

# TYPES OF REFUGEES – CROATIAN AND BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN EXPERIENCES

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**S**ome researchers have warned that in the field of refugee study and research the dichotomic categorization "refugees vs. non-refugees", used in legal and administrative procedures, is not considered satisfactory in sociological analysis. The author of this article has come to the same conclusion in his research about the prospects of return of Croatian displaced persons and refugees, as well as Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugees. The first series of inquiries was conducted at the height of the refugee crisis, at the beginning of 1992. We surveyed 726 examinees, Croatian displacees in Croatia and Croatian refugees in Germany and some one hundred interviews about the reasons of fleeing were recorded. Another one hundred interviews were recorded on cassettes during a more recent survey of Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugees, conducted from the summer of 1993 to the spring of 1994 in Croatia, Hungary and Germany. At the same time, 1247 respondents from both groups of refugees answered questionnaires. The results of both surveys and especially of the interviews have led the author to construct several typologies of refugees with regard to reasons of fleeing, the reaction of the examinees to the situation of refuge and the issue of return. In this article the author expounds the typology or categorization of refugees and displaced persons based on differences in pre-refugee experiences. Thus, the main categorization criterion of refugees into certain types was the degree of danger for their physical and psychological integrity they were exposed to prior to fleeing. Therefore, six categories of refugees and displaced persons were discerned: I) anticipating refugees/displacees; II) semi-refugees/displacees; III) impelled refugees/displacees; IV) refugees/displacees of war; V) expellees; VI) ex-camp inmates refugees/displacees. In elaborating his typology, the author put forward two broader conclusions. First, refugee groups are commonly composed of socio-psychologically heterogeneous subgroups with greatly differing pre-refugee experiences. Second, the political and societal dynamics of a refugee crisis produces fluctuation within and among refugee groups or types.

## INTRODUCTION

In a superficial media<sup>1</sup> presentation refugees and displaced persons are reduced to a grey mass of impoverished people dependent on someone else's help. All essential distinctions, both in their pre-refugee experiences (i.e. in the reasons why they had to take refuge), as well as in the way that they personally felt the refugee situation, are most often lost from view. Only rarely does the mass media direct public attention to special groups of the worst sufferers, as was the case with (mainly) Moslem Bosnian women raped in Serb concentration camps and forced brothels. Likewise, in the public presentation of the refugees, and also in refugee studies, not enough attention is given to differences in the living conditions and life perspectives between and within individual refugee groups, which may sometimes be greater even than before the refugee situation.<sup>2</sup> They can have long-term frustrating, and often sociopathological effects on the refugee communities.

Granting asylum, or else recognizing refugee status to individuals and groups of involuntary migrants is in the jurisdiction of each state, and is more or less dependent on the foreign policy of the host state concerned, i.e. of its political criteria, which do not always have to be the same in different refugee crises.<sup>3</sup> Groups which in some country acquire refugee status, either by convention (i.e. in accordance with the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees), or apart from the Convention, are composed of individuals whose diverse reasons and motives for requesting international protection can only conditionally be reduced in a sociological sense to the least common denominator: the formal status of a refugee.<sup>4</sup>

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The author is grateful to the Editorial Board of Društvena istraživanja for publishing this report in English. This way it is easier for the foreign researchers interested in the field to get acquainted with it. Some of them have already expressed their interest and requested the report from me.

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It should be recognized that individual researchers have paid certain attention to some aspects of differences among refugees, primarily to gender and age.

Of some different characteristics of the Ugandan refugee population warned B.E. Harrel-Bond in her extensive study (Harrel-Bond: 1989, pp.142-47).

J. Reynell found three broad socio-economic classes among refugees on the Thai-Kampuchean Border (Reynell: 1989, pp.49-50).

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In the U.S.A., for example, for the most part, refugees from El Salvador were treated as economic ones, although civil war was raging at the time. On the other hand, applicants from Nicaragua could easily receive refugee status (Galagher: 1989).

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The universal and rigid UN definition of a refugee does not correspond also to broad humanitarian activities of both non-governmental organizations and churches (Ferris: 1993, pp.18-22).

All the possible differences in the plethora of reasons why individuals and groups become involuntary migrants apply, naturally, also to internal migrants or displaced persons, who often find themselves in even more difficult living conditions than those that secure refugee status in another country. In this paper, for practical purposes, the term "refugee" shall be used in a broad sense to refer to internal refugees or displaced persons.

Some researchers have warned that the dichotomic categorization used in legal and administrative procedures: refugees vs. non-refugees, cannot be considered as satisfactory in sociological analysis. According to them, the concept of refugee should be conceived as a variable on the basis of the index of danger, combined with the probability of that danger.<sup>5</sup>

In the literature on migration, W. Petersen introduced the distinction between two categories of non-voluntary migration: impelled and forced. In the first case the migrants retain some power to decide whether or not to leave, while in the latter they did not have this power. "Often the boundary between the two, the point at which the choice becomes nominal, may be difficult to clear-cut, and historically it is often so. The difference is real, for example, between the Nazis' policy (roughly 1933-1938) of encouraging Jewish emigration by various anti-Semitic acts and laws, and the later policy (roughly 1938-1945) of herding Jews into cattle-trains and transporting them to camps" (Petersen 1966). Barry Stein, yet, differentiated "anticipatory refugees" (those who sense the danger early and leave) from "acute refugees" (those who leave with little time for preparation) (Stein: 1981).

Empirical evidence which we have collected in research on Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugees and displaced persons with regard to the immediate reasons of their involuntary migration showed that they could not be simply divided into Peterson's two categories. This moved us to make an attempt at producing a more sophisticated sociological typology of refugees. The work was based on two series of investigation.

## METHODOLOGY

I conducted the first series of inquiries, with the help of sociology students, at the height of the refugee crisis in Croatia, at the beginning of 1992. The inquiries consisted of some hundred extended interviews and 726 questionnaires. The respondents were Croatian displaced persons that we found in organized and private accommodations in several Croatian cities. There was also a small,

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The application of this approach to the case which we have mentioned shows that the majority of Salvadorians were certainly refugees, and even to a high level, but that the fundamental sociological conditions were not fulfilled by some groups which had been able relatively easily to gain refugee status, e.g. Soviet Jews, Cubans, the Vietnamese (Zolberg: 1986).

non-representative group of Croatian refugees surveyed and interviewed in Frankfurt a.M., Germany. The sample for Croatia was in general well representative of the main social traits of the displaced Croatian population with regard to the regions of origin (areas affected by terrorism, war, and devastation), sex, age, education, etc. The sample, however, included only 4% of the ethnic Serb population in Croatia. This mainly applied to persons from mixed marriages and to some members of the Serb-controlled parts of Croatia who could not accept Great Serbian "politics" and "ethnic cleansing" of Croats and other non-Serbs from the "Serb land" (sic!). Most of the Serb refugees and displaced persons from Croatia went to the so-called "Krajina", to Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and were therefore inaccessible to us. However, in our construction of refugee/displacee types we took into consideration these groups as well.

The recorded conversations and questionnaires pertained to the main dimensions of the refugee problem: the reasons for refuge, refugee experiences and reactions of the respondents to the refugee/displacee situation, questions concerning return and the perspectives of "coexistence" in ethnically mixed areas of Croatia affected by "ethnic cleansing" of the non-Serb population by the Serbs. The integral results of the research were published in a book, partially presented at several scientific gatherings, and also published in several journals (Mesić, 1992; Mesić, 1993).

I conducted a similar investigation with my associates- Katrin Becker (Berlin), Janós Gyurok (Pécs), Pavao Jonjić (Zagreb) -on an extended sample which included, aside from displaced persons in Croatia, also Croatian refugees in Hungary and Germany, and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croatia, Hungary and Germany.<sup>6</sup> A total of 1,247 respondents was surveyed and about a hundred open-ended interviews were recorded. A large part of the research was carried through in the second half of 1993, and a smaller part in the spring of 1994. In Croatia, refugees and displaced persons were surveyed in several places where there was a greater concentration (Zagreb, Zadar, Karlovac, Osijek, Nova Gradiška, Kutina, Slavonski Brod, Varaždin, Pula, Rijeka). In Hungary we surveyed the Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugees located at Nagyatád, Harkány, Mohács, Siklós and in several villages of the Baránya region, but in Germany only among those in Berlin and Wittstock.

In the following pages we shall present a synthesized typology of refugees/displacees with regard to their reasons of fleeing.<sup>7</sup> Due to the brevity of this report we have omitted the extractions from the original testimonies of respondents

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Differences with respect to gender and age are not dealt with here in this typology. We are well aware, however, that living conditions and life perspectives of refugees rest also greatly upon gender and age.

which illustrate individual types,<sup>8</sup> and we have also omitted the findings of the questionnaire related to this typology.

Before continuing with the typology, note should be made of details in the refugee population, on which our typology has been constructed, and which, we feel, may be (at least partially) of general significance. On the eve of our first investigation, in late January 1992, the Croatian refugee contingents reached their highest point. According to an estimation of the Government's Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees the total number of displaced persons and refugees, Croatian citizens, amounted to about 719,000. Of this number some 324,000 displacees were situated in individual places in Croatia (i.e. in that part of the country controlled by the government). At the same time, the estimations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) indicated 141,000 Croatian refugees (ethnic Serbs mainly) in Serbia, 95,000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 6,500 in Montenegro, and 2,000 in Macedonia. Finally, 22,025 Croatian refugees were registered in Slovenia (about 10,000 non-registered should be added to this), about 45,000 in Hungary, 15,000 in Austria, 5,000 in Germany, 2,117 in Czechoslovakia and 1,500 in Italy. The mass of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croatia reached 286,727 at the end of 1992, and some refugees began to appear from Serbia (Croats, Magyars and other non-Serbs).

According to the UNHCR data, at the close of our second investigation (early 1994), there was a total of 3,766,000 displaced persons and refugees in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. They were mostly located in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This number included a certain portion of "other vulnerable groups". With a slightly higher number of refugees with regard to displacees, Croatia had all together 532,000 of these uprooted people. The rest of the refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina took refuge in Serbia – 301,000, Montenegro 33,000, Macedonia 32,000 and Slovenia 31,000 (UNHCR 1994: 7).

## **TYPES OF CROATIAN AND BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS**

We have discerned six basic categories or types of refugees and displaced persons: I) anticipating refugees/displacees; II) semi-refugees/displacees; III) impelled refugees/displacees; IV) refugees/displacees of war; V) expellees; VI) ex-camp-inmates refugees/displacees.

Refugees and displaced persons had no differences between them with regard to the degree of life-threatening danger to which they were exposed, and concerning the physical and psychological damage that they suffered. This was an important determinant on which we constructed our typology.

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For testimonies from our first investigation see: Mesić, 1992 and Mesić, 1993.

## 1) Anticipating refugees/displacees

These are persons that on the first sign of possible danger for their personal or family security immediately made use of "an escape in necessity". As a rule, they belonged to higher social levels. They often had alternative abodes in some other parts of the country, or sometimes abroad. Thus, some persons and families from areas of Croatia that came under control of the "rebelled Serbs" had a house, flat or weekend retreat in unoccupied parts of Croatia.<sup>9</sup> Others had close relatives or powerful friends that could help them. Such possibilities, in turn, facilitated the decision to leave in due time the dangerous area in which the threat of conflict and war was developing. Some were warned or felt the danger in advance, so that they arranged to exchange their houses or flats for a different location in a more secure part of the country.

This first type we can find not so often among displaced persons and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, for Bosnian Muslims and Croats, especially after the outbreak of the Croat-Muslim conflict, very few more secure places remained in the country, since the Serbs had taken over about 70% of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Yet, a certain number of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina did have week-end retreats on the Croatian coast, in which we found some of our respondents, but the majority did not fall into the first category of our typology.

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The term "rebelled Serbs" is used here, conditionally, for several reasons – first, because it has become a typical expression; second, because we could not find a better phrase. Rebellion of a minority implies that it has for some time suffered a greater or lesser degree of oppression or negation of its minority and human rights. For Serbs, in parts of Croatia where they constituted a majority or a significant minority, in the context of political changes, this is very difficult to claim. First, in part of this area their national party or the former Communist Party (in which they were very numerous, especially in the said area) won the local government positions in the multiparty elections (spring 1990).

Second, from the beginning they had the support (first concealed and later open) of the former Yugoslav People's Army (whose officers were predominantly Serbs). Third, the new Croatian government was under the constant scrutiny of international factors, especially with regard to the "Serb question" in Croatia. As a result of all these circumstances, the Croatian government, from the start, had no real authority in this area. With the help of the Yugoslav Army and terrorist actions by paramilitary formations, the Serbs managed to extend their rule over almost a third of the internationally recognized Croatian state territory. Paramilitary formations (Chetniks, "White Eagles", etc.) recruited their members, to a large extent in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Besides this, as is especially important to note with regard to the refugee situation, a legitimate rebellion would be primarily directed against the state's organs of force and other such institutions. However, the essential trait of the "Serb rebellion", first in Croatia, and then in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was diverse terrorism against the civilian non-Serb population, against former neighbours, friends, relatives, etc., all with the goal of "ethnic cleansing". In their territorial claims, the "rebelled Serbs" sometimes referred to historical principles (i.e., Kosovo, where the Serbian state in the Middle Ages was born, but today populated with over 80 per cent of ethnic Albanian "minority"), sometimes used the ethnic criterion (where they formed a majority), and sometimes simply insisted that all Serbs have the right to live in one state. The Great Serbian policy of "ethnic cleansing" caused a spiral of violence and war crimes among all the "warring parties", but the Serb side was the initiator and bears, by far, the greatest responsibility.

This type of refugees and displaced persons is, in general, the less visible and accessible one to researchers. They do not arrive in receiving areas in great numbers, but rather individually. They are already situated in the new surroundings in which they quickly adjust. It is unlikely that we shall come across them in camps or in queues in social service facilities (except abroad). Refugees (displacees) who have passed through hard pre-refugee experiences speak with displeasure about them. Some respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina are especially angered by political leaders in their home-places who sent their families to Croatia or to some other country before the beginning of serious peril and danger. In Osijek, after our first investigation, a scandal broke out concerning the return of certain local government officials, who had abandoned their duties and their co-citizens when they were most needed, at a time when mortar shells were falling every day and when battles were raging on the outskirts of the city. When they returned, these persons presented "certificates" issued by government authorities in Zagreb, attesting to the alleged patriotic activities during the time of refuge, in Zagreb or even abroad.

A large section of the Serb refugees (displacees) from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina also falls into this category. For example, many family members of officers and policemen who had refused to be loyal to the Croatian and Bosnian government left very early. Likewise, this category is also made up of those groups of Serb refugees who were warned in advance by the Yugoslav People's Army and Serb paramilitary formations that they were preparing an attack on the places where these people were living. There are well known cases where the Serb population in ethnically mixed areas in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina abruptly left these areas before they were bombed or shelled.

If cessation of war hostility brings about a situation permitting anticipating refugees to return to their towns and homes in conditions of full security, they quickly lose the sociological characteristics of refugees. Others, however, may with time find themselves in the sociological situation of true refugees, whose towns/villages have in the meantime been occupied, whose homes have been destroyed and plundered.

## **II) Semi-refugees/displacees**

These people left their homes although there were no real dangers, or else they went, influenced by induced frightening. These "refugees" are used to "proving" before public opinion the peril faced by certain ethnic groups, in this case by the Serb community in Croatia. The Great Serb movement staged this type of refugee flow first from Kosovo (in the late 1980s), which helped Milošević find an excuse to annul the autonomy of Kosovo (and also of Voivodina) and to introduce a military-police dictatorship in these provinces. The first waves of Serb refugees from Croatia to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as of Serb displacees to the Serb-controlled areas of Croatia (in the summer of 1991), to a great extent belong to this category. Unlike the first type, these people left their homes in a group; they were more passive actors in the situation and more likely they came from lower social layers.

In this category there also belong those individuals who attained their refugee or displacee status by the use of out-of-date documents. For example, there are people working in Split or Zadar, and at times living there in their houses or flats, who have come from the vicinities of these cities, where they still have land or old houses. Sometimes their parents, or some close relatives, still live in these houses, and sometimes nobody lives there permanently, but only occasionally. However, the personal or some other documents of these people were, for some reason, not changed, and so carried the old address. Some of these places in the vicinity of the mentioned (or other Croatian) cities were affected by the war and expulsion of Croats, non-Serbs and all those who did not accept Great Serb politics and its unscrupulous methods. Along with those that truly had to leave their homes, who were expelled and had been terrorized before that, some migrant workers in the mentioned cities, or in other safer places in Croatia, managed to gain refugee (or displacee) status by the use of old documents. Our respondents in Zadar also mentioned certain entrepreneurs in that city who, due to lower taxes, had registered their businesses somewhere outside of Zadar (e.g., in Obrovac or Benkovac). Thus, although their homes and firms were in fact (let us say) in Zadar, they could (and some apparently did) receive refugee or displacee status.

Likewise, there were cases when migrant workers or commuters, for some reason (e.g., while waiting to receive a social- owned flat from their firms) had personal documents issued in Split or Zadar, but were in fact living and travelling to work from their homes in the vicinities of these cities. When the places where they were living were occupied, when they could not return to them safely and thus, perhaps, had to flee from real danger, they could not receive refugee status (or else could do so only with great difficulty).

Similarly, part of the migrant workers from Bosnia and Herzegovina (mostly Muslims), many of whom were in Croatia, were at their place of work when war broke out in Croatia, and later in Bosnia. Some had their families, or rather individual family members with them. Others (probably the majority) had their families still in Bosnia. In Croatia they lived in temporary workers' accommodations, investing their hard earned savings in houses and farms back home, in the expectation of spending their old-age days more pleasantly and more securely upon retirement. The war came, and many were left overnight without their homes and the possibility of return to their native places.

Since the Serbs, with the help of the YPA (which had become a Serb Army) and paramilitary Serb formations, had through war hostilities and "ethnic cleansing" occupied 70% of Bosnia and Herzegovina (although they made up only 31.4% of the population in 1991), many families of these migrant workers became refugees. Although this may seem cynical, such refugees could be considered fortunates in misfortune, especially if they fled without passing through numerous Serb concentration camps, without being beaten or raped. Many others became victims of genocidal massacres, witnesses to barbaric devastation of cities and villages, sniper fire, or else they remained in camps, or enclosed and

terrorized in their homes, without any rights, not even the possibility of fleeing and becoming refugees.

Later the Muslim-Croat war broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which produced a situation in which there practically did not remain a safe place in that country, either for Croats or Bosniak-Muslims, except, to a certain degree, for restricted areas under the full control of their ethnic military forces.

We found respondents from this subgroup in two small shack settlements, in which migrant workers (mainly Bosnian Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also migrants from other areas) had previously lived, and which had been transformed into "wild" refugee camps. Some of the inhabitants had been joined by their family members, now refugee families. Others had their family members living as refugees in diverse places, while still others had their families in Bosnia, sometimes knowing, and sometimes not knowing what was happening to them. Some of the respondents had gained refugee status in Croatia, remaining at their jobs (mostly in construction). Others had neither status, nor work, but were receiving some form of humanitarian help.

We have called this type "semi-refugees" due to the way in which they went into refuge, which was quite different from the conventional manner of determining refugee status. However, by this we do not mean that they are false (bogus) refugees, since they cannot safely return to their old domiciles. The personal situations of the first examples of this subgroup are, most often, quite different than the situation of refugees in the full sense of the *Geneva Convention* or the situation of refugees in our sociological determination. By this we mean those persons who have had an alternative house or flat, and a job. The second subgroup - migrant workers, although they did not have a pre-refugee experience, actually found themselves in a true refugee situation. Our categorization, is not, perhaps, the most appropriate for them, but in our typological concept it is difficult to find another place for them. Migrant workers (some of which have in the meantime lost their jobs because of the war), whose homes in their places of origin have been destroyed or occupied, and who have nowhere to return to with security, in fact have found themselves in the position of true refugees.

The concept of false/bogus asylum seekers or refugees is overburdened with pejorative negative connotations. Namely, all those who cannot fulfill the ever more rigid Geneva Convention criteria for attaining refugee status, are labeled false/bogus refugees, although they (excluding some genuine impostors) have not committed any fraud, have not falsified documents, and finally, a good many of them truly are involuntary migrants, although not foreseen by the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Geneva).

This does not mean, however, that the break-up of Yugoslavia and the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina did not provide an opportunity for false/bogus refugees in the real sense of the term. By this, we do not wish to denounce genuine economic migrants, who use refugee status as a modus to temporarily improve their living conditions. This applies all the more, when the people concerned are coming from countries affected by war and economic crisis, in

which their livelihoods are threatened. Such people, however, are not refugees (especially not according to the Convention), but the term false/bogus refugee should be applied to them only in the technical, administrative, and not in the moral sense. In our view, the problem lies in the fact that they take away an otherwise limited number of places (contingents) from real refugees, who cannot, hence, receive refugee status.

After every war, especially after a war in which the goal was "ethnic cleansing", as is the case with the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, sooner or later, war criminals appear in the mass of refugees, for whom the term "false/bogus refugee" is at the least, an understatement. Some of our respondents in Berlin mentioned, that they had heard how some of their acquaintances, former prisoners from Serb concentration camps, had seen their former tormentors, now living in Germany. At the time when we were preparing this report, the German public had been informed of several cases of persons, suspected of war crimes in the Serb concentration camps; some were arrested for trial.

### **III) Impelled refugees/displacees**

This type concerns people, who had been exposed to diverse modes of pressure, threats and intimidation, aimed at forcing them to flee. It is, in a way, the most typical category in political refugee population. Along with Croats, and other non-Serbs from ethnically mixed areas of Croatia, which had fallen under control of local Serb authorities and terrorists, in this group we can also find individual Serbs who resisted the Serb policy of "ethnic cleansing", or else did not want to participate in it. In earlier refugee flows from Bosnia and Herzegovina, refugees of this type were more common than later on, when the war and "ethnic cleansing" became more bestial. Later on, refugees of this type, Bosniak-Muslims and Croats, most often came from areas where Serbs constituted a pronounced majority of the population, and/or from areas where Serbs had at an early date consolidated their power. Non-Serbs could remain in such areas, but without any protection of their national (ethnic) and basic human rights. Moreover, they were deprived of freedom of movement and exposed to various forms of humiliation, looting of property and violence (many such cases from Banja Luka and Prijedor have been reported by the international observers).

Serb aggression and terrorism in Croatia, and later in Bosnia and Herzegovina, provoked retaliation on the Croat and Muslim sides. In the later waves of Serb refugees from Croatia (i.e., from regions under Croatian government control), a large part probably enters into this refugee category. One of the more drastic cases of pressure on certain Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity, which has been noted by organizations for human rights protection and mass media, has been the mining of Serb houses and businesses and forced evictions of the tenants of some social-owned apartments which have been used by YPA's officers and their families. This applies primarily to the houses and firms of persons who had fled from the area under Government control (of which a part doubtlessly participated in war and terrorist actions against Croatia), but also, in some cases, to the homes and property of other citizens of Serb ethnicity who had remained.

The same applies likewise to some Serb refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, from areas under Bosnian Croat or Muslim control.

#### **IV) War refugees – persons displaced by war**

In places where war activities are being carried on, either as aggression (or liberation for parties defending their legitimate rights), or else as civil conflict, all refugees from the region in war may be broadly labeled "war refugees". Namely, such cases are directly tied to the war, or to the roots of the war and refugee flows, which are basically the same. Since at the same time this means strong and large movement of non-voluntary migrants, host countries receive certain contingents of these refugees, and give them the collective status of war refugees (in a liberalized version of international refugee law). This is certainly a necessary and humane gesture on the part of the host countries. Yet this, as we have attempted to show so far in the elaboration of our typology, leads in fact to an administrative leveling of very different categories of refugees. The same applies to displaced persons. We shall, therefore, use the concept of "war refugee" in a narrower sense, excluding from it groups of refugees not directly determined by war in the sense of war operations. Our findings and insight into the refugee problem with regard to the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has shown that one should further distinguish two sub-types of "war refugees" in a broader sense. Tentatively, we call these "first-degree war refugees" and "war refugees of the second degree".

In the first degree-war refugees we include persons who were above all affected by war devastation and danger resulting from armed conflict between the warring sides. Here, therefore, we mean refugees who left their homes because their houses were destroyed or badly damaged, and who were living in immediate danger of being killed or wounded due to armed conflict in their places of origin (air bombardment, tank shelling, artillery shots, mortar shelling, gunfire and sniper shots). In some cases the local authorities, and even the YPA (at the beginning of the war in Croatia), organized the evacuation of threatened civilian population.

Some places may have been defended, and war operations around them stopped, which would bring these war refugees (in this case mainly the non-combatant, civilian population) into the transitional category which we conditionally called "post-refugees".

If a place was occupied, they became (relatively) permanent "war refugees of the first degree". Namely, return is not to be considered as long as the enemy army, paramilitary forces and occupational regime not only deny security to civilian population of other nationalities and religions (as well as to people of their own ethnicity and religion who do not accept "ethnic cleansing"), but also continue to imperil them through violence. The international public is, perhaps, most familiar with the case of the Croatian town of Vukovar, in which the Serbs constituted only a minority, and which was taken by the YPA, assisted by Serb paramilitary terrorist groups, after months of bombardment and shelling. A similar example is the Bosnian town of Zvornik, with a Muslim majority, which

was also occupied by the Serbs. Unfortunately, there are many more places in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, more or less known to the international public, to which war refugees cannot return.

Individual refugees and displacees of this type could have been exposed (before leaving regions in war) to a greater level of immediate life peril, than their fellow refugees from the previous category. However, the pre-refugee experience of the latter was burdened by immeasurable and certainly painful feelings of fear, peril, intimidation. Fear of even the most devastating bomb or shell does not compare to fear of the knife, fear of people who wish to humiliate other people and drive them from their homes, and who are in a situation which enables them to do precisely that. Distinguishing this refugee sub-type from impelled refugees, as well as from expelled ones, is necessary also when discussing possibilities of return. It is by far more simple, although it requires great funds and self-sacrifice, to rebuild destroyed houses, than to restore lost faith in one's former neighbours and friends of the other nationality (ethnicity).

The second sub-type - "war refugees of the second degree" - is much more heterogeneous. It consists of military deserters and persons fleeing from conscription. The first deserters appeared, in this case from the former YPA, shortly before the military intervention of that army in Slovenia. They were heralds of the quick transformation of the YPA (which had even until then been dominated by Serb officers) into a militaristic instrument, which was to be used in stamping out the resistance of all the non-Serb peoples to the Serb model of "Yugoslavism", and in denying their drives to independence. Intervention in Slovenia, and especially the aggression against Croatia brought about a gradual dispersal of non-Serb officers and soldiers from the ranks of the former YPA. Actually, most of the soldiers and a good part of the officers, and even a part of the Serb soldiers and officers, were held in the YPA against their will. During its aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav army was finally transformed into a Serb Army, formally into the army of the Bosnian Serbs. To our knowledge, with the continuation of the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, relatively more and more Serb deserters (coming from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina), in comparison to the Croats and Muslims, have appeared abroad either as "war refugees" or through other (i)llegal channels. That can be seen as one of the indicators that, at least some of them could not accept the Serb war methods and goals as legitimate.

In later phases of the war in Croatia, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, deserters appeared from the military and paramilitary formations of all three "warring parties". Their reasons for deserting could be very diverse: fear of losing one's life (regardless of agreement or disagreement with the war goals of one's own side); a moral or religiously motivated aversion to the use of arms; disgust at seeing war crimes committed against civilian population.<sup>10</sup>

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Reports by International humanitarian and other organizations speak of war criminals among all the "warring parties", but they all agree that the "Serb side" was by far in the forefront concerning the

Draft-dodgers had by far an easier way of becoming refugees. This category included all those who did not want to fight in the war, regardless of whether they agreed or disagreed with the war goals of their side. Most common among them are members of non-Serb peoples who refused conscription in the YPA, and later forced mobilization into the Serb army. Here we are thinking primarily of Magyars, Croats and other national (ethnic) groups from Voivodina, of Kosovo Albanians, Sanjak Muslims, and of other peoples and minorities from Serbia and the Serb-held regions of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Naturally, in the same category we could place Serbs from Croatia who did not want to serve in the Croatian army and police, Croats in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina who refused conscription in the Muslim dominated Bosnian Army, and Bosnian Muslims in areas under control of the Croatian Defense Council who did not accept service in Bosnian Croat Army.

Finally, a relatively large and in fact special subgroup among refugees of this type is constituted by Serbs from Serbia (especially from Belgrade and other larger cities), and by Montenegrins. Namely, the present war is not being waged in any part of either Serbia or Montenegro. The fact that we can quite often meet this type - let us say of "secondary war refugees" - in various European countries, regardless of whether or not they have formal refugee status, indicates the deep involvement of the Serbian and Montenegrin regimes in the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are mostly young, well-educated people, with middle-class backgrounds, some of which managed to open in the host countries some form of legal or illegal business. In general, the status and return perspective of members of this subgroup is much better than that of members of the other subgroups which are classified in this type. They have not lost their homes and property, and after the calming of the war and possible amnesty for draft-dodgers, they will easily be able to return home.

A similar subgroup is made up of Croats who have fled from safe areas of Croatia, and who likewise have a place they can return to. The Croatian government, after the calming-down of the war in Croatia, published lists of places considered safe for return, and canceled official displaced person status for persons coming from such places. The German government likewise began to repatriate refugees to areas no longer considered as immediately threatened by war.

Deserters and draft-dodgers can become war refugees; however, a certain number of them has been arrested and sent either to the first battle lines, or detained in camps. With a lot of luck, some have finally managed to become refugees, which we shall consider as belonging to the sixth level.

Here we have to point out who cannot, in terms of such a typology, be considered, a war refugee. Simply and generally anyone who does not come from areas immediately affected by war. It is known that the present war has not affected all areas of the former Yugoslavia, but that, after a short period in

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scope and systematic method of its war crimes directed at "ethnic cleansing".

Slovenia, the war conflict moved to Croatia, and then to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, even after the individual states from the former Yugoslavia gained independence and international recognition, Western governments and international factors have continued to use the term "former Yugoslavia" in the context of the war, instead of precisely locating the events in one of the new states. In this way refugees are often labeled as "war refugees from the former Yugoslavia". That this is not only a formal question of terminology was shown recently (in spring 1994) when the German government attempted to return to Serbia (through Rumania) a large number of people (reports were given of 100,000 to 200,000), who had been living in Germany as "war refugees from the former Yugoslavia". The relative calming down of the war in Croatia brought about, on the other hand, the German decision to gradually repatriate refugees from Croatia, primarily those from areas they could return to safely.

In other words, we wish to say that, for example, Albanians from Kosovo, or Muslims from the Sanjak region in Serbia, in fact are not war refugees, and that they thus cannot be placed in the same framework as Croatian and Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugees. Quite a few of them we found living as "war refugees" (Kriegsfluchtlinge) in refugee camps (Heime) in Berlin. By this, however, we do not wish to place in doubt their status in the host country, since we are convinced that many among them are, in a genuine sense, involuntary or political migrants, with legitimate rights to asylum, in view of the fact that their minority (ethnic) and human rights have been denied, and they have been subjected to state and para-state terror in Milošević's Serbia. At any rate, there have been many reports on this by various agencies for human rights protection.

In fact, as early as the late 1980s Albanians from Kosovo were the first refugee groups from Yugoslavia to Germany, which naturally coincided with the strengthening of the Great Serb nationalistic movement, which began in Kosovo and with Milošević's rise to power in Serbia (1987). Shortly afterwards, the autonomy of two provinces, Kosovo and Voivodina, was revoked, although by the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 these were not only constitutive parts of Serbia, but also of the Yugoslav federation. In this way, Kosovo Albanians (80% of the population of that province) lost even the most basic minority and human rights. Even though persecution of Kosovo Albanians has been confirmed by international agencies, due to stricter regulations, today they find it difficult to attain asylum, and thus it was more easy for them, in the given context, to gain a non-conventional "war refugee" status. From the point of view of this typology they would mostly fit in with the third category, or in certain cases with the second one.

The problem of the Romany (Gypsies), some of whom we found living in Berlin camps as "war refugees from former Yugoslavia", is more complicated. Namely, the Romany lived and migrated practically over all of the former Yugoslavia. Part of their population had become sedentary, while part had remained "nomadic", so it is difficult to determine their domicile. Therefore, if they come from immediate war-affected areas, they can be considered war migrants, in the strictest sense of the term. It is unknown to us, however, whether or not the Romany, as an ethnic group, were persecuted either in war areas, or elsewhere in the former

Yugoslavia, as, for example, occurred during the Second World War. Nevertheless, some groups of Romany (from Serbia and Macedonia) also appeared among the first asylum seekers in Germany, at the beginning of the Yugoslav political crisis in the late 1980s. In legal-administrative procedures they could easily be written off as "bogus refugees". Yet, to their age-old tradition of being persecuted, in a certain sense they perhaps could be classified as anticipating refugees moved by the approach of future dramatic events.

## **V) Expellees**

This type of refugee (and displacee) has been literally expelled from home. Such people actually do not have the possibility to remain in their domiciles, without their lives being exposed to immediate danger. Before expulsion, they are subjected to various forms of maltreatment and humiliation. In border-line cases it is not easy to determine whether one is dealing with impelled refugees, or expelled ones. As a rule, but not always, the former appear in earlier phases of the refugee drama in a given area. They are still in a situation to decide for themselves whether to flee, or accept insecurity and attempt to stay. They later simply have to go, or else they are literally shoved into some lorry, bus or tractor trailer, generally in the middle of the night, and left in "no man's land". Some of our respondents from this group, on their way to refugee freedom, had to cross over dangerous mine fields.

Some such persons, before leaving, had to sign statements in which they "voluntarily" gave up their houses, flats, land and other possessions, to the benefit of the local Serb authorities. In Croatia this occurred in the so-called United Nations Protected Areas (UNPA), even after the arrival of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).<sup>11</sup>

## **VI) Ex-camp-inmates refugees/displacees**

The refugees (and displacees), who were previously detained in camps, prisons, forced brothels, and even in their own homes and domiciles (without freedom of movement, often with forced labour and daily humiliation) had the worst pre-refugee experience. We have gathered some recorded testimonies on this by some of our respondents. Among our respondents (mainly Croats and Bosniak-Muslims who were detained in the Serb concentration camps) there were also Bosniak-Muslims, ex-prisoners of Croat concentration camps and prisons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina, ex-prisoners of Muslim concentration camps and prisons.<sup>12</sup>

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That goes for refugees and displaced persons expelled from the Croatian town Ilok by the local Serb authorities, in which case we were able to gather relevant documentation.

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Reports of international humanitarian and other organizations mention that all the "warring parties" in Bosnia and Herzegovina organized some form of concentration camp, in which they violated

A special subgroup of this type is made up of raped women (cases of raped children and men are also known). Rape is, in general, one of the most traumatic experiences a person can have (not counting bodily injury), and many women afterwards have great difficulty in recovering the integrity of their personalities. Mass and systematic rape, mainly practised by soldiers of the Serb paramilitary formations, causes even worse bodily and psychic injury. Here, namely, we are not talking about individual excesses by uncontrollable soldiers, as occurs in every war. Many collected testimonies of the victims indicate that these were systematic rapes, in which more than one assailant violated the victim over a prolonged period of time, as a function of "ethnic cleansing". With this goal, rapes were conducted before children of the victims, their parents, friends, etc. Many cases are known where interned women (in camps, forced brothels, and their own homes) were forced into pregnancy, held for a certain time in order to prevent abortion, and then allowed to flee into refuge where they would give birth to the children of their tormentors. In this way the integrity of the victim is devastated (especially in situations where the traditional moral code of Muslim and other religious women is concerned), with the aim of destroying the entire victimized national (ethnic, religious) community.

## CONCLUSIONS

Our refugee typology is not based on political, or any other arbitrary criteria, although it did take into consideration the political context of the refugee drama in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and (furthermore) in other areas of the former Yugoslavia. The typology was based on sociological, or more precisely sociopsychological elements in pre-refugee experiences and in the post-refugee perspectives of individual groups of refugees (and displaced persons). These elements were then used to differentiate them. The political context, i.e. the main mover and cause of the refugee crisis, the generator of the refugee spiral, is linked to the reasons why some types were predominantly coincidental to one national (ethnic) determinant (the Serbs), while others with other national (ethnic) determinants (non-Serbs). However, representatives of all the three "warring parties" can be found in all the refugee (and displacee) types.

If a political criterion is to be applied in order to determine who is a refugee, as was the case after the Second World War, then one would first have to respond unequivocally to the question whether we are dealing with a civil war, or primarily with military aggression of one side against the other two. We might note that

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international conventions concerning prisoners of war (even by the very fact that a major part of the internees were civilians – the elderly, women, children). Nevertheless, all reports agree that in the number of concentration camps and in the scale of civilian detention (as well as in the mass rape of women), the Serb side in the war is by far in the forefront. Thus the Helsinki Watch, in its report *War Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (August 1992), made a list of Serb military commanders, including the president of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, from whom evidence was gathered with regard to war crimes, with the request that they be brought to trial before a competent tribunal (page 4-5).

discussions in the Third Committee of the U.N. confirmed the difference between "genuine refugees and displaced person", "war criminals, quislings and traitors", and "Germans transferred to Germany from other lands, or who have fled to other lands before the Allied troops". By this "typology" some 13 million ethnic Germans - Reichdeutscher and Volksdeutscher - could not receive refugee status, although a great majority of them were civilians, personally not responsible for the war, and finally its victims. This had practical consequences, since they did not have the right to international humanitarian aid.

We do not feel that the political decision at the time, which excluded entire groups of genuine refugees from formal refugee status, was socially fair or morally justified. Therefore, in the case of a definite political evaluation of the character of the present war, denoting it as the aggression of Serbia against two internationally recognized states, we would anyway basically uphold the same sociological typology of refugees. Furthermore, we feel that in this case our typology would be even more convincing.

Finally, two broader conclusions could be drawn upon the fabric of this typology. First, refugees are commonly composed of sociopsychologically heterogeneous groups and subgroups. Legal determination of someone's refugee status (whether of rigid or liberal provenance), which is unavoidable for an administrative purpose levelling a variety of individual cases into an equal formal position (refugee vs. non-refugee), may (and often does) give a profoundly wrong impression that they are basically and really in the same situation. Ignorance on the part of various actors dealing with refugees in understanding the real differences within a refugee population (and this typology points out some of them based on pre-refugee experiences and prospects of return) make the approach to the problem as well as finding the solutions more difficult. Furthermore, it may produce new injustice and further complication of inter-refugee relationships. Second, political and societal dynamics of a refugee crisis produces fluctuation within and among refugee groups or types. (differences based on sex and age)

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## TIPOVI IZBJEGLICA – HRVATSKA I BOSANSKO-HERCEGOVAČKA ISKUSTVA

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Neki su istraživači na području izbjegličkih studija upozorili da dihotozna podjela na izbjeglice i ne-izbjeglice, koja se koristi u pravnoj i upravnoj proceduri, nije dovoljna u sociološkoj analizi. Do istoga zaključka došao je i autor ovoga članka u svojim istraživanjima o izgledima povratka hrvatskih raseljenih osoba i izbjeglica te bosansko-hercegovačkih izbjeglica. Prvo istraživanje provedeno je na vrhuncu izbjegličke krize u Hrvatskoj, početkom 1992. godine. Anketirano je 726 ispitanika, hrvatskih raseljenika u Hrvatskoj i hrvatskih izbjeglica u Njemačkoj te snimljeno stotinjak njihovih svjedočanstava o razlozima izbjeglištva. Drugih stotinu svjedočanstava snimljeno je na kasetnim vrpcama tijekom novog ispitivanja hrvatskih i bosansko-hercegovačkih izbjeglica, provedenog od ljeta 1993. do proljeća 1994. u Hrvatskoj, Mađarskoj i Njemačkoj. Istodobno, anketirano je 1247 ispitanika iz obje skupine izbjeglica. Rezultati obaju istraživanja i osobito intervjuiranja naveli su autora da konstruira nekoliko tipologija izbjeglica koje se odnose na razloge izbjeglištva, reakciju ispitanika na izbjegličku situaciju i pitanje povratka. Ovdje je iznijeta tipologija ili kategorizacija izbjeglica i raseljenih osoba temeljena na razlikama u predizbjegličkim iskustvima. Pri tome je osnovni kriterij kategorizacije nekog izbjeglice u odgovarajući tip – stupanj opasnosti za tjelesni i psihički integritet kojima je prije izbjeglištva bio izložen. Na taj način došlo se do šest kategorija izbjeglica ili raseljenih osoba: I) anticipirajuće izbjeglice/raseljene osobe; II) poluizbjeglice/poluraseljenici; III) iznuđene izbjeglice/raseljenici; IV) ratne izbjeglice/raseljenici; V) prognanici; VI) logoraši-izbjeglice/raseljenici. Elaborirajući svoju tipologiju, autor je istaknuo dva opća zaključka. Prvo, izbjegličke skupine su obično sastavljene od sociopsihološki heterogenih podskupina s bitno različitim predizbjegličkim iskustvima. Drugo, politička i socijetalna dinamika neke izbjegličke krize proizvodi fluktuaciju izbjegličkih tipova unutar pojedinih podskupina i između njih.

## FLÜCHTLINGSTYPEN – KROATISCHE UND BOSNISCH-HERZEGOWINISCHE ERFAHRUNGEN

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Einige im Bereich der Flüchtlingsproblematik arbeitende Forscher haben darauf verwiesen, daß die dichotome Unterscheidung von Flüchtlingen und Nicht-Flüchtlingen, wie sie in rechtlichen und administrativen Prozeduren in Gebrauch ist, für eine soziologische Analyse unzulänglich ist. Der Verfasser dieser Arbeit ist zur selben Schlußfolgerung gekommen, und zwar aufgrund seiner Untersuchungen über die Aussichten auf Rückkehr ausgesiedelter Kroaten und bosnisch-herzegowinischer Flüchtlinge in ihre Heimatsorte. Die erste Untersuchung wurde Anfang 1992 durchgeführt, als die Flüchtlingskrise in Kroatien ihren Höhepunkt erreicht hatte. Es wurden 726 Personen – ausgesiedelte Kroaten in Kroatien sowie kroatische Flüchtlinge in Deutschland – befragt, ferner wurden etwa hundert Zeugen mit Berichten über die Gründe ihrer Flucht gefilmt. Weitere hundert Zeugenberichte wurden von Sommer 1993 bis Frühjahr 1994 im Rahmen neuer Befragungen von kroatischen und bosnisch-herzegowinischen Flüchtlingen in Kroatien, Ungarn und Deutschland auf Tonband aufgenommen. Im selben Zeitraum wurden 1247 Personen aus beiden Flüchtlingsgruppen befragt. Die Resultate beider Untersuchungen und insbesondere der Interviews veranlaßten den Autor zu einer Konstruierung verschiedener Flüchtlingstypologien im Hinblick auf Fluchtursachen, die Reaktion der Befragten auf ihre Flüchtlingssituation und die Frage der Rückkehr. Die hier dargelegte Typologie oder Kategorisierung von Flüchtlingen und Aussiedlern gründet sich auf die Erfahrungen, die der Flucht unmittelbar vorausgingen. Das Hauptkriterium für die Kategorisierung eines Flüchtlings ist hierbei die Stufe der Gefahr, die seiner körperlichen und psychischen Integrität unmittelbar vor der Fluchtergreifung drohten. Auf diese Weise wurden 6 Kategorien von Flüchtlingen oder Aussiedlern ermittelt: I) antizipative Flüchtlinge/Aussiedler, II) Halbflüchtlinge/-aussiedler, III) Flüchtlinge/Aussiedler, die zum Verlassen ihrer Heimatsorte gezwungen wurden, IV) Kriegsflüchtlinge/-aussiedler, V) Vertriebene, VI) internierte Flüchtlinge/Aussiedler. Bei der Ausarbeitung seiner Typologie unterstreicht der Autor zwei allgemeine Schlußfolgerungen. Erstens, Flüchtlingsgruppen sind zumeist aus soziopsychologisch heterogenen Untergruppen zusammengesetzt, deren Erfahrungen aus der Zeit unmittelbar vor der Flucht jeweils wesentlich verschieden sind. Zweitens, die politisch und die Sozietätsdynamik einer Flüchtlingskrise führt zur Fluktuierung der Flüchtlingstypen innerhalb der einzelnen Untergruppen sowie zwischen ihnen.