P23, p.8)

Phone calls home are sometimes wonderful, sometimes okay, and sometimes painful. This

same young woman talked about her three-year-old daughter, who would talk on the

phone to a grandmother she has never met.

> When I call my mom . . . my daughter take the phone and she said,
> "Grandma, come to coffee." My mother has high blood pressure for that
> day (P23, p.8).

Still, she moves forward in her life, raising her three-year-old and preparing for

and finally giving birth to her second child. During the course of the study she had a

beautiful baby boy that she worries will never meet his grandparents.

A powerful force that both keeps families together and breaks them apart are

Canadian immigration policies and officials. "It has been shown that there is an assault on

freedom of movement and a closing of borders by the more advanced industrial countries of the world" (Richmond, 1994). Eligibility for full citizenship is sometimes difficult to achieve and the process of how refugees come into this country to live or even visit, is to some extent a "mysterious"one (Richmond, 1994). Of the two (non-study participant) couples that I was a part of sponsoring, one couple's immigration was approved and the other couple's was not. Although both couples were in mixed marriages and experienced open oppression, as stated previously, the deciding factor seemed to lie in the fact that one couple had not moved in 12 years and the other couple had. The fact that the latter couple had been trapped behind a blockade during the war did not seem to matter. Sponsors' letters of inquiry and assurances of continued financial support went unheeded and unanswered by the Canadian Embassy in Vienna.

Developed nations such as Canada have some responsibility to assist the world's displaced and oppressed populations but, along with other economically developed and affluent countries that are banding together to protect their privileged position, Canada has implemented a major revision to immigration laws. In 1993 Bill C-86 came into force and gives greater power to the minister in council to create regulations that govern who lets immigrants and refugees into the country. Richmond (1994) likens this attitude to the Afrikaners who sought to maintain dominance in South Africa and maintains this attitude has lead to global apartheid (Richmond, 1994).

The sense of helpless bitter disappointment that family members feel when a sister, brother, mother, or father are denied entry into Canada, or are not allowed to visit, when there is no avenue of appeal, enhances the isolation and alienation of the refugee. During the course of the study, some participants were able to bring family over to visit, others

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had family members whose requests to visit were denied, and still others had church-sponsored siblings' requests for entry into the country denied. Bringing family members to Canada, even for a visit, is a difficult process. Often immigration officials refuse to allow relatives to visit in Canada as they fear they will attempt to remain. When relatives do arrive, however, that is usually instrumental in helping the resettlement process.

> In the beginning I was writing letters every day to my mother. There was like five pages and I was writing that I didn't like anything here and everything was so terrible, so awful, so ugly. . . Because that was the way I wanted to see it. . . . And when they came they were really surprised and enjoyed the six weeks here. They liked it. They said, "Why are you complaining all the time? It is not so bad here. . . . In Bosnia it is still not good for you or for the kids." I could accept that. . . . and when they came I felt that now there is still a way we can be in touch with each other so it is not that far away if you can still go and visit and pay for the ticket (P16, p.19).

When the decision is made to come to Canada, the impact of the sheer distance between the two countries is discouraging and depressing for the refugee. To see family is to understand that the distance, although considerable, is not impossible to traverse. This helps the resettlement process immensely as it assuages the sense of isolation from extended family, and one's culture and ethnic roots. Seeing family leaves the refugee feeling a little more blessed and hopeful than before the extended family arrived. Reconnecting to family and one's roots is a vital ingredient in the well-being and the successful resettlement of the refugee because it softens the profound sense of disconnection that can occur. Hosting visiting family helps reconnect the refugee to self and others.

In some cases, however, the reconnection underscores the fact that having an ocean between oneself and one's extended family is not necessarily a bad thing. One

participant's mother, who came to visit at the peak of her and her husband's marital

problems, read her daughter's diary and discovered the conflict the young couple was

undergoing.

> Her reaction was . . she is traditional woman . . . and also there is
> kind of cultural thing. . . .accuse your child first not the other person.
> People are nice to somebody who is not your blood. So she made pressure
> on me like I am one who is not good wife. . . He was always on the job . . .
> so he was never home. My mom was there criticizing me all the time (P29,
> p.33).

War changes everything and emigration solidifies those changes. A critical

parent/child relationship within an enmeshed family structure will remain so and possibly

get worse as a result of war. However, emigration changes the relationship in that

ultimately, the visitor must go home. When the entire family emigrates, however, the

family system must shift to accommodate the fact that people have been traumatized and

as a result familial relationships can be more strained than before the war. In a

conversation with one of the participant's children, she commented on how the war has

changed her parents and their relationship. "They got nervous and they got sensitive on

everything," she said. "Before the war I could joke around with them, now I can't. They

think when I joke I am serious. It hurts their feelings. Before we were just a happy family

but now I have to think before I say anything or know what I am going to say (P18, p.18).

Further, family members deal with their trauma in different ways. One

participant's adolescent daughter talked about the antipathy that can arise between her and

her mother because they deal with the past differently. The more anxiety the mother feels,

the more compelled she is to disclose her feelings and talk about her experiences and her

memories. Her daughter, on the other hand, prefers to "stay on the surface" and use

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avoidance as her major defense against the pain.

> I avoid it all because I know if I talk about it with my mom she is going to get upset and start crying and I hate that. I don't like seeing her crying and when she is crying I start crying too. So I just avoid that. . . . She gets mad because I don't want to listen. . . . She thinks I am ignoring her but when I try to explain it to her she doesn't understand that we live different lives. We have different ways of thinking (P18, p.27).

Differing values between generations, children developing bicultural identities, and growing up without extended family all increase the pressure on the family system. However, ties to home for first generation immigrants are maintained in myriad ways apart from the obvious letters and phone calls. Participants who fled during the war but whose homes remained fairly unscathed have given their houses to family members whose homes were destroyed. For example, one study participant's father-in-law and three brothers-in-law lost everything during the war. They are all living together in the house that he and his wife once called their home. Although this participant has moved to Canada with his wife and family, the homestead has remained within the extended family. In the rebuilding and restructuring of his life, he has also contained the damage and destruction to his father-in-law's and brothers-in-laws' lives from an ocean away.

Health

Health problems often arise in this country. One participant, after living through four years of war, arrived in Canada and developed severe weight loss, nausea, and anxiety. After an acute anxiety attack this participant went to the hospital and discovered that her heart, due to extreme stress, was not functioning as it should. At 33 years of age this was a shocking reminder of how quickly stress depletes physical and emotional resources. However, in the context of a peaceful country, she was able to redefine her

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health problems in accordance with her needs and those of her daughter. She made

sweeping changes to her life and in so doing "cleared" her mind and solved her problems.

> I was very sick . . . I went to hospital . . . I had so many problems
> and I lost so many kilograms and I told myself, "Stop! That is enough. You
> can't do this." You have a child and that is the most important thing. . . . I
> couldn't solve these problems because I am not the reason for that. The
> reason are other people. So, I just cut connection with those people and
> now I am okay and I have just very small number of friends . . . two or
> three . . . but for me it is enough. . . . So I start to clean my emotions. I see
> what is good and what is not. . . . I was on the bottom again . . . and I say,
> "No. No. No. I deserve something better in my life." (P21, p.30).

These relational, health, financial, and psychological problems she was struggling

with were far too similar to much of what she had already lived through. She had traveled

too far literally and figuratively to allow herself to sink into sickness and depression again.

Because the experiences of the war years were so clearly etched in her life experience, she

recognized the internal signals that would indicate her resources were being depleted and

she needed to "clean her emotions," as she put it. She began running every morning,

taking better care of herself nutritionally, and focusing on her and her child's needs. Out of

the relational, health, and financial problems that she was struggling with came the

reminders of just how horrifyingly desolate life could be and how desperately she did not

want to revisit that inner terrain. After all she had been through, she did indeed deserve

better and this cognitive pattern activated her determination to change and adapt and create

a more satisfying life for herself and her daughter.

The opposite can also happen in that weight loss and severe, debilitating anxiety

attacks which were a problem during the war stop shortly after arriving in Canada. One

participant was told by a Canadian physician that her problems were due to stress and it

was recommended that she begin a program of nutrition, exercise and other forms of self

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care. Although she continued to suffer from bouts of depression, the acute anxiety disappeared.

A third scenario occurs when serious health problems that developed during the war persist into resettlement. The more severe the trauma during the war the more persistent and intractable the health problems appear to be. The elder members of the study who spent several months in a concentration camp did not fare as well as younger people or as well as people who were not so severely traumatized. Their health will no doubt need to be monitored for the rest of their lives. Since his arrival in Canada, one participant has had an operation for a blocked urethra, developed serious ulcers and stomach problems for which he received medication, received medication for sleeplessness and anxiety and was also being treated for high blood pressure. His partner, who developed diabetes during the war, also developed arthritis and debilitating lower back pain. But, unlike the United States, Canada has universal health care services and all of these problems are being treated and controlled. Unlike two other study participants whose ailing, aging parents in former Yugoslavia have both recently died, these elders were healthy enough to enjoy a walk in the park, each other, good food and good drink, and fantasize about one day opening a restaurant.

Further health problems that developed during the war and continue into resettlement were prevalent in one couple who spent time in a Slovenian refugee camp. Life in the camp took its toll on these participants and resulted in extreme back problems for the male and ongoing menstrual and digestive problems for the female. However, in this country, their health concerns were constantly monitored by both a general practitioner and specialists. Both of these participants justifiably worried about their health

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as every day some new health concern surfaced. For example, during the course of the study one of these participants developed kidney stones, which were terribly painful, and his physician was in the process of determining a course of treatment when the study ended.

Further, two of the study participants who were soldiers during the war were also suffering from ongoing health issues. The participant who has been diagnosed with PTSD was on medication for anxiety and he and his partner were finding ways to deal with the symptoms. If, for example, he disappeared in the middle of a gathering and did not return for some time, she knew that he had been overwhelmed with anxiety and was possibly having a panic attack. They have accepted the fact that this is a legacy of the war that they will possibly have to deal with intermittently for the rest of their lives. Their local emergency ward has a large file on him and when his symptoms become unmanageable they go immediately to the hospital.

Because symptoms of stress abound within the Bosnian immigrant community, controlling and monitoring health concerns is vital to the self-organization and restructuring of the lives of these refugees.

Social Order

The 1999 war between Serbia and NATO, although creating intrusive memories for almost everyone, affected participants in different ways, but many were relieved, overjoyed even, to be in this country and not struggling through war. In fact, one couple saw this war as a turning point. As they watched it unfold on television and listened to the bombing over the phone when talking to relatives, for the first time they felt grateful to be in Canada.

Many participants acknowledged the gratitude they felt at the fact that they were now living in a country where the social order was intact, where law and order have developed unhampered and unimpeded since the country's inception, where the army is answerable to the Prime Minister, and elected officials are to a large extent answerable to the people, and the justice system, at least in theory, operates without prejudice. They were reminded that this was a country where the heating and electrical systems worked and the grocery stores were full.

> In my country (Serbia) right now the symbol of wealth is the banana. In my country they are expensive. Here is one dollar for bunch. I said to my sister . . . sometimes we throw out the banana because my daughter doesn't like. She said to me in the Bosnia and Serbia banana is only abstract word. I am so happy because we can avoid that suffering for our children (P23, p21).

Because the Balkans are prone to war, a number of participants noted the fact that when the current war ended there would be another and another and another in this troubled part of the world. As the social order in the Balkans decayed yet again, they marveled at the peace that surrounded them, even while lamenting the suffering that their families were going through.

Further, this country, comparatively speaking, is enormous. People here are also less connected and far less involved with one another's lives. It is unheard of in Bosnia for one not to know one's neighbours. In Canada, one's neighbour may well be an unknown. Although this engenders a feeling of isolation in the refugee, there is also safety in anonymity. Several participants talked about the vast expanse of the land and the sense of "hugeness" they felt when they arrived in Canada, or upon returning from a visit to Europe.

> . . . When you are back you just feel this wide country. This space in
> Canada. Like relief of some kind. Huge. Something has just opened to you.
> Traveling in Europe, these countries are so tight . . .You feel that everybody
> is just living on top of each other. Here is just hugeness. I would say just
> space. Space here is something else. Just open. Open concept country (P4,
> p.22).

Such an "open concept" when woven into the social order, can engender not only a sense

of isolation, but also has the potential to engender acceptance of diversity and difference,

another necessary component for the well being of the refugee.

Individual Identity

One of the most difficult transitions for the refugee to make is the transition from

who one was and believed one was going to be, to who one has become and what is now

possible. When one loses house, home, country, culture, possessions, profession, and

familial roots, what is left? Who is left? What is there to count on? Further, there is an

effort on the part of some people in host countries to further erode this loss of self and the

refugee's only defense is healthy affirmation of who they were before they lost everything.

One participant talked about her refugee status in Croatia. She described a secretary's

response to her attempts to enrol her daughter in music school.

> "What? Music school? You are refugees. You don't need music,
> you need just one piece of bread and fresh air." I was looking at her and I
> said, "I am music teacher and my daughter is learning for seven years
> music and she will continue whatever I do" (P28, p.12).

With refugee status, the loss of self is reflected in the external as well as the

internal representational worlds. When one's life is an utter catastrophe for almost a

decade and change is not so much change as it is upheaval, the distinction between reality

and fantasy becomes very blurry. Basic ego functions, such as reality testing, that were

once taken for granted, are at once untrustworthy. Judgement, or that capacity to reach

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reasonable conclusions about what is and is not appropriate behaviour, is destroyed. Modulating and controlling impulses, affect and self-esteem become impossible, as does level of mastery of what would have once been the simplest of tasks.

> I had every reason to have high self-esteem. I felt strong, I felt that nothing bad had happened. For me there was no question that I will be doctor one day, that I will fall in love and have children, a house on the seaside . . . no question (P29, p.42).

However, as more and more is lost and as members of the family are left or lost, pieces of the self are left behind with them and anything becomes possible and everything becomes a question. Several participants voiced the sentiment that nothing would surprise them, that in a world where life leaped in less than a day to a remote place beyond chaos, anything could happen at any time.

Out of these ruins the refugee rebuilds self, family, and a social network. These dimensions of the refugee's experience in the new world, although often judged negatively by the refugee, are the rudimentary building blocks of self-organization and transformation. Within the experience of destruction of individual identity lies the fodder for transforming, self-organizing and rebuilding self. Within the experience of destruction of family lies the necessary material to rebuild family. Within the destruction of the social order lies the threads needed to rebuild, reorganize, and reweave the fabric of a new social order. The remainder of this chapter will explicate and articulate the kinds of experiences and adaptive mechanisms that refugees use during the aftermath of trauma to help accomplish the task of self-organization.

Rebuilding of Self

An individual's personal and cultural history will determine how she or he evolves, changes, and self-organizes. Chaos plays a vital role in this because in order for a system to self-organize it must go through periods of chaos where a disruptive force pushes people along pathways to change. Nonlinear systems, if they are going to evolve beyond equilibrium, must invoke transitions to chaos. The traumatic junctures in study participants' lives have created pathways to and through chaos that are replete with critically unstable points of choice or bifurcations. In far-from-equilibrium open systems, self-organization occurs either through self-renewal or through the creation of new structures and internal connections. As study participants created new structures and new internal connections, the process of self-organization gained momentum and novel solutions emerged.

Despite the tempests they have weathered, every one of the participants in this study, to varying degrees, rebuilt, restructured and reorganized his or her sense of self. Participants created new and cohesive patterns of the self in many ways: Through autonomous decision-making; through acceptance and integration of their wartime experiences; through holding a vision for the future; returning to school; changing outmoded and superfluous patterns of behaviour and thought; taking stock of what they have and making a conscious decision to begin to live in the present.

One participant, a young single mother, stated that as repugnant as the war was, it had made her stronger and more independent and that part of the new self-structure she has created is far more self-reliant than the old. She had organized the uncertainty inherent in chaos into learning. This new learning is vital to the capitalist society she is now a part

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of, with its emphasis on autonomy, independence and self-reliance. Without that, she could not function nearly so productively in the Western world.

> I can now solve problems piece by piece without any help. . . . I discovered that I can't count on people . . . only some very close friends and even them not always. I discovered that I have to count first on myself (P21, p.33).

Whereas before the war she might have looked to her older sister or husband to take care of her, she is now resolved to take care of herself. However, as with most people who have lived through tragedy, study participants were willing to discuss exactly how that tragedy contributed to their growth and transformation, but it is also something they never would have chosen and they wish had not happened.

In spite of the depression and the loneliness, participants rebuild through humour and a steely resolve to maintain their gains. Partially, out of the very symptoms of anxiety, health problems, and grief comes the determination to adapt and self-organize. Learning boundaries, adjusting to cultural differences and rebuilding through enjoyment of the small normal daily actions such as coffee with a friend and dancing alone in the dark, help the refugee to order his or her new world. Accepting one's fate and allowing a sense of belonging to develop helps to shift the feelings of coercion and victimhood that accompanied the refugee on their trip to this country. One participant expressed a feeling of belonging in Canada, but upon her return from former Yugoslavia felt utterly shattered. She was agonizingly lonely, full of remorse for coming to Canada, and fell into a depressive state. Shortly after the study ended, however, she had been hired to work in a multicultural daycare centre with children very similar to the children she had worked with in the war. Who better to understand children who are perhaps healing from war and

certainly learning to cope in a new culture? Hence, self-organization is a fluid state that

ebbs and flows and is established and reestablished as individuals dump entropy into the

environment and exchange matter and energy.

Although empathy for the survivor of war is difficult to come by in Western

culture, regaining some sense of dignity that war so thoroughly crushes can be achieved.

> I knew when I came to Canada that I had to accept everything and
> try to find myself here but it is so hard. . . . But every day brought
> something new and I had to learn about everything and sometimes I didn't
> have so much time thinking about past, about what happened . . . and I
> think that we have our dignity again and it is so important (P24, p.4).

Restoring dignity is preliminary to restoring identity. Further, as the refugee

restructures the self, the task is complicated by the fact that this process is occurring in a

multicultural context. Even within that, however, successful self-organization for study

participants appeared to entail cultivating a willingness to begin the restructuring process

in many different areas at once (i.e., work, family, language, relationship); adopting a

wait-and-see attitude about what is possible; acknowledging strengths; and accentuating

the positive. Although this participant still suffered from panic attacks and nightmares, and

is an accountant by profession but was working in a hotel as part of the cleaning staff, the

positive aspects of life were not lost.

> I have good life in Canada. I am free and I sleep, I work, I don't
> have a fright, scared all the time. Life is good. I have a life. I am together
> with my family, I have food, bed, everything. . . . We have new life here.
> My oldest daughter likes school and my youngest daughter like school.
> And I am very satisfied. (P22, p.14).

She holds a vision for the future where her daughters continue to achieve in the new world

by entering university and her English and finances improve to the point that she can go

back to school in order to practice as an accountant here in Canada. Further, so many

people lost children and other loved ones in the war that study participants who did not lose anyone were continually grateful. This selective evaluation of traumatization or "downward comparison" (Tedeschi, et al., 1995, p.66) is more likely to enhance self-organization and decrease anxiety than are upward comparisons (Gibbons, 1986). Two hundred thousand people were killed in Bosnia. Hundreds of thousands of children were left without parents and hundreds of thousands of parents were left without children. Under those circumstances, to walk away with an intact family is viewed as nothing less than miraculous. Many participants expressed sentiments such as the following:

> We didn't lose anybody in the war and I was happy about that and it kind of kept me going. When so many people you knew were killed and there were so many kids without parents, I would think, "Oh, I am so lucky" (P17, p.13).

or,

> When you lost somebody, that is worst. So we are fortunate. In the range of sadness we are lucky (P4, p.13).

Although several participants said they were not happy here because they were homesick and missed family too much, or their jobs were not what they expected, many said they were satisfied, not only with their lives in Canada but with the choices they made under the circumstances. Most participants were quick to count their blessings and many were able to acknowledge what they had accomplished for themselves and their families.

With rebuilding and self-organization comes the ability to put the past into perspective, to forget the war for short periods of time, and engage in the process of living and creating through peaceful coexistence. Focusing on the loss to the exclusion of what has been accomplished inhibits an individual's power to rebuild. Self-organization is a spontaneous process that occurs when a self-organizing system has moved through chaos

and lived to tell the tale. Cooperating with that process, however, does not earnestly begin until the loss is accepted as real and permanent.

> In the beginning after we left, I was for months and months just thinking, oh I had that and I don't have that now. . . . I was crying about clothes, it was one thing after another. I have no shoes, . . . I was thinking we could still go back and I was thinking if I found something, anything, any piece of clothing, pictures of my kids or any (video) tape from their birthdays, but then I realized that there was nothing left. . . . . When I realized that we were not going back soon, then I didn't think about it much any more (P16, p.13).

The experience of surviving war and emigration and looking backwards with some sense of triumph and appreciation, in other words being able to measure the distance from where one has been and what one has lost to where one is now and what one has rebuilt, is an exercise that requires a certain flexing of the newfound strength and muscle of a reconstituted self.

Understanding that post war Bosnia is not a pleasant place to live and work is further incentive to invest in the process of self-organization. Investing in a home is both a literal and metaphorical investment in life in Canada. During the study three participants bought homes and moved in shortly after the study concluded. For some, living in apartments felt impermanent, much like living in a hotel. Considering the level of irreversible loss and devastation that study participants witnessed, and that the impact of such loss is often passivity, withdrawal, submissiveness, post traumatic stress, high levels of intrusion, arousal and avoidance, and depression and anxiety, the degree to which they self-organized and built new structures and new internal and external connections, was astonishing. Further, the degree to which they once again took charge of their lives was equally astonishing. There appeared to be two levels upon which control and order of

one's existence is built. The first appears to be a primary level of control which includes

pragmatic concerns such as getting a job, finding a place to live, learning the language,

learning to drive, and making contact with helpful agencies and programs such as welfare

and ESL. The second appears to take place in a more esoteric space and concerns issues of

meaning, understanding, reducing emotional distress, adjusting expectations, and an

acceptance of the hand one has been dealt. The following illustrates this kind of

hierarchical establishing of primary and secondary control.

> In Canada, I learn how I have to live alone. How I have to spend
> money. How I have to have a plan. I learn so many things here. . . . Here in
> Canada, I am alone. You make your life how you can. It isn't how you will,
> but how you can. How you have to (P21, p.20).

And from a secondary perspective,

> I found myself. I know I am strong. I was very weak in my country.
> Anybody can play with me, my mom, my ex-husband, my family . . . but
> now . . . I am stronger. I know what I will do with my life. . . . Now I know
> when I cry exactly why I cry and it have to be very big reason. Before . . . it
> was like . . . I cry for anything. . . . Now, I am stronger. . . . First time in my
> life I do it my own way (P21, p.20). Problem for me was . . . I always try to
> keep inside my answer. But now I don't like to keep anything in my self. . .
> . I can speak and why not. I have a mouth and I have a tongue. I always just
> swallowing and put in my soul. But I collect things. . . . now I can't collect
> things. I have to say and I have a right to say. . . . This is the big change in
> me. . . . It is different. I am different (P21, p.33).

Rebuilding self on a secondary level also involves learning to trust again. To

experience helpful, trustworthy people in the host country aids in the process of self-

organization. Rebuilding self through accumulating knowledge that helps with the struggle

to successfully adjust to a new country and new relationships, withdrawing blame from

others you hold responsible for your plight (e.g., the Serbs, the Croatians), and sifting and

refining old values and setting new goals, are all ways that the refugee self-organizes and

restructures the self. Once the initial period of terror at being here and the sense of having committed a grave error for coming have passed, what apparently follows is a period of goal setting. Having achieved the first goal, which was to get here, the refugee must take stock and begin to articulate realistic goals for the future. If one has goals then the struggle inherent in adjusting to a new country is easier to manage. It is possible to live on social assistance and deliver pizza if the vision is ultimately to return to school and study electronics, for example. It does not take long before the refugee determines that being successful in Canada is quite different from success in Germany. Many landed immigrants live and work in Germany because they can make a great deal of money over a relatively short period of time. The work is labor intensive and difficult, but it pays well. In Canada the refugee learns quickly just how difficult it is to earn a great deal of money. Shifting goals accordingly is something several participants did in order to restructure their present and their possible future.

> Before we come here we have plans but now we see that we cannot do these plans. Not like this. . . . My plan is just normal life, house, grounds, flowers. We want safe life with good job and to be able to go to our country and visit our family and to come back. We were planning, not every year but at least every second year, to go to visit our country and friends but now we see that is not possible. But we still understand that we are at the beginning. It is just going to take more time (P13, p.39).

By applying lessons learned during the war many participants are able to use this experience to their advantage in order to make the mental shifts necessary to survive in the new world.

> It is hard here . . . but I learned during the war to be patient because something is going to come later. It is the same thing here. . . . I was in area

which was surrounded for four years and I had to be patient . . . and it is
easier to be patient here for one year than be in war (P2, p.25).

Further, the refugee heals and self-organizes through time. Time to heal, adjust,

and learn the language and the culture, is a priceless gift the host country can give the

refugee. Some need much more time than others. If a refugee already speaks English, for

example, that individual can move along the path of self-organization much more quickly

than someone who knows a few English phrases from songs on the radio. Further, a

refugee who is struggling with full-blown PTSD needs far more time to adjust than

someone whose symptoms are not nearly so acute. It would appear that the longer the

refugee is here the more relegated to memory the experience of the war becomes and the

more the experience is incorporated into a cohesive sense of self. This does not mean that

intrusive memories do not occur and the symptom cluster of post traumatic stress does not

trouble the refugee, sometimes for many years. However, the experience of war in its

entirety appears to be less central to the organization of the self. As one participant

suggested,

> It is not like a dream. I know I went through that and it will always
> be there but it is not bugging me all the time. It is part of my life. A
> memory. Not a very nice memory but it is still a memory. I don't know
> how to explain (P1, p1).

Time is also a commodity the refugee must grant him or herself. Rebuilding the self

occurs in part when the refugee realizes that creating in Canada what it took forty years to

build in former Yugoslavia, will take more than a few years. Understanding that it may

take a decade or more to make up some of the lost ground is a shock to many refugees

who have bought into the myth of the golden West. Learning to think in step-by-step

increments while self-organizing and rebuilding one's life can help to place the task into manageable frames of reference.

Reframing the experience of living in this country as a challenge instead of a catastrophe is another technique refugees use to rebuild after forced emigration. They learn quickly to enjoy inexpensive pleasures such as going to garage sales where they can obtain some possessions inexpensively and spend quality time together as a family or a couple. They rebuild through experiencing feelings of competency when they get a job, even a menial one, learn to drive, complete a course, or make new Canadian and ethnic contacts.

There were two participants in the study, however, for whom the dolorous truth was that after three years of trying they still hated Canada. Their plan was to become Canadian citizens and then use that citizenship to go back to Europe and work in Germany where Canadians are well liked and accepted. They miss everything about the European lifestyle, from the coffee bars on every street corner to the friendships and multitudinous acquaintances they had in Bosnia. Such an attitude is an obstacle to adjustment. One imperative to self-organization appears to be making a commitment to stay in this country. The decision to commit to living in Canada as a Canadian citizen appears to have a quiescent effect on the internal world of the refugee, although it is a difficult one to make. Living with one foot in each world avoids the issue of belonging/not belonging, and intensifies the feelings of isolation, aimlessness, and homesickness. Life under what one participant called "refugee status" is precarious.

> Many people can't understand that refugee status is different than any other status. Why? Because in refugee status you just live in the moment. Like in Germany, you never going to get citizenship. After eight years you can apply but you are not going to get it. . . . I am going to work . . . make good money. But for how long? Day, month, two years, five years.

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In the end you think you will stay. No. you never will stay. You have to go out. Germany is good country but Canada is better because of paper (citizenship). If I going to stay, I stay. If I going to go, I go (P7, p31).

For people who have been without a country, citizenship carries powerful connotations of belonging . Moreover, to live and belong to a peaceful country where one has "a roof and feels secure that nobody is going to collect us and put us in war" adds to the refugee's sense of security.

Security is also enhanced through noting and accentuating similarities to home as well as making connections to the larger Bosnian community and, beyond that, to the needs of refugees in general. For example, one family appeared quite vexed by the whole problem of adjustment. Every time we talked someone would cry and lament the countless losses. Approximately two-thirds of the way through the study, however, something shifted. Upon arriving at the house I noticed everyone had a haircut, the elder women had coloured their hair, they were dressed-up and the atmosphere of the house was more alive. Friends from Bosnia, who had first settled in Saskatchewan, had moved to the apartment building across the street. That connection had made all the difference. Further, this same family had become members of a nonprofit Islamic centre. The mandate of this centre, along with assistance and funding from three church organizations, is to assist other immigrants and refugees. When this wave of Eastern Europeans arrived there was not enough help and information on how to establish their lives. Knowing this, the family was anxious to help incoming refugees from Kosovo and other areas of the world. In sharing the benefits of their hard-won knowledge they effectively created meaningful activity that enhanced their own process of self-organization. Immigrants helping immigrants is perhaps one of the most effective ways to self-organize.

At the same time that several participants acknowledged their fatigue, and loss of

energy and power since the war, they also believed that "life is very important to live" (P6,

p.14) even when it feels bad. Time and life are not something to squander but must be

appreciated. They further acknowledge that time is moving forward. Here or there they

would be older and the fond pre-war memories are from a time of greater youth and

innocence. With self-organization comes a restoration of internal psychic equilibrium after

horrific chaos. There are many things across physical and psychological dimensions that

help this process, from repaying money the Canadian government lent them to get here, to

having children, to changing jobs, learning to drive, and being in the almost inevitable car

accident. The refugee begins to create history and narratives that organize self cohesion

around principles other than the trauma principle. Restructuring of the self occurs because

of and in spite of the hyperarousal, fear, trauma, and remembered loss and grief of war.

And of course, rebuilding of self happens through rebuilding the family. The belief that

you have given your children the inestimable gift of opportunity, peace, and a future, is

ample incentive for people from the Balkans.

Rebuilding of Family

Balkan families appear to be structured, for the most part, with the male at the top

of the hierarchy, his partner next, and the children answerable to both. However the

Balkan women in the study, with the exception of those on social assistance, three young

mothers, and one elder woman, all worked outside the home, taking whatever jobs were

available in order to help the family. Balkan women spend far more time cooking than

Canadian women and one elder male was shocked when I told him I did not cook. He

could not imagine what I was doing with my time.

Several female participants talked about the shift in their level of independent thought and action since the war and immigration. Several of the women in the study talked about how much stronger they felt and how little they worried now about what they would do if their marriages failed. Compared to the pre-war years, in recent years they have accomplished so much with so little that their faith in themselves and their self reliance has increased measurably. During the war, they were thrown into chaos too often. Alone, often with their children to care for and their men gone or in hiding, they were forced to embrace and acknowledge their strengths. Further, if their partners were fighting in the war, women usually had no idea when or if they would return. In spite of the fact that marital relationships were severely stressed during the war, most couples steadfastly maintain that the marriage is stronger for the forced separations and experience of war. As one male participant said:

> We feel more like partners . . . like we are in business. We got two kids . . . and we decide we are together and we stay together. . . . We will find ways for kids to get good life. . . . Relationship is strong. When we are in our country we have lots of friends around, mothers, fathers, if we get problem in marriage, we could split up. But here, where am I going to go? I am going to pay for child for support. I have to pay my rent and the same for woman. It is easier here for women than in my country. Better life. . . . They are protected. . . . At first place is women, then pets or kids, I am not sure, and we are maybe fourth or fifth (P9, p.53).

This was an interesting response. These relationships are stressed on many levels and memories of the war lay just under the surface, capable both of ripping the couple apart and solidifying the relationship. Because family is so far away and unavailable for support, couples must rely on each other. This alone can create inordinate stress for the couple. Shifting gender roles, which are inevitable in war and resettlement, are disconcerting for males and females. Further, the above participant followed his discussion

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about the strength of the marriage with a cartoon he saw during the war. In the cartoon the wife was walking fifteen steps ahead of the husband and a friend asked him what was happening, that his wife was ahead when traditionally she should be fifteen steps behind. The punch line, "They made that rule before there were mines," was delivered in a typically sexist way to two women, myself and his wife, with little regard for how the joke might impact on us.

Another couple, who openly professed love for one another but spoke candidly about marital conflict, rampant insecurities and jealousy, and copious quantities of blame, were possibly painting a more accurate and balanced picture. Containing the loss, grief, and sense of emptiness was extremely difficult. Moreover, often both members of the dyad had been seriously traumatized and used different and opposing defence mechanisms to deal with the trauma. Like the mother and daughter mentioned above, couples dealt with their trauma in very different ways. The more anxiety one person felt the more compelled he or she was to disclose feelings and talk about the experiences and memories, while the partner preferred to use avoidance as a major defence against the pain, live in the present, and move on.

As a way of self-organizing within the dyad, however, couples tended to be somewhat more understanding, protective, and even appreciative of each other.

> I knew she was missing her family, her sister and then everybody else. But I have some mechanism and maybe I developed that during the war. . . . If you are here . . . you have to say to yourself, "I can't go there." You have to sit and survive. Get a job, get some money for ticket. That is your goal . . . to see your family and everything else is just waste of time (P2, p.10).

However, the stresses on the relationship and the family are severe and sometimes the marriage simply did not survive. Rather than self-organize, the system dies. One participant, after the birth of her first child, made the decision to leave the marriage. Because ethnic women often do not have family in Canada and do not speak the language or have paid work, they are trapped in untenable positions within the marriage. Adjustment problems specific to women such as greater levels of isolation from the larger culture, lack of mobility, and poor language skills all work toward magnifying and increasing an already imbalanced power structure. Non-English speaking women in the study were more reticent to speak English improperly, and unlike the men, would rather be silent than make gross linguistic errors. Men in the study seemed more comfortable speaking, for good or for ill. Further, almost sixty percent of the women in the study did not drive and more than fifty percent of women in the study had young or latency age children.

It takes considerable courage to end a relationship where he is traditionally seen as the powerful head of the household and is often the major income generator. While researching another issue, this participant ran across some of the services and shelters available to women.

> I want briefly to describe my gratefulness for all (women's) services
> available in this society because they were replacing my family. I left for
> the shelter and the very first hour I was there, I found so much support and
> so much explanation and there was experienced woman who . . . explain
> the core of my problem. What struck me was she said I lost my identity, my
> authenticity . . . who I am . . . to be authentic (P29, p.31).

Because the male in the traditional Balkan family is seen as the chief provider, resettlement trauma and financial struggles can exacerbate and heighten male vulnerability

to violence. However, once the decision was made and the break to a woman's shelter complete, this participant was on her own. With no one to support her and a small baby to care for she found herself adrift and alone, but in a short time she demonstrated a surprising self-reliance that she has continued to count on.

> I recognize, as a benefit of my mental breakdown, . . . that I am healthier now and able to make better relationships in the future. I will never allow myself to rely on another person that much. I will always try to keep control of my life. And even more, . . . this teach me to say NO without smile on your face and don't feel guilty after that. . . . I start to see my growth. . . . I think pretty much my core   is the same but I changed as a daughter and a woman. . . . Now, if my parents   have opinion which is different than mine and that opinion insult me I will fight   openly . . . (P29, p.39).

Hence, not only do marital relationships change drastically or dissolve but so do adult children's relationship with parents. This participant's sense of self-reliance translated to her relationships as more presence. Less concerned with her need for either parents or partner, she gave herself the freedom to argue her case in the context of her meaningful relationships. The fires of war have singed the dutiful daughter and the trials of immigration and resettlement have found her less guilty and much more apt to defend herself. This participant returned to school and found work in a university laboratory as a research assistant. She shifted her priorities and rather than strive for a relationship, she placed a much higher priority on her independence and her professional goals. And like most of the other participants, her goal is to become "a living role model" for her son and focus only on that which will make life better for her and her son.

Children and Parenting

The most potent force for restructuring and self-organizing the family is the children. Every participant who had children cited them as the main reason for

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emigration. In different ways, the following sentiment was expressed by everyone.

> We work everything because of kids. This was the biggest reason.
> Just the kids and escape from Balkan states. Because we knew that war
> would start again. Maybe not with us but with our children or their children
> (P28, p.2).

Most study participants agreed that in post-war former Yugoslavia there was little

opportunity for children. This country was seen as presenting children with far more

possibilities than former Yugoslavia. Hence, children's adaptation was central to parental

adaptation and self-organization. People who did not hold visions for themselves in this

country tended to hold a vision for their children.

> I would say that I have vision for my kids. . . . It is very secure place
> here and good place to spend some time, some period of life. . . . It is good
> place to come back to. . . . But for my children, I see them settle totally in
> this society and have life what every average Canadian has, so I see them
> totally accepted here. . . . Everything we plan is connected to the children
> and whatever the situation that develops toward this, we will follow (P4,
> p.25).

Children imbue the family with purpose and meaning. One couple discussed the abject

feelings of despair that they were struggling with while living in Quebec, but on

discovering that a baby was on the way the couple's ability to hope was restored.

Because children suffered so much during the war and parents helplessly watched

them survive with no milk, no food with the exception of beans and rice, no toys, no

books, and no freedom, they were anxious to give their children everything possible.

Children were constantly at risk of death and injury and many were wounded. Children

were often hysterical and extreme protective behaviour was necessary during the war for

children's survival, and now that the family has the opportunity to compensate for some of

that grief, children are given the highest priority.

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> Our family is everything . . . They must be okay. . . . We just want
> that children have everything. It doesn't matter I have or not have money.
> What they want, that is not a problem (P11, p.32).

During war and the subsequent resettlement process, parents helplessly watched

their children cry constantly, vomit due to stress, and get hysterical when they were

separated. Every now and again they would regress to that type of behaviour, even in the

safety of a country that is not at war.

> I think, "Okay, my children were young. They will forget
> everything. Especially here." One day it was fire alarm here and they start
> to cry, both of them. Older one he start . . . to put on some shoes and yell,
> "Go outside! Go outside!" He was so nervous. . . . My husband say, "Stay
> here. It is nothing.". . . but my youngest one he start to cry, "Please, go
> outside." They remember in old times like sirens and alarms and they know
> that is airplanes. They know to go somewhere . . .safe place (P15, p.13).

Never again did the study participants want to see their children frightened to death and

never again did they want to experience not being able to provide their children with the

basic necessities. To watch them adjust quickly, as children do, to a new culture and a new

language, and to see them make friends and adopt a sense of belonging where ethnicity

and religion are not an issue were the main reasons most parents emigrated.

> We always have these two kids. . . . You don't have right to be sick,
> to fell down, to go down, you don't have right because you are looking out
> for them. . . . Their future is probably only point that keeps us here.
> Otherwise we would be somewhere else (P4, p.10).

Adjustment Issues and Problems

Study participants' attitudes in the initial phase of adjustment to Canada in some

ways paralleled their response to war. First, they described a state of shock. Then, fueled

by potent feelings of homesickness and dislocation, there was a huge push to escape and

return home to what was familiar. The sheer magnitude of the adjustment that the refugee

undertakes is incredible and although it is possible to circumvent some of the more obvious problems, there are triggers that will agitate a refugee that people in the host country could not anticipate. Hence, having someone, a confidante, a host, a friend, in the host country who is open to discuss those kinds of triggers is of invaluable support.

> Do you know what is bothering me the most? When I went for bus I usually saw the pictures of kidnaped children. . . . I am afraid of that. . . . Maybe first or second year when I live in Canada . . . I sitting in my ESL class and I just think of my daughter. Maybe somebody kidnap her and I just took my purse and I left the class and I took bus and went in front of her school and just knocking on the door and see she is sitting there. Oh, thanks God and I go back to school (P21, p.27).

Self-organization on the level of restructuring a social network requires that the host country assist in the process of rebuilding. Making Canadian contacts and rebuilding through the macroscopic levels of the social order such as school systems and the welfare system helps refugees restore some of the trust that has been lost. Contact with others, both ethnic and native-born, affects the process of growth and the reestablishing of an identity and sense of self. Unfortunately, there is little real mixing of the populations. Due to language difficulties Canadians and Bosnians tend to stay within their own linguistic and cultural circles. Several study participants formed stereotypical images of Canadians as superficial, closed, and cold. Without genuine contacts and friendships against which to test these internal images there was little to change their minds. Although participants spoke often about forming more contacts with Canadians, they were rarely successful because the relationship requires a great deal of work on both parts. Conversations are difficult and awkward and the simplest of ideas can take an inordinate amount of time to communicate. Translating through her daughter, one participant said,

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I had a friend, a Canadian . . . I ask her to come sometimes and drink coffee because she didn't work either. So we had a lot of spare time. . . . I think we can talk and I can practice English. The lady she said, yes. She came once and never again. She just didn't want obligation (P19, p.32).

For the Eastern European refugee, language is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, barriers to life in Canada. Many participants would have chosen to stay in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, or Germany to avoid the culture shock of moving across the world but life there, for different reasons, was more untenable than here. According to several study participants, getting a job in Canada was more difficult and more dependent upon language than in countries such as Germany and even the United States. One participant, who tried to learn four languages in the last seven years, found this a major stumbling block. This participant had trouble adjusting to school and concentrating and he found that the four languages he attempted to learn often got confused. As helpful as the ESL program was to most of the participants in the study, it was stressful for this participant and his partner and after almost four years in Canada their English is poor and their adolescent daughter translated all interviews. Neither were employed because of the language problems. She was a seamstress and he was a woodworker. Although ESL helped some, "street English is different than classroom English." Further, all study participants talked about the difficulties of adjusting to another language and culture as they aged. Many of them looked with a mixture of envy and pride at the ease with which their children learned a new language and adapted to cultural differences. The two oldest individuals in the study, both in their fifties, as well as individuals who were in their forties, talked about how difficult adjustment was for them as a direct result of their age. For participants in their forties and fifties, everything from learning language to finding

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work was more difficult than for younger participants.

One of the more unfortunate ways that participants dealt with adjustment problems was through a coping stance of blaming other family members. Usually, because of the protective and cardinal role that men are often bound to take in Yugoslavian families, blame lands on either the husband/father, or older brother. With several of the participants, the first year of adjustment was difficult in that a great deal of blame and anger surfaced and if one was not prepared to be patient the level of frustration could get uncomfortably high. At least two participants talked about "cleaning" their minds of their negative and critical appraisals of the new land.

> After one year in Canada I start to clean mind. Like, this is bad. Go out. Keep other one in mind. You know? More positive. I have some things to do quickly and some things to do slowly. I am a quick person and I want to do right now. But you have to be patient (P6, p.7).

Time and patience are woven into the self-organization of the refugee. No matter what developmental tasks are involved in bicultural socialization and the formation of a bicultural identity, they must be represented over the continuum of time (Robbins, 1998). The refugee's ability to integrate the values and behaviours of the ethnic family culture and the majority social culture, changes over time. Even the most multidimensional of ethnic bicultural identity models (Galan, 1978), which look at levels of adherence to the values and beliefs of ethnic family culture in relationship to levels of adherence to the values and beliefs of the majority culture, do not speak to the complexity of the refugee's experience as it weaves in and out of time.

For example, the first night the refugee spends in Canada was a very different experience than what refugees experienced on the fifth anniversary of their arrival.

Providing they had no relatives, their first night was spent in a refugee shelter, often located in downtown, lower socioeconomic areas of major cities. One refugee couple described their first impressions of Canada as "black". Drunks, drug dealers, and prostitutes were going about their business as usual. Compared to what they had been told about Canada and had seen in films, this was shocking and unexpected. Reception House on Dundas Street in London, Ontario, comes complete with cockroaches. One participant, who spent two weeks in Reception House and visited Toronto, decided that, indeed, there had been a war in his country but there was an equally disastrous one here on drugs and prostitution. It was a nasty introduction but luckily it was brief. Counselors began looking immediately for permanent dwellings, and connected refugees to the system through health cards, social insurance numbers, and social assistance.

As a rule, within five years substantial changes have taken place for the refugee. Some have houses, most have cars, many have jobs and friends and have established some sense of belonging. Canada, with its multicultural and human rights awareness, is one of the reasons participants can, at the very least dream of something better, and at most, achieve it.

> My uncle told me it is very difficult to buy stuff for kids in Bosnia. This is possibly because they are Croatian and they live in Muslim country and you know, Muslim people is on the first place and other religion, Catholic or Orthodox, it is on the second place and this is true and we can't change this. But, in Canada, if you are smart . . . you have a chance and nobody is asking you who you are, what is your religion, what is your name (P21, p.24).

Learning the language is the first door to open. One of the most useful programs that Canada has for the refugees that arrive on its shores are the ESL programs in Ontario and the French language programs in Quebec. Canada further helps the refugee with

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language by beginning ESL programs in Zagreb. Without English or French language training, it is impossible, no matter what level of education you have achieved, to move beyond unskilled labor. Canada, as a host country, does well to insist that refugees go to ESL classes. ESL teachers are an important resource and can make a substantial difference in the refugee's adjustment. Programs such as the Host Program, designed to connect an immigrant or refugee with a Canadian-born friend or host, are equally meaningful. Social assistance is also an exceptionally useful program for refugees. Further, Working for Work, or New Canadian, programs designed to ease the refugee into the Canadian job market and help with resumes and placement experiences, are worthwhile for refugees. Canada creates programs that assist the refugee at various stages and times in the biculturalization process.

These programs do not, however, go far enough, and many of these programs are either unknown to the refugee or not understood. Further, many of these programs are not available to all refugees. For example, sponsored refugees are not eligible for social assistance as the sponsors are expected to support them. Being sponsored is a double edged-sword in that the family is reluctant to approach the sponsors for more, as they are perceived to already have done a great deal.

Further, Canada's treatment of foreign professionals is appalling. Physicians are usually cited as the professionals least likely to work in their field. However, architects and dentists do not fare much better. Currently, the refugee must pay to write licensing exams. Any licensing fees must be paid in addition to paying the Canadian government back many thousands of dollars which were loaned to the refugee to come to Canada in the first place. Securing employment, especially relevant and meaningful employment, is

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probably one of the most significant and far-reaching events in the refugee's successful

adjustment process. In the moment-to-moment transactions of daily living, one of the most

significant events in the refugee's adjustment process is how well they are treated by

people in the host country. In the long term, governments, professional bodies such as the

Canadian Medical Association, and individual professional employers, independently and

with government incentives, need to do everything in their individual and collective power

to facilitate job creation for refugees. In the short term, successful adjustment is based

upon treating the refugee respectfully, personably, and with integrity as well as according

him or her basic human rights.

> What I appreciate in Canada most . . . I can go in store or bank,
> doesn't matter where. Nice people. Is always friendly, always love. This is
> important to me. I have very bad nerves. Man or woman is friendly, I feel
> here (in heart) (P12, p.23).

The larger macrosystem contributes to the refugee's mental health through hospital

services, fair police and justice systems, social assistance programs, and other programs

geared toward the mental and physical well-being of the refugee. One participant fell into

deep depression after the birth of her son. He was less than two kilos at birth and remained

in intensive care for a week. The nursing staff was supportive and instructional in the ways

of infant care and breast feeding. While still in hospital this young mom happened to catch

the beginning of an excellent television series, The Death of Yugoslavia. Flashing across

the screen were pictures of elders, dead by the side of the road. It was storming outside

and she felt "a storm of feeling in her heart" (P29, p.29). She began to sob uncontrollably

and the on-duty nurse cradled and comforted her. This was a healing crisis well handled

and is an excellent example of how the system can cooperate with self-organizing

processes. Following the eventual break up of the marriage, this participant joined a training program for immigrant women, World Wide Opportunity for Women, and began volunteering for a women's crisis line.

The larger macrosystem is detrimental to the refugee's mental health when government officials are interfering, nosy, autocratic and unreasonable. Checking refugees' homes for illegal roomers, refusing to explain a request for a participant to be fingerprinted prior to receiving citizenship, cutting off all sources of income, and putting an economist suffering from PTSD to work picking apples, are all examples of how the macrosystem contributed to the symptoms and the frustrated helplessness of the refugees in this study.

Citizenship

Renewal and rebuilding occur through the process of getting Canadian citizenship. As one participant stated, "I am free person here and now I am Canadian citizenship and I feel great." Citizenship exemplifies the creation of a new structure in the life of the refugee now citizen. Political instability in the country of origin is one factor that promotes prompt application for citizenship so refugees are more likely to apply early rather than later (Richmond, 1994). Citizenship status makes a difference to the refugee in that it affords a stability and sense of belonging that is not available otherwise. Approximately 38 percent of the participants in this study were citizens and two were awarded citizenship during the course of the study. It was always a significant milestone in the life of the refugee and it was remembered as an exceptional event. The day was usually marked by a celebration and several study participants had photographs that commemorated the occasion.

Because becoming a citizen shifts something in the participant in terms of a sense

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of security and belonging, it is a necessary service if the host country is to assist the self-organization process.

> We been so proud and happy that we got citizenship. . . . I don't know, I cried. I got some Canadian friends at our citizenship ceremony and I be so happy. This is something like you are born. . . . Starting new life (P10, p.38).

Capitalism: Differences Between Communism and Capitalism as a Way of Life

People from former Yugoslavia have a joke. "If you are thinking about coming to Canada, pack a suit and pyjamas because all you are going to do is work and sleep." Adjusting to a capitalist system is, in itself, an enormous adjustment.

> . . . People from our country came to Canada and they are losing our customs and accepting Canadian way . . . just work and sleep. Just work, like machines. They have no time for socializing. It is like they have no souls. They just work to get money (P26, p.12).

Living in a Communist system in former Yugoslavia did not exact the time and energy that a capitalist system demands. Health insurance for all medical and dental bills was paid by the state, the educational system from kindergarten to the PhD level was paid by the state, and there was no such thing as property tax or income tax. Many enjoyed a fairly high standard of living and study participants said they had more time to spend with family and friends. Capitalism demands time and appears to be an unstable way of life for many individuals who have lived within a Communist system. The ever-changing tenor of a capitalist society, where the emphasis is on independence, accomplishments, achievements, and upward mobility, leaves the refugee experiencing "nothing that feels stable" (P18, p.28).

> Everything is different from day to day. Everything in our lives is changing. If we try to hang onto something today then it is going to be different tomorrow (P18, p.29).

The tempo of a capitalist system is faster. Under Communism life is slower, more social and sociable, and more relaxed. Participants talked about phoning home to their elder parents, who were upset and hurt that they have not been called sooner and more frequently. As one participant said, "I say my mother, 'I am sorry I don't call but many minutes pass too fast to see. One day is nothing here, one week, one month. It flies.' My mother not understand" (P13, p.32). According to study participants there is more stress and pressure built into the system. Almost all of the participants discussed the pace, speed, and relentless demands of living in Canadian society. One communist slogan, "Have as much as you need and work as much as you can.", could not be more antithetical to capitalism where the slogan might read, "Have much more than you need and work as much and as hard as you can." According to most participants, life here is all work and no play. In a communist system, working on a weekend was as unheard of as overtime.

The refugee begins with nothing in a society that places a great deal of value on possessions and is under considerable pressure both externally and internally to regain as much of what was lost as possible. Unlike former Yugoslavia, the capitalist Canadian system demands a certain amount of initiative that is somewhat unfamiliar and confusing to some of the people of the Balkans.

> People used to clean in their own house but put the garbage outside
> and not taking care of it. The same happened in war. . . . they were waiting
> for foreign troops to come and clean our garbage (P29, p.5).

Others, however, saw this country as an opportunity, providing one was willing to snatch up the gauntlet.

> If I am here, I have to do something . . . but nobody is going to offer
> me that job if I don't do something by myself. . . . Canada offers you
> everything from the beginning . . . It is up to you how you use it. . . . You

have rights from first day you came here (P1/2, p.11,13).

Still other participants talked about an attitude of arrogant hedonism held by many of the inhabitants of the smaller cities subsequent to the war. Post war Bosnia appears to be neither Communist nor capitalist at this point but rather an unhealthy mixture of corrupt hedonism and nepotism.

> Here in Canada . . . is fine living people . . . not rich people . . . but people who invest in their house and the things for the future. There (in Bosnia) people are living for today. Spending money with friends and to enjoy the time being. When I have money, we are going to enjoy and when I don't have money somebody will help me. . . . Here you are rich if you do something for your future. . . . You invest in something for you and your family. . . . People are still waking up from the war I guess (P2, p.11).

Many participants talked about the level of exhaustion they felt living and working in a capitalist system. In addition to the residual exhaustion that occurred as a result of living through a war, participants had to make substantial adjustments to exist in a capitalist country. Further, because the refugee was working in a second language they always had to concentrate a little harder. One refugee who found work in the world of finance was aghast at the rate of change in her workplace. Coming from a system where no one had insurance, registered retirement savings plans, or savings bonds, the sheer volume of material to learn was second only to how quickly what you learned changed from day to day.

Two of the major differences between the countries are the sheer size of Canada and the breathtaking beauty of Bosnia. Full of lakes, rivers and mountains, none of which exist in London and Kitchener, Bosnia was remembered as a much warmer land and Canada was experienced as both a physically and emotionally colder place. Colder, more conspicuously competitive, faster paced, closed, isolating and inauthentic, the country and

the people were sometimes difficult for the Eastern European to understand.

That difficulty can result in a reversal or leveling off of the process of adjustment. In some cases people felt better when they first arrived. They were more hopeful but in time, when the struggle did not produce the expected results, a kind of hopelessness began to pervade daily living. When this happened, study participants began to dream of returning to Europe or the dreams and visions for a fine life in Canada moved to the children.

Capitalism and getting and spending notwithstanding, life here is better than war. Citizenship, speaking the language, having a home, having a right to exist, work, and make money are all valuable in healing the human spirit.

NATO Bombing of Kosovo

The NATO bombings of Kosovo impacted on every one in the study in some form or other. The Serbian participants felt a helpless and angry rage as many of them had family in Serbia. The Muslim participants, although voicing a certain amount of compassion, generally felt vindicated that the world now understood that the Serbians were the aggressors in this war. They hoped the world would now understand what they had gone through.

> This (bombing) is kind of justice for me. Here in Canada, 90
> percent of people from ex-Yugoslavia are Serbs. I have to live here and if
> you have three Serb friends around you and you know their story that is one
> thing. They are still okay, but now, everybody knows who they are and you
> don't have to say anything. Everybody knows who they are and that is
> justice for me (P2, p.31).

Beyond the feelings of vindication, however, many of them were reminded of just how alone and alienated they felt during the Bosnian war. Several participants reiterated

that no one came to their rescue. One Croatian study participant bordered on happy about the NATO bombings because the Serbs were no longer singing and dancing as they had when Brcko and Vukovar were being bombed.

Interrelationships: Qualitative Data Matrix

To some degree, time itself is a healer. When time is coupled with the kinds of adaptive mechanisms described above, the refugee grows, transforms, and self-organizes. Despite death, flight, loss and destruction of every description, homelessness, homesickness, survivor guilt, and political, cultural and ethnic betrayal, the refugee learns to live and work in a new world. It is difficult for an outsider to comprehend the totality of the destruction that the refugee experiences. Torn away from all physical and psychological moorings by unmanageable political and social forces, this loss of dignity, hope, family, direction and control of life events, as well as loss of ethnic identity, country, and culture, tosses the refugee into an alien, and confusing world where safety and normalcy become attributes of a distant past.

Rather than collapsing under the weight of this extreme trauma, however, the refugee turns out to be surprisingly resilient. In a chaotic, changing, far-from-equilibrium world the refugee takes flight and in spite of the almost total annihilation, resettles and rebuilds his or her life. Figure IV is a matrix that represents the interrelationships between various qualitative categories and shows how and where in the process of chaos and self-organization the refugee begins to create new internal and external structures and connections. Only after the refugee stops running and makes certain choices about the meaning of survival does the process of self-organization take on a conscious dedication and direction.

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From Peace to War: Order to Chaos

	SURVIVAL (WAR)	LOSS AND GRIEF	DESTRUCTION OF FAMILY, HEALTH, SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY	DEATH IMPRINT/ RESPONSES TO WAR	POLITICS OF WAR	ETHNIC CLEANSING
SURVIVAL (WORK)	survival war/work: the paradox	loss of life/ dignity as a human being	destruction of professional/ career identity	survivor guilt	politics of war/work	ethnicity in the old/new world
HOMELESSNESS/ HOMESICKNESS	survival in spite of emptiness	loss and nostalgic despair	destruction of home, community	nowhere to go/ nowhere to return	politics of flight	ethnicity in exile
DESTRUCTION OF FAMILY, HEALTH, SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY	survival: the choice	grieving the loss of family, social order, health, self/ identity	acceptance of total destruction	grieving death and accepting the possibility of rebirth	politics of resettlement	ethnicity in flux
REBUILDING OF SELF	survival: the rebuilding a) self	rebuilding of identity: professional, cultural personal	rebuilding inner landscape	the self restructured with a deep understanding of the reality of death	politics of identity (i.e. the personal is political)	rebuilding ethnic identity in the new world
REBUILDING OF FAMILY	b) family	rebuilding of family structure	rebuilding structure of daily existence	the family restructured with the knowledge that war/death has changed it forever	politics of the changing family structure	rebuilding the family as ethnic Canadians
ADJUSTMENT	c) social order	rebuilding understanding of social order	rebuilding social network	adjusting the traumatized inner reality to a peaceful social order	politics of adjustment to Canadian society	adjusting to a multi-ethnic social order

From Citizen to Refugee: Self Organization

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To describe the activities and states of a human system as it moves from chaos to self-organization is to map out unstable and transitory tendencies and possibilities as well as stable and resilient states of being. In the language of dynamical systems theory, one creates a map of state space or a model of all possible states a system can attain. Figure IV is intended as a partial representation of a refugee's movement from order to chaos and chaos to self-organization. From the perspective of dynamical systems theory, one of the noteworthy features of any state space is the attractor state, or that state toward which the system gravitates. Any one of the categories in figure IV could be conceptualized as a possible state space with each one of the boxes representing an attractor within that state space. For example, the category loss and grief merges with the category of homelessness/homesickness around the issue or attractor state of loss and nostalgic despair; the category death imprint and responses to war merges with the category rebuilding of self around the issue or attractor state of restructuring the self within the context of a deep understanding of the reality of death; the categories ethnic cleansing and rebuilding of the family merges around the attractor state of rebuilding the family as ethnic Canadian, and so on.

With the exception of survival work, the first two horizontal columns of figure IV represent the events that stem from war and flight. At these junctures it is impossible to cooperate with self-organizing principles and forces. The damage is too great, the risk of death is too high, and the chaotic energy of destruction is too pervasive. To some degree, the character of the refugee is forged within this chaos of war. For the participants in this study, this chaos of war represented steps along the tumultuous and tragic developmental pathway of citizen to refugee. This destructive and chaotic energy of war underlies the

categories of survival war, loss and grief, destruction of family, health, society and individual identity, death imprint/responses to war, politics of war, ethnic cleansing, survival/work, and homelessness/homesickness. The tragic disorder and chaos inherent in these categories can be conceptualized as essential states that the refugee endures en route to self-organization. They represent a historically constructed state space that overthrows even the most entrenched ideas about life as rational and predictable.

It is not until the category of destruction of family, health, society and individual identity that the energy of self-organization begins to germinate and it does not become emergent except within the categories of rebuilding of the self, rebuilding of the family, and adjustment.

The category, destruction of family, health, society and individual identity spans both the old and the new world order and in dynamical systems terms can be described as a bifurcation or choice point in the process of self-organization. Attractors describe stable or weakly stable outcomes of self-organization, but in any model of dynamical systems constructs for depicting change are also needed (Lewis, et al., 1997). Change can be described in terms of the system's movement between attractors or as movement to a totally new configuration of the state space through a bifurcation process. Because this category of destruction of family, health, society, and individual identity spans both the old and the new world and mirrors the existential angst of the war but occurs in the context of peaceful coexistence, it might be conceptualized as representative of a bifurcation point within the qualitative data matrix.

In the new world refugees ultimately come to a point where they realize just how difficult it is going to be to live and work in Canada. They have suffered enough and the

expectation for many was they would arrive in Canada and the suffering would not necessarily be over, but in the land of the Golden West life might be easier. The distance between the real and the imagined not only emphasizes what has been lost, but brings to the refugees' attention what must be recreated and the amount of work and energy that recreation will entail.

The difference, however, between destruction of family, health, society, and individual identity in war and in peace concerns the obvious fact that in war there is no time and no space to recreate anything. Not until one has settled, even marginally, into a new life can one even begin to grieve and accept what has been lost and make choices concerning the process of self-organization. In peace, even though everything is different and all that was lost remains lost, the possibility of restructuring and rebuilding one's family, health, social network, and individual identity exists.

Further, at the centre of figure IV and central to the refugee's self-organization is an attractor state that denotes acceptance of the suffering and the total destruction, loss, and devastation that has occurred. This is not, however, an event. Acceptance is a process that ebbs and flows and shifts with time and external triggers. For example, the participant in the study whose suffering and loss included the death of her son, has accepted her status as a Canadian citizen, and in all sincerity said that former Yugoslavia was her last country, not her country. As fully as possible this participant is living in Canada with both feet firmly planted in Canadian soil. She has accepted the loss of her son and is aware that her life goes on as do her two remaining children's and she must be as present as possible for them. When she sees the young lad on the early morning televised mass, however, the grief and the loss overpowers all else including acceptance.

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Fundamental to this acceptance is the grieving process. Before acceptance comes some affective response to all that has been lost through death and forced relocation. Acceptance is neither an antidote to grief nor does it remove the pain of the knowledge that one has entered the heart of existential meaninglessness. However, grief following acceptance can be tempered with an acceptance of the possibility of rebirth, self-organization, and restructuring. Despite all odds and in spite of unspeakable living conditions, homelessness and homesickness, loss of dignity, identity and family, and the tremendous survivor guilt that some refugees feel at being alive, they are indeed alive. They have lived through the chaos of war and dislocation and ultimately, they find the "butterfly" that lies beneath it.

Another fundamental building block or corner stone to functionally restructuring one's life is meaningful work. The value of meaningful work cannot be overestimated. Procuring of meaningful work is a critical point for the refugee and has the potential to restore dignity, professional identity, and home. However, that process can be so difficult in Canada, and the stakes are perceived to be so high, that it is reminiscent of survival in war. Like survival in war, working in the new world is a categorical imperative and irrespective of the refugee's survivor guilt, loss of dignity and professional identity, intrusion, hyperarousal, and lack of concentration, he or she must find meaningful work if life is to hold any promise. Life on welfare is subsistence existence. However, as in war, ethnicity can be a deadly issue. In the new world a refugee's ethnicity is rarely a bonus. Linguistic, educational, social, and cultural barriers interfere with the possibility of reclaiming one's professional existence and many resign themselves to a life far below their extant achievements and their potential. For example, the music teacher with perfect

pitch who believes himself to be a realistic man, has all but renounced his vocation because he believes the barriers in this country are too large to get over, around, or under. He might be right. He has examined the courses he would need to work in his field and determined that he has all the requirements. However, he has been told by one academic institution that his language skills are lacking and he should try to seek employment in the field. He has been told by prospective employers that he must return to school and redo his credentials.

The refugee must self-organize and restructure an individual identity, the family, and one's social network within the context of his or her intimate understanding of death, experience of loss and grief, limited understanding of the politics of the new world, and ethnic identity as redefined by life in a multicultural capitalist society. The self-organization of identity takes place internally and externally and provides a perfect example of a nonlinear dynamical systems model where interdependent micro, meso and macro levels of a system interact in order to create a novel outcome. Disparate components are brought together in unexpected and unpredictable ways and a reconstituted personal, professional, and ethnic self and family come into being. For example, after escaping a war, cleaning toilets in Germany, and coming to Canada only to lose her marriage, one participant, a physician, is finally studying at University of Toronto in a Master of Science program. Although it may not be what the refugee envisioned, this experiential understanding of the fact that, contained within the ashes of total destruction and death are the seeds of creation and rebirth, helps the refugee reclaim the power to choose and set goals.

For the refugee, meaning is constructed out of individual, sociocultural,

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international, and historical contexts. The thoughts, feelings, decisions, and experiences of the refugee as she or he moves through time construct a new reality that for the first six months can create a confusing amorphous mass of mixed emotion. Some refugees vacillate between feelings of despair and a desperate desire to return home, to a profound curiosity and hopefulness about the new world. Many of the participants said that the entire first year was a nightmare, nothing like war, but a nightmare nonetheless. For others, however, the first year was full of hope, peace and newness. Genuine despair did not begin unabated for about two-and-half years. And, what refugees are taught in classes and programs such as ESL is that it will take five full years before they have any abiding sense of belonging or comfort in Canada. In that five years refugees accomplish tremendous restructuring and the process of self-organization works its magic. Although many will never be completely free of symptoms such as hyperarousal, intrusion, avoidance and psychic numbing, and the refugee's identity is inextricably intertwined with the experience of war and uprootedness, he or she will structure and restructure the self in novel and unexpected ways. Immigrating to Canada, a move not one of them would have foreseen prior to the war, is one of the more obvious novel solutions to problems that appeared unsolvable.

Out of the ashes of chaotic destruction, even the most grief-stricken refugees in this study have created a life for themselves and their children. The have reinstated their power of choice and they have set goals. They have traversed the politics of an alien system and they have restructured the self, the family, and their social order. They have learned to weather swiftly changing rules as they apply to family and ethnicity and they have worked to build a minority or bicultural ethnic identity within the larger culture.

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<u>Quantitative Study:</u>
<u>Analysis and Discussion</u>

Sex

Sex differences were examined in the average response to the trauma variables of avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion. Women almost consistently chose measures on the IES-Revised that indicated intrusion rather than either avoidance or hyperarousal. In 9 out of the 13 women in the study, intrusion was the most frequently reported. Three women endorsed the item avoidance, and only one female participant endorsed hyperarousal as the most common symptom. The p-value or probability associated with this finding (binomial Prob (X>8) = 0.0088, using p = 1/3) suggests that this finding concerning women's ratings of intrusion is not a random occurrence. This is a significant finding suggesting that women are more likely to endorse intrusion rather than hyperarousal and avoidance.

It is perhaps not surprising that women would suffer more from intrusion. Feminist theory teaches that woman are more easily intruded upon, both externally and internally, by actions, feelings, and the needs of others as well as internal states and feelings. Gender is a risk factor throughout the life cycle and in war having a female body is riskier business than usual. For example, rape was such a prevalent crime in this war, and fear of this kind of invasion so pervasive that it is little wonder images of intrusion continue to haunt the women in this study. Further, the sexes are socialized differently to experience and express aggression. Intrusive memories are a form of internalized aggression directed at the self rather than directed outward. Such a form of aggression is far more congruent with sex-role conventions, especially in the Balkans, than externally directed forms of aggression or even avoidance of aggression altogether.

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Males, on the other hand, experienced all three symptoms of trauma equally

(avoidance = 4; hyperarousal = 3; intrusion = 4).

Married Versus Single Trends

Findings concerning two separate trends are reported in this section. In order to

address the extent of influence between husbands and wives in terms of symptom profile

and item endorsement on the IES-Revised I asked the question, "What is the probability

that husbands and wives will answer the IES-Revised in a similar way?". Second, in order

to determine what changes occurred among married women, married men, and single

women, over time in the symptoms of hyperarousal, avoidance, and intrusion a linear

regression was used. Avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion were the dependent variables

and marital status, and sex were the independent variables.

1)   In 6 out of 8 couples, it was found that symptom profiles coincided. Under the

         hypothesis that husbands and wives are in fact answering independently of one

         another, the probability that they choose the same answer (i.e., rated the same

         variable as experienced most often) is approximately 0.3566. The probability (p-

         value) associated with the (binomial) statistic that in 6 out of 8 couples both

         members give the same answer is $P(X>5) \leq 0.028$ (p = 0.36). Therefore, husbands

         and wives influence each other's symptom profile.

Husbands and wives do not answer independently of each other. The trend over

time is for husbands and wives to impact on one another's symptom profile. This

reciprocal affective effect was evidenced in the qualitative and quantitative data. Based on

the qualitative data married female participants tended to blame their husbands when they

were anxious and depressed and report that if they became depressed their husbands

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tended to become depressed also.

2) Trends over time for married men and married women versus single women were also explored and increases and decreases in trauma symptoms were compared. A linear regression model was used for each group (i.e., married men, married women, single women), in order to assess the relationship between time and trauma symptoms of avoidance, intrusion, and hyperarousal. The slopes over time for each group were compared to determine whether there were significant differences. Results suggest that all symptoms decreased in single women over time (intrusion: $F = 213.67$; $N = 172$; $p < 001$: avoidance: $F = 38.66$; $N = 172$; $p < 001$: hyperarousal: $F = 114.43$; $N = 172$; $p < .001$). Moreover, based on the raw data, single women's base rates were lower than either married men or married women's base rates. Both married women (intrusion: $F = 22.84$; $N = 172$; $p < .001$: avoidance: $F = 68.54$; $N = 172$; $p < .001$: hyperarousal: $F = 0.22$; $N = 172$; $p = .6345$), and married men (intrusion: $F = 49.33$; $N = 172$; $p < .001$: avoidance: $F = 35.00$; $N = 172$; $p < .001$: hyperarousal: $F = 3.31$; $N = 172$; $p = .0705$), showed a decrease in avoidance and intrusion over time but hyperarousal stayed constant.

Confounding Events Encountered During the Course of the Study

As mentioned previously, these plots marking significant events, although purely descriptive, show obvious responses to NATO's bombing of Kosovo. Because participants began the study at different times, the bombing of Kosovo took place on or around day 50 of the study. Although this is an obvious and expected response, it does lend support to the idea that refugees are susceptible to external events that can trigger internal traumatic symptoms. This "Kosovo effect" is evident in most of the time series plots.

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Chapter Four

Discussion and Conclusions

Suffering and trauma appear to be an inherent part of the human condition. Trauma is systemic in that it intrudes into every aspect of a system's organization. From the macroscopic to the microscopic, trauma and suffering create extreme chaos and perturbations within a system that eventually force the system to self-organize or die. Former Yugoslavia, and the 26 former citizens who made up the participants in this study, exemplify the scope and power of the processes involved in the transition from chaos to self-organization. The country as it existed is gone, its people are scattered both physically and psychologically, and the world, in particular the West, has been pulled into the conflict and its aftermath. These warring factions that have sprouted from the same Slavic seeds have changed the composition of the world.

In the spirit of the science of complexity, the following discussion section will attempt to distil the diverse content and the findings of this paper into a cohesive picture of the process of self-organization. The intensity and complexity of the suffering that many of the participants in this study have experienced (and continue to experience) in both their internal and external reality, cannot be easily communicated. In the following discussion, I will first summarize the major points of the study's qualitative and quantitative analyses. Second, I will attempt to explain and integrate these findings with the earlier theoretical discussion of dynamical systems theory and the process of self-organization. Finally, I will look briefly at the practice implications and make suggestions for further research as well as discuss any further limitations of this study.

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The Findings: A Summary

Self-organization occurs as a result of interaction between and within all system levels. The micro, meso and macroscopic levels of organization are respectively represented by the self, the family and the larger social order or network. Central to self-organizing personal identity and restructuring self is time, coupled with adaptive mechanisms such as viewing the self as fundamentally stronger and more competent. Central to self-organizing the family are children and establishing a minority ethnic identity within the larger dominant culture while dealing with shifting roles in the family. And, central to self-organizing the social order is communication, and the nature of exchanges of energy between cultures.

Establishing and maintaining a sense of competence in the new world entails such achievements as finding meaningful work, maintaining ties with one's homeland, learning language, grieving losses, and rebuilding dignity. Because rebuilding dignity is closely related to meaningful work, however, it is at this juncture that not only the internal processes of the refugee are at issue, but so are the laws, policies, and practices of the macrosystem.

The destruction in study participants' lives was total. Everything that ordered their existence was destroyed in the chaos of war. The disordered, entropic, disequilibrium forces of war dismantled their lives and destroyed their country. Integrating such chaos, however, leads to the renewal of life and is part of the process of human self-organization. Inasmuch as inorganic processes can self-organize when in far-from-equilibrium states, so too, can human beings. The forces of chaos such as surviving in war, living with extreme levels of loss and grief, witnessing or experiencing the destruction of health, family, self,

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and social order, and living with death as a conscious and constant companion, eventually yielded to the forces of self-organization and transformation. Growth in the wake of trauma entails transforming wanton destruction into an ongoing restructuring of self, family, and an entire social network. Although post traumatic growth and transformation following trauma comes at an awful price, it is as a result of trauma that participants' appreciation for their personal strength, competence, self-reliance, and confidence increased. Appreciation for life, relationships, compassion for others, and acceptance of what is and what has been are all aspects of post traumatic growth participant's discussed.

Restructuring the Self

As the refugee reconstructs a new self, he or she performs many tasks that require containing and transforming the intense emotions and the physiological and psychological correlates of trauma. Some of the participants accomplished containment in a fluid process-oriented way and by that I mean, they learned to flow with the whole of their experience, including symptomatic manifestations. Absolute mastery of intense emotional responses to trauma and overwhelming grief was, perhaps, an ideal but the refugee's experience taught that symptoms come and go and sometimes they are manageable and sometimes they are not.

As the refugee moves through time, the shattered self is recreated internally and externally. For example, as external daily activities increased and study participants became busier and perhaps got work, their internal reality became more stable. With an increase in a structured daily activities came an ability to forget the past, even for a short time, and focus on events and meanings outside of loss. Rebuilding physical, emotional, and psychological aspects of the self is an antidote to loss.

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There is an obvious and vivid interconnection between internal and external domains. For example, the participant who made the decision to clear or "clean" her life of unhealthy relationships also made a decision to exercise, eat better, and in general appreciate what she had accomplished. She had developed the ability to recognize the signs that bottomless despair was lurking in the shadows and that the only course of action was to shine the light of consciousness into those murky depths and then take appropriate action. Further, several of the participants became members of the YMCA, which as part of its mandate makes memberships available to refugees free of charge.

Structurally, they made life easier for themselves and even bearable by buying a home, a car, making new connections within the host community, visiting doctors and tending to the physical and psychological concomitants of trauma. They rebuilt through rekindling the quality of hope and along with the ability to hope comes the ability to envision a future. This ability to envision a future is in part a product of living in a peaceful country where peaceful coexistence occurs. No one is going to enter your home and take you to a concentration camp. Law and order abide. Because many refugees have faced extreme hardship, including refugees in this study, they understand that although life in this country is difficult, it is not war.

One of the most potent ways to rebuild the self appears to be reaching out to other, less experienced refugees and helping through one's intimate and experiential knowledge of the processes involved. An extension of this occurs when the refugee finds ways to aid not only other refugees, but people and children in former Yugoslavia who, as yet, have no apparent way out of their suffering. Self-organization also occurs through establishing boundaries, making autonomous decisions, maintaining independence and, learning to trust

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self and others. Trust in life, self, and others is demolished during the experience of war and flight and rebuilding appears to come primarily through relationship, reestablishing some sense of internal equilibrium, and time.

Time is crucial to the process of self-organization and participants come to realize that they must rebuild in and through the dimension of time. Further, they can only give themselves time through understanding the value and virtue of patience. During the first one or two years the refugee displays an impressive and aggressive drive to regain what has been lost. After four or five years the refugee has completed the major aspects of adjustment and less change or improvement occurs after this point (Stein, 1986).

Creating relationships, households, and a dream or vision for the future, giving expression to creative and humourous aspects of the self, as well as giving oneself permission to accept challenges that are pertinent to the new country such as getting a driver's license, are all aspects of the process of self-organizing identity. Further, self-organization is realized through giving expression to new values that have developed as a result of the war such as prioritizing one's close relationships and an appreciation for normalcy.

Contained within the trauma are the elements of rebuilding the self. If, as Herman (1992) contends, the core experiences of trauma are disempowerment and disconnection or isolation from self and others, then core experiences of empowerment and empathetic reconnection with self and others constitute the cornerstones of self-organization and all of the above are explicit expressions of how the Eastern European refugees in this study reconstructed and self-organized the shattered self.

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Restructuring the Family

Central to the self-organization of the family are children and the formidable task of creating an ethnic identity in the midst of a majority culture. Boundaries between the family and the larger culture are often in flux and often at issue. Policies that create more open and permeable boundaries, allowing extended family to visit freely or emigrate, would aid adaptation. The inherent humaneness of keeping families together enhances conditions for self-organization.

Retaining ties to family, tradition, music, and community is an important aspect of creating an ethnic identity. However, what seems to be equally important to post traumatic growth is engaging in new traditions. Events such as Thanksgiving bring a fresh quality and have no obvious associations with the gone but not forgotten world. They provide an opportunity unique to the new world for the family to come together in a new way and begin the process of creating tradition.

Rebuilding through children and the knowledge that you have provided them with opportunities they would not otherwise have plus maintaining connections with extended family, are common techniques for restructuring family. Children are undeniably central to the self-organization of the family. Their role cannot be overemphasized. They usually provide the impetus to emigrate and they provide a central focus for familial hopes and goals. Parents take pride in the alacrity with which their children soak in and adjust to language and culture and they feel relieved that they have brought their children to a safe place. In the midst of the NATO bombings study participants were beyond grateful that their children were here and could eat, drink, and develop normally. Nieces and nephews living in Serbia could be heard over the phone during bombings shrieking in fear. The

belief that things can be better for your children, even while they may not be better for you, is enough to mollify even the unhappiest of parents.

To have parents and siblings visit can also coincide with a change in attitude for refugees. They are often told that post-war conditions are bleak and once having seen extended family members, they come to realize that family is not as remote as they once thought.

Restructuring the Social Network

Central to the self-organization of the social network is communication and the nature of the exchanges of energy between members of the larger culture and members of the minority culture. The host culture, through its programs, funding, and policies must acknowledge the struggles and needs of the refugee and the potential contributions. Encouraging dialogue between members of the host culture and members of the minority culture, is almost as important as maintaining within culture ties and rebuilding community through connection to the larger Bosnian community

Policies and programs that encourage dialogue between cultures such as the Host program, which pairs a refugee or immigrant family or individual with a Canadian family for a limited period of time, were appreciated by all members of the study. ESL was considered vital in the early stages of life in Canada and anything that can be done to improve the delivery of language education to refugees is significant to the process of social self-organization. Again, time is an all-important dimension in that self-organization is accelerated when official programs are geared to differing needs at differing times in the refugee's social adjustment process. ESL programs also included daycare which was of inestimable help to the female refugee. Although Working for Work and New Canadians,

programs designed to ease the refugee into the Canadian work place, were deemed good programs in that they provided the refugee with information on the Canadian job market, resumes, and on the job experience, they were experienced by some participants as exploitive and described as stopping short of being really useful in actually placing refugees in a paying job. The lack of programs that encourage physicians to be physicians rather than obfuscating the process, and assisting professionals by streaming them into some kind of equivalency exams or truncated licensing program, probably constitutes this country's most troubling areas of inefficacy. People tend to, as one participant said, "get hungry" for their vocation or profession. By smoothing the way to professional licensing and creating a loan system for refugee professionals, the entire process of social self-organization would be facilitated.

Every system within the host culture impacts on the refugee. Because children are so essential to restructuring the family and the hopes and visions of parents, teachers (both ESL and public school teachers) are profoundly important figures. Because people from the Balkans tend to respect authority figures such as teachers, what they say and how they say it has weight. Further, people's attitudes in general toward refugees appeared to facilitate the process of self-organizing one's social network. How refugees are treated by people in banks, stores, and on the street, made a tremendous impact on the refugees in this study.

Canada does well to encourage citizenship. It facilitates self-organization as it can help to nourish a sense of belonging and it can give people a stable and reliable basis upon which to return to Europe if they wish to. However it is costly, several hundred dollars, depending on the size of the family.

Providing refugees with information on appropriate and available programs was a

need stressed by almost every participant. Because social programs and shelters such as welfare and women's shelters were not available in former Yugoslavia, the refugee does not think in such terms of support. Equipping refugee women with this kind of information as well as programs run by the multicultural society is fundamental to the process of rebuilding a social network of support.

Further, because refugees are in a state of shock when they arrive in this country refugee receiving houses should at a minimum be cockroach-free and at most, comfortable, private spaces away from downtown cores. Acknowledging and accommodating from the outset that refugees labour under high levels of stress and anxiety might help to begin the process of rebuilding faith and trust across system levels. Further these receiving houses are not available to everyone, depending on whether the refugee has been sponsored or arrives in Canada as an immigrant, and this can cause some real hardship for some. Further, reconstructing a coherent system of meaning and belief that encompasses the trauma story is one of the steps to healing (Herman, 1992). Therefore, encouraging refugees to talk to appropriate people about their war experiences, as opposed to suggesting they avoid any mention of the war and put it behind them, constitutes a more respectful and utilitarian approach to the refugee as a human being and the processes of self-organization.

Integration of Theory and Findings

The study of the dynamics of complex systems must involve constructs of self-organization and nonlinearity, mutuality and relationship, interdependence and connectedness, and context and wholeness. To think systemically is to place elements of the system into the context of the larger whole. One of the easiest ways to place systemic elements into such a context is to view systems as multilayered with micro, macro, and

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meso levels composed of interdependent networks within networks.

Remembering that what is macro in one context can be micro in another, one way the refugee can be contextualized is to examine the refugee's impact on all three levels of the system, if the microscopic level is defined as the individual refugee, the macroscopic level is defined in terms of the refugee's global impact, and the mesoscopic level of the system is defined as the country of asylum. Dynamical systems theory, with its emphasis on mutuality provides a way to view the refugee's impact across and within system levels. On each level of the system, micro, macro, and meso, the refugee can be conceptualized as being symbolic of self-organization, interconnectedness, and diversity, respectively.

On an individual, microscopic level the refugee exemplifies the processes of self-organization. By surviving such incredible adversity the refugee attests to the infinite resourcefulness of the human spirit. Out of chaotic destruction, the refugee fabricates the tools needed to recreate life and reestablish meaning. War destroys accepted rules of causality, order, predictability, and life as it once existed. People are killed or spared or maimed at the apparent capricious whim of an inhumane fate. Death stalks the land and its people leaving mountains of corpses, burned out buildings, and blackened scorched countryside where once there was exquisite beauty.

If, in fact, human behaviour is governed by the generic processes of self-organization then key to understanding processes of self-organization is understanding and isolating pattern because self-organization is the spontaneous emergence of order and pattern in open, complex, far-from-equilibrium systems. Interconnectivity, or the way things cooperate to form coherent pattern; attractors, or patterns toward which all nearby trajectories are pulled; chaos or the subtle forms of underlying organization within

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apparently chaotic behaviour; and bifurcation points, or critical places of choice within a system's evolution as it tumbles through chaos toward eventual self-organization or system disintegration and death, are organizational concepts that combine to create novel patterns and solutions to dynamic instabilities.

Dynamic instabilities mark a clear distinction between one pattern of behaviour and another, they allow one to map movement between patterns of behaviour, and they provide a means to predict behaviour near critical or crisis points (Kelso, 1997). The participants in this study symbolize not only processes of self-organization, but they also provide behavioural examples of dynamic instabilities. From Yugoslavian to Canadian, they have experienced total destruction of self, family, culture and society. They have grieved and accepted the facts of that destruction, and they have rebuilt their internal and their external realities in novel and totally unexpected ways.

On a collective macroscopic level the refugee is more than a critical symbol of interconnectivity. Refugees connect diverse aspects of reality. They transport interconnectivity through culture, language, diverse ways of thinking and being in the world, and trauma, to every corner of the inhabited globe. However, awareness of developing complexity and interconnectivity is occurring faster than humanity's ability to deal with it by manifesting mutual aid and support, cooperation and empathy, and responsibility for and consciousness of, such levels of interdependence. Hence, the refugee is part of a growing transnational crisis that developing nations such as Canada are trying to control by closing borders. In an effort to protect privilege, a global apartheid (Richmond, 1994), much like what privileged whites created in South Africa, is pervading immigration policy. Through restrictive immigration and refugee policies economically developed

nations are practising global apartheid. In the name of state sovereignty, humane deterrence, and border control, more and more industrial nations are placing barriers in the way of the fundamental right to leave a country where serious threats exist to personal safety and well being (Richmond, 1994). If apartheid operates on a global basis like it did when applied by white South African elites, then the world should brace itself for even greater degrees of oppression and angry responses from those who have nothing to lose.

More and more the need to coordinate global activity across international borders is becoming apparent. The world already recognizes the necessity and existence of an interdependent global economy, where information, goods and services, and money move freely across borders in a kind of "borderless world" (Ohmae, 1990). What is not recognized is that like goods and services human beings, too, must have the right to move freely. This dam against the free flow of migration is, however, not only blocking the free flow of energy and people, but it is creating a build up of migratory pressure (Straubhaar, 1993). Dynamical systems theory would suggest that this far-from-equilibrium complex system is experiencing internal and external perturbations as well as a build-up of energy flow. There is a large, unevenly distributed energy concentration or buildup and this creates pressure toward new energy flows. Energy will increase until fluctuations reach a critical size and the system is forced into critical evolutionary places of choice where the time-space constraints that hold the flow of energy in place are broken. A new form of flow will come into being. However, unless developed nations facilitate this flow of migratory patterns, rather than block it, the new form of flow that will come into being will likely involve violence, civil war, and clandestine movements designed to evade law and order. Stable systems will dampen perturbations, but aggregates of refugees living in oppressive

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conditions, or in camps, or on the run do not constitute a stable system. The decrease in the rate of decay of perturbations will destabilize the system further and create chaos which necessitates death of the system or self-organization into greater levels of complexity. Smuggling people across borders, stowaways, refugees who are bought and sold and used and abused, and forged travel documents and asylum applications, are all symptoms of this growing disequilibrium force.

We are living in a global village but simplistic, protective and apartheid-like policies and agendas deny this globalization and global interconnectivity. The current refugee crisis cannot be resolved through a denial of interconnectivity but, rather, requires highly coordinated activities within and between countries (UNHCR, 1997). The human race has the capacity to self-destruct and as long as ideologies of separateness, and isolationist and protective policies are operating as the primary way of dealing with global crises, then this capacity to self-destruct will grow rather than decrease. Global apartheid is not a viable way of dealing with refugee crises and as surely as its South Africa counterpart collapsed so, too, will it collapse.

What appears to be emerging is both a global economic and a global social system (Richmond, 1994). Economically developed nations support the emergent economic system because it is seen as beneficial while the emergent global social system, which by definition involves migrants, immigrants, and refugees, is seen as potentially detrimental to social cohesion, international solidarity and peace (Widgren, 1991). Long-term solutions would involve long-term developmental assistance, large-scale planned migrations, and concerted efforts to promote human rights and equality in both sending and receiving nations. Further coordinated global efforts to harmonize immigration and asylum policies, encourage

voluntary repatriation, and promote economic development in Third World countries (Richmond, 1994), are all ways that developing nations might create conditions conducive to self-organization.

The impact of the refugee is felt on all system levels and the refugee crisis cannot be resolved without intense involvement from First World nations. If the war in the Balkans and the subsequent influx of refugees underscores anything for the West, it should underscore that, indeed, as dynamical systems theory would have it, we are dynamic webs of interrelated events and a war in former Yugoslavia is not without its impact in Canada. Yugoslavia failed to sow the seeds of a democratic community where minority rights were both honoured and protected. However, far-from-equilibrium conditions create recursive forward trajectories of a growth/limitation/transformation cycle of evolution" (Goerner, 1993, p.172) and self-organization results in greater levels of complexity.

One manifestation of that complexity that, obviously, cannot be extricated from the refugee, is that of ethnic diversity, the mesoscopic level of impact. This ethnic diversity that is part of the profile of almost all post-industrial societies today brings to the surface in countries of asylum, such as Canada, issues of human rights, equality of opportunity, and the openness of people of the host country to meeting the needs of those who represent this diversity. This is a service to the host nation. Regulating the dance between cultural pluralism and the heterogeneity of individual interest, with the homogenous needs of a united people is the task of all polyethnic societies. It cannot be accomplished without an understanding of how interdependent dynamical systems weave in and out of one another, enter chaos, crack open and either transform or die.

Practice Implications and Directions for Future Research

Practice Implications

From a clinical perspective, the social worker who deals with refugees must be willing to navigate the choppy water that connects and feeds all system levels, where the micro is defined as the individual refugee and his or her family, the meso is defined as intermediate systems such as schools and other local systems, and the macro is defined as the governmental policies and attitudes of the host country toward refugees. Advocating across system levels for the refugee can be frustrating and disempowering. I know from my own experience of accompanying refugees to schools to discuss their children's misdemeanours, of working with grief-stricken refugees who broke down in the middle of an interview, of tackling Canadian immigration policies in an effort to bring refugees from former Yugoslavia to Canada, that this work is not for the faint of heart.

Refugees have in common the fact that they have survived excessive violence and repression hence, working with intrusion, avoidance, hyperarousal, and all the concomitants of this symptom cluster, as well as being able to witness high levels of grief are a vital part of any work with refugees. Because so much has been written about treatment of trauma from the perspective of traumatic symptoms, however, I would like to focus the following discussion on therapeutic techniques designed to enhance post traumatic growth and the forces of self-organization and transformation.

Traumatic symptoms occur alongside post traumatic growth and self-organization. Even while the refugee struggles with intrusion, hyperarousal, and avoidance, he or she also reconstructs the self, the family, and one's social order. Most behavioural and social science models frame human beings as seeking steady states rather than far-from-

equilibrium conditions (Merry, 1995). Treatment goals are designed to maintain a steady state or foster a return to homeostasis through cessation of a symptom, rather than treating the symptom as a meaningful communication and possible perturbation en route to chaos and subsequent self-organization. From the perspective of dynamical systems theory steady states are just one small corner of self-organization processes and chaos, or disequilibrium forces and states, are seen as normal variants of a self-organizing world. Chaos and nonlinearity, as a normal and necessary part of system evolution and self-organization, are seen as ways of ensuring spontaneous creations of new patterns as well as novel and unexpected solutions. Viewing symptoms of trauma as self-organizing rather than disturbed serves to depotentiate highly pathological connotations.

Core therapeutic constructs of "empowerment, membership, regeneration, synergy" (Saleebey, 1992) and communication can be placed alongside symptomatic behaviour which can then be framed as the best possible self-protective strategies designed to serve that individual's adaptive needs in an inadequate and unresponsive milieu (Shane, et al., 1997). Symptoms can be viewed as part of a response pattern whose purpose is not to prolong or destroy, but to heal. Moreover, the quantitative findings in this study are helpful from a heuristic perspective. To understand and teach people that partners will affect one another negatively and will mimic each other's traumatic symptoms, could be exceptionally helpful to the couple and the family in general. To teach men that women may be more affected by intrusive memories than they are, might prove effective in helping to establish a more sympathetic and less avoidant response. Many female participants talked about how quickly their partners had put the past into the past and how unable men were to understand and be patient with a woman's inability to follow suit.

Although the 26 participants in this study have collectively suffered as much horror as any group of refugees from a war-ravaged place on the planet, all of our encounters took place in their homes or in the context of their daily lives. In this surround it was easier to appreciate the refugee's strengths and normalcy despite the fact she or he struggled with nightmares, grief and loss, intrusive memories, panic attacks, depression, and high levels of stress. Observing them moving through their daily activities in the privacy and comfort of their homes added an entire dimension of observations that reinforced the idea of the refugee as growth-oriented and transformational. Although there were times when I would visit and one member of the family would appear anxious or depressed or just plain hostile, this was a rare occurrence. Usually participants were forthcoming with information, open to the new connection, and ready to share their story, even segments they had never told to anyone.

Perhaps one of the most therapeutic events that occurred during my relationship with participants was that they were finally able to tell their story to someone who was willing to listen. Nothing more. Just listen. Over and over Vietnam veterans would tell their psychiatrists and psychologists, "Listen. Just listen" (Shay, 1994). The therapeutic value of quite, empathetic listening is vital to the work with refugees. Further, the causes that led these people to become refugees were openly discussed and if blame was ascribed to another ethnic group, there was little reaction and less judgement from the listener.

Through the interviews and the questionnaires participants were led back into the trauma and in some crude way, allowed to process it simply in the telling and the recording of symptoms. Healing is contained in the telling and sharing of the trauma story. Because study participants were all several years removed from the war, as it ended three years

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before the study began, the timing was sufficient to allow participants to begin to see some possibility of benefit from their experiences in former Yugoslavia.

In order to assess increased levels of self reliance and resiliency, along with shifts in relationships and values, sufficient time from trauma must elapse before any growth can be seen as a result of the experience (Tedeschi, et al., 1995). Even the participant who lost a child and was, therefore, on some level utterly inconsolable, had a cozy home, worked with children and elders, regularly worshipped and prayed for her son, was deeply engaged with her other children, and visited her mother and father in former Yugoslavia to arrange for care. During the study she made the decision to lay down roots in her country of asylum despite her grief. She found myriad meaningful ways to interact with her world even though she was constantly dealing with intrusion, or as she referred to it, living "a double moment" between the here-and-now and the intrusive and traumatic past.

Time, positive contact with others, and some degree of security are prerequisites to grow from trauma. Refugees are usually far more invested in who they have been than in who they are or who they are becoming. Hence, for this participant to decide that Canada was her home and would be forever, and former Yugoslavia was her last home is a courageous and important choice point. To be able to return home, in spite of being on welfare, and to see her parents again was not something this participant ever expected to do. Nor did she expect that upon returning to Canada she would know in her heart that this was now home.

Novel and unexpected solutions to what appeared to be insolvable problems manifested as a function of self-organization. Nonlinearity ensures the possibility of novel outcomes which appear to arise from out of nowhere. Nonlinearity within chaos creates a

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rich diversity where absorbing suffering, learning from it, and self-organizing in its wake, restores something between promise and hope. Uncovering memories is not enough. They need to be placed in their proper context and reconstructed in a personally meaningful way. "Thus, in therapy, memory paradoxically needs to become an act of creation rather than the static recording of events" (van der Kolk, et.al., 1996, p.19). Nonlinearity provides the necessary underpinnings upon which to base such an act of creation. Currently, treatment goals are designed primarily to maintain a steady state or foster a return to homeostasis through cessation of a symptom. In a dynamical systems model, however, the symptom is treated as a meaningful communication and possible perturbations en route to chaos and subsequent self-organization.

Modelling treatment goals on a science of complexity affords different ways to think about trauma and perhaps expand on ideas such as those that arise out of Janoff-Bulman's (1992) model of shattered assumptions. This model states that core assumptions about normative experience as nontraumatic, safe, benevolent and meaningful are shattered during traumatic events. Ideas about predictability, safety and invincibility are violated at the bedrock level of our conceptual assumptions. In the wake of traumatic physical and sexual abuse or the unspeakable pain exerted on victims of torture, "illusions of invulnerability" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.19) are destroyed leaving the survivor with an understanding of a reality that precludes naive beliefs in the invincibility of being human. Such a legacy is an important step toward post traumatic growth because, in fact, illusions of invulnerability are just that, illusions.

The refugee has evolved a sense of self that can cope with situations in extreme flux and therefore, is equipped to deal with the changing family boundaries and roles, for

example. Rather than collapse under conditions of excessive hardship, the refugee has been surprisingly resilient, so resilient that previously held ideas about the self have to be radically altered.

The quality of the interconnectedness in and between micro, meso, and macro domains will influence self-organization. For example, within the meso system lies the reciprocal value of refugees helping refugees. The idea that "one has something precious to offer other people in great turmoil" can be perceived as a gift (Tedeschi, et al., 1995). Moreover, the residual effects of trauma as manifested in the antagonism, jealousy, and competition participants said existed among refugees exists, in part, because the dominant culture sees minority tension as "other" than itself. However, the minority tensions are "holographic" (Mindell, 1995, p.125) because they are also pictures of ubiquitous tensions that the dominant culture refuses to address and projects onto minorities.

Refugees self-organize from ground zero on all domains. They establish new lives and imbue their lives with different meanings. Even the most devastated of participants transformed their lives. Supportive others and family are helpful but, eventually, old beliefs and perceptions are, at the very least shaken to the core, and notions of invulnerability and personal power must be given up. What springs up in its place is, however, a new sense of power and conviction to live a good life and provide for oneself and ones children (Tedeschi, et al., 1995).

Directions for Future Research

"Some persons transform and quietly triumph over their personal trauma and distress. Others spend the rest of their lives searching for answers. In between these extremes of coping lies a vast, uncharted area for future research on what it means to be a

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survivor" (Wilson, et al., 1988, p.244).

Future research points in three major directions: development of post traumatic

growth instruments that can be used as repeated measures; development of solid cross-

cultural measures for post traumatic stress and post traumatic growth instruments in Serbo-

Croatian and other Slavic languages; and quantitative time series analyses that focus on

trends in traumatic symptoms and post traumatic growth as a function of degree of trauma

and time from trauma.

Post Traumatic Growth

A valiant attempt was made to study post traumatic growth through testing for

appreciation for life, new possibilities, personal strength, spiritual change, and relating to

others. As stated, the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI), a 21-item self-report

measure, was filled out by participants every third day in an effort to track characteristics of

growth as well as symptoms of trauma. Although the measure has merit for studying post

traumatic growth, with an internal consistency of .90 and alphas ranging from .67 to .85

and test-retest reliability over a two-month period being .71 (Tedeschi, et al., 1995), the

major weakness probably lies in the fact that it should not be used as a repeated measure.

Developing such a repeated measure would be invaluable in studying post traumatic

growth. There was a real discrepancy between the quantitative findings and the qualitative

findings in this area of the study in that study participants knew they had grown from the

trauma and were able to articulate exactly how they had restructured themselves, their

families and their world. However, none of this was reflected over time in the PTGI.

Cross Cultural Research

I am aware of no Western measures for post traumatic growth and post traumatic stress that have been translated into any of the Slavic languages. Because so many people from that area of the world are emigrating to Canada as refugees, establishing reliable and valid measures would be a meaningful and worthwhile area of research.

Stressor Magnitude and Time From Trauma as Important Variables in Trauma Research

Stressor magnitude refers to the intensity of the stressor. Certain variables seem to increase stressor magnitude. They include the presence of life threat, physical injury, extent of combat exposure during war, witnessing death, degree of violence during sexual assault, witnessing or being the victim of intentional acts of violence, grotesqueness of death, loss of a friend or loved one, unpredictability and uncontrollability, and finally, sexual victimization (Briere, 1998).

Although there appears to be a linear relationship between extent of trauma and the severity of the stressor, it is not invariant. In many cases this association is not large in magnitude and applies more to group data than to individual data. Further, two people who undergo the same stressor, such as war, may differ significantly in terms of their post traumatic stress response. One may develop acute stress disorder, followed by PTSD, whereas another may experience few short or long term effects. Also, two stressors may appear equivalent but have remarkably different impacts on those individuals involved (Briere, 1998, p.15). Future time series research needs to investigate, in statistically rigorous ways, the relationship between degree of trauma, time from trauma, and rate of recovery.

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Conclusions

Nonlinearity, chaos, and interdependence are "central organizers of the components and patterns" (Shane, et al., 1997, p.13) of all living systems, and they ensure the system's continued transformation, growth and adaptability. The 26 participants in this study have lived through the chaos of war and through circuitous, nonlinear and intensely interdependent and complex processes, they have landed an ocean away from the place they once called home. In the process they have transformed, grown, and adapted. They have suffered and they have self-organized.

Using multistrategy research, the stated purpose of this study was to explore and uncover some of the elements, processes, and patterns inherent in the self-organization and adaptation in this group of 26 Bosnian refugees. The adaptive and coping processes upon which Eastern Europeans rely have been theoretically and metaphorically likened to the principles inherent in dynamical systems theory, principles such as the ability of complex systems to spontaneously self-organize, the essential function of chaos as a harbinger of change and transformation, and the interdependence of systems nested within systems.

Under the rubric of the science of complexity I have discussed and explored the brutal 1990s war in the Balkans, some of the causes of that war, and some of the history of that old and blood-soaked area of the world. I have looked at the world's current refugee crisis and the plight of the refugee through the eyes of people who have been forced to completely restructure their internal and external worlds as a result of becoming a refugee. I have vicariously suffered with them and for them. I have cried with them and laughed with them, been drunk with them (albeit unintentionally), and learned much about the depth and breadth of the human spirit.

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The cost of extreme trauma is enormous. It reverberates and vibrates through every level of the social strata and, if studied carefully, brings to light the complex interweaving of micro, macro, and meso social realities. The global community is a reality and the refugee is its emissary. People in First World nations have much to learn from people who have, through trauma and suffering, been forced to redefine, restructure, and recreate their inner and outer realities. They carry within the memories of terrible suffering and the experience of self-organization despite that suffering. They have crossed difficult developmental divides and rode powerful and violent waves of change to the shore of a distant land and for those who take the time to learn, they have much to teach.

Endnote

1. As a dynamical system changes with time and the system occupies a particular point in what is called state space, the tendency for change associated with that point is represented by a vector. Graphically this vector is represented by an arrow indicating how much each variable will change over the next instant in time. The collection of vectors for each point in the state space is called a vector field. When differential equations are created for each of the variables in the vector field, then one has defined the dynamical system. If the system is started by some initial point, the forces creating the tendency for change push the system to a new state. The succession of states and their vectors creates a path or trajectory. The graph of all possible trajectories for all different initial conditions is called a phase portrait.

Appendix A

Diagnostic Criteria For
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (DSM-IV)

Diagnostic Criteria for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

A. The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:

    a.   the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of the self or others

    b.   the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. **Note:** In children, this may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behaviour

B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in one (or more) of the following ways:

    (1)   recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts or perceptions. **Note:** In young children, repetitive play may occur in which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed.

    (2)   recurrent distressing dreams of the event. **Note:** In children, there may be frightening dreams without recognizable content.

    (3)   acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated). **Note:** In young children, trauma-specific reenactment may occur.

    (4)   intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.

    (5)   physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by three (or more) of the following:

    (1)   efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma

    (2)   efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma

    (3)   inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma

    (4)   markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities

    (5)   feeling of detachment or estrangement from others

    (6)   restricted range of affect (e.g., unable to have loving feelings)

    (7)   sense of a foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children or a normal life span)

D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma), indicated by two (or more) of the following:

    (1)   difficulty falling or staying asleep

(2)   irritability or outbursts of anger
(3)   difficulty concentrating
(4)   hypervigilance
(5)   exaggerated startle response

E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in Criteria B, C, and D) is more than 1 month.

F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

Specify if:
    Acute: if duration of symptoms is less than 3 months
    Chronic: if duration of symptoms is 3 months or more

Specify if:
    With Delayed Onset: if onset of symptoms is at lest 6 months after the stressor

(Reprinted from: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Fourth Edition). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association: pp.427-429.)

Appendix B

The Biology of Trauma

Biological Theories of Trauma

Biological Alterations in Central Noradrenergic Activity

The most obvious physical manifestations of trauma are seen in light of the changes in the autonomic nervous system[1] and most likely involve the neuronal systems which underlie attention, alarm and memory function (Krystal, 1990). Behavioural aspects such as explosive affective outbursts and aggression, irritability, nightmares, flashbacks and startle response, all involve the autonomic nervous system. It is generally accepted that chronic stress due to repeated exposure to traumatic events, as in war, parental abuse, neglect, loss or separation and, childhood sexual abuse or rape, leads to autonomic nervous system and central nervous system hyperarousal (Schwartz, 1990) which in turn creates permanent neurological changes where the individual favours the processing of threat material. Many abused children, for example, show evidence of permanent neurological changes even when there is no evidence of specific head injury (van der Kolk, 1987).

In studying brain mechanisms that could hypothetically explain the trauma response researchers have looked for what has been called physiological trauma centres within the central nervous system. It is further hypothesized that conditioned activation of these trauma centres could be associated with the alarm-like symptoms of the trauma response (Giller, 1990). "The locus coeruleus (LC), located within the brainstem in the pons, which along with the medulla oblongata creates the hindbrain, meets the criteria for a biological trauma centre" (Krystal, 1990, p.4)(see diagrams 1,2, and 3).

Under stress, the LC responds by stimulating increased vigilance in behaviour. It has been shown to be critical in a number of regulatory functions including the regulation of affect, irritability, locomotion, arousal, attention and the startle response (Giller, 1990). Among other functions, the LC has the largest population of neurons (which are the conducting elements of nervous tissue) in the brainstem that makes and stores noradrenaline (or norepinephrine). The central noradrenergic neurons in the LC as well as the laterally located noradrenergic neurons have long axons that end in the gray matter of all parts of the brain and spinal cord (Barr, et al., 1993). The LC, due to its nerve cell body projections, connects with most of the central nervous system and because it is the largest producer of noradrenaline, has a powerful influence on the process of emotional arousal. It appears to be a key factor in the experience of pleasure, anger, and aggression and is implicated in learning, memory and sleep patterns (Upledger, 1995), all of which are affected during prolonged and/or severe trauma (see diagram 3).

Similarly, the ventral tegmental nucleus (VTN), the other major adrenergic-noradrenergic system in the brain, is implicated in the release of noradrenaline when the organism is under stress. The VTN, is a major nuclei of the reticular formation in the brain stem and projects to the limbic system and the hypothalamus. The VTN is concerned with the control of sympathetic nuclei in the pons and medulla or the brainstem (see diagram 4).

Noradrenaline or norepinephrine is a neurohormone which is a class of hormones that stimulates the structure of the nervous system and its functioning. It is released in the brain and known to affect the response to stress. Neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine are necessary for communication within the body and are released, when excited, from the axon terminal of a presynaptic neuron of the central or peripheral nervous system and travel across the synaptic cleft to either excite or inhibit a target cell. Noradrenaline (norepinephrine), along with adrenaline

Diagram 1: Midsagittal View of Midbrain and Brainstem

Reprinted from Upledger, John (1987). Craniosacral II: Beyond the Dura. Seattle, Washington: Eastland Press.

Cerebrum: Medial Views

Sagittal section of brain in situ

Cingulate gyrus

Cingulate sulcus

Medial frontal gyrus

Sulcus of corpus callosum

Fornix

Septum pellucidum

Interventricular foramen (of Monro)

Interthalamic adhesion

Thalamus (3rd ventricle)

Subcallosal (parolfactory) area

Anterior commissure

Paraterminal gyrus

Hypothalamic sulcus

Lamina terminalis

Optic recess

Optic chiasm

Tuber cinereum

Hypophysis (pituitary gland)

Mamillary body

Cerebral peduncle

Pons

Cerebral aqueduct (of Sylvius)

Precentral sulcus

Central sulcus (of Rolando)

Paracentral lobule

Corpus callosum

Precuneus

Superior sagittal sinus

Choroid plexus of 3rd ventricle

Stria medullaris of thalamus

Parietooccipital sulcus

Cuneus

Habenular commissure

Pineal body

Posterior commissure

Calcarine sulcus

Straight sinus in tentorium cerebelli

Great cerebral vein (of Galen)

Superior colliculus

Inferior colliculus

Quadrigeminal (tectal) lamina

Cerebellum

Superior medullary velum

4th ventricle and choroid plexus

Inferior medullary velum

Medulla oblongata

Diagram 2: An Overview of the Brain

Reprinted from Netter, F.H. (1995). Atlas of Human Anatomy. Summit, New Jersey: Ciba-Geigy

Posterior view

- 3rd ventricle
- Pulvinar of thalamus
- Pineal body
- Superior colliculus
- Inferior colliculus
- Trochlear nerve (IV)
- Superior medullary velum
- Cerebellar peduncles { Superior / Middle / Inferior
- Lateral recess
- Superior fovea
- Sulcus limitans
- Inferior fovea
- Trigeminal tubercle
- Hypoglossal trigone
- Vagal trigone
- Obex

- Habenular trigone
- Medial } Geniculate bodies / Lateral
- Dorsal median sulcus
- Superior cerebellar peduncle
- Locus ceruleus
- Medial eminence
- Facial colliculus
- Vestibular area
- Dentate nucleus of cerebellum
- Striae medullares
- Tenia of 4th ventricle
- Cuneate tubercle
- Gracile tubercle
- Dorsal median sulcus
- Lateral funiculus
- Fasciculus cuneatus
- Fasciculus gracilis

Diagram 3: The Brainstem and Locus Ceruleus

Reprinted from Netter, F.H. (1995). Atlas of Human Anatomy. Summit, New Jersey: Ciba-Geigy.

Diagram 4: Approximate Positions of the Major Nuclei of the Reticular Formation of the Brainstem

Reprinted from Kiernan, J.A. (1987). Introduction to Human Neuroscience. J.B. Lippincott Company.

(epinephrine) and dopamine, is believed to function to increase the speed of reflex responses and the general level of alertness.

Any threatening situation is associated with the VTN and the LC which is the primary source of noradrenergic innervation to the limbic system, the cerebral cortex, the cerebellum and to a lesser degree, the hypothalamus (van der Kolk, 1987). Specifically, the cerebral cortex and the limbic system are areas that are associated with significance discrimination, fear, and memory formation (Giller, 1990). The limbic system (an interconnected group of brain structures including portions of the frontal lobe cortex, the amygdala, the thalamus and the hypothalamus, as well as the fibrous pathways that connect these structures), is associated with learning and emotional behaviour (Barr, et al., 1993).

The medulla oblongata of the brain stem is the structure that most directly controls the activity of the autonomic nervous system. The medulla oblongata is in turn influenced by input from the hypothalamus. It is the hypothalamus which orchestrates somatic, autonomic and endocrine responses during various behavioural states and the hypothalamus is in turn influenced by input from the rest of the limbic system, cerebellum, and cerebrum. These interconnections (among others), provide the autonomic component to changes in emotions and personality (van de Graaff, 1992) and directly connects the neurotransmitter norepinephrine, (the major source of which is the LC), to the autonomic nervous system and the fight/flight response, as well as to the various above-mentioned brain structures. Because the LC influences autonomic nervous system functioning, it is assumed to be intimately involved in the response to trauma.

The noradrenergic tracts which emanate from the LC to the hippocampus and the amygdala are also known to play a role in memory retrieval and it has been hypothesized (van der Kolk, 1985) that reliving traumatic experiences is caused by stress-induced reactivation of LC-hippocampus-amygdala pathways. During sleep, under stress, or under other conditions in which conscious control over limbic system activity is diminished, it has been proposed that LC-mediated autonomic arousal activates these potentiated pathways, thus accounting for the increase in nightmares and flashbacks when an individual is under stress or has in some way been triggered (Perry, et al., 1990).

Under severe acute stress, there is first a massive secretion and subsequent depletion of a variety of neurotransmitters including norepinephrine. Presumably this occurs "because utilization exceeds synthesis" (van der Kolk, 1988, p.276). Under chronic stress what appears to be created is a norepinephrine depletion due to a massive secretion during arousal and a subsequent depletion which then becomes a conditioned response to any kind of threat or arousal. It may be that norepinephrine depletion in the central nervous system becomes an adaptively conditioned and chronic response to high levels of stress. It is hypothesized that chronic recurrent depletion of norepinephrine concentration in the brain renders norepinephrine receptors in the brain, or in parts of the brain, hypersensitive to norepinephrine stimulation (van der Kolk, 1987). Hence, physiological hyperarousal is attributed to chronic alterations in the central neurotransmitter systems. It has been hypothesized that "the emotional arousal observed in PTSD patients is related to abnormalities in the central adrenergic system either as a result of excessive secretion or enduring hypersensitivity at receptors" (van der Kolk, 1984, p.101).

When these neurohormones are pharmacologically depleted decreased social interactions among rats, monkeys and humans results (Zahn-Waxler, et al., 1986). This points to an underlying biological explanation for the social isolation that is often part of the clinical profile of survivors of trauma.

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Chronic stress is related to a stressor's capacity to create a state of ongoing helplessness and this helplessness is critical to the formulation of permanent psychobiological systemic changes (Krystal, 1988). One model that is often applied to the study of the interaction of biology and behaviour in trauma is the inescapable stress or learned helplessness model.

An animal's initial response to inescapable stress is alarm. When the stress or shock continues, a conditioned alarm state and an exaggerated reactivity to previously tolerated stressors occur. This is followed by what researchers have referred to as a "helplessness" characterized by impaired avoidance learning, failure to use previously successful escape strategies, and depression. In animal studies, inescapable shock (IS) creates a depletion of brain norepinephrine and dopamine which is behaviourally associated with impaired concentration, loss of interest in activities, and psychomotor retardation (Giller, 1990).

Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis Dysregulation

The biological model of the trauma response is further explicated when the relationship between the noradrenergic system and the relationship between the hypothalamus, the pituitary or hypophysis and the adrenal cortex are factored into the equation. This hypothalamo-hypophysial system constitutes much of the science of neuroendocrinology and is, therefore, a large and complex subject. Here, the discussion will remain focussed on the relationship between the hypothalamus, hypophysis (pituitary gland) and the adrenal gland or, what is referred to as the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA-axis) (see diagram 5).

Details of the interactions between hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis hormones and neurohormones such as dopamine and noradrenaline in the human response to trauma are still poorly understood. However, these various hormones help the body mobilize to deal with stressors. In a well-functioning organism, stress produces rapid hormonal responses. Chronic persistent stress, on the other hand, inhibits the effectiveness of the stress response and induces desensitization (van der Kolk, et al.,1993, p.430).

In spite of a paucity of research on the relationship between the trauma response and the HPA-axis, it is known that the body responds to increased physical or psychological stress by releasing norepinephrine from the LC and adrenocorticotrophin (ACTH) or corticotrophin from the anterior lobe of the pituitary gland. Located in the sella turcica or notch-like space in the sphenoid bone in the head, the pituitary gland is made up of an anterior lobe or adenohypophysis and a posterior lobe or neurohypophysis. ACTH is a peptide hormone secreted by the anterior pituitary gland that acts primarily on the adrenal cortex which is the firm, yellowish, outer layer that comprises the larger part of the adrenal gland located on the cranial pole or top of each kidney. The more than thirty known hormones produced by the adrenal cortex are called corticosteroids or corticoids (Barr, et al., 1993).

The adrenal corticoids are grouped into three types - mineralocorticoids, glucocorticoids, gonadocorticoids. The glucocorticoids help the body resist stress, promote vasoconstriction and act as anti-inflammatory compounds. The most abundant glucocorticoid is cortisol (hydrocortisone) and is the major hormone secreted by the adrenal cortex in response to stress. ACTH stimulates the cortex of the adrenal gland to produce and secrete cortisol (hydrocortisone) and other steroids that protect against many effects of stress (Barr, et al., 1993).

The pituitary gland is intimately connected to the hypothalamus which serves as the main controlling centre of the autonomic nervous system which is believed to be deeply affected by
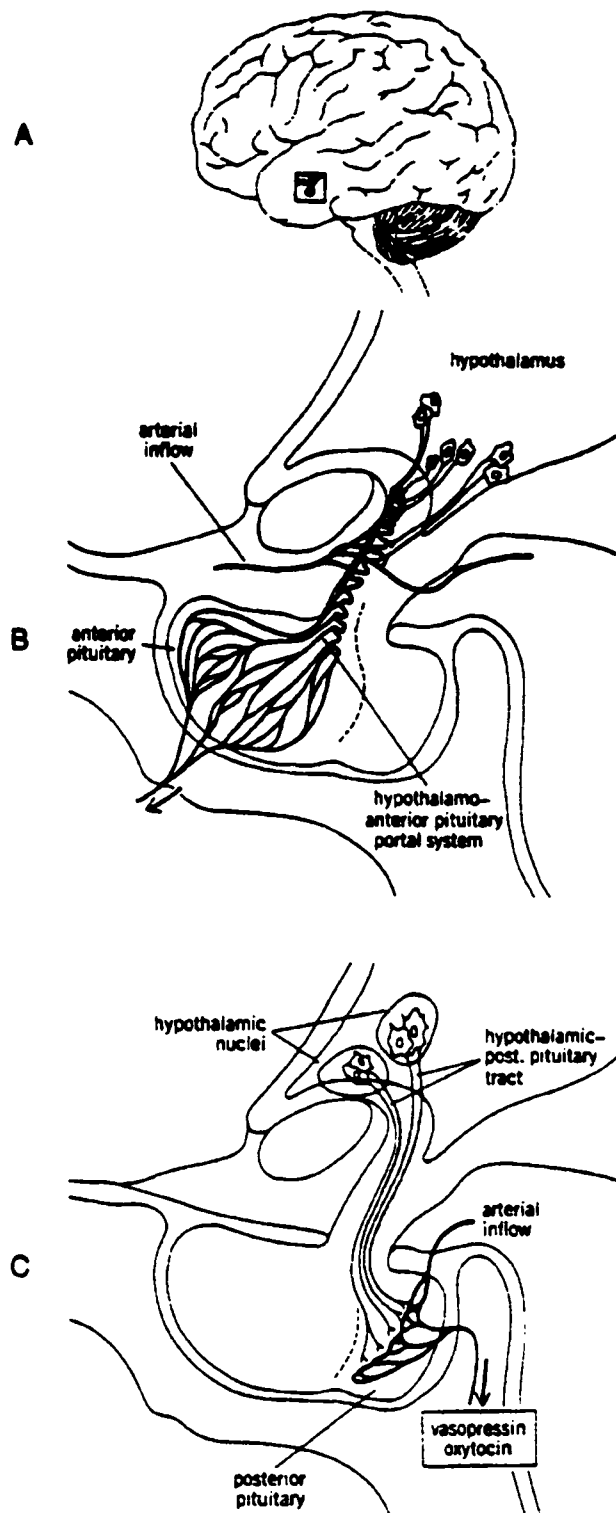
Diagram 5: The Pituitary Gland and the Hypothalamus

The pituitary gland is intimately associated with the hypothalamus and the higher brain. Capillaries from the hypothalamus branch out into the anterior lobe of the pituitary, and nerve axons from the hypothalamus branch out into the posterior lobe. Thus chemical messages in the blood and neural impulses from both the brainstem and the cortex converge upon this master gland.

Reprinted from Juhan, Deane (1987). A Handbook for Bodywork: Job's Body. Barrytown, New York: Station Hill Press.

chronic stress. The hypothalamus has several neurotransmitter systems which, when the organism is under stress, are activated and cause the release of corticotrophin-releasing factor (CRF). CRF from the hypothalamus induces pituitary secretion of ACTH which stimulates the adrenal gland to secrete cortisol (Krystal, et al., 1989) which assists the organism in dealing with stress.

Hence, severe stress is associated with cortisol release through activation of the HPA-axis and these various hormones mobilize the energy necessary to deal with the stress. However, chronic persistent stress inhibits the effectiveness of the stress response and induces desensitization of the natural stress/recovery process (van der Kolk, et al., 1993; Wilson, et al., 1988). A blunted ACTH response to corticotrophin-releasing factor as well as low cortisol levels (Giller, 1990) is common among people who have experienced prolonged trauma.[2]

Several explanations exist that might explain the blunted ACTH response in the trauma response. First, there may be a decreased sensitivity to ACTH in the pituitary itself. A second possibility states that perhaps the pituitary is appropriately sensitive to ACTH but may have less ACTH available for release, and a third possibility states that the pituitary is hyperresponsive to cortisol (Giller, 1990).

Most people who suffer from PTSD seem to exist in a hyperadrenergic state where the neuroendocrine profile is one of increased epinephrine or adrenaline levels and decreased cortisol. Epinephrine is a powerful stimulator of the sympathetic nervous system and causes increases in heart rate and blood pressure. Cortisol is the most abundant glucocorticoid and it is known that glucocorticoids affect central and sympathetic nervous system functioning. When neurobiological systems respond to acute stress, the function is one of adaptation and protection. In chronic stress, however, the situation is entirely different. The relationship between the HPA-axis and the regulation of the LC through glucocorticoids and CRF in chronic stress is multifaceted, complex and intricate and "cannot be explained as simple excitation or inhibition, but may represent a tuning of LC neurons to certain patterns of input" (Giller, 1990, p.122) where these systems appear to modulate each other during stress.

Dysregulation of Endogenous Opioid Neuromodulation

In situations of acute stress not only do norepinephrine and corticoid levels increase but so does the release of endogenous opioids. Fear activates the secretion of endogenous opioid peptides (van der Kolk, et al., 1993). Opioids are naturally occurring peptides and neuropeptides such as enkaphalins, endorphines and dynorphines, which among other functions, exert an opiate-like effect due to interactions with opioid receptors of cell membranes.[3]

The release of endogenous opioid peptides and neuropeptides[4] occurs in response to a need for the organism to increase the pain threshold creating an analgesic effect. This resultant decrease in pain allows for more effective measures to be taken to deal with the stressful situation. Endogenous opioids mediate the analgesic response to prolonged or repeated stress. When the traumatic event is consciously perceived, inescapable and intense, then opioid analgesia, through the production of enkaphalins occurs in response to sympathetic nervous system stimulation (van der Kolk, et al., 1993).

In the case of chronic stress the endogenous opioid system is not as well understood (Southwick, et al., 1994), but animal studies indicate that a physiological state is induced that resembles dependence on high levels of exogenous opioids and withdrawal symptoms can be

produced by ending the source of the stress or by administering naloxone, an opioid antagonist (van der Kolk, 1987). Opioids are known to have a tranquillizing effect that causes a reduction in paranoia, feelings of inadequacy, and rage and aggression (van der Kolk, 1987). Moreover, it has been speculated (van der Kolk, et al., 1993) that opioid mediated analgesia or the numbing of pain that occurs due to stress may be the biological basis for the psychic numbing that is so prevalent in survivors of trauma.

Individual voluntary reexposure to traumatic events is a common life experience for those who suffer from severe trauma. For example, individuals who suffer from multiple personality disorder (MPD) are more frequently sexually victimized than women who have not suffered from severe early childhood sexual abuse (Putnam, 1989). Veterans may enlist as mercenaries or seek other dangerous occupations. Self-mutilation is common among survivors of serious and ongoing trauma, and my own clinical experience with survivors of sexual abuse upholds the idea that these clients can live dangerously.

This tendency for trauma survivors to reexpose themselves to traumatic events is formulated in the literature as an "addiction to trauma" (van der Kolk, 1987). Biologically speaking, this addiction to trauma has been linked to the effects of endogenous opioid release within the body. Inasmuch as the effect of exogenous opioids is addictive, so too is addiction to the release of endogenous opioids.

Van der Kolk, et al. (1985), have proposed a strong link between the LC and the noradrenergic system and the endogenous opioid system. The noradrenergic system is known to mediate the symptoms of opiate withdrawal (van der Kolk, 1987). Endogenous opioid release within the central nervous system following reexposure to trauma, although facilitating a sense of immediate control and calm, is followed by withdrawal symptoms such as sleep disturbances, hyperreactivity and explosive outbursts of aggression. So, as the body withdraws from the endogenous release of opioids the LC creates the very symptoms the opioid release is attempting to control and the addictive cycle is perpetuated. It is also well established that survivors of trauma may also be prone to serious substance abuse (Peterson, et al., 1986).

Moreover, from a neurobiological perspective epinephrine, norepinephrine and opioid peptides are neuromodulators known to influence the process of memory encoding and consolidation. It has been shown that epinephrine and endogenous opioids probably influence memory consolidation through their effects on norepinephrine (Southwick, et al., 1994). Because much of the traumatic stress response involves a disturbance of memory as experienced through intrusive recollections of trauma in the form of daytime memories and flashbacks, and nighttime terrors and nightmares, these neuromodulatory systems may create relatively indelible emotionally charged memories.

Often, the nightmares or flashbacks are more like a reliving than a remembering of the event and the eidetic or potent, vivid and exact imagery is linked to the noradrenergic system. The LC innervates structures which are involved in short-term memory as well as memory retrieval and memory formation. Re-experiencing can occur immediately after the traumatic event(s) or can remain latent for years and be reactivated through important biological and/or psychologically stressful events such as childbirth, marriage, the onset of puberty or physical illness or even retirement (van der Kolk, 1987).

Dynamical Biological Dimensions of the Trauma Response

During prolonged periods of exposure to overwhelmingly stressful and traumatic experiences the body and brain undergo irreversible changes. Further, it has been hypothesized that when trauma is chronic, trauma-related memories become "kindled," in that repetitive exposure etches them more and more powerfully into the brain (McFarlane, et al., 1996, p.8). This process of kindling is one way researchers account for the stability of traumatic symptoms, and irreversible changes that the brain undergoes are thought to be the result of iterative learning patterns (van der Kolk, et al., 1996). Iterative learning generates specific microbiological patterns of behaviour within the central nervous system (CNS). Inasmuch as iterative processes recreate every cell in the body every seven years or the cells in the pancreas every twenty-four hours (Briggs, et al., 1989), they also create irreversible changes following severe and/or chronic trauma.

In dissipative open structures, feedback, competition and cooperation operate in mutually dependent ways. The brain itself forms a complex open system where complexity arises through chaotic processes, nonlinear feedback and self-organization at various levels. The enormously complex structures in the human brain "contain about 10 billion nerve cells or neurons which are interlinked in a vast network through a thousand billion junctions or synapses" (Capra, 1996, p.82). In the chemistry of the brain these vast networks of molecules self-organize through an order to chaos, chaos to order process (Globus, 1995). From this perspective, the patterns in the central nervous system that appear following severe and/or repeated trauma represent an evolutionary morphogenesis where huge numbers of neurons are rewired so the individual can survive. In other words, the central nervous system self-organizes to accommodate traumatic experiences. The balance between competition, cooperation, and feedback between the individual and the environment is shifted so the individual can survive under deadly circumstances.

Through an understanding of the dynamics of chaotic systems attempts are being made to understand and manipulate biological systems. For example, recent attempts by Garfunkel et al. (1992), to predict and control chaos in cardiac tissue may constitute the first steps toward the creation of a new generation of smart pacemakers that can restore normal cardiac rhythm. A similar approach has been applied to neural networks and may result in deeper insight into the pathogenesis, treatment and control of epilepsy (Persson, et al., 1995; Schiff, et al., 1994). This same kind of manipulation could prove important in working with the biological implications of trauma.

Although the changes in the central nervous system that occur during periods of prolonged stress can never be reversed, it is possible that subsequent self-organization could result in a new and more viable order. A growing body of evidence suggests that the brain, which has been described as a cathedral of complexity (Coveney, et al., 1995), is chaotic (Globus, 1995). Chaos marks the beginning of a new order and as always, one of its most intriguing features is that even within deterministic dynamics that involve only a few degrees of freedom, small changes in input can create huge shifts in output.

To date, the study of the brain, or neuroscience, has been held largely in the hands of cell biologists, biochemists and molecular biologists and models of the brain are often analogous to the computer. There is now, however, another way to study the brain. Computational neuroscience, "which is concerned with the use of neural networks to gain insight into brain structures and function" (Coveney, et al., 1995, p.302), is being explored as one way to

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understand the staggeringly complex emergent properties of the human brain. Information coming from the brain appears to form highly complex nonlinear patterns of distribution that conform to the idea of a network (Pert, 1990). Networks operate quite differently than hierarchies because it is theoretically possible to plug into a network and get to any other point within that network. For example, when a nerve cell releases opioid peptides, some of those peptides are capable of immediately acting at other nerve cells which are located far from the site of release.

Artificial neural networks are highly simplified models of large collections of simple and identical neurons simulated in software or built into silicon chips. "Artificial neural networks mimic the brain's complexity through their nonlinearity and a high degree of interconnectivity through their nodes. Like the brain, they are inherently parallel devices that can do many things concurrently" (Coveney, et al., 1995, p.302). When viewed through the lens of complexity theory it is possible that future forays into computational neuroscience, with its emphasis on nonlinear feedback and the evolution of highly complex behaviour "from simple rules acting on large collections of simple units" (Coveney, et al., 1995, p.302), will create insights into methods of altering "the all-important strengths of connections between processors" (Coveney, et al., 1995, p.302).

Unlike current models of the brain, the "postmodern brain" is viewed as "a connectionist system whose processes are spontaneous, unpredictable, nonlogical and self-tuning" (Globus, 1995, p.59). The nonlinearity inherent in neural nets is far more helpful and simulative of the manner in which the brain self-organizes. For example, artificial neural nets have an input layer, an output layer and a well-defined third layer or hidden layer sandwiched between output and input. It is possible within a neural net to introduce as many layers as deemed necessary. As a rule, full connectivity exists between neurons in adjacent layers but none within a given layer or across more than one layer (Coveney, et al., 1995). Speculative and imaginative usage of such models might engender interesting research directions to explicate the workings and possible manipulations of dissociative and "overconsolidated" (Southwick, et al., 1994) neural networks.

Complex behaviour arises in the brain through self-organization which constantly reorganizes huge numbers of neurons in order to create, store and use memories and new learning so as to tailor behaviour to environmental demands (Coveney, et al., 1995). These modifications represent powerful biologically creative transformational self-organization where the brain is seen to deal adaptively with novel and unfamiliar situations, including trauma.

For example, memory appears to be facilitated when there is an emotional charge to the associated events. Pitman (1989) has suggested that in a traumatic situation there is an overstimulation of endogenous stress response hormones and neuromodulators which creates an overconsolidation of memory or a superconditioning. In an acutely stressful situation this kind of overconsolidation of memory has qualities of self-preservation in that the organism is then sure to remember dangerous situations. The intrusive memories and flashbacks that are characteristic of traumatic symptoms may indicate an overfunctioning of the very neurobiologic mechanisms designed to serve a protective role (Southwick, et al., 1994).

On the other hand, from a dynamical systems perspective this superconditioning may also be offering humankind, on an individual and collective level, the opportunity for future self-preservation because the potent and eidetic nature of flashbacks makes forgetting impossible. In order to evolve beyond denial, repression and periodic amnesia to a more profound biopsychosocial understanding of the effects of trauma on the human mind/body/spirit, new learning must occur. Learning and forgetting are antonymous. It has been suggested (Skarda, et

al., 1987) that the brain relies on chaotic rather than steady or random activity "as a means of ensuring continual access to previously learned sensory patterns, and as a means of learning new sensory patterns" (Skarda, et al., 1987, p.161). It is highly speculative but conceivable that the overconsolidation of acutely stressful memories represents a type of quasi or pseudo-learning which exists somewhere between previously learned sensory patterns and new learning. "Learning occurs when connections between brain cells sprout, wither, or alter in strength" (Coveney, et al., 1995, p.130). In the wake of serious trauma connections sprout with such strength and power that neither learning nor forgetting can take place without some form of mediating neurobiological self-organization process.

If illuminated under a softer light, understood in terms of far-from-equilibrium systems theory and modeled as a network within an emerging framework of neurocomputational science, then the biological changes that occur due to chronic stress might be conceptualized as emergent rather than fixed and highly resistant to change. In other words, rather than deeming them pathological and resistant to change, researchers could begin the process of constructing research questions and methods designed to determine how these biological shifts might further evolve and self-organize within the central nervous system.

Endnotes

1.

The fundamental unit of the human nervous system is the neuron, which is responsible for communicating coded information throughout the body. The human nervous system is divided into two basic parts, a central nervous system (CNS), composed of the brain and spinal cord, and a peripheral nervous system (PNS)which consists of nerve fibres that extend from the CNS to the rest of the body. The PNS has a somatic and an autonomic component. The autonomic nervous system is that part of the peripheral nervous system that innervates smooth muscle and glands of visceral organs as well as the cardiac muscles of the heart (Vander, et al., 1990). The autonomic nervous system is composed of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system. The preganglionic fibres of the sympathetic nervous system leave the CNS at the thoracic and lumbar portions of the spinal cord while the preganglionic fibres of the parasympathetic nervous system leave the CNS from the brainstem and sacral portion.

2.

Interestingly enough, although many trauma survivor seem to suffer from depressive symptoms and are often misdiagnosed with depressive disorder and are treated accordingly, right up to including electroconvulsive shock therapy, they maintain low cortisol levels rather than the high levels often seen in major depressive disorders (Giller, 1990).

3.

Peptides are amino acids and amino acids are structural subunits of protein. Fifty percent of the organic material in the body is made up of protein (Vander, et al., 1990) and proteins are what makes life, in its present complexity, possible. Amino acids bond together in any sequence and create chains of varying length (Schraer and Stoltze, 1990). The combination of two or more amino acids creates a peptide. Peptides are strings of amino acids arranged in different sequences. If the number of amino acids is lower than fifty the molecule is a peptide, and if greater than fifty, the molecule is called a polypeptide.

4.

Neuropeptides are composed of two or more amino acids and are synthesized in neural tissue. More than fifty neuropeptides have been found although little is known of their functions. Both peptides and neuropeptides are known to function in communication networks throughout the body and are known to work within the neural, endocrine and immune systems (Vander, et al., 1990).

Appendix C

Notice to Prospective Participants

Wilfrid Laurier University

NOTICE TO IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES FROM FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Research is being done to investigate the experiences of refugees from former Yugoslavia. It is hoped that a deeper understanding of the refugee experience will be one result of this study and that this understanding will ultimately benefit people who are entering or have entered this country from war-torn areas of the world. Kristin Trotter, a doctoral candidate at Wilfrid Laurier University, Faculty of Social Work, is looking for individuals to participate in a six-month study that will require a two-hour interview at the beginning of the study and a 5-minute per day commitment to fill out a brief questionnaire. All responses will be kept strictly confidential and if you would like further information please contact

Kristin Trotter at (519) 885-6409 or
Jasna Mudrinic at (519) 748-5868.

OBAVJEŠTENJE

SVIM IZBJEGLICAMA ILI IMIGRANTIMA
IZ PODRUČJA BIVŠE JUGOSLAVIJE

U toku je istraživanje posveceno iskustvima izbjeglica iz bivše Jugoslavije. Nadamo se da će kao rezultat tog istrazivanja biti dublje razumjevanje izbjegličkih iskustava i da će ta saznanja biti od koristi svima onima koji su došli ili dolaze u Kanadu, kao izbjeglice iz ratom zahvaćenih podrucja. Kristin Trotter, kandidat za doktorat sa Wilfrid Laurier Univerziteta, fakultet za Socijalni Rad, traži pojedince koji be učestvovali u šestomjesecnom istrazivanju (2 sata intervju na pocetku i petominutno popunjavanje kratkog upitnika svaki dan). Sve dobijene informacije su povjerljive.
Ako ste zainteresirani ili bi ste htjeli više informacija vezanih za istraživanje, molimo Vas kontaktirajte.

Kristin Trotter, telefon (519) 885-6409 ili
Jasna Mudrinic, telefon (519) 748-5868

Appendix D

Measures: Impact of Event Scale - Revised
Post Traumatic Growth Inventory

Questionnaires: Demographics Questionnaire
Life Event Checklist
TSI - Life Event Questionnaire Revision 1:
Subsection A: Affected by War, Military or Holocaust

Impact of Event Scale – Revised

Instructions: Below is a list of comments made by people after stressful life events. Please check each item, indicating how frequently these comments were true for you during the past twenty-four hours with respect to stressful events. If they did not occur during that time, please mark the "Not At All" column.

	Not At All 0	Rarely 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Often 5
1. Any reminder brought back feelings about it						
2. I had trouble staying asleep						
3. Other things kept making me think about it						
4. I felt irritable and angry						
5. I avoided letting myself get upset when I thought about it or was reminded of it						
6. I thought about it when I didn't mean to						
7. I felt as if it had not happened or it was not real						
8. I stayed away from reminders about it						
9. Pictures about it popped into my mind						
10. I was jumpy and easily startled						
11. I tried not to think about it						
12. I was aware that I still had a lot of feelings about it, but I didn't deal with them						
13. My feelings about it were kind of numb						
14. I found myself acting or feeling like I was back at that time						
15. I had trouble falling asleep						
16. I had waves of strong feelings about it						
17. I tried to remove it from my memory						
18. I had trouble concentrating						
19. Reminders of it caused me to have physical reactions such as sweating, trouble breathing, nausea, or a pounding heart						
20. I had dreams about it						
21. I felt watchful and on guard						
22. I tried not to talk about it						

The Post Traumatic Growth Inventory

Indicate for each of the statements below the degree to which this change occurred in your life during the past three days as a result of your crises, using the following scale.

0 = I *did not experience* this change as a result of my crisis.

1 = I experienced this change to *a very small degree* as a result of my crisis.

2 = I experienced this change to *a small degree* as a result of my crisis.

3 = I experienced this change to *a moderate degree* as a result of my crisis.

4 = I experienced this change to *a great degree* as a result of my crisis.

5 = I experienced this change to *a very great degree* as a result of my crisis.

	Did Not Experience 0	Very Small Degree 1	Small Degree 2	Moderate Degree 3	Great Degree 4	Very Great Degree 5
1. My priorities about what is important in life						
2. I'm more likely to try to change things which needed changing						
3. An appreciation for the value of my own life						
4. A feeling of self-reliance						
5. A better understanding of spiritual matters						
6. Knowing that I can count on people in times of trouble						
7. A sense of closeness with others						
8. Knowing I can handle difficulties						
9. A willingness to express my emotions						
10. Being able to accept the way things work out						
11. Appreciating each day						
12. Having compassion for others						
13. I'm able to do better things with my life						
14. New opportunities are available which would not have been otherwise						
15. Putting effort into my relationships						
16. I have a stronger religious faith						
17. I discovered that I'm stronger than I thought I was						
18. I learned a great deal about how wonderful people are						
19. I developed new interests						
20. I accept needing others						
21. I established a new path for my life						

DEMOGRAPHICS

Name/Code _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Phone

Home _____ Work _____

Birthdate _____ / _____ / _____ Age _____

            day   month   year

Sex _____

Country and Place of Birth _____

_____

Number of Years Since Emigration _____

Number of Years in Canada _____

Marital Status

Single   _____

Married   _____

Divorced   _____

Separated _____

Widowed _____

Status of Spouse Unknown _____

If status of spouse is unknown, please give details

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How many years have you been married?_____

Family Relationships

Do you have children? _____

If yes, what sex and how old are your children?

Sex _____   Age _____

      _____   _____

      _____   _____

      _____   _____

      _____   _____

_____   _____
_____   _____

How many of your children are currently living with you? _____

How many of your children are living in Canada? _____

Do any of your children remain in your country of origin? _____
If yes, how many? _____   What age(s)? _____

Are any of your children living abroad? _____

Are any of your children married? _____

Do you have grandchildren? _____
If yes, how many? _____

Do you have other family living in Canada such as parents, grandparents, brothers
and sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews? _____
If yes, would you please list the relationship to you? For example, 2 uncles, 1 aunt, 3
cousins, etc. _____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Housing

Do you own your
House _____
Duplex _____
Condominium _____
Town House _____

Do you rent your
House _____
Duplex _____
Condominium _____
Town House _____
Apartment _____

Education

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Grade school _____
High school   _____
Trade School _____
Some College (indicate number of years completed) _____
Graduated College (indicate diploma) _____
Some University (indicate number of years completed) _____
Graduated University (indicate degree) _____
Graduate School (indicate degree or degrees) _____
Post Graduate School (indicate field of study) _____
Professional Training (indicate profession) _____

Employment

Are you currently employed? If yes, please indicate your profession, trade or type of job?

_____
_____
_____
_____

If no, how long have you been unemployed? _____

Are you employed in the profession, trade or type of job for which you trained in your country of origin? Please comment.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Have you been unemployed in Canada? _____
If yes, for how long? _____

Were you employed during your immigration to Canada? _____
If yes, please indicate the number and type of jobs you had during your immigration to Canada? Include the countries in which you were employed.

Employment	Duration	Country
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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Please indicate your current salary range.

Under $10,000 per year _____

$10,000 to 15,000 per year _____

$15,000 to 20,000 per year _____

$20,000 to 30,000 per year _____

$30,000 to 40,000 per year _____

$40,000 to 50,000 per year _____

$50,000 to 60,000 per year _____

More than $60,000 per year_____

How does your current salary compare to the salary you earned in your country of origin?

Lower _____

If yes, by approximately how much? $_____

Higher _____

If yes, by approximately how much? _____

Medical History

Are you currently suffering from any serious or moderately serious medical condition?

_____

If yes, please provide details.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are you currently on medication? _____

If yes, would you indicate what kind? _____

_____

Have you ever, or are you currently engaged in therapy of any kind?_____

If yes, please indicate what type of therapy? For example, psychotherapy, physiotherapy, etc. _____

_____

_____

_____

How long have you been receiving treatment? _____

Life Events Checklist

Participant I.D. Number _____
Date _____
Research Associate _____

Key: 1 = Yes, Positive
      2 = Yes, Negative
      3 = Yes, Neutral, Uncertain
      4 = No

1. Change in Structured Daily Activities

A. Has there been a change in gainful employment? _____

B. Has there been a change in social/church organizations? _____

C. Has there been a change in regular leisure activities? _____

D. Has there been a change in school? Work? _____

E. Are there impending changes in school? Work? _____

2. Change in Residence

A. In the past month, has there been an active change in
residence? _____

B. Is there an impending change in residence? _____

C. Has there been a change in your current residence's
environmental conditions? _____

3. Change in Health

A. In the past month, have you had a major operation in hospital? _____

B. Have you had a minor operation in hospital? _____

C. Have you had a hospitalization for psychiatric reasons? _____

D. Have you had any other hospitalizations? _____
Specify _____

E. Have you had any other major health problems? _____
   Specify _____

F. Have you had any other minor health problems? _____
   Specify _____

G. Have you had any change in chronic health problems? _____
   Specify _____

4. Change in Finances

A. In the past month, have you had an active change in financial
   resources?   _____

B. Is there an impending change in financial resources?   _____

5. Change in Family Relationships (other than spouse)

A. In the past month, has there been a change in FREQUENCY
   of contacts with family members?   _____

B. Has there been a change in QUALITY of contacts with family
   members?   _____

6. Change in Relationship with Spouse or Equivalent Living in Same Residence

A. In the past month, has there been a change in FREQUENCY
   in contacts with spouse?   _____

B. Has there been a change in QUALITY of contacts with
   spouse?   _____

7. Change in Interpersonal Relationships with Non-Relatives

A. In the past month, has there been a change in FREQUENCY
   of contacts with non-relatives?   _____

B. Has there been a change in QUALITY of contacts with
   non-relatives?   _____

8. Death of Significant Other

a. In the past month, has someone close to you died?   _____

9. Change in Personal Habits

A. In the past month, have you changed your eating, sleeping, etc., habits?   _____

10. Holidays or Vacation

A. In the past month, have you taken a holiday or vacation?   _____

11. Notable Personal Achievement

A. In the past month, have you had a notable personal achievement? _____

12. Legal Problems

A. In the past month, have you had any legal problems?   _____

13. Change in Transportation Resources

A. In the past month, have you had a change in transportation resources?   _____

14. Miscellaneous Events

A. In the past month, have you had any other changes?   _____
   Specify? _____

Life Event Questionnaire

	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Did this individual serve in the military?	___	___	___
2. Did this person fire a weapon or get fired upon?	___	___	___
3. Does this person feel responsible for the death of anyone?	___	___	___
4. Was this person wounded in combat or fighting?	___	___	___
5. Was this person involved in an attack in which others military or civilian were injured or killed?	___	___	___
6. Did this person participate in torture, rape, mutilation or other atrocities?	___	___	___
7. Did this person observe rape, torture, mutilation or other atrocities?	___	___	___
8. Was this person a prisoner of war or missing in action?	___	___	___
9. Did this person have a parent or loved one who was a victim of torture, rape, holocaust and/or mass killing?	___	___	___
10. Was this person a victim of torture, holocaust and/or mass killing?	___	___	___
11. Was this person's parent, loved one or family member killed, missing in action, or a victim of war?	___	___	___
12. Was this person's parent or loved one a prisoner of war or in an internment or refugee camp?	___	___	___
13. Was this person a prisoner of war or in an internment or refugee camp?	___	___	___
14. Did this person lose a loved one in a refugee or internment camp?	___	___	___
15. Did this person see dead or dying people as a result of the war?	___	___	___

16. Did this person lose a child due to the war? _____   ____ _____

17. Did this person lose a spouse due to the war? _____   ____ _____

18. Has this person experienced other trauma (eg.
    childhood sexual abuse, accident, natural
    disaster, death of a child) not due to the
    war and relocation? _____   ____ _____

19. Has this person dealt with any of these issues
    in therapy? _____   ____ _____

20. Are there any other comments you, as the interviewer,
    would like to make about this person or this interview? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E

Information About the Study:
Letter of Consent

Information About The Study

Letter of Informed Consent

I understand that I am being asked to participate in a research study which is being conducted by Kristin Trotter (M.T.S.; D.S.W. candidate), with the research assistance of Jasna Mudrinic (M.A.); under the supervision of Dr. Judith Levene (PhD) and the Faculty of Social Work of Wilfrid Laurier University. This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board of Wilfrid Laurier University.

The purposes of this study are to better understand the experience and resettlement needs of European refugees and to develop methods and ideas of working with refugees that focus on strengths as opposed to weaknesses.

The following procedures will be used: once a day a questionnaire will be filled out that will take approximately 10 minutes. This questionnaire is designed to explore some of the more stressful ways that my experiences in Bosnia might still be affecting me. Once every three days an additional questionnaire that will also take about 10 minutes will be filled out. This questionnaire explores ways my experiences might have resulted in transformational growth. Once a month, a third 10-minute measure designed to explore changes in my current life will be completed. At the beginning of the study I will talk with the researcher and fill out a demographics questionnaire that will take 10-15 minutes. An open-ended interview, that could take an hour will take place at the outset of the study following the demographics questionnaire. If necessary, short follow-up interviews may take place but only to clarify information. The initial interview will focus on your experiences in Bosnia and your experience of relocation in Canada. Finally, a debriefing will occur at the end of the study which may take 20 minutes. At this time my impressions and feelings about being a participant will be explored. I understand that the proposed length of my participation in this study is about six months. In total, there are two to three interviews, as well as daily, bi-weekly and monthly measures.

I understand that the following risks are involved in participation. First, it may be uncomfortable for me to talk about my experiences in Bosnia and what happened afterward. I also understand that this study requires a commitment of time that I may find inconvenient from time to time. I understand that I am free to contact any of the names and numbers listed below if I have any questions. At any point during the study if I feel it is necessary or if the researcher thinks it is necessary, I can request to see a counselor.

The following are **benefits** which I may derive from my participation in this study: First, if I want, I can receive a transcript of the interview material. This material bears witness to historical events experienced during the genocide. If I wish, I can retain this material for use in future war crime tribunals. Second, I understand that talking about the things that happened to me, even though it is uncomfortable, can help me in dealing with my experiences. Third, I understand that I am helping to add to the knowledge of what happens to refugees when they leave a war-torn area and resettle in a new country. Hopefully, what I am doing will give people from the host country insights that will help others who have suffered in the same way. Fourth, I am helping to create a way to explore and emphasize the strengths rather than the weaknesses of refugees.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate in this study without penalty to me. I may also withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of

benefits to which I would ordinarily be entitled. *I have the right to withdraw from the research project or refuse participation at any time for any reason whatsoever.* I may omit the answer to any questions. I understand my responses to all questionnaires and interviews will be kept confidential and that I will not be identified in any publication or discussion. **I also understand that the research material will be kept in locked drawers and I will be identified by number rather than by name. The only individuals who will have access to my name are researchers Kristin Trotter and Jasna Mudrinic, herself a Bosnian refugee and a clinical psychologist.**

If I agree, the initial interview will be audio taped and transcribed. I understand that all tapes will be destroyed upon completion of the research project as will all written material that could in any way identify me as a study participant. During the study, research material will be stored in locked cabinets and upon conclusion of the study all material, with the exception of transcribed interviews, will be destroyed. The transcribed interviews will be kept on file. All identifying information will be destroyed.

I understand that any direct quotations may be used in reporting the data as long as they do not disclose anything about my identity. All transcribed material will be shared with me and I will receive a copy of the transcription so that I can check it for accuracy and change anything I want. I understand that I have a right to have all questions about the study answered by the researcher or research advisor in sufficient detail to clearly understand the answer. I understand that I can receive feedback on the overall results of this research by both talking to the researchers and asking for a copy of the final paper or an abstract of the paper.

If I have any questions about the research, the procedures employed, my rights, or any other research related concerns I may contact the researchers Kristin Trotter and/or Jasna Mudrinic, supervisor Judith Levene or Linda Parker, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies and Research at Wilfrid Laurier University. At my debriefing I will meet with researchers to discuss the study, receive a copy of my interview transcript(s) if I want them, and/or receive a referral to counseling if I think it is necessary.

I acknowledge receiving a copy of this informed consent.

_____   _____
Investigator   Participant

Telephone #   (519) 885-6409 (Kristin Trotter) or
               (519) 748-5868 (Jasna Mudrinic)

Supervisor: Dr. Judith Levene
            Wilfrid Laurier University
            (519) 884-1970 ext.2924.

Assistant Dean
Graduate Studies and Research: Dr. Linda Parker
                               Wilfrid Laurier University
                               (519) 884-0710 ext.3126

Appendix F

Time Series Plots:
Avoidance
Intrusion
Hyperarousal
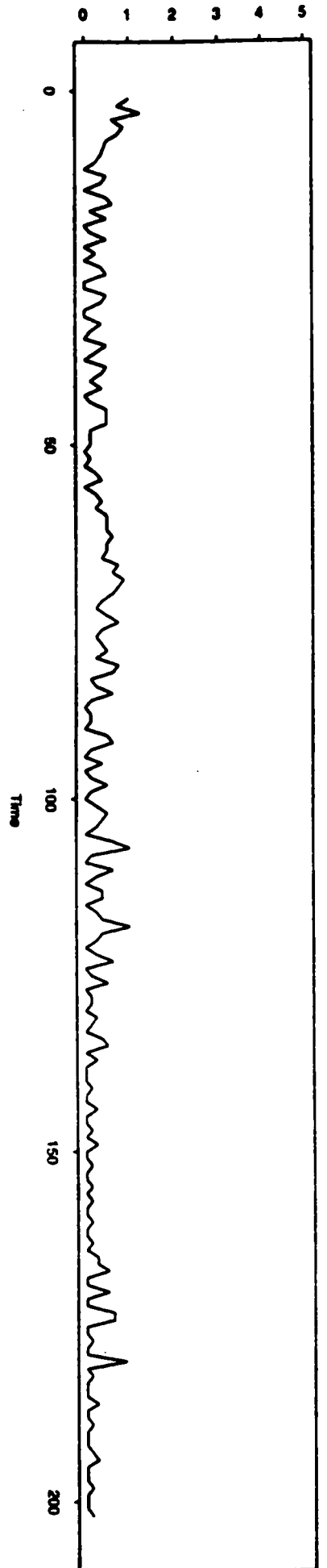
Participant 01 - Hyperarousal
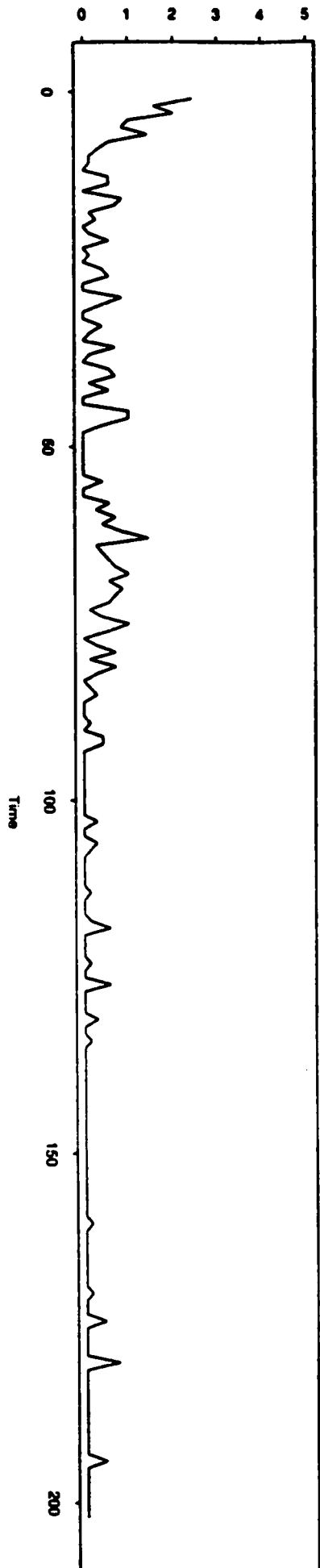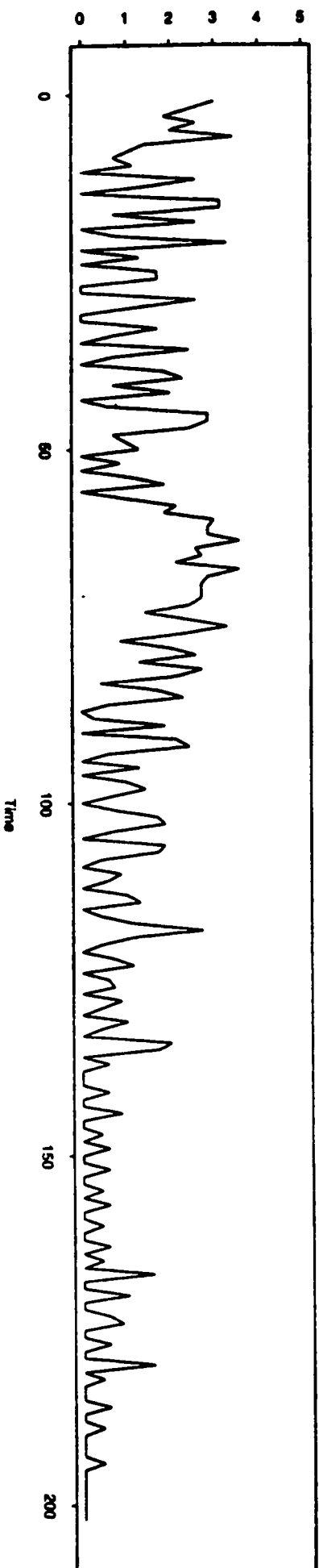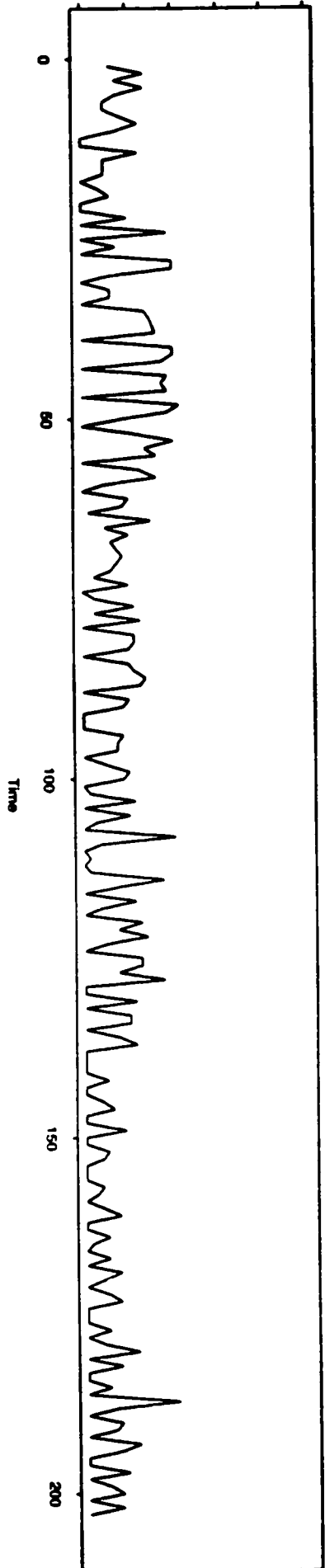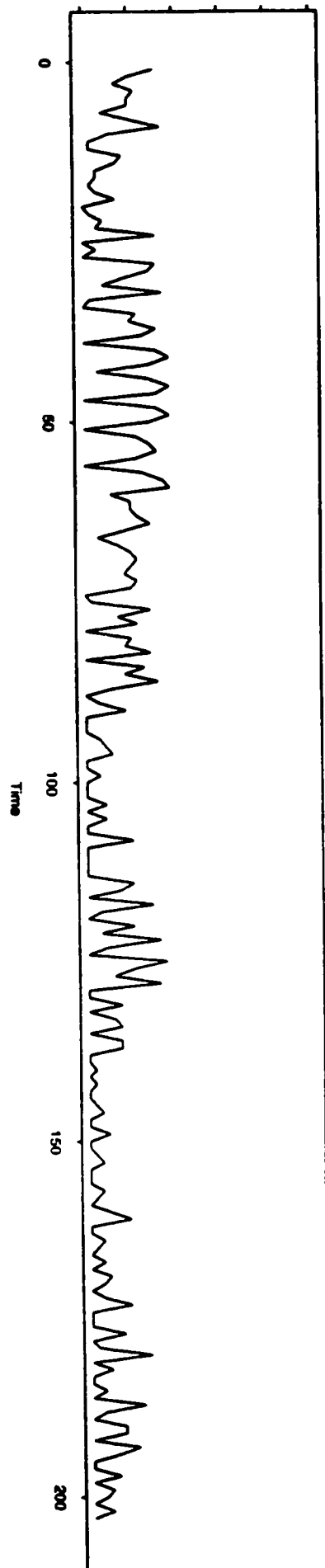
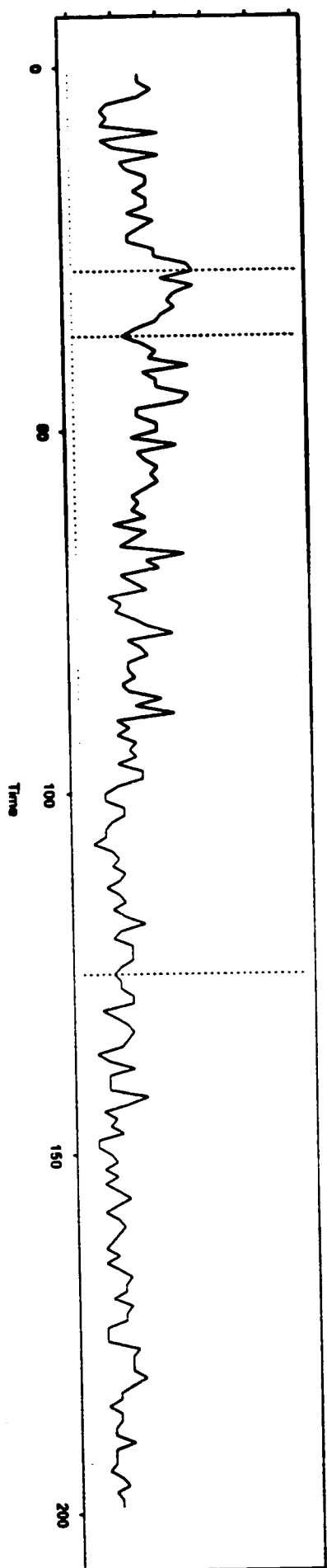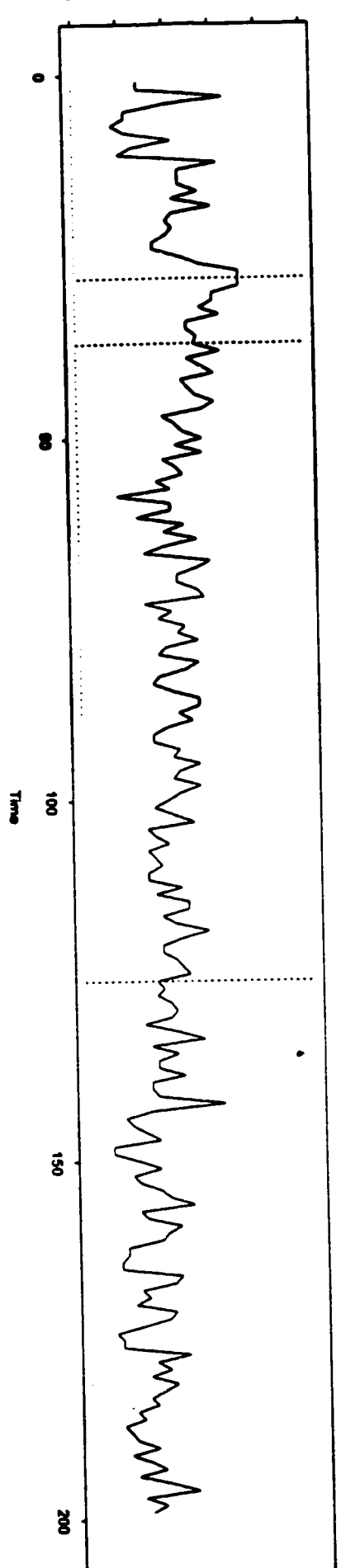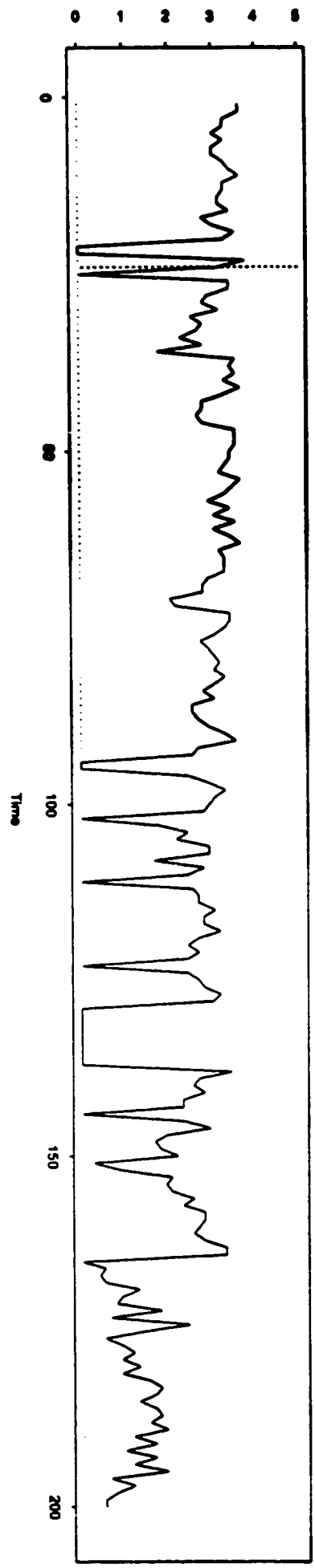Participant 01 - Intrusion

364a

Participant 02 - Hyperarousal

Participant 02 - Intrusion

364b

Participant 04 - Hyperarousal

Participant 04 - Intrusion

364c

Participant 05 - Hyperarousal

Participant 05 - Intrusion

364d
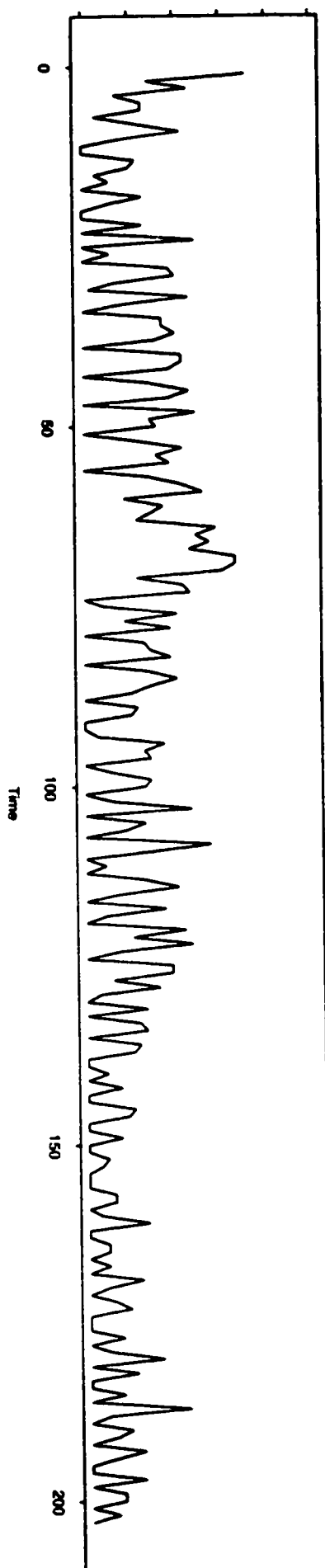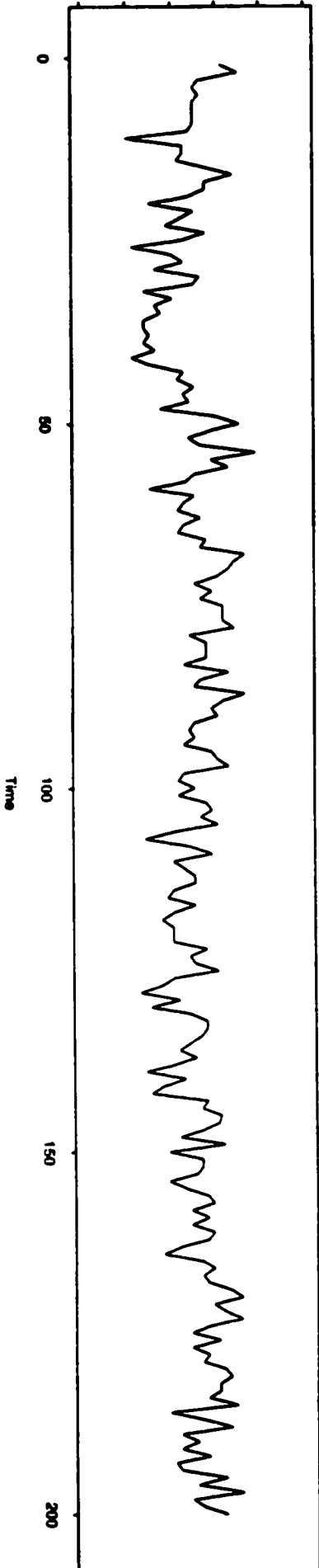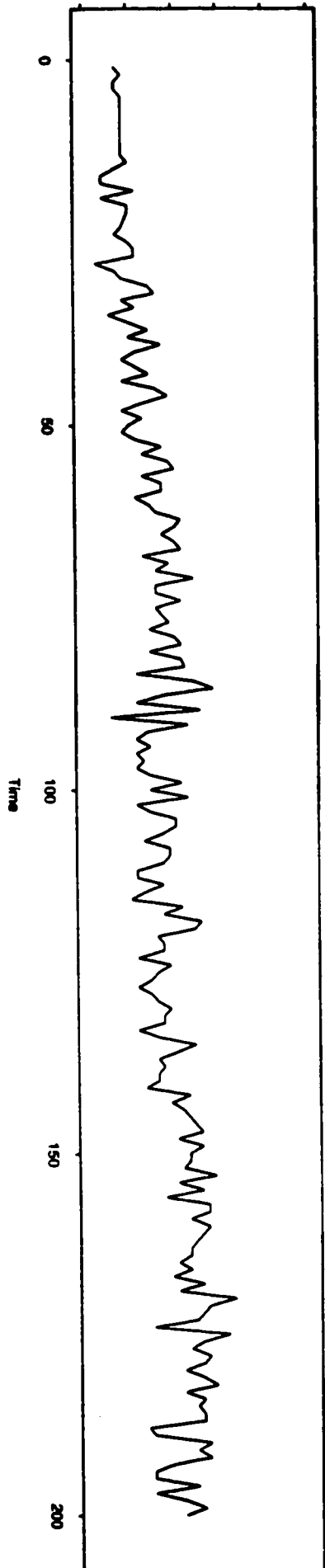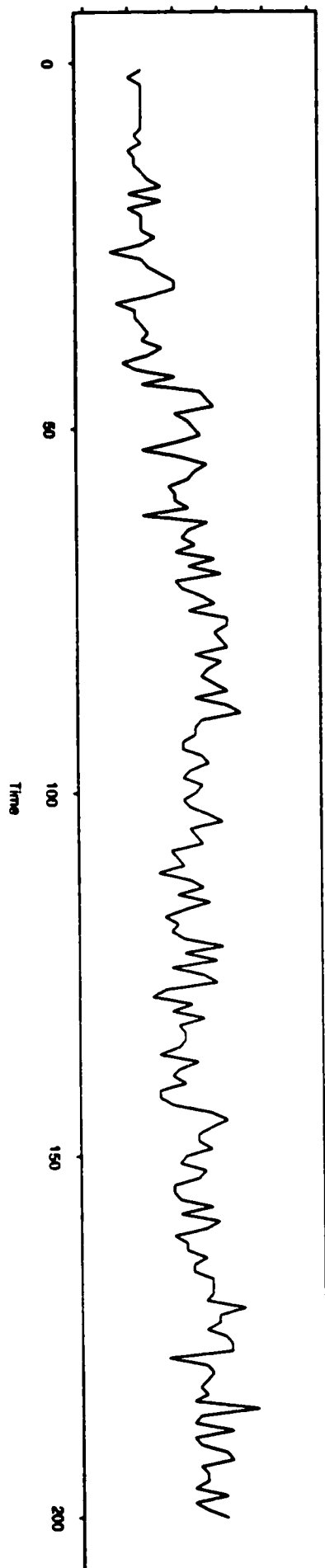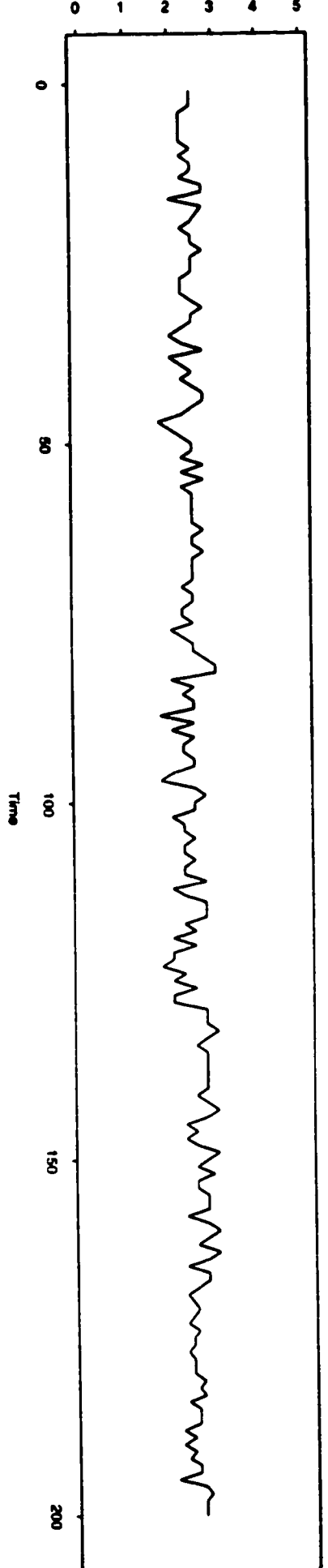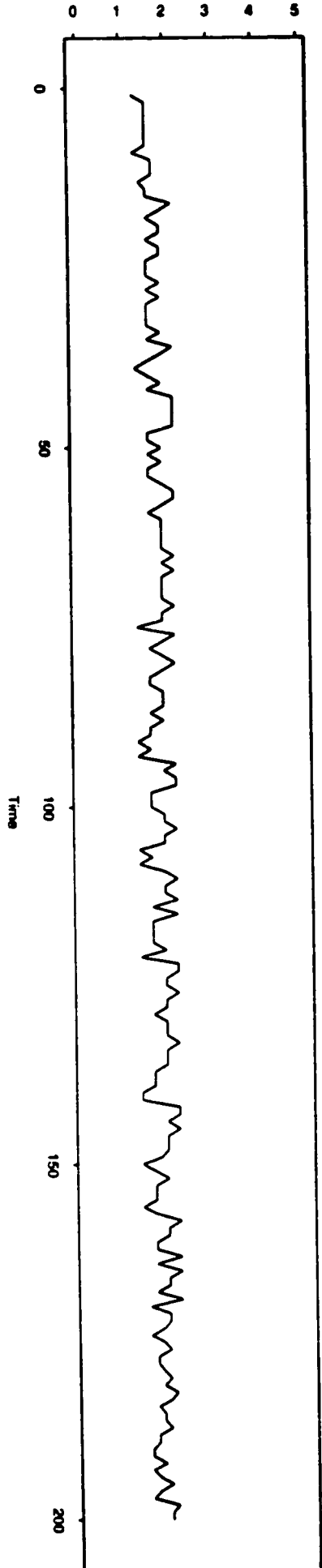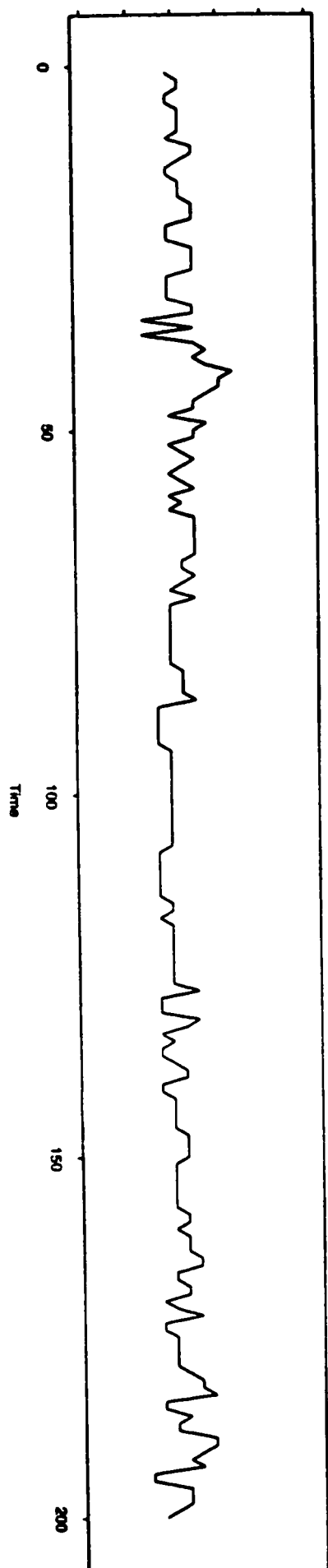
Participant 06 - Intrusion

Participant 06 - Hyperarousal

364e

Participant 07 - Hyperarousal

Participant 07 - Intrusion

364f

Participant 09 - Intrusion

Participant 09 - Hyperarousal

364g

Participant 10 - Hyperarousal

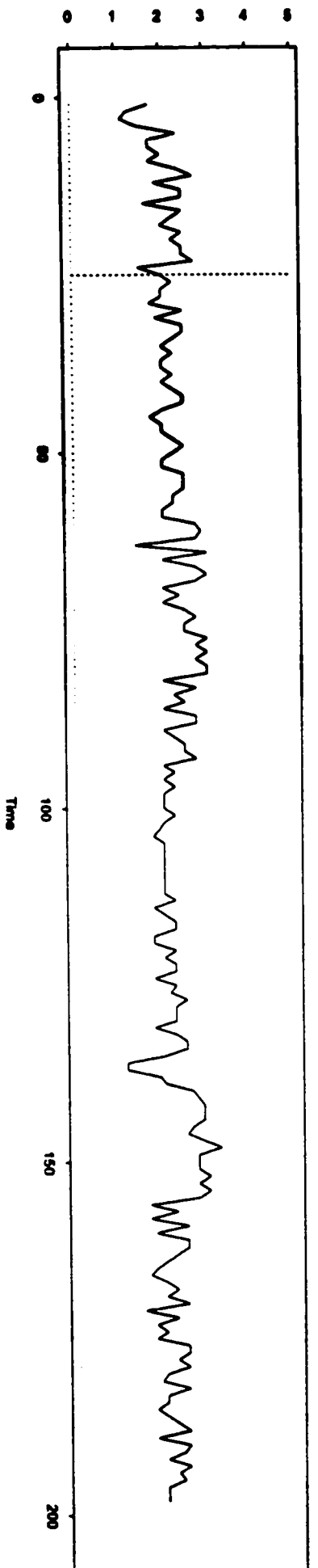Participant 10 - Intrusion

364h

Participant 11 - Hyperarousal

Participant 11 - Intrusion

364i

Participant 12 - Hyperarousal

Participant 12 - Intrusion

364i

Participant 13 - Hyperarousal

Participant 13 - Intrusion

364k

Participant 17 - Hyperarousal

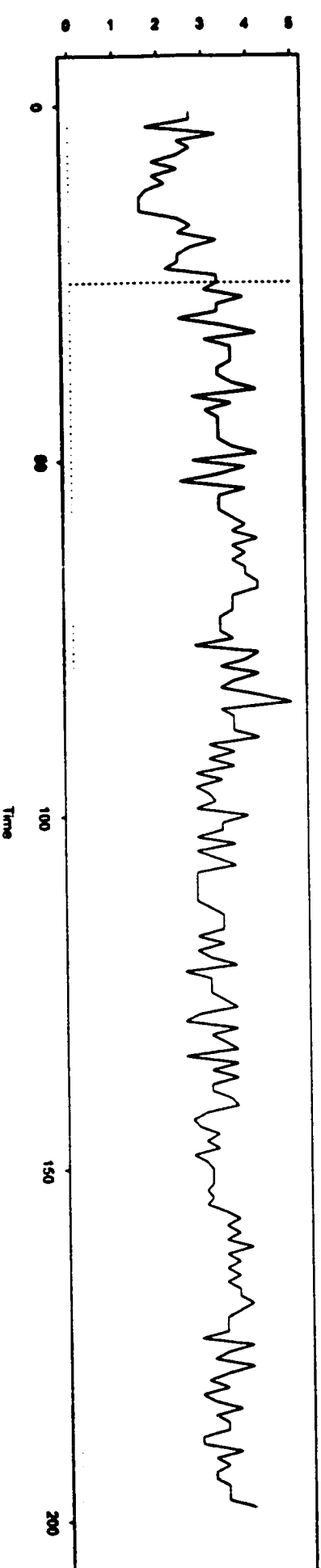Participant 17 - Intrusion
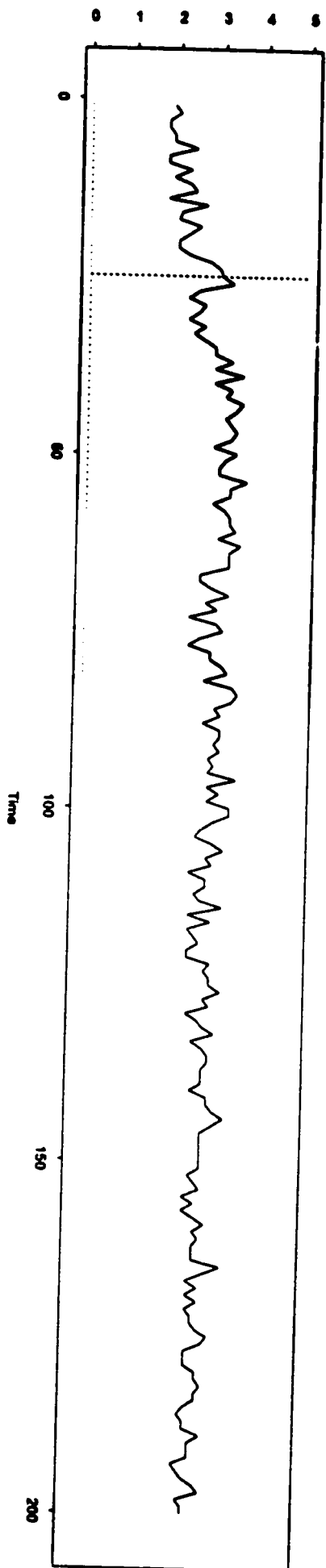
3641

Participant 18 - Hyperarousal

Participant 18 - Intrusion

364m

Participant 19 - Hyperarousal

Participant 19 - Intrusion

364n
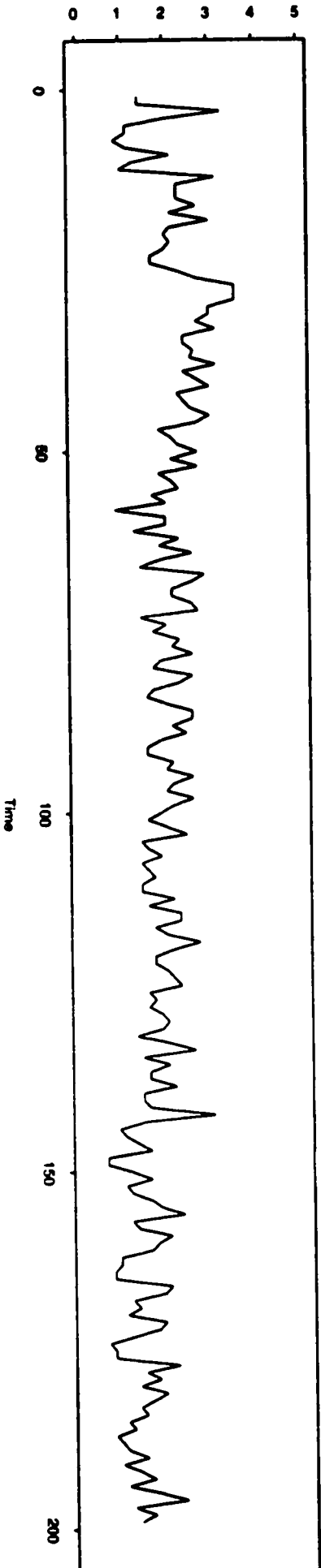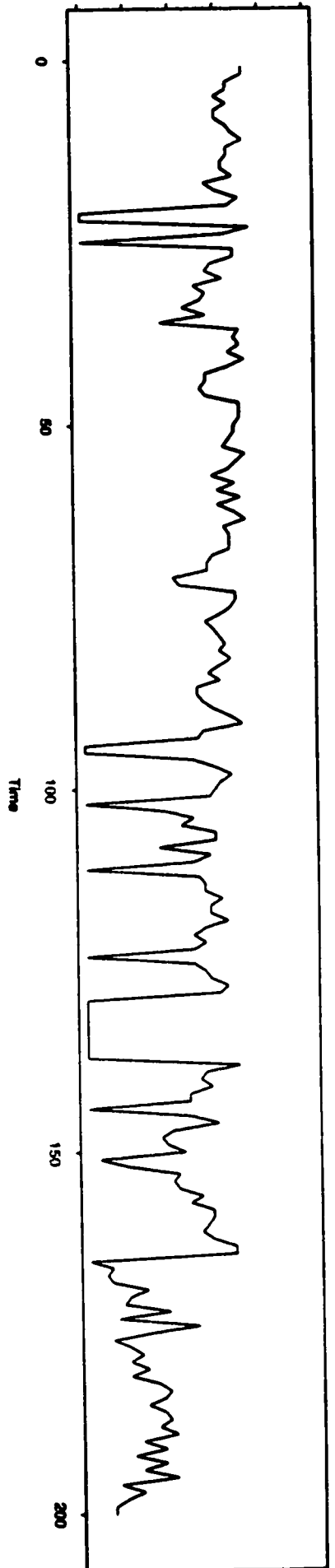
Participant 20 - Intrusion

Participant 20 - Hyperarousal

Participant 20 - Avoidance
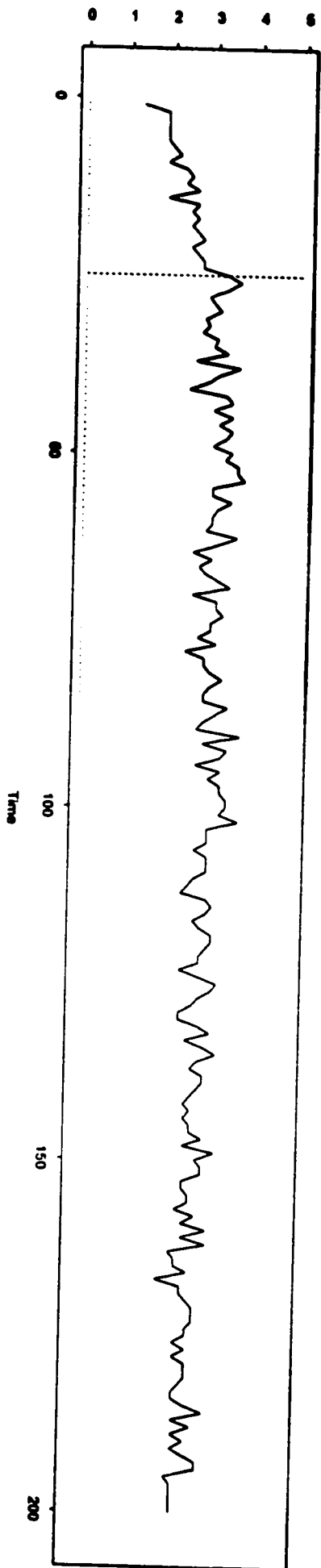
Participant 21 - Hyperarousal

Participant 21 - Intrusion

364p

Participant 22 - Avoidance

Participant 22 - Hyperarousal

Participant 22 - Intrusion

364σ

Participant 23 - Hyperarousal

Participant 23 - Intrusion

364r
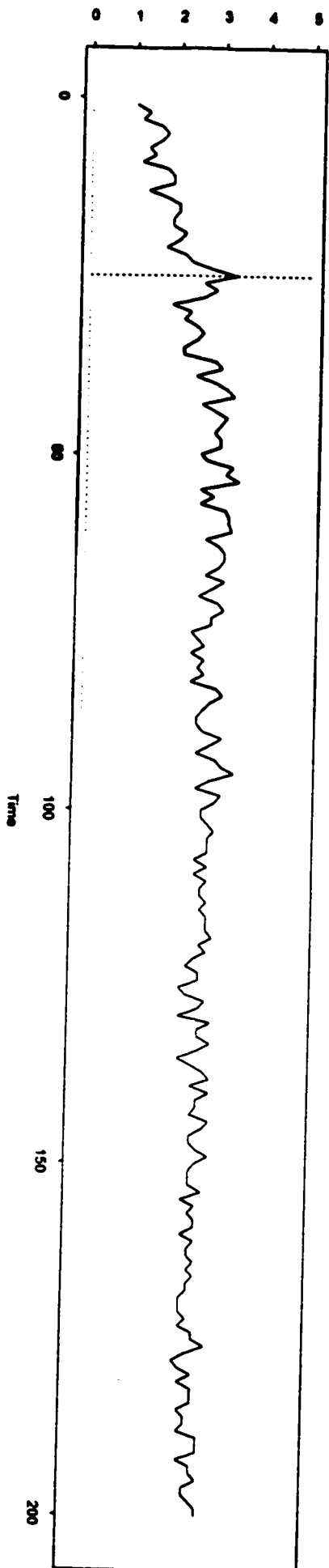
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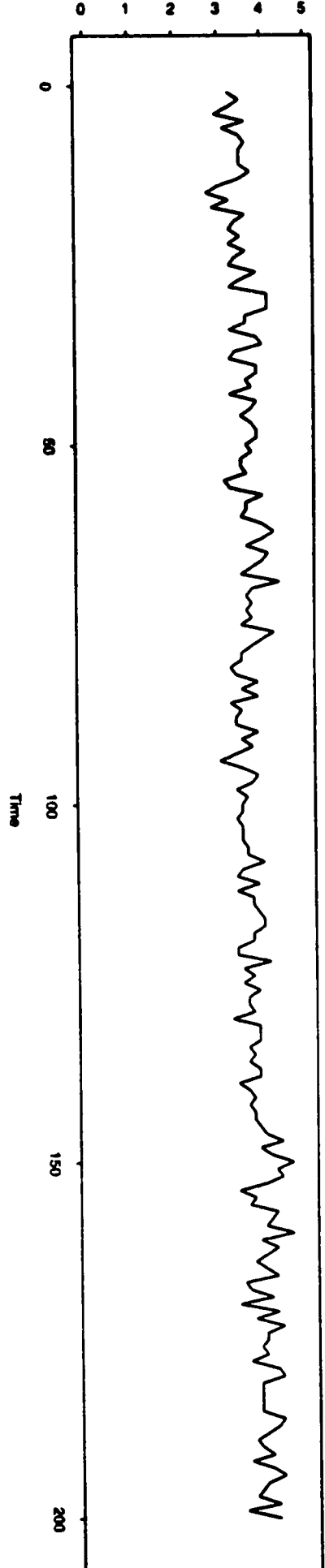
Participant 24 - Hyperarousal
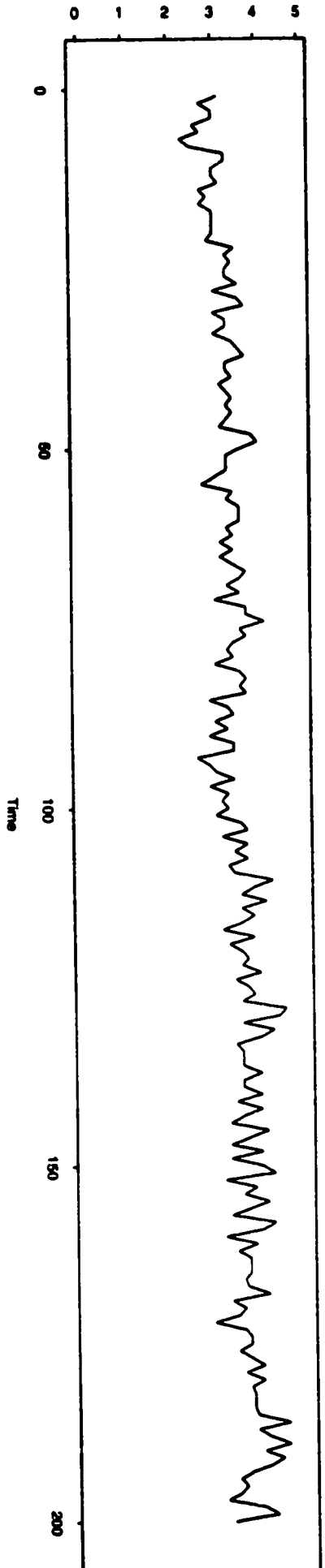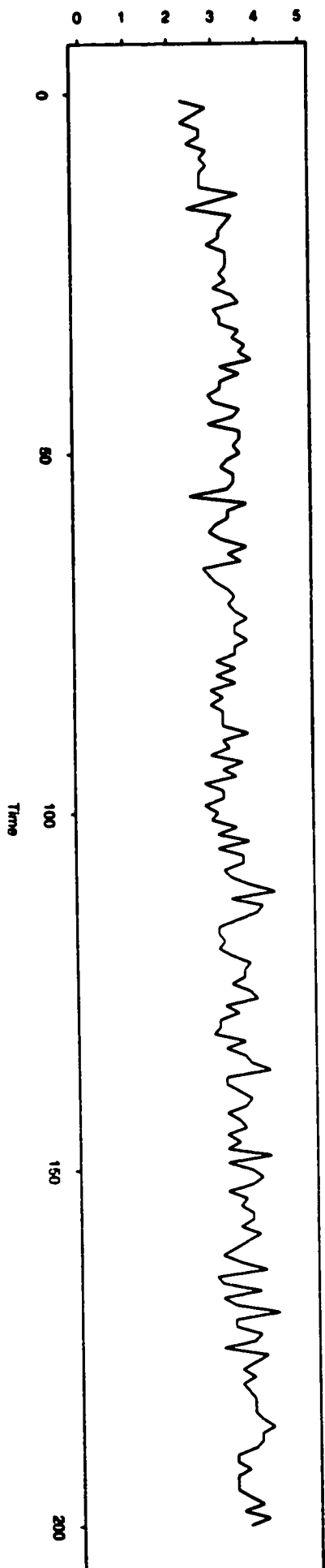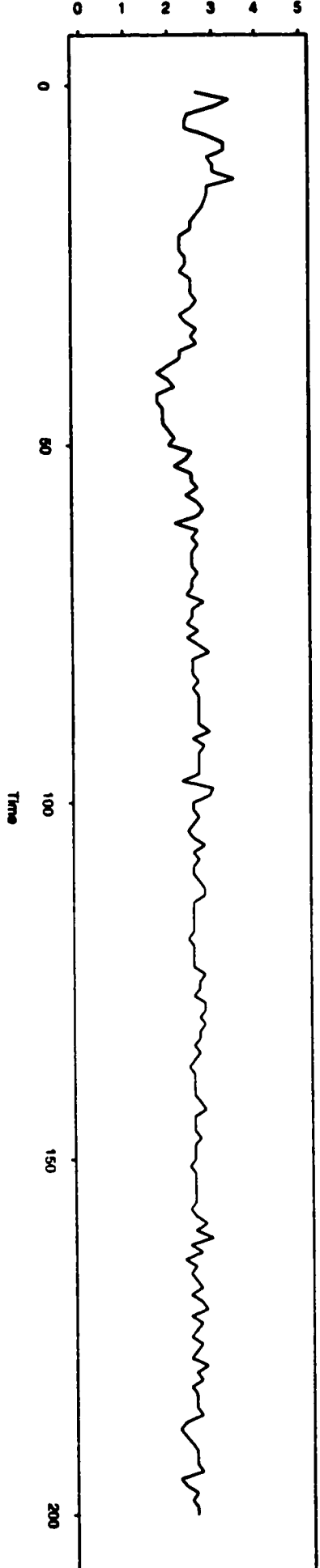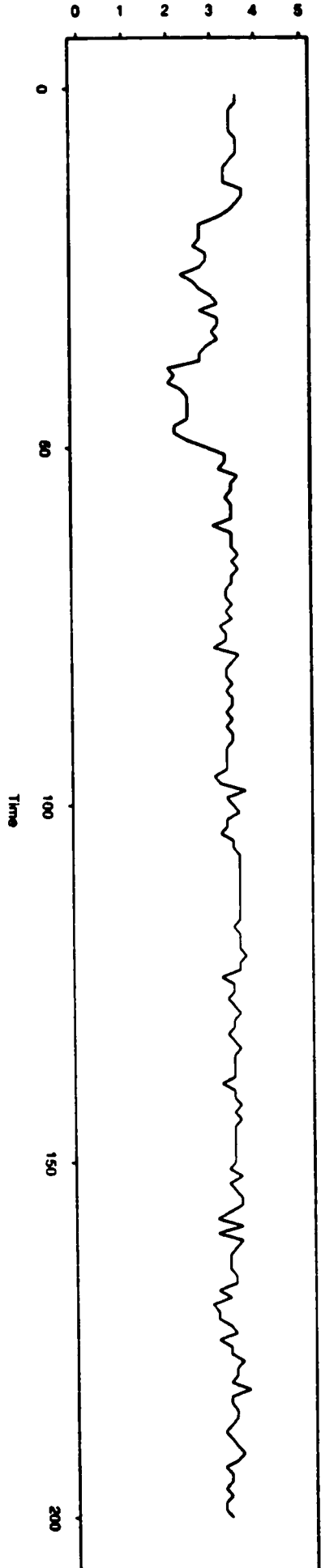
Participant 24 - Intrusion

364s

Participant 26 - Hyperarousal

Participant 26 - Intrusion

364t

Participant 27 - Intrusion

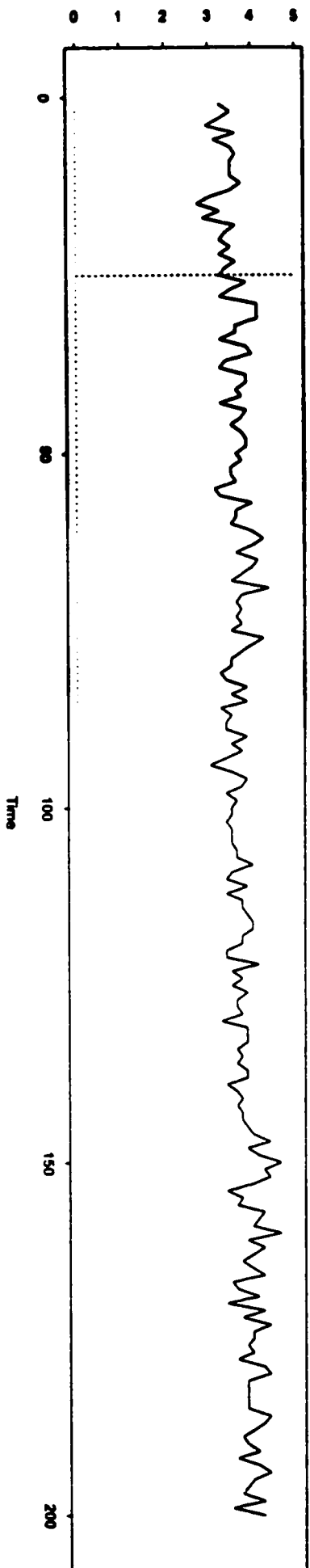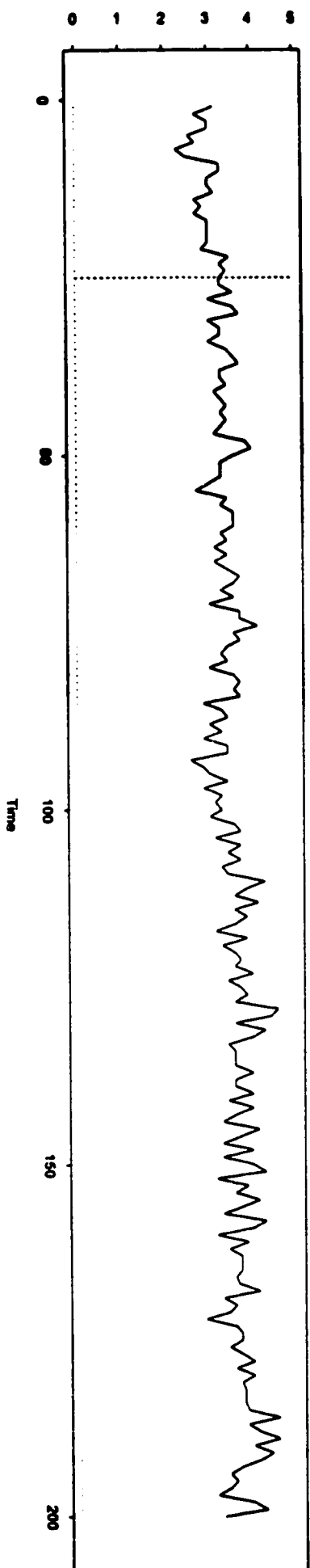Participant 27 - Hyperarousal

364u

Participant 28 - Intrusion

Participant 28 - Hyperarousal

Participant 29 - Intrusion

Participant 29 - Hyperarousal

Participant 29 - Avoidance

364w

Participant 30 - Intrusion

Participant 30 - Hyperarousal

364x
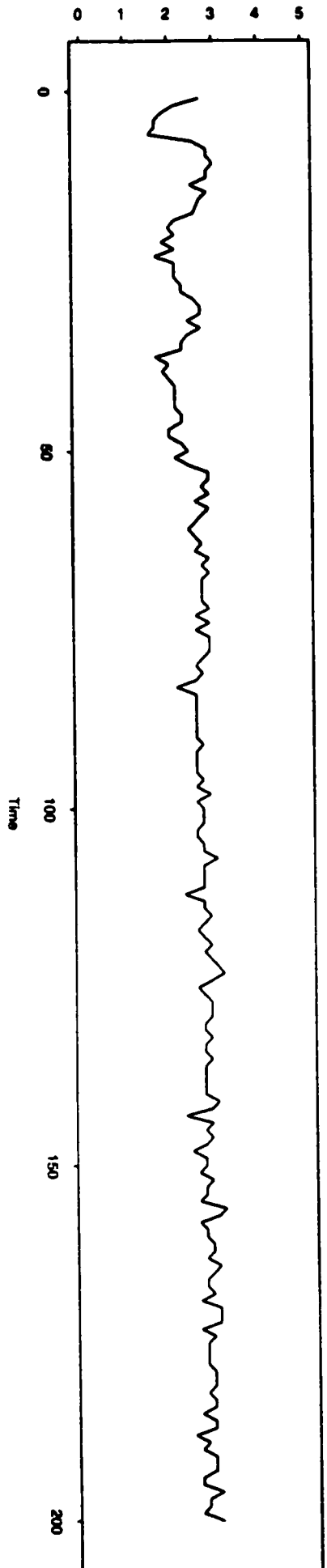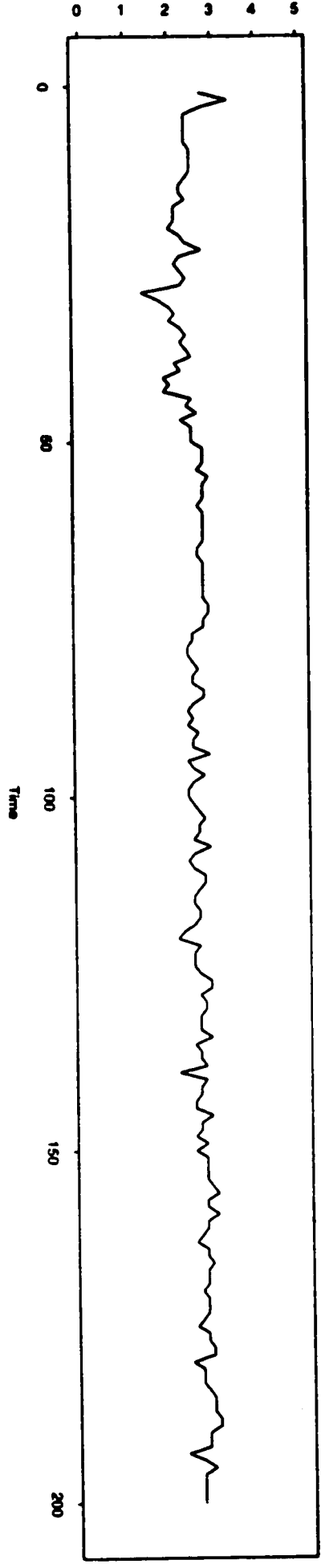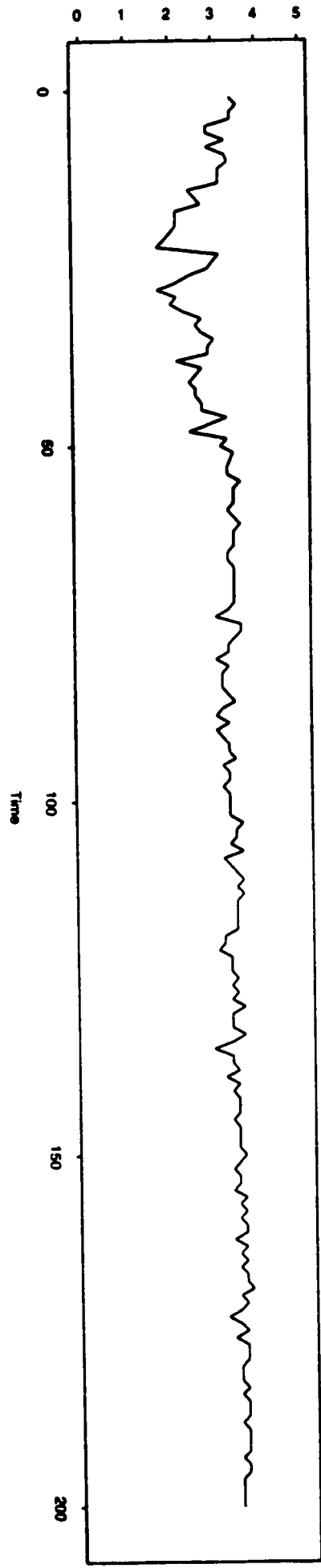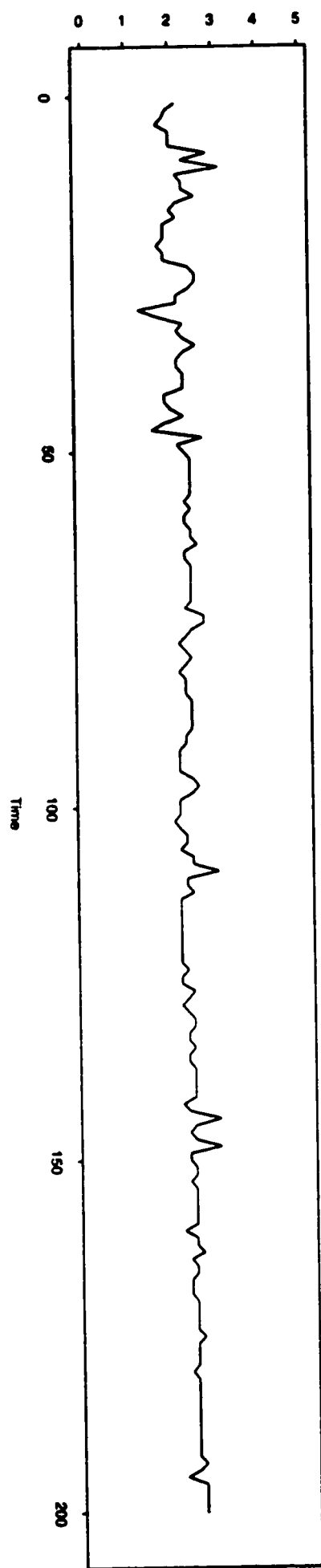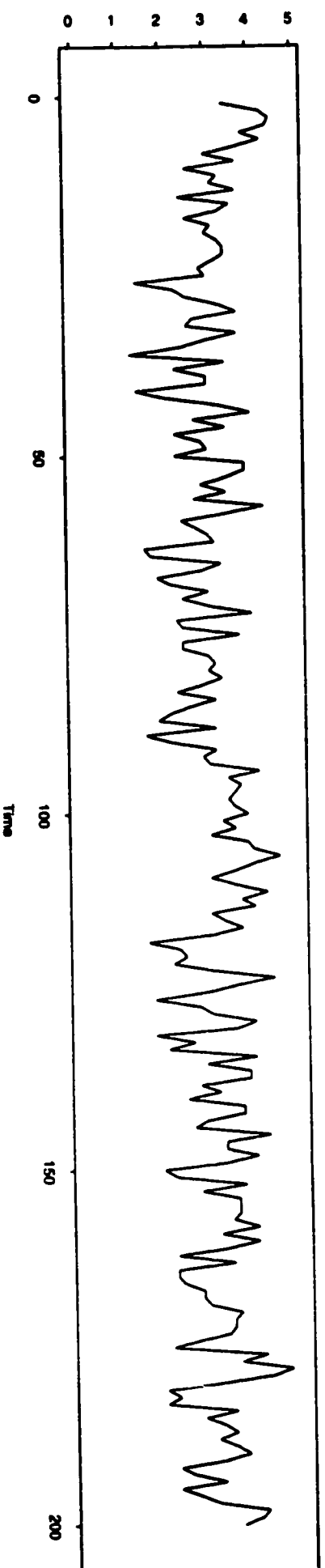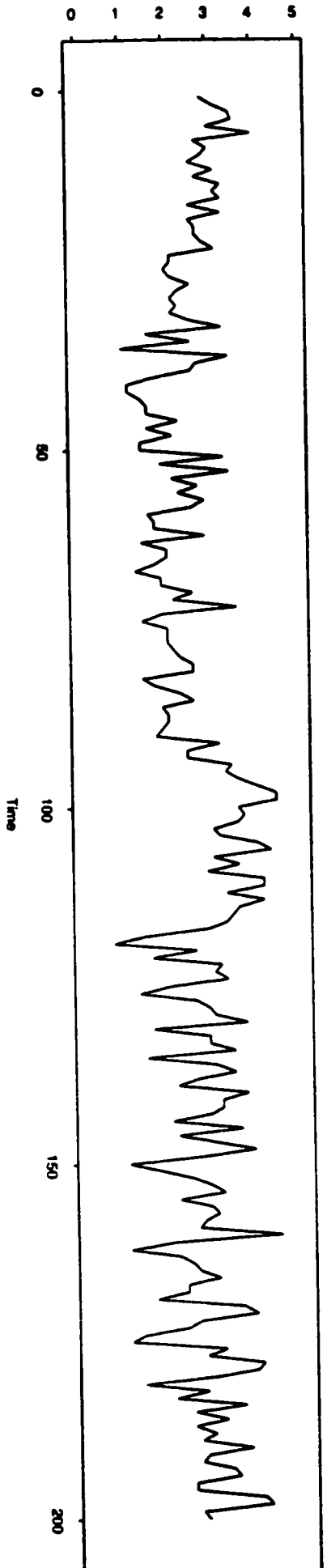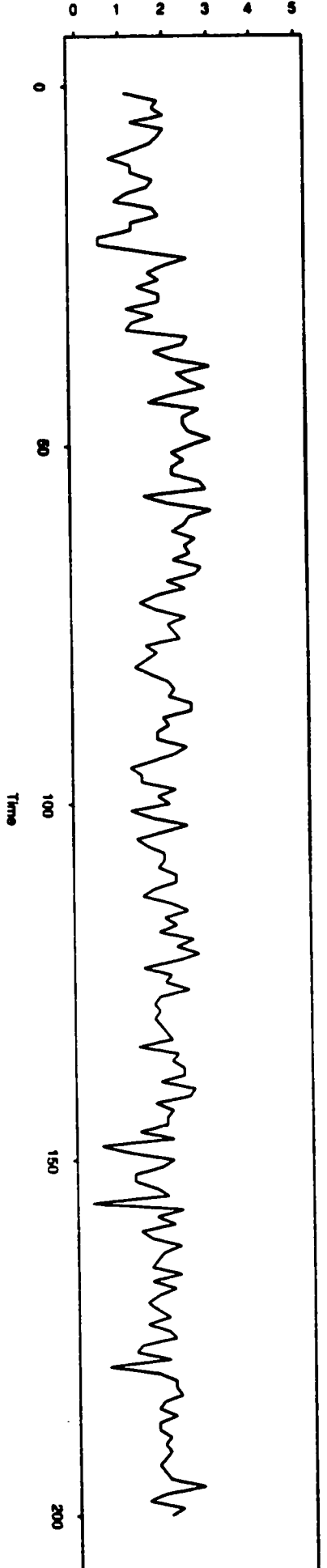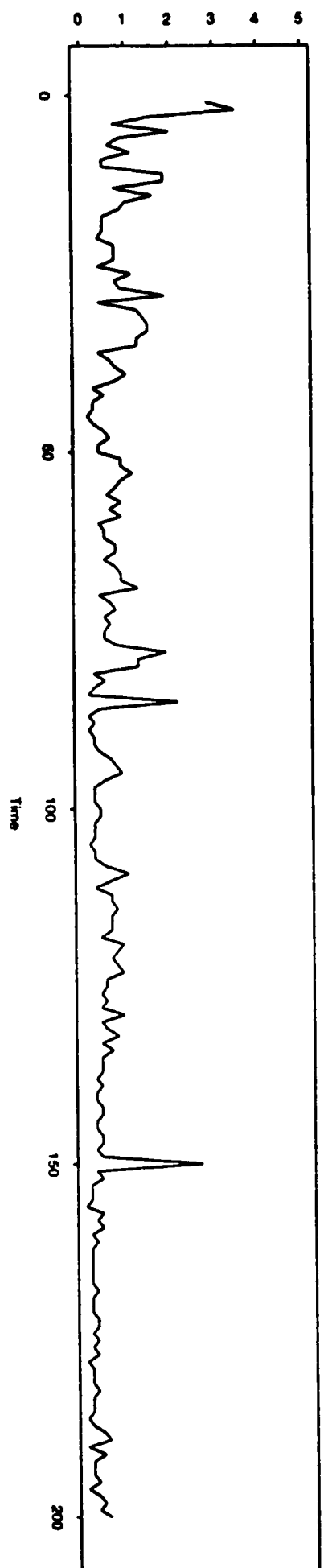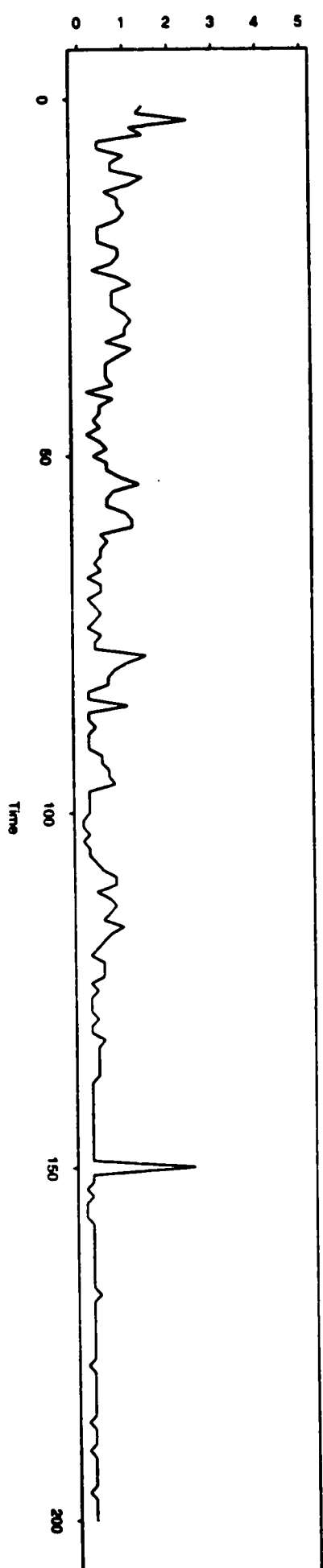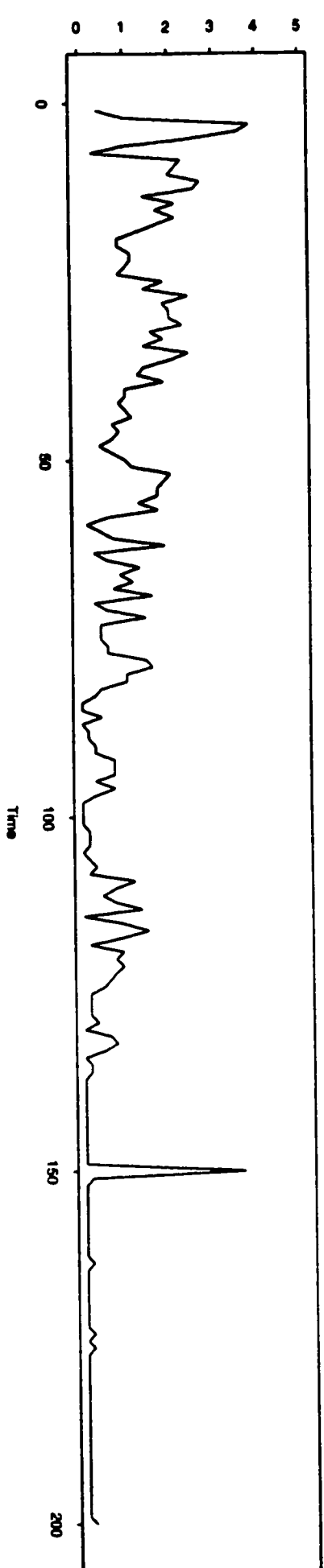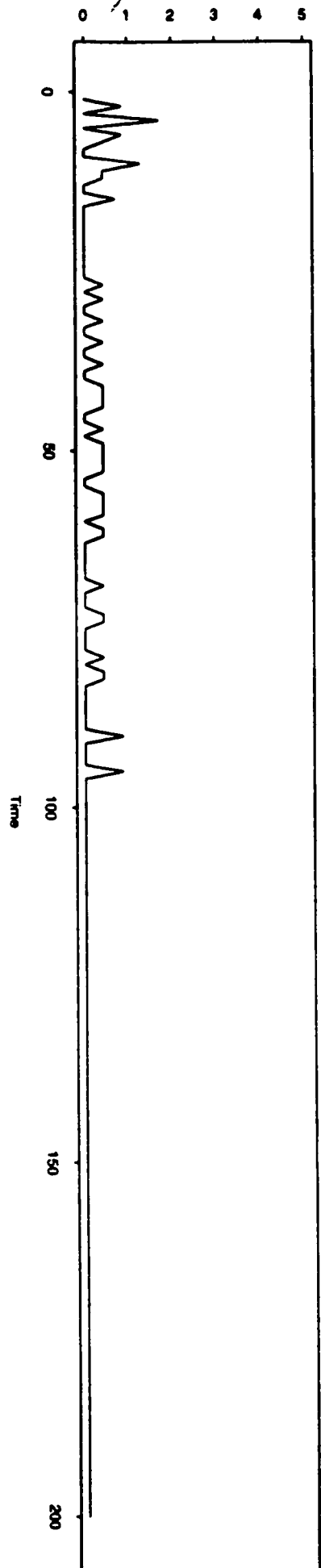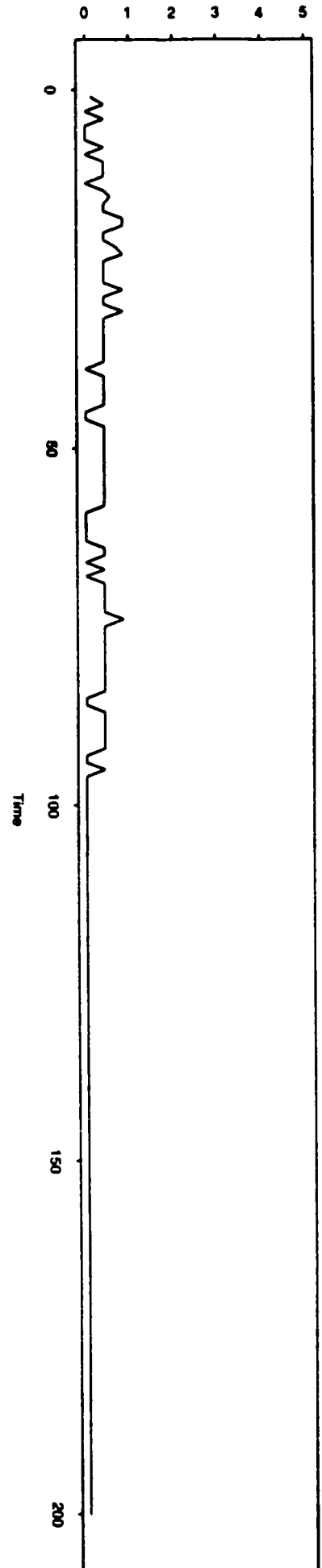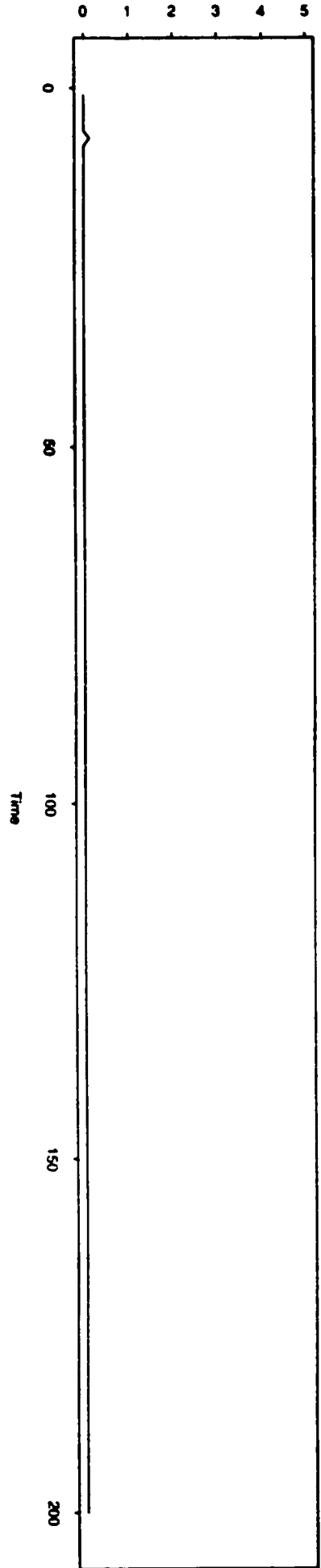
Appendix G

Significant Dates
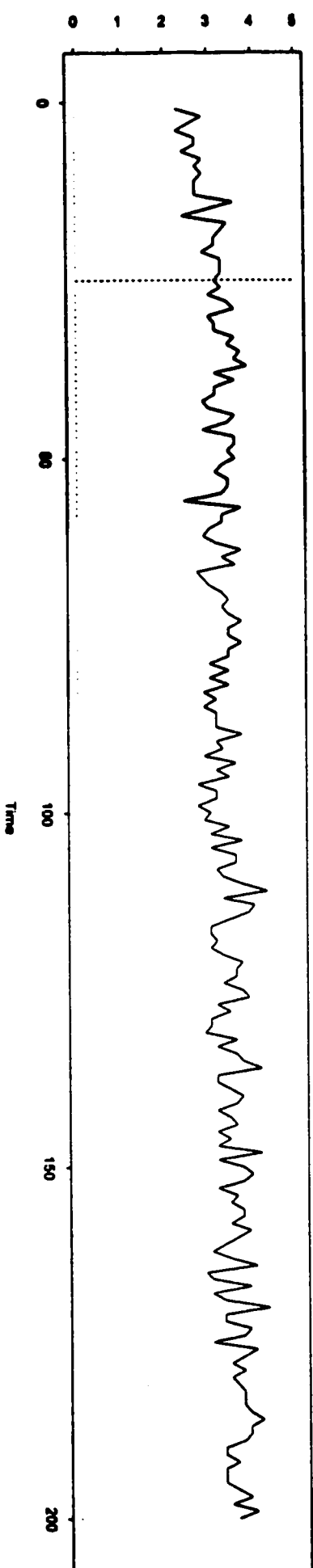
Participant 01 - Hyperarousal

Participant 01 - Intrusion

365a

Participant 02 - Hyperarousal

Participant 02 - Intrusion

365b

Participant 04 - Hyperarousal

Participant 04 - Intrusion

365c

Participant 05 - Hyperarousal

Participant 05 - Intrusion

365d

Participant 06 - Hyperarousal

Participant 06 - Intrusion

365a

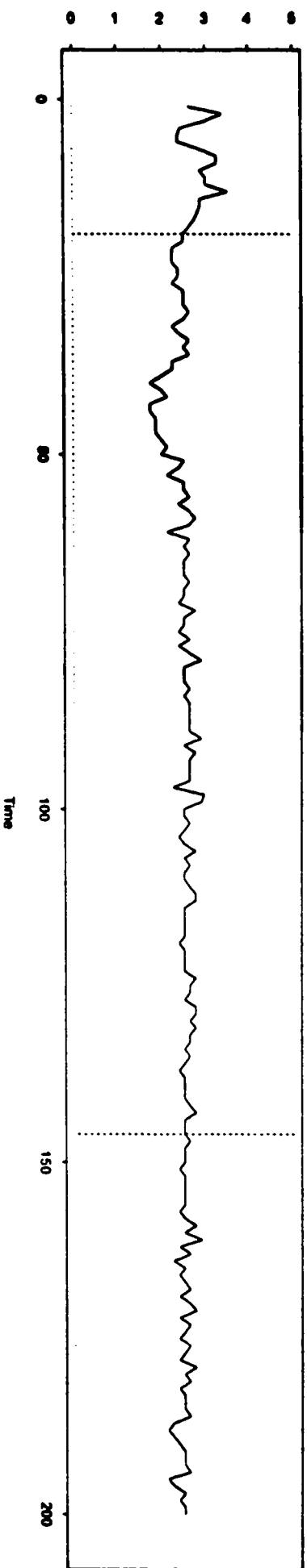Participant 07 - Hyperarousal

Participant 07 - Intrusion

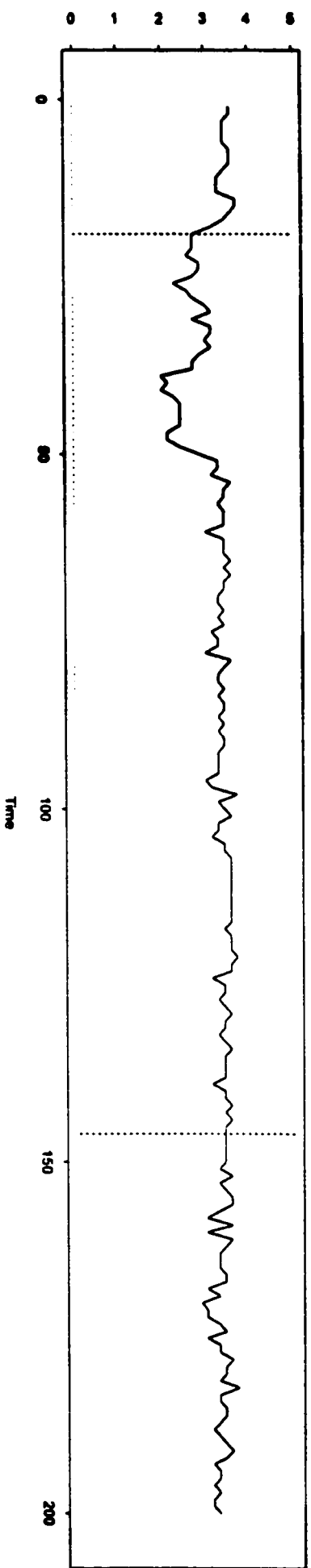365f
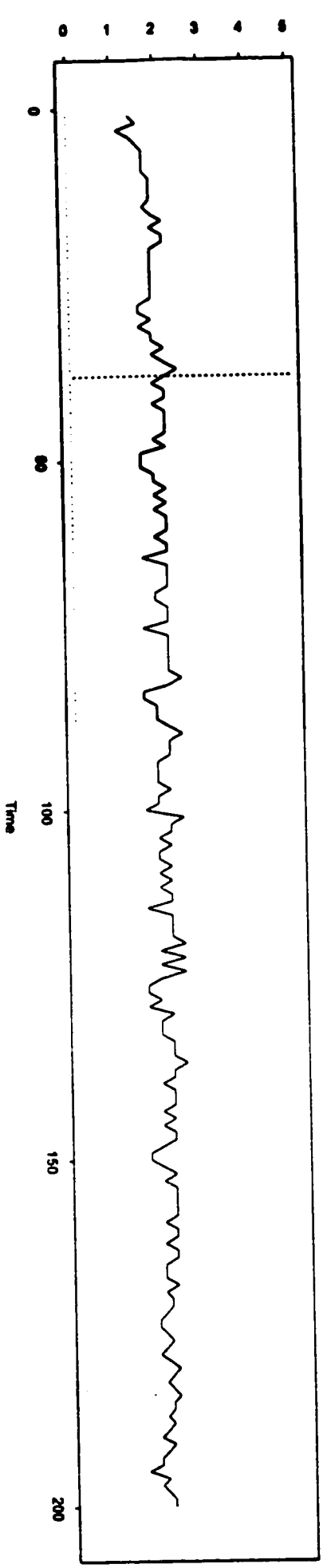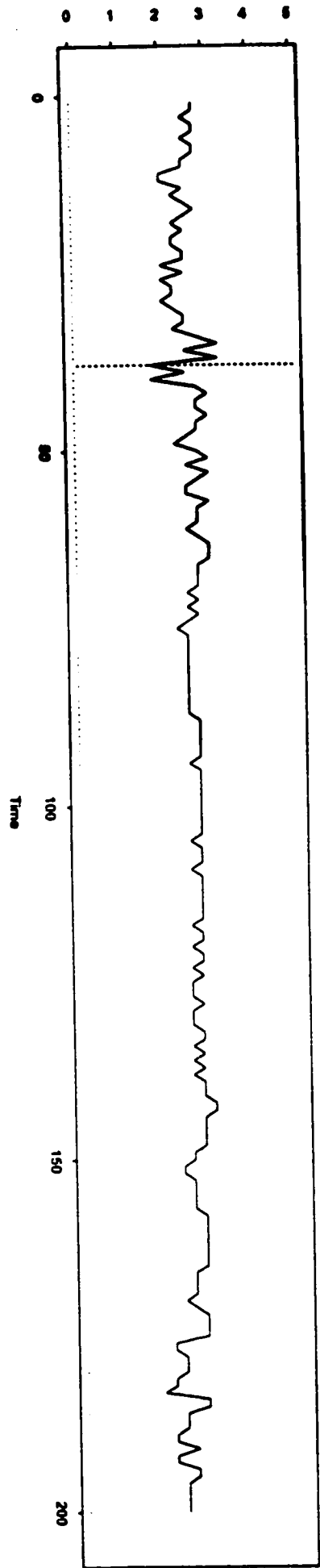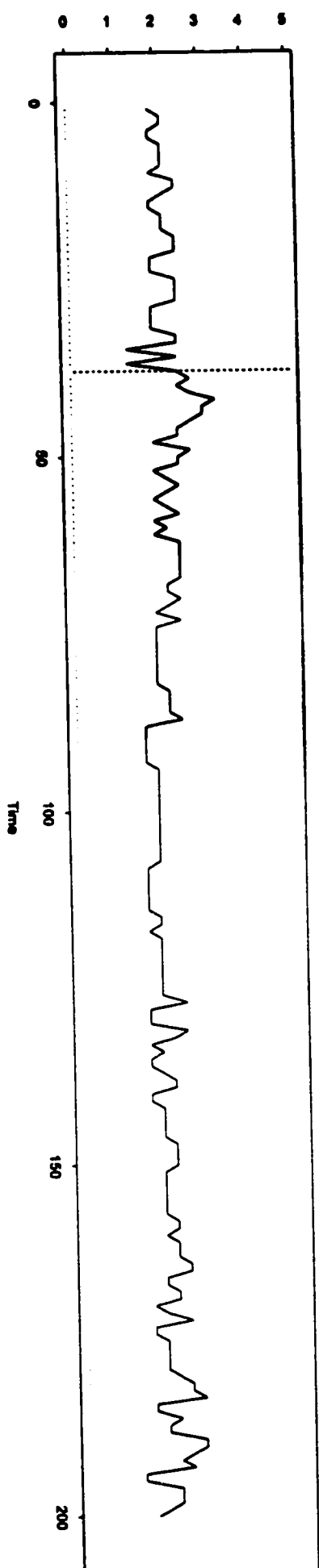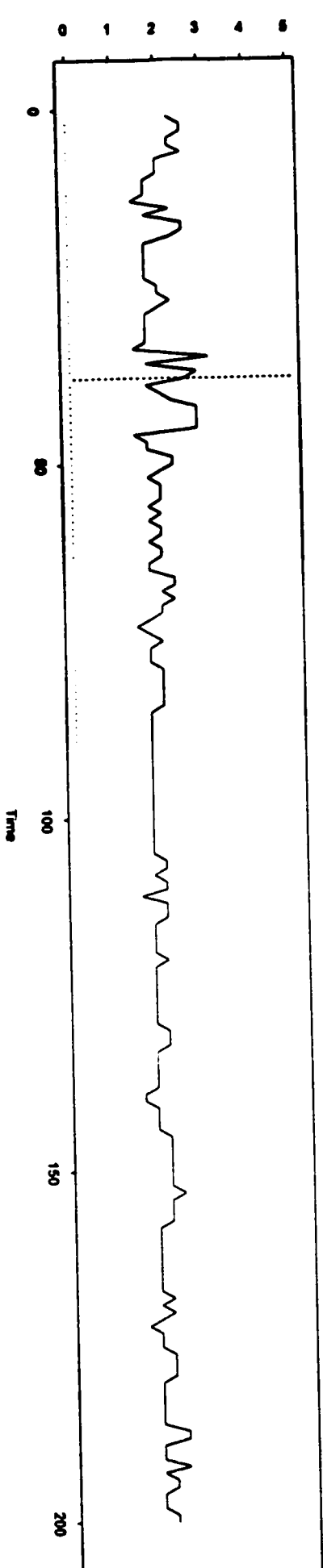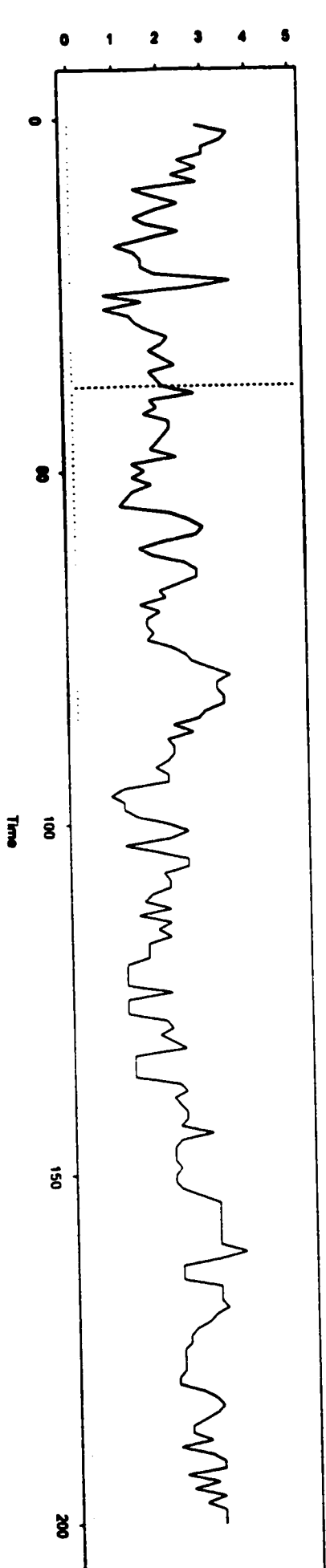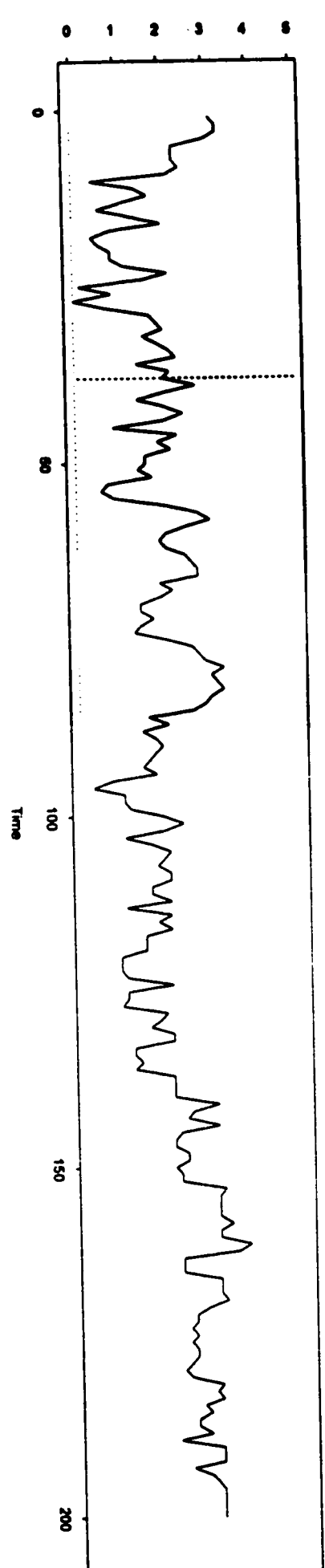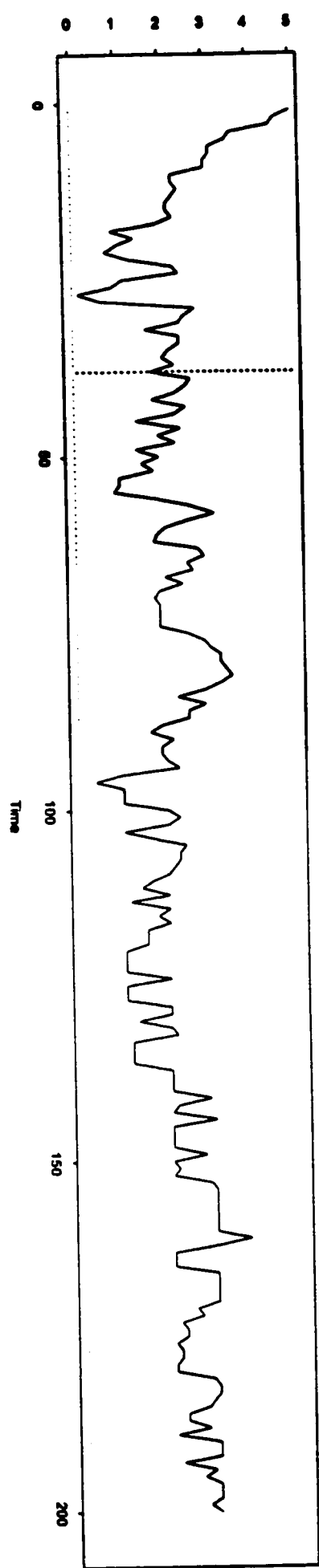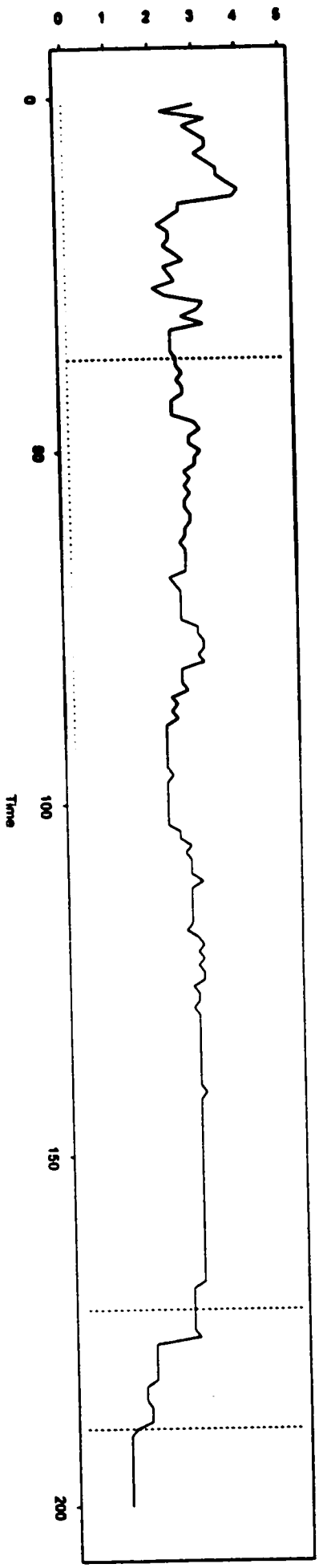
Participant 09 - Hyperarousal

Participant 09 - Intrusion

365

Participant 10 - Hyperarousal

Participant 10 - Intrusion

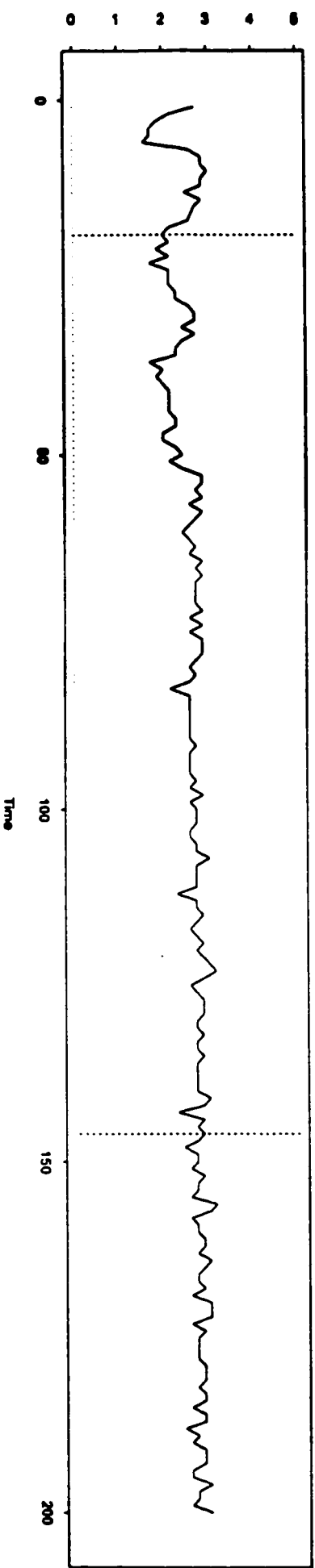365h

Participant 11 - Hyperarousal

Participant 11 - Intrusion

365i

Participant 12 - Hyperarousal

Participant 12 - Intrusion

365j

Participant 13 - Hyperarousal

Participant 13 - Intrusion

Participant 17 - Hyperarousal
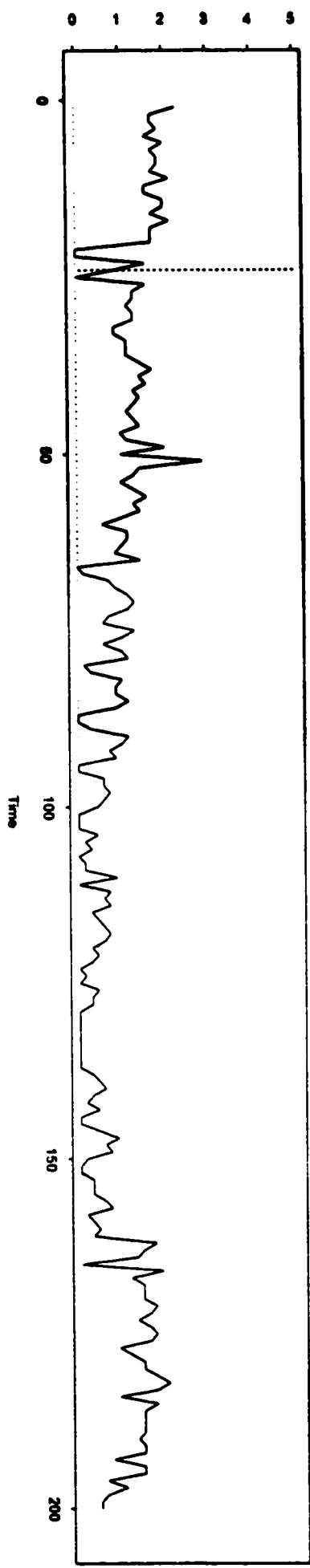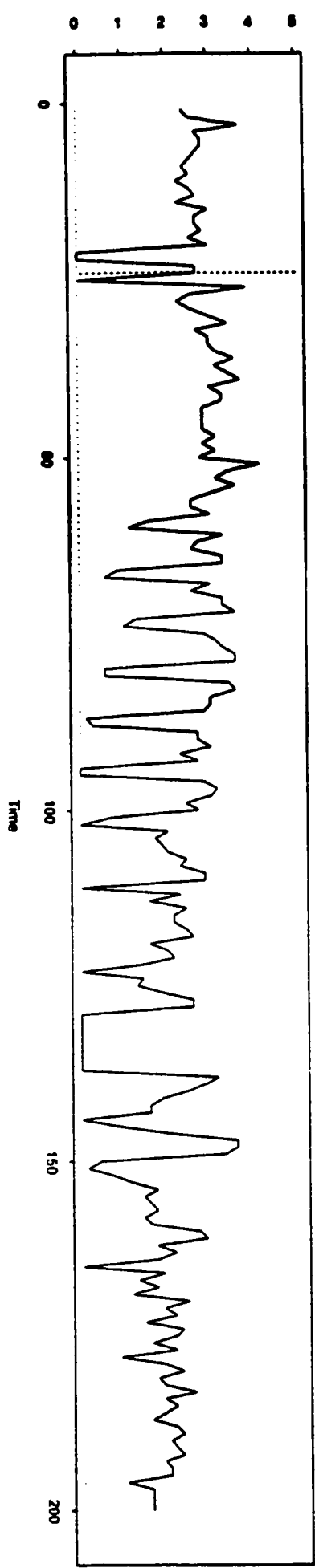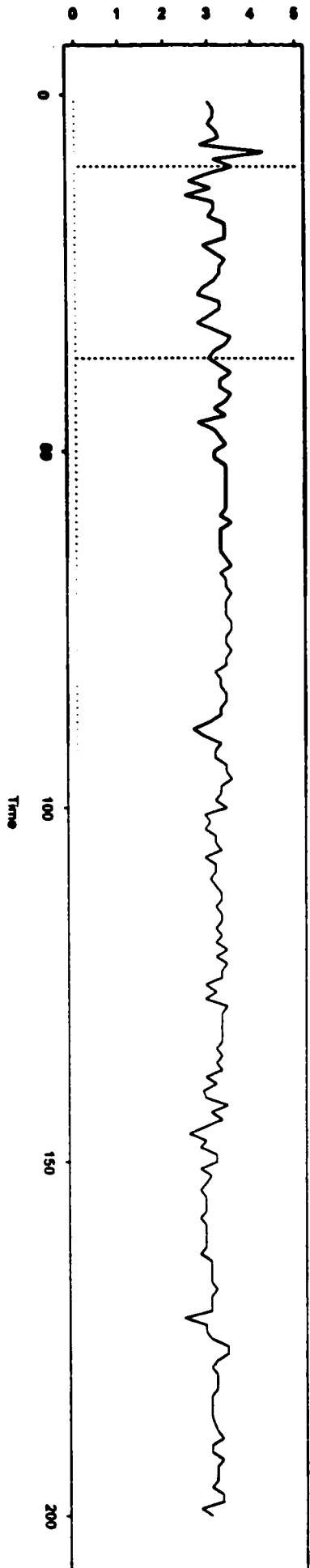
Participant 17 - Intrusion

Time

3651

Participant 18 - Hyperarousal

Participant 18 - Intrusion

365m
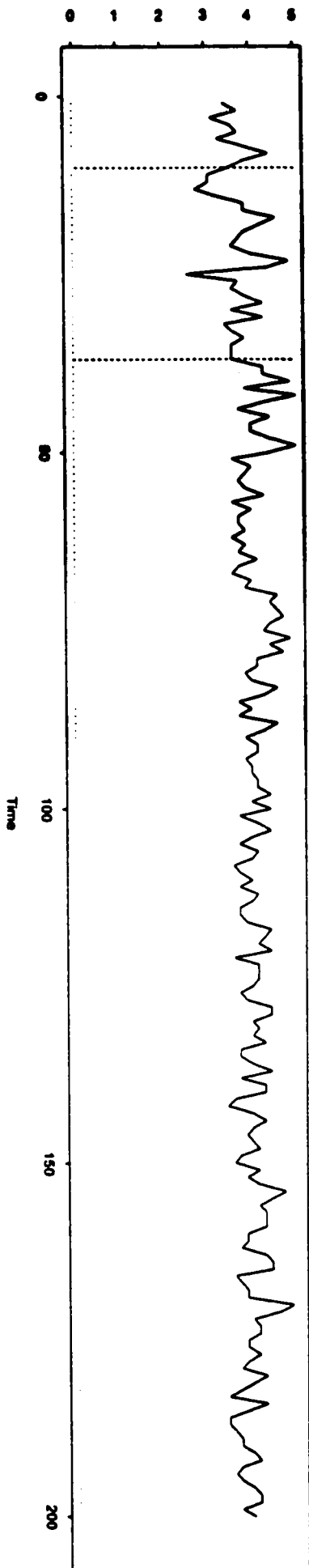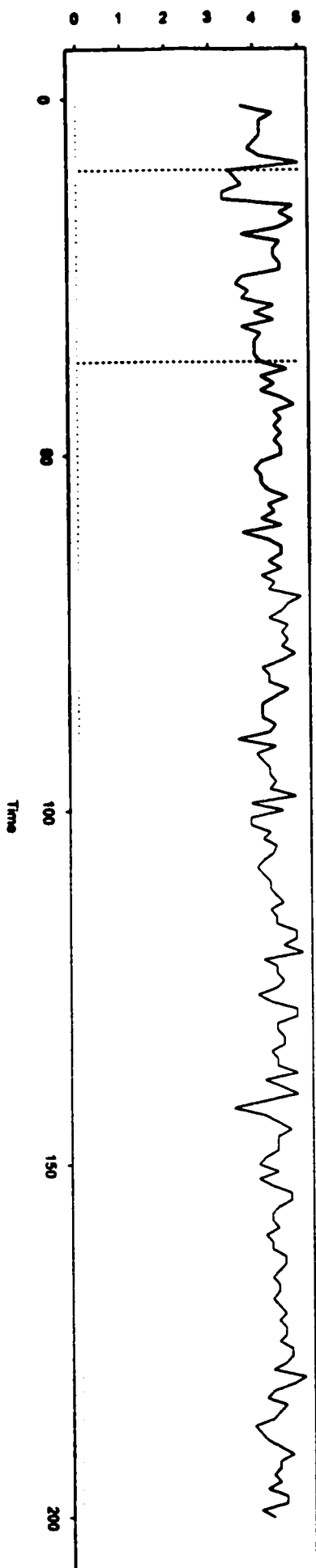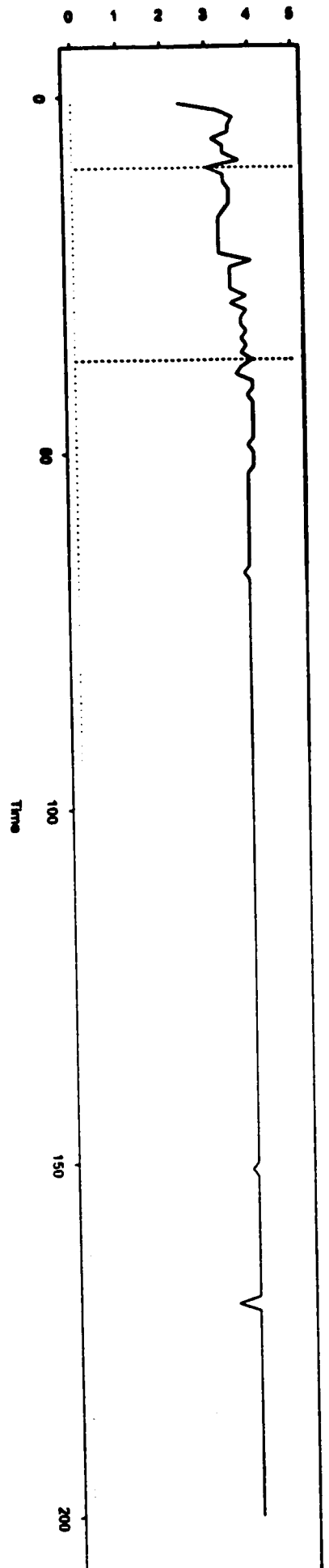
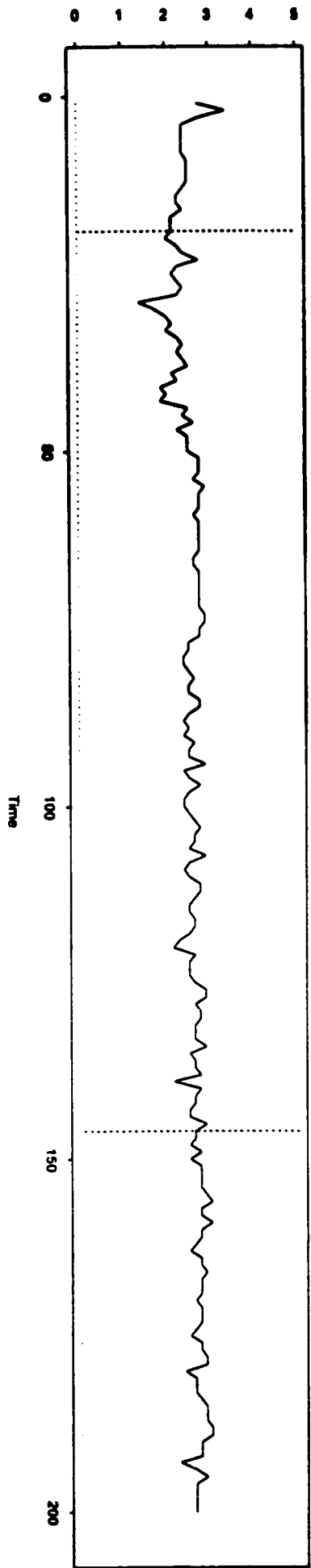Participant 19 - Hyperarousal
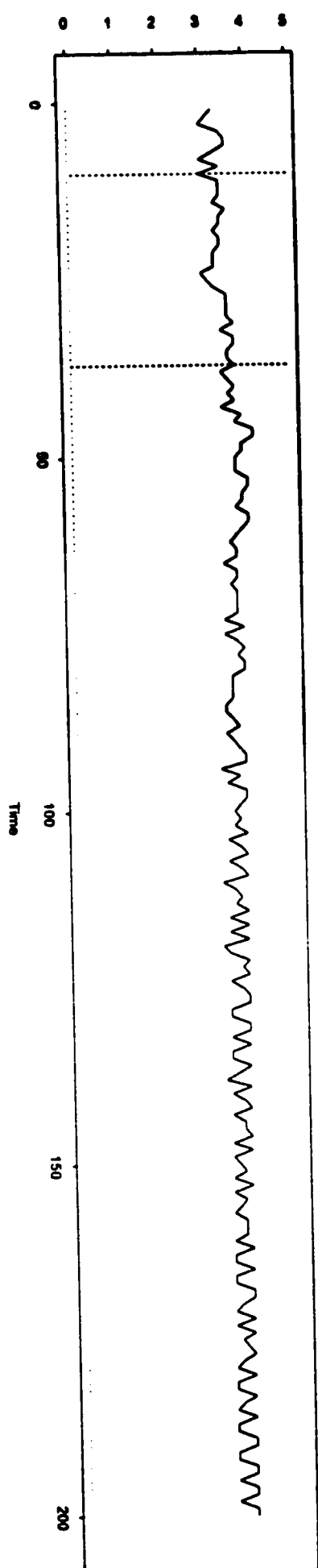
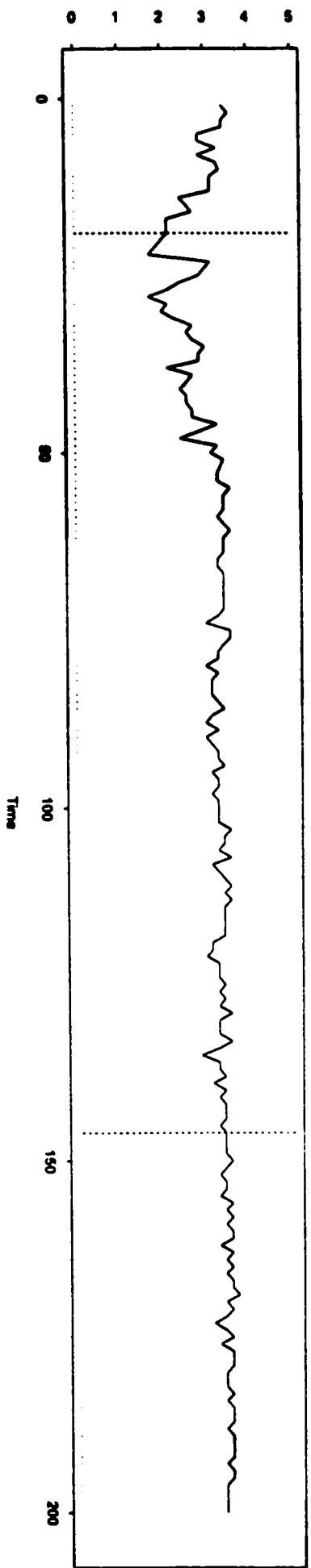Participant 19 - Intrusion
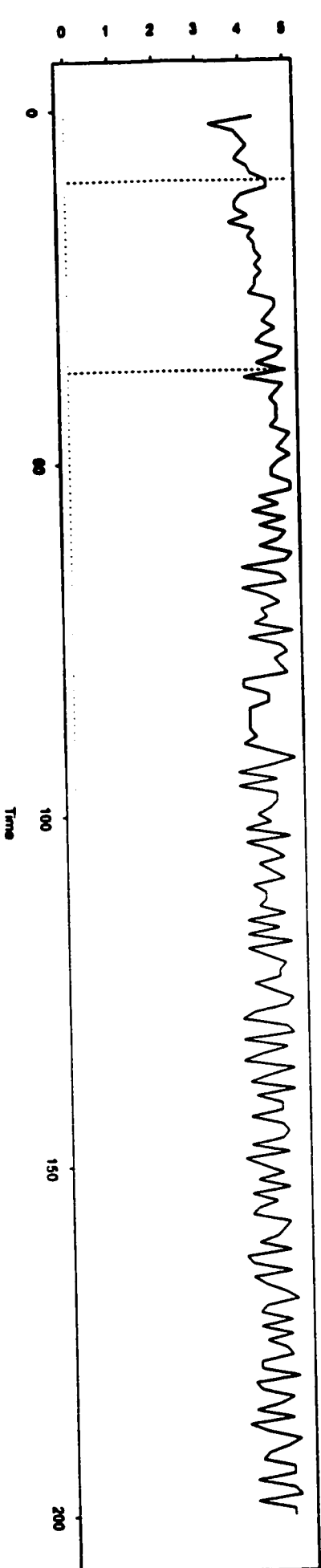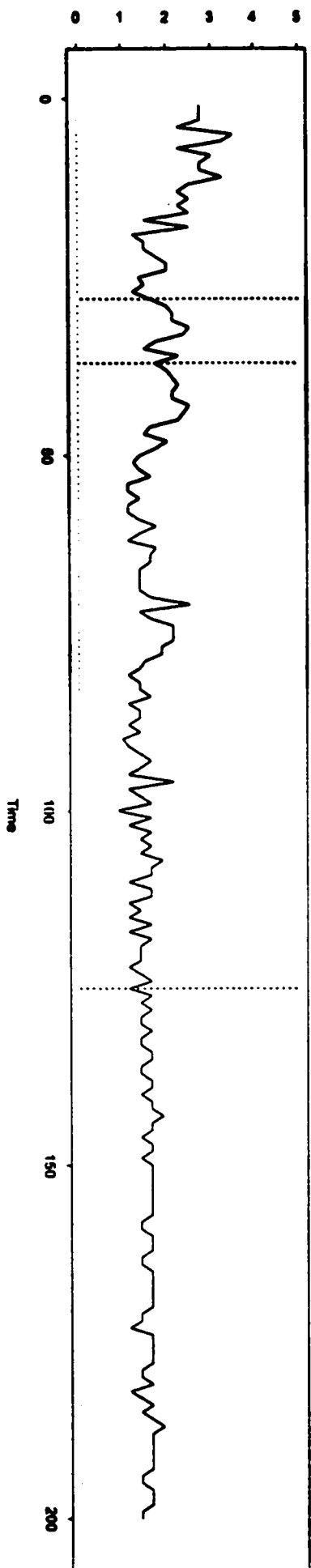
Participant 20 - Hyperarousal
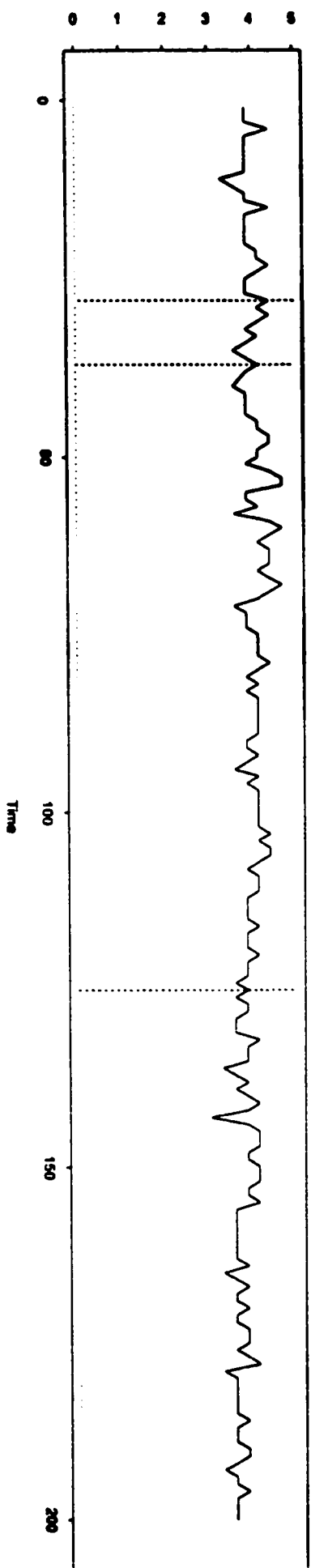
Participant 20 - Intrusion
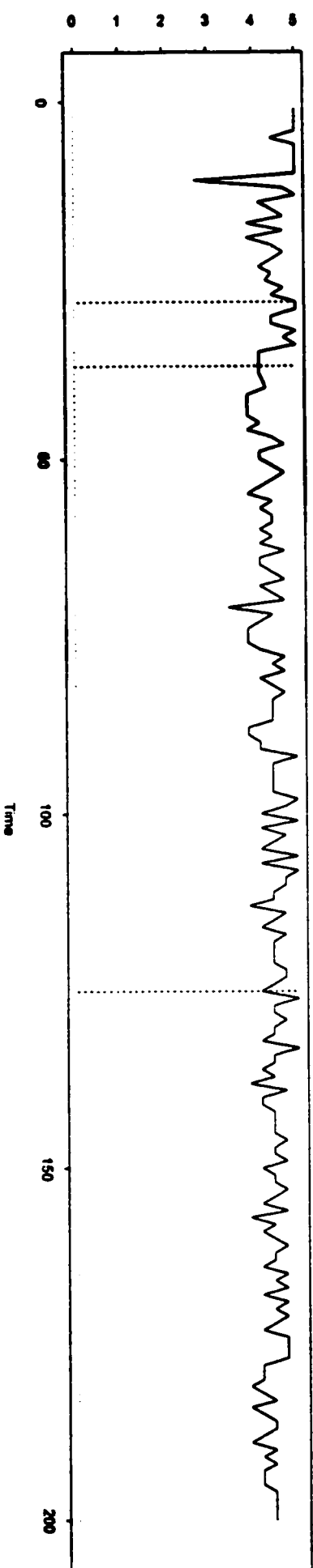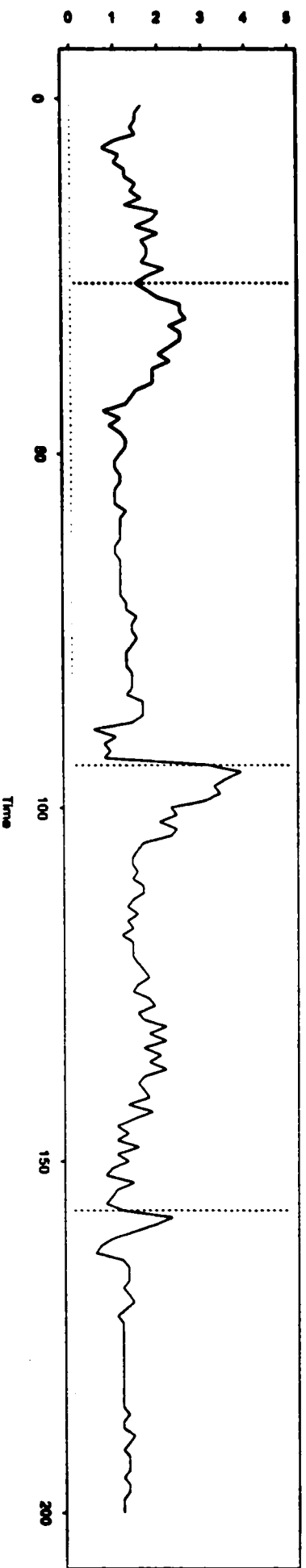
Participant 21 - Hyperarousal
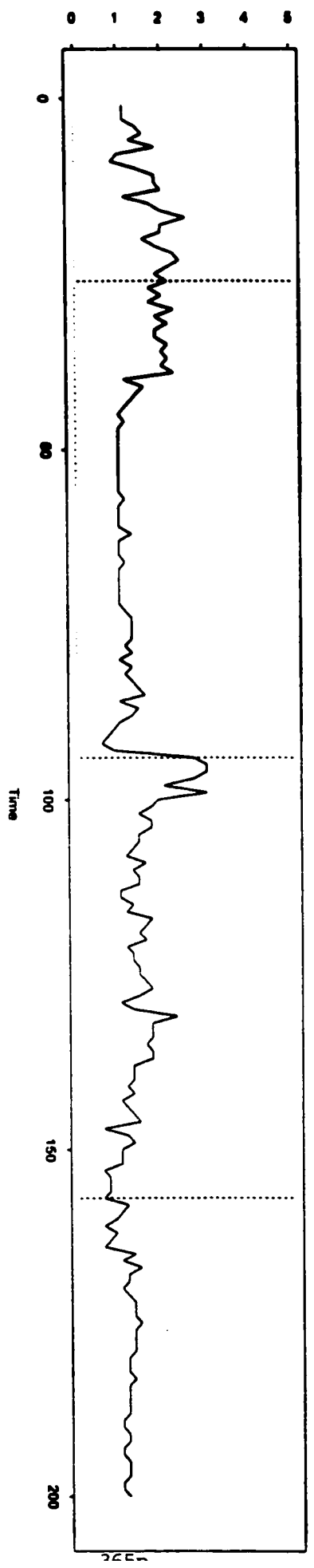
Participant 21 - Intrusion

Participant 22 - Avoidance

Participant 22 - Hyperarousal

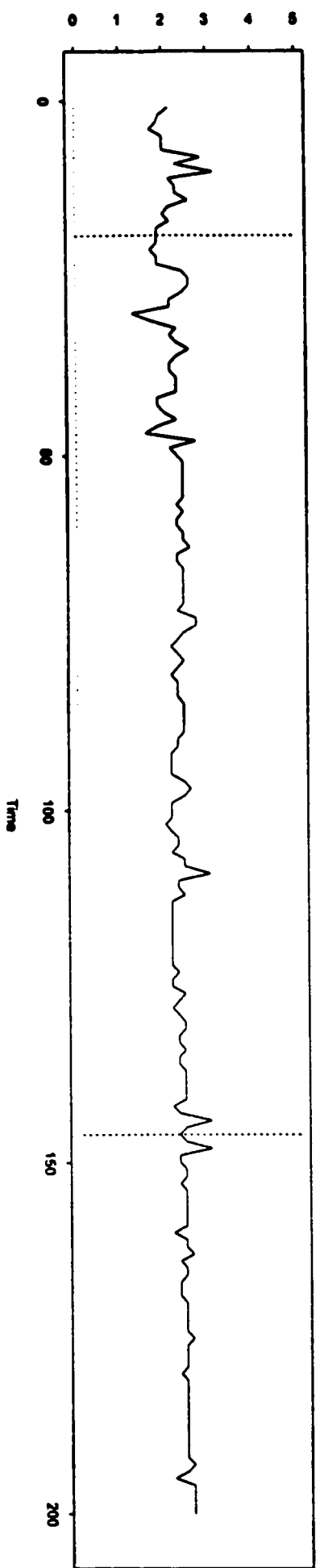Participant 22 - Intrusion

Time

365g
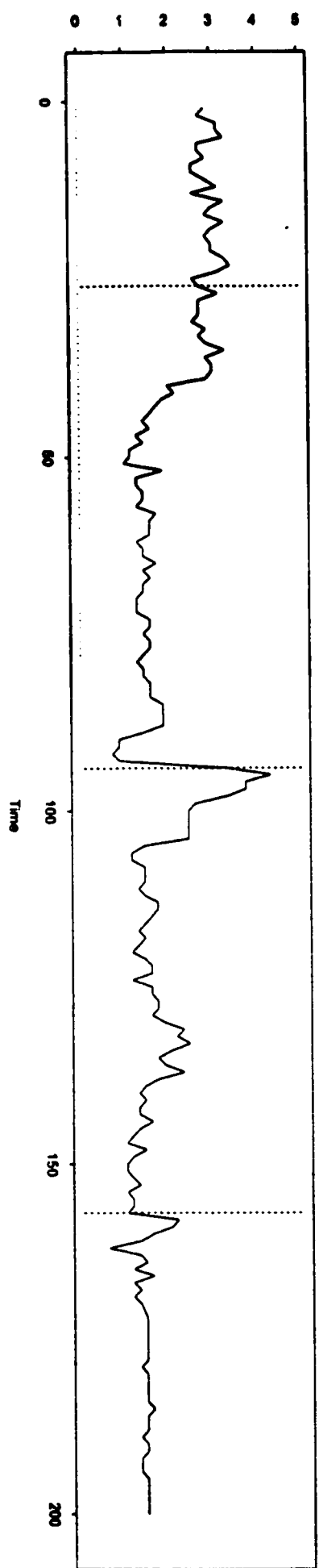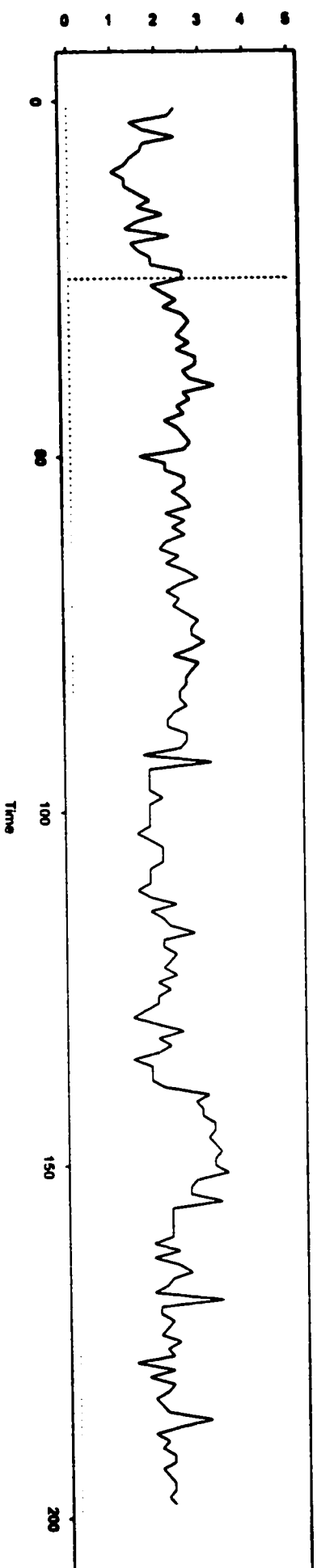
Participant 23 - Avoidance

Participant 23 - Hyperarousal

Participant 23 - Intrusion

Participant 24 - Hyperarousal

Participant 24 - Intrusion

365a

Participant 26 - Hyperarousal

Participant 26 - Intrusion

Time

365+

Participant 27 - Intrusion

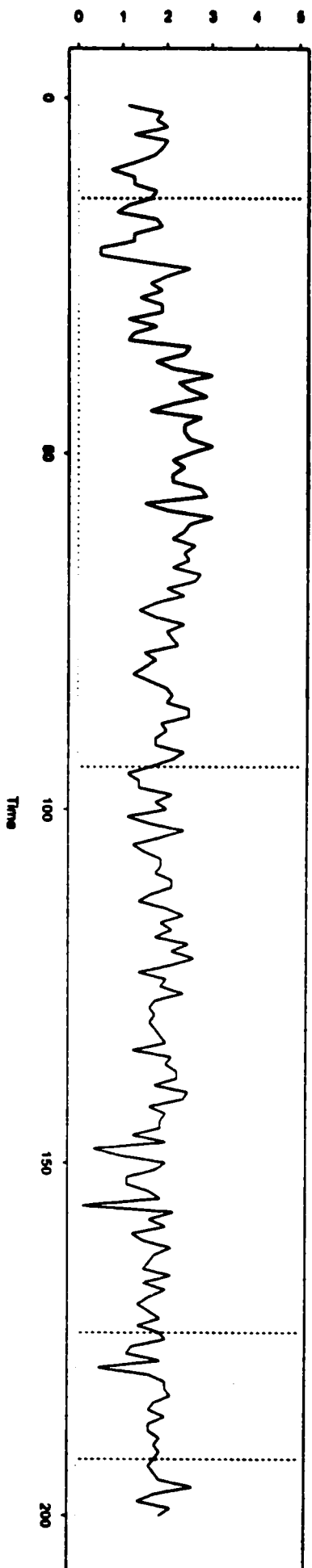Participant 27 - Hyperarousal

365u

Participant 28 - Avoidance

Participant 28 - Hyperarousal

Participant 28 - Intrusion
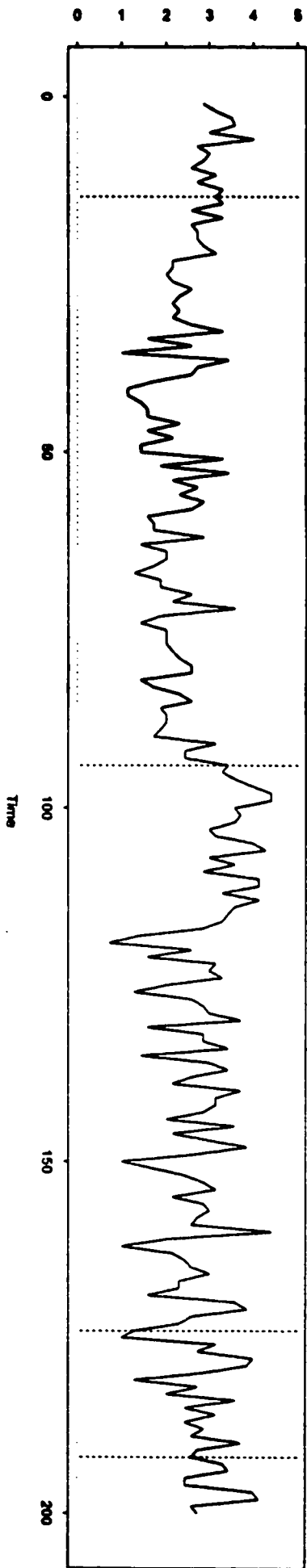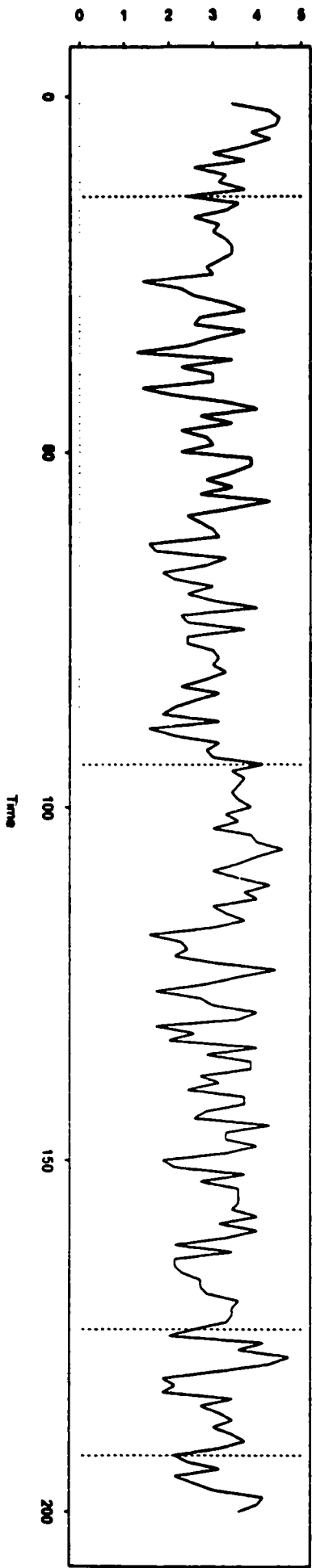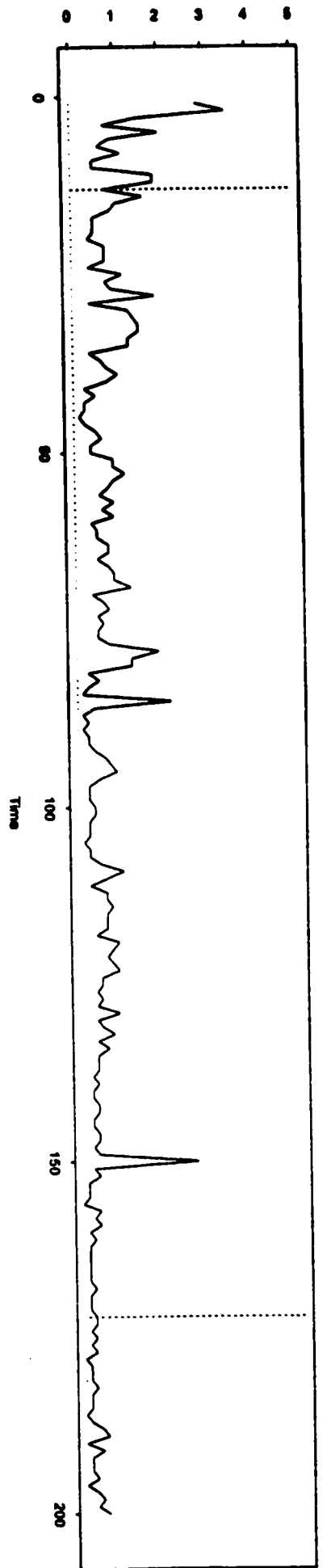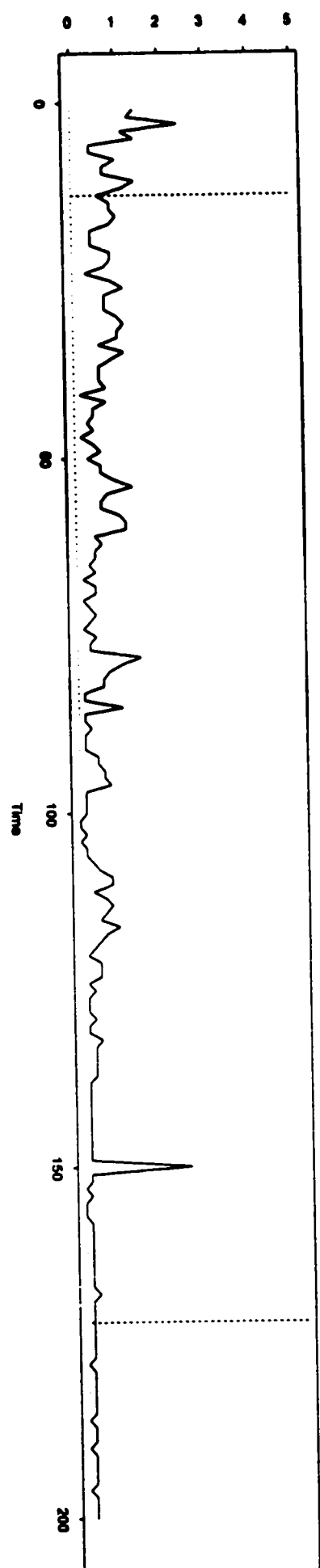
365v

Participant 29 - Hyperarousal

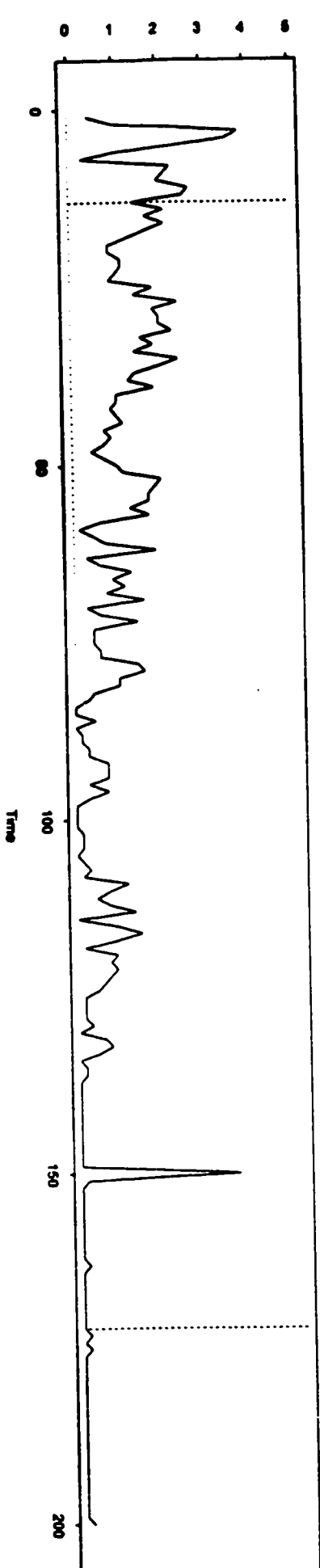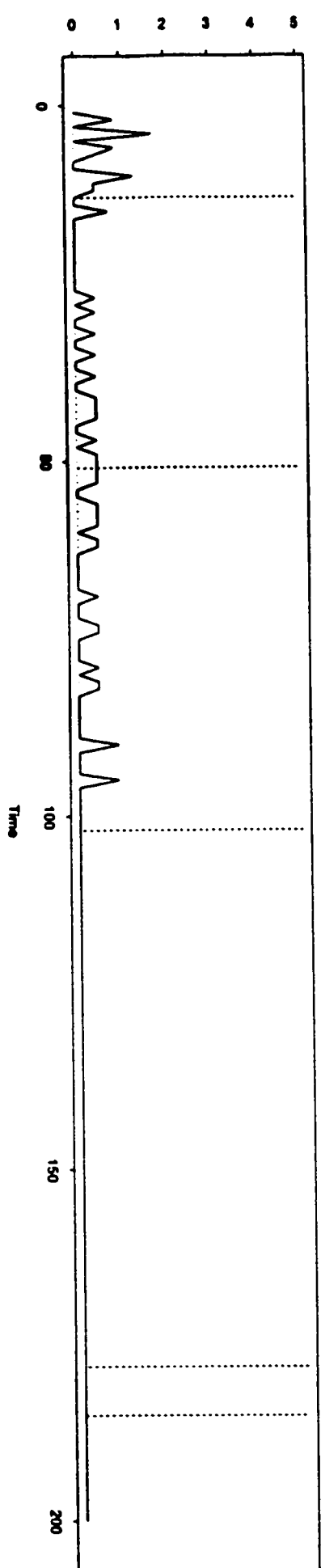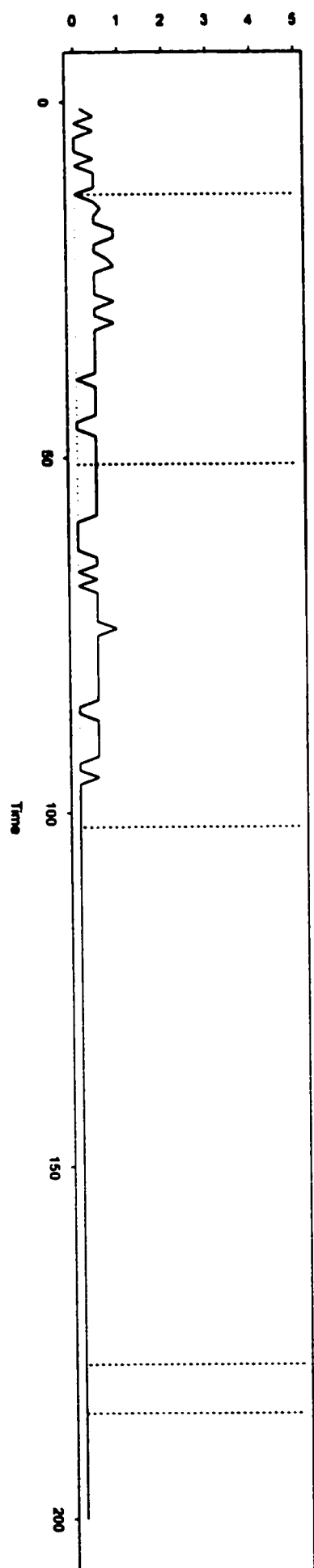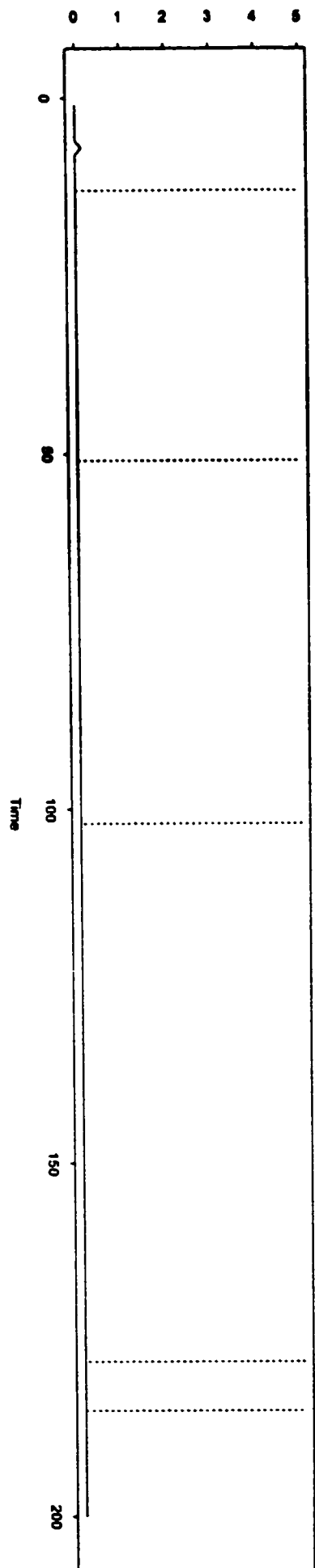Participant 29 - Intrusion

365w

Participant 30 - Hyperarousal

Participant 30 - Intrusion

365x

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