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COMING "HOME": IDENTITY AND PLACE IN POST WAR CROATIA[*]

The authors explore the concept of home and the problematics of "returning home" in the post-war context of multi-ethnic villages in eastern Croatia. The authors argue that ruptures in social identity are articulated in ideas and sentiments about "home". One of the primary questions asked is to what extent the ethno-nationalist discourses of the state and international media enter into the reconstitution of home and social identity. Home, for villagers attempting to reconstruct their lives after the war, is a shifting concept that is tied to the re-negotiation of the war-ruptured social identity space. At present, it seems to point more often to what is missing in home and community life than to what has been recovered. For many, displacement and dislocation have occurred not only at the physical level, but also at the cognitive level. Therefore, "going home" entails much more than returning to a place and addressing material needs. It requires a cognitive reorientation.

Keywords: displaced persons, return and repatriation, identity, ethnicity, home, Baranya, Croatian Danube Region

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Introduction

"Dom" in Croatian, like "home" in English, is a trope for the security of the quotidian, the certainty of belonging in time and space, that taken-for--granted realm of predictability and control. In her paper on the impact of war experiences on the shaping of identities, Maja Povrzanović notes that

> In peace, home is the site of our individuality, the space of the everyday, the place of intimacy, the symbol of safety (1997:153).

We would add that, in addition to a sense of individuality, or individual identity, home serves as an anchor for our connectedness to the people and places that give us our primary social identity. It is one of the very important contexts in which and through which we are recognizable to ourselves and others. The loss, therefore, of certain signifiers of home — — one's house, yard, community — the spatial and structural dimensions of home, especially due to forced expulsion, signifies a rupture in identity, both personal and social — the loss of baseline certainties.

Such ruptures have occurred in the hundreds of thousands across the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for more than a decade, first during and just after the 1991-1995 wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and more recently in Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Forcible uprooting and displacement due to war and other kinds of armed strife, as well as natural disasters, was a hallmark of the 20th century, affecting tens of millions — approximately 60 million at any given time across the globe. It has been one of the most formidable political and social issues of the century.

As the conflicts that drove people into refugee camps subside, return and repatriation issues are becoming increasingly important, particularly in light of rising anti-immigrant sentiments in host countries. What happens to people once they "go home"?[1] Return may mean that a primary loss, that of place, has been alleviated. But this is just one aspect of the problem. Isn't home more than just a place and the structures in which people reside? To what extent are people really able to "go home" after the traumas of war? The issues surrounding "going home" have multiple dimensions, from the personal and practical, to the ideological and political.[2] They are particularly critical to the stabilization of life in the

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[1] Here we do not deal specifically with the issue of forced repatriation.

[2] Maja Povrzanović (1998) points to the contrast between discourses of return and people's experiences of return; between the politically motivated ideology of return (driven by international and national agendas), and the reality for returning persons to the Croatian Danube region; between the mass mediated representations of return, and the psychological impact of returning.

new republics of the former Yugoslavia[3] as well as to a number of other countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.[4]

In the case of the former Yugoslavia, where the initial striving for a "Greater Serbia" resulted ultimately in a disintegration centering on the ideology of forging mono-ethnic states, another issue that has arisen has to do with the congruity, or lack thereof, between home and homeland. "Homeland" as a territory, may have been defined in any number of possible ways by people of the former Yugoslavia,[5] but in any case, it has come to be forcibly redefined in the nationalist discourses of the state. With the politicization of ethnicity, the ideal state came to be one in which ethnic and political borders would be, ideologically speaking, congruent (resulting in the "ethnic cleansing" campaigns of the 1990s).

The characterization in the international reportage of the events in the former Yugoslavia in similar terms, in other words, by picking up of the nationalist narratives of the state, rather than defining the conflicts as say of a political or economic nature, stimulated certain questions for us. To what extent in fact does the national and international discourse of nationalism and ethnic separatism enter into the lives of people at the local level, that is, at the level of communities, and in what ways? Or to put it another way, are local identities, particularly in the potentially more volatile contexts of multi-ethnic communities, being constituted or reconstituted around the ideas of nationalism and ethnic homogeneity and if so, how? Exploring the notion of home or *dom* and the loss of the *naïveté* about one's place in the world that is triggered by the loss of home, struck us as being a way to shed light on these questions.

In Croatia, as in many other parts of the former Yugoslavia, war brought about not only physical dislocation—occasioned by the redefinition of geographical space — but also cognitive dislocation — a disjuncture, in this context, between the concept of home in the past and in the present. For many, dislocation occurs at these different levels simultaneously. People found themselves being driven from home and homeland, or having to go to a "homeland" they had never known, or found that "home" had collapsed around them. Thus when we speak of

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[3] Pamela Ballinger is working on similar issues on the Istrian peninsula and Tone Bringa in central Bosnia.

[4] The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was involved in the repatriation of Mozambiquee refugees in the early 1990s — considered by the organization to be a success story. More problematic have been repatriation programs in Liberia and Cambodia. See UNHCR's url at http://www.unhcr.ch/pubs/ for synopses of these projects.

[5] Here we do not get into the question, but we merely note that homeland might for some have meant the multiethnic former Yugoslavia, for others a region of co-ethnics that may or may not have coincided with official territorial borders (i.e. Croats from Vojvodina who viewed their homeland of eastern Srijem as "Croatian historical territory" and part of the Croatian homeland — see Čapo Žmegač 1999). See also Stef Jansen's (1998) "Homeless at Home: Narrations of Post-Yugoslav Identities."

people "coming home" we refer not only to refugees and internally displaced persons who return to their domiciles, but to the whole redefinition of social identity implied by the loss and the subsequent redefinition of home space.

Territorial redefinition, in other words, has required emotional and cognitive redefinition. And this latter kind of redefinition may differ for different constituent groups. In this paper, we take a preliminary look at this redefinition for people in one beleaguered area, in the Baranja region in the eastern part of Croatia (the Croatian Danube Region), whose constituent groups are varied. They include Croat and Serb returnees who were refugees and displaced persons (who came home to find other occupants in their houses), Croats and Serbs who stayed through the war (sometimes accused by neighbors who left of pilfering and looting), and people who are in ethnically mixed marriages (whose loyalties were and continue to be questioned).

Regardless of the particular circumstances of individual experiences, long after the structures and dwellings have been rebuilt, the cognitive dislocation seems to endure. This is the primary focus of the paper. For "returnees" of every kind, the concepts of home and homeland have become deeply problematic.[6]

Background of the region

Baranja is a region that cuts across the Croatian-Hungarian border. About one-third of it lies in Croatia. It is a fertile area situated between the rivers Drava and Dunav (Danube), lying north of Osijek, the fourth largest city in Croatia. It is contiguous on the east also with Vojvodina, which lies in the Federated Republic of Yugoslavia. The ethno-historical picture of the region is quite complex and involves large population migrations into and out of the region at different periods since the 17th century.[7] Historically Baranja was multi-ethnic with people of German, Serbian, Croatian and Hungarian descent living across the region. Multi-ethnic marriages were not uncommon. A major reshuffling of ethnic demography occurred after World War II as well. However, we will restrict ourselves here to the more

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[6] Ger Duijzings (1996) raises similar questions in a study of Croatian refugees from Kosovo who resettled en mass in a town in Western Slavonia, Croatia in 1992-93. See also Jasna Čapo Žmegač (2000) on the adjustment of 200 Croats from Srijem who were forced out of their homes and immigrated to Gradina in northeastern Croatia; and Čapo Žmegač (1999, 2001) on cultural difference and ascribed ethnic identity of Croatian emigrants from Vojvodina.

[7] Baranja was a part of Vojvodina during the first Yugoslav state (1918-1941). It became a part of the republic of Croatia after WWII. Vojvodina became a part of the Republic of Serbia. See Ritig-Beljak (1996:175), who discusses this as well as outmigrations from neighboring Srijem of Croats and Germans after WWII, and in-migrations (enforced) of Serbs from poor parts of Yugoslavia. An earlier generation of one group of interviewees for this paper were a part of this in-migration from Dalmatinska Zagora.

immediate past, specifically since 1991 when Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia.

In Croatia, major population displacements occurred during two key periods of the war: In 1991 when Serbs took control of much of Slavonia and parts along the Dalmatian coast and formed the so-called Krajina[8] — — that is, approximately one third of Croatia; and in 1995 when Croatia successfully re-took the territory. Thus, first Croats fled Serb aggression in those parts of Croatia, including Baranja, and later, Serbs, many of whom had moved to the areas after the 1991 Serb campaigns, fled when Croats retook the territory. During these periods too, Croats from the other side of the Serbian border were moving to the large Croatian cities and Croatian held regions in Slavonia (Čapo Žmegač 2001, 2000, 1999; Duijzings 1996) while Serbs were leaving for Serb territory.

After the 1995 Croatian campaigns, peace agreements ended the war and treaties were signed in Dayton, Ohio and Erdut, Croatia. Eastern Slavonia, including Baranja, were to be peacefully handed back to Croatia under the administration of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). The signatories to the agreements, namely Serbian leaders and the Croatian government, had to agree to allow the return of ethnic minorities to their countries of origin. In other words, people had to be allowed to go home, to their pre-war domiciles.

Tens of thousands of people have returned to Croatia or have moved from one part to another. According to the 2001 Programme report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 89,400 IDPs (internally displaced persons) returned to their homes or home areas in 2000, of which 66,700 went to the Croatian Danube region.[9] Returning to other parts of the country from the Danube region were 22,700 people. The U.N. estimates that in the year 2000, some 35,000 people returned to Croatia from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Hercegovina.[10] The number of repatriates between the years 1997-1999 from the FRY to Croatia was 35,500.[11] Croatian state statistics indicate that as of March 2001, 76,482 people had returned to the Croatian Danube

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[8] "Krajina" in this context refers to *Srpska Autonomna Oblast Krajina*, Serbian Autonomous Area Krajina, the Serbian name for the occupied territories. This area was not of one piece, but comprised a crescent moon shaped area that stretched from the Adriatic Sea, near the Croatian city of Zadar, northward, including the cities of Benkovac, Knin, Petrinja, and Okučani, and curved along the northern border of Bosnia into the Slavonia region.

[9] The Croatian Danube Region consists of two counties: Osječko-Baranjska, the site of our research, and Vukovarsko-Srijemska.

[10] One third returned with U.N. assistance, while the rest were "spontaneous" returnees. See "Croatia in short" at the UNHCR url: http://www.unhcr.ch/fdrs/ga2001/.

[11] Table II.4 "Repatriation of refugees by origin and country/territory of asylum, 1997- -1999". Go to the "Statistics" page after linking to http://www.unhcr.ch/world/euro/seo/croatia.

Region. Of this total, 2,708 Serbs have returned to the Baranja region, which is now incorporated under Osječko-Baranjska county.[12] Croatian returnees to this region and those of other ethnicities numbered 31,396.

What then have people gone home to?

Talking to people

The following data is based on a pilot study conducted over a two-day period in the summer of 1999 during which the authors sought to sketch out the parameters of a future ethnographic project in the region. During a two-day visit, we met first with an activist based in Osijek who has been involved in community rebuilding efforts since the mid-1990s (see Mountcastle & Tot 2000). This individual provided important background information on the groups we would meet with and an historical perspective on the process of rebuilding being undertaken in the Baranja communities. Our contact was instrumental also in arranging our visits with members of three villages on the second day of our stay. For the purposes of confidentiality, we will refer to these as Village 1, 2, and 3 (V1, V2, V3).

Our interviewees comprised a unique population. Each was active in a grassroots non-governmental organization in their communities. Their involvement ranged from a few months to several years. These organizations are called "peace groups", operating under the umbrella of the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights (Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava) in Osijek. They function more as support and self-help groups that incorporate the Peace Center ideology of reconciliation and rebuilding of multi-ethnic communities and strengthening civil society. While these organizations receive support from foreign agencies, religious and social, they are run for and by local people. The groups are multi-ethnic in composition, of mixed gender, and all but one of the individuals we interviewed were adults 21 years or older. People's war experiences have ranged widely, including those who stayed and those who left during the war, and those who have served in the armies of opposite sides.

We met with people in groups in their respective communities: five members in V1, eight in V2, and three in V3. We engaged in a "focus group" style interview process. The participants' involvement in community activism was no doubt an important factor in their outlook and

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[12] Croatia reorganized into new municipal (*općine*) and county (*županije*) political units after the 1991 census. Population statistics for those new political units will be available upon the completion of the current census (which commenced in April 2001). In this new system of organization, the region is a geographically larger territory than existed under the previous system, which placed Baranja under the municipality of Beli Manastir. Total inhabitants under this earlier system numbered 54,265. Of these, 22,740 were Croats, 13,851 were Serbs, 8,956 were Hungarians, and 8,718 were Other. Statistics are from the *Državni zavod za statistiku — Zagreb* (State Institute of Statistics — Zagreb).

responses to our queries. Also, group dynamics inevitably impact the tenor and direction of a conversation, thereby potentially limiting the range of responses. The skewed sample, the small sample size, and other factors prevent us from generalizing these responses. On the other hand, we can assume a certain integrity to the data, given that group members knew each other and many had established a rapport and level of trust from working closely together over a period of months and even years. We believe that their responses were therefore candid. Furthermore, these individuals are accustomed to having outside visitors interacting with them and asking questions and given the level of the discussion, group members appeared to be forthright regarding many of their feelings, concerns and thoughts. One of the authors had met with members of each of these groups during a previous study one year prior and this provided a basis for seeing changes that had occurred in the ensuing year (Mountcastle & Tot 2000).[13]

We were comfortable with addressing the concept of "dom" directly, given that one of us (Danon) is a native speaker of the Croatian language and well familiar with its connotations, and there is a similar concept for English speakers in the term "home". We asked participants to discuss what "dom" means to them and what makes "dom". We did not raise the question of the role of ethnicity or nationality until near the end of the discussion.

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[13] Mountcastle found the transformation of the group in V1 quite remarkable. In one year, it had gone from its fledgling state as a newly recognized "peace group" to a thriving, dynamic group, with its own building and development projects. The personal transformation of some of its members is also noteworthy in terms of the effectiveness of the self-help aspects of these peace groups.

Home is... what you've lost

Ivana[14] led us through her yard, neatly trimmed in seasonal flowers, to an arbor shaded by vines winding on trellises that created a cool and comfortable alcove behind her house in V3. She wanted to show us the bread oven (*peć*) that had been recently built. It was for making the loaves that were characteristic of the region known as Dalmatinska Zagora, the place on the other side of the mountain range that runs along the Dalmatian coast, the place that Ivana called home.

The head of Josip Broz Tito embossed in a wood plaque hung silently above the oven.

Ivana pointed to another wall, to the long handled wooden spatula used to shift the baking bread loaf.

That bread spatula is the only thing that is left [of home],

she would explain to us later.

> Now I don't have a house anymore because all of my family had to go away. I don't have a place to go to, everything is burnt. That board for bread... is the only thing that is left.

The house, the yard, the lovely alcove there in the village, these were not home for Ivana, despite her more than 30 years of residency. Here, she said, she still feels like a new comer. Born in Dalmatinska Zagora, Serbian by ethnicity, she came to Baranja at the age of 16 to work. She met her husband-to-be, a Croat from Zagorje, married, and settled down in Baranja, raising a family. Her parents and sister remained in Dalmatinska Zagora until 1995, fleeing to Serbia when Croatia retook the territory, which had been occupied by Serbian forces since 1991. The small arbor was a shrine to a happier time, when "home" was just a day's journey away. "Home" for Ivana was in a sense reduced to the Dalmatian oven and spatula and head of Tito — vestiges of her identity. At the same time, these articles are repositories of social identity, representing an attempt to recover or retain the connection to an ideal or idealized home. Identity may be thus seen both as reduced and threatened, yet potentially recoverable through these objects.

Ivana's neighbor, Zoran, was born in V3, but he also considered Dalmatinska Zagora "home". His parents had moved to V3 in the 1940s as part of a government enforced labor migration of Serbs from the poorer regions of Yugoslavia. Zoran reminisced about childhood visits to his maternal grandmother's place in Dalmatinska Zagora. Like Ivana, he felt pulled there, called it home, despite living his entire life in V3.

About 10 miles away in V1, Gordana, appearing radiant and in command, dressed in her Sunday best and freshly coiffeured, talked about the big house that she and her husband had built, whose walls echoed

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[14] All names of interviewees provided here are fictitious.

because her children were no longer around. Gordana, a Croat, told us about receiving anonymous threatening phone calls during the war, about her Serb husband and sons. Even more recently, she said, she gets call from people asking her,

> 'Do you still live with a četnik?'[15] Some people at work don't say hello to me because I live with a "četnik" and accuse me of being among Serbs during Krajina. Those of us who stayed here are in a worse situation than the Serbs who left during the war.

Gordana's grown children went to Austria. She and her husband remained in the village throughout the war.

> My home was full of children and happiness, but unfortunately now I am happier when I'm out of my home. We ask, for whom did we build this home. This home is becoming like a heavy load.

The life she had envisioned, of living amidst her children and grandchildren in the extended families that were common to the area, was not to be.

> Home isn't to close [the door] and watch the walls,

said Gordana,

> Walls may be beautiful, but they are empty.

Home no longer offered the security and joys of family, but was a reminder, instead of their dissipation, of loss. The empty house was a continuous reminder of an irrecoverable future.

In 1991, Ivan, a Croat, and his Serbian wife fled their home in V2, became designated IDPs (internally diplaced persons) and went to live in a makeshift dwelling near Čepin. They returned home in 1997. A year and a half earlier, Ivan had been working on repairing his house. By 1999, much of that work had been accomplished, but he said:

> To build a home is not just to fix doors and windows. I will need 15 years to get where I was before.

The allusion to the rupture in social relations refers not only to the tensions between Croats and Serbs, but also to intra-ethnic tensions. As noted by another man in V2,

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[15] "Četnik" is an epithet referring to the Serbs during an earlier period of ethno--nationalism, who fought in common interest with the German and Italian fascists during the Second World War against the Partizans.

> Those who went to Osijek don't like those who stayed here. Those who
> were in the army don't like those who weren't. Those who benefitted
> from the war are not liked by others.

In V1, Josip, Gordana's Serbian husband, described home in terms of relationships across the community: Home is

> community, friends, neighbors, with whom to share happiness, work,
> etc. This home is torn now,

he said,

> It doesn't exist. Its pieces are spread all around. I am afraid it will never
> again be like it was.

Neighborliness, friendship and community have been replaced by suspicion, fear and anger. It is so even within some families.

> Before the war, there was much greater closeness in the family as well
> as in the community. When we would greet one another, we thought we
> were all sincere. Now we are distrustful of anybody who says anything,

described Ivan of V2.

Home is less about what you have, or have regained, than it is about what you have lost or what remains unresolved. In V2, interviewees first described home in terms of the house, the structure, and its furnishings. Recalling their actual return to their home, which had been occupied by another family, one couple described what they found that gave them delight: a piece of an old fence, a page from a children's book. But as the discussion developed, it became clear that their preoccupation with their own houses was also indicative of the shrinking of the concept of home for them. Home formerly extended across the whole village, but, as one woman said,

> People have pulled back. They are oriented more to their own houses
> than before.

Perhaps symbolic of this orientation is the fact that many people in V2 have left their gardens and yards unattended, something noted by another participant in the discussion. The wilderness, in V2, at least for that moment in time in the summer of 1999, began at the doorstep. If yards and gardens are extensions of domestic space that link inhabitants to the community space, then the symbolism of an unkept yard reflects the post--war de-linking and isolation of the domestic space from the, now broken, community space. A similar phenomenon of the spatial shrinking of the site of "home", is mentioned by Povrzanović (1997:157): One elderly man in Dubrovnik steadfastly refused to leave his armchair, despite the shells falling around his house.

> For this old man, his home — the space he stubbornly refused to abandon to the attackers — was reduced to a single armchair.

The shrinking of home space signifies the shrinking of identity space. This shrinking occurs in the context of a macro-narrative of the nation that attempts to link individuals to other (purported) like individuals across the territorially bounded national space (see Anderson 1991). It is a classic nation-building attempt to transcend local identities that might countermand the national one, yet it is strangely distorted as well — it violently disrupts identity and continuity.

The macro-narrative, that is the state discourse of ethnicity and nation did insinuate itself indirectly into the local narrative of home in one case. Josip of V1 stated:

> Home was much brighter before the war. Homeland and home were together. Now homeland and home are separate. I'm not accepted in my homeland. Before, there was never a need for national identification. All nationalities were around. Now it is very obvious that I am Serbian.

For Duško of V3,

> Home is here. But I may have to find home elsewhere. Without a job, and politics being as they are, I have but one choice. A man without a job and without prospects doesn't have a choice but to start thinking about something else.

He had been employed by the state as a veterinarian, but he had lost the job. Duško was referring to discriminatory practices that Serbs in Croatia faced during and after the war. The allusion to moving to Serbia reflects his feelings of disenfranchisement (not unfounded) in the place he calls home and his hopes (whether founded or not) that he would find a place receptive and accepting of him in the territory that has now been delineated as his "homeland". The disjunction between the home on which the emotions alight and the politically designated homeland is reflected in this man's dilemma. Just as the delineation of hyper-ethnicity is troubling for the retrieving of the former familiar sense of home, so the shifting boundaries of the homeland have made identification to place and territory problematic. For Josip, his Serbian nationality does not tie him to the geographical territory of Serbia. It alienates him from his home and homeland(s). In an odd transposition of the refugee and exile experience, it is not the individual who has been removed or expelled from the homeland, but the homeland (as territory and concept) that has been altered or dissolved.

Furthermore, as much as ethnicity might serve as a marker for group membership, it can also serve to destabilize the community, not only across ethnic boundaries, but within them. Interviewees of both ethnic groups were often more concerned about the negative sanctions from people of their own groups than from people of the other group. Membership in the

peace group made them vulnerable for that reason: it means that they are fraternizing with the "enemy".

"Home", once emblematic of all that was certain, stable and secure in everyday life, has lost that quality. Home has lost its mooring in taken-for--granted reality; it is compromised. We see that it is not a fixed, singular entity, but one that is in flux and comprises an array of linked features: house and furnishings, place, family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, community, security, sociality, conviviality, etc.

Reestablishing home involves finding a fastening point, but even after that happens, such as when you move back into your house, or repair it, many of the other features, now frayed and dangling, make a mockery of that hallowed idea. What comes to be emphasized in describing it is what is lacking. What is available, attainable, is underscored by its incompleteness and inadequacy. It pales compared to what it was before.[16] Home then is expressed in negative terms, and it is not expressed in terms of potentialities either because there are too many uncertainties. If futures are predicated on the past, and therefore on a certain predictability of how the future should unfold, then in the case of war, in the direct aftermath, there can be no imaginable future. War has ruptured the necessary temporal continuity. A man without a job, without prospects for a job, a woman without her children and the prospects of living in an extended family, people whose former friends and neighbors will not speak to them, or who make accusations, whose former colleagues turn away. Home is more than a place and more than the things.

Some further thoughts

In the utopian discourses of newly established ethno-nationalist states, the ideal of the homeland is made out to be a mono-ethnic entity. The myth (in the sense of fictitiousness) of this formulation is readily visible in any multi-ethnic community, such as those found in Baranja, or in any instance where we find non co-ethnics. At these local levels of reality, the myth (in the anthropological sense of a self-evident truth) of unity in ethnicity becomes strained. Not only are there sub-ethnic groups that put pressure on this myth (see Čapo Žmegač 1999), but interethnic unities (marriages, friendships, offspring), as well as intra-ethnic tensions (as alluded to by Baranja villagers). Clearly, the hyper-ethnicization that may serve a new state well in its attempt to create national identity has quite a different impact at the local level.

It is obvious that the redefinition of the state polity in ethno--nationalist terms has resulted in the disintegration of multi-ethnic villages. Less obvious perhaps, or at least worth making explicit, is the resulting

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[16] See Ritig-Beljak (1993), who uses the metaphor of the lunch (afternoon, main meal) to depict this loss. Also Duijzings (1996:211).

discontinuity of experience for people who called the place home. This discontinuity, in our terms in relation to the experience of "dom" or "home", is a disruption of a fundamental identity space. "Going home" cannot be satisfied in the case of communities such as those in Baranja, merely by return to place, nor even the repair of structures, economy, and other material indicators. Given the devastation to community that ethnic wars cause, it is unlikely that "home" will be resurrected from the ashes.

The discomfort that people experience, as normalcy (the absence of war) returns to their communities, the cognitive dissonance, the sense, perhaps of distanciation from their own history, concerns a loss of identity. It is important to understand the dimensions of this mental dislocation as a source of suffering, of personal and social instability. The trajectory of history that was assumed to exist before the war, is no more. There is no longer an unbroken trail from the past, through the present, to the future. The social rupture is itself defining. Returning *home* after war means a profound redefining of social identities.

Recovering may mean the clearing of a new social space in which home can be redefined. How can that space be made? What will home be or become? How will individuals come to relate to family members, families to communities, communities to states, and so on? How is each of these entities to be constituted?

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DOLAZAK "KUĆI": IDENTITET I PROSTOR U POSLIJERATNOJ HRVATSKOJ

SAŽETAK

U članku se istražuje koncepija doma u stanovnika triju višenacionalnih sela u Baranji u istočnoj Hrvatskoj. Donose se preliminarni nalazi pilot-istraživanja provedenog u ljeto 1999. godine. Autorice pokazuju kako gubitak određenih označitelja doma, kao što su nečija tuđa kuća, dvorište i zajednica, upućuje na prekide osobnog i društvenog identiteta, što se artikulira u ideje i sentimente "doma". Za mnoge se raseljavanje i dislociranje zbivalo ne samo na fizičkoj nego i na kognitivnoj razini. Stoga "ići kući" obuhvaća mnogo više od samoga povratka u određeno mjesto i usmjeravanja na materijalne potrebe. Ono zahtijeva kognitivnu reorijentaciju.

Jedno je od osnovnih pitanja do koje mjere etnonacionalistički diskursi i ideologija jednonacionalne države zadiru u rekonstituiranje doma i društvenog identiteta u višenacionalnim zajednicama. Ideal etnički homogene nacionalne države čini se da istodobno rezultira i biva odrazom diskontinuiteta iskustva i identiteta ljudi u takvim zajednicama. Za seljake koji nakon rata nastoje rekonstruirati svoje živote dom je mijenjajuća koncepcija povezana s ponovnim pregovaranjem oko ratom prekinutih prostora društvenog identiteta.

Ključne riječi: prognanici, povratak i repatrijacija, identitet, etnicitet, dom, Baranja, hrvatsko Podunavlje