MIGRANTS WITH A MANDATE FOR NATION-BUILDING: INTERNATIONAL AGENCY IN MULTI-ETHNIC KOSOVO

Mojca VAH[1]

COBISS 1.01

ABSTRACT

Migrants with a Mandate for Nation-Building: International Agency in Multi-Ethnic Kosovo[2]

The post-war reconstruction of Kosovo took the shape of a trusteeship-like international administration led by the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and partners. Large numbers of international staff were imported and entrusted with a mandate for nation-building according to the Western European civic-territorial model. Although this model has been perceived and promoted as an appropriate and desirable solution for multi-ethnic Kosovo, reconciliation between the ethnic communities, a prerequisite for the implementation of the proposed model, remains a serious challenge for the agents of UNMIK. A number of ambiguous and questionable solutions have been proposed, jeopardising the professional integrity of the international staff.

KEY WORDS: nation-building, migration, UNMIK, international community, Kosovo

IZVLEČEK

Migranti z mandatom za formiranje nacije. Mednarodna dejavnost na multietničnem ozemlju Kosova

Povojna rekonstrukcija Kosova se odvija pod okriljem mednarodne civilne uprave, na čelu katere je Misija Združenih narodov na Kosovu (UNMIK) s partnerji. Mednarodno osebje, ki se je v velikem številu naselilo na ozemlju Kosova, je dobilo mandat za izgradnjo nacije po vzoru zahodnoevropskega teritorialnega modela. Za implementacijo tega modela, ki je prepoznan in promoviran kot primerna in zaželena rešitev za multietnično strukturo kosovske družbe, je nujno potrebna zgladitev sporov med etničnimi skupnostmi, kar ostaja primarni izziv za akterje Misije ZN na Kosovu. Za dosego tega cilja so bile ponujene številne nejasne in vprašljive strategije, njihov neuspeh pa začenja spodkopavati profesionalno integriteto mednarodnega osebja.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: formiranje nacije, UNMIK, mednarodna skupnost, migracije, Kosovo

---

[1] Analytical and Theoretical Sociologist, Research Assistant; Institute for Slovenian Emigration Studies SRC SASA, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana, e-mail: mvah@zrc-sazu.si.

[2] The article was inspired by a month-long period of fieldwork in Kosovo, conducted as part of the target research programme "Science for Peace and Security 2006-2010", entitled *The Impact of Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Factors on Peace and Stability in the Western Balkans.*

Mojca Vah

INTRODUCTION

Peacekeepers, consultants and experts of all sorts are an abundant species in Kosovo. (KIPRED 2005)

Since the disintegration of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed, the area has become a magnet for international development workers, diplomats, researchers, journalists, and other privileged and high-skilled labour migrants fascinated by the character of Balkan societies. I became aware of the popularity of the area after being engaged in several conversations with international development workers in Prishtina. According to their narratives, employment in the development profession is recently most desirable in the countries of Western Balkans.[3] "Orient is passé, Western Balkans is in", I was accustomed to hearing several times during my stay in Kosovo. Indeed, the Balkans have a reputation of being chaotic, barbaric, primitive, uncivilised, cruel, untamed, even tribal on one hand (Todorova 1997; Green 2005) but also exotic, primal, unspoiled by capitalism, passionate, picturesque and romantic (Debeljak 2004) on the other. It provides a one-of-a-kind work and research opportunity for the international staff due its ambiguity, impulsive nature and stubborn posture. In addition, it is currently relatively stable and therefore provides a safe environment to conduct research, provide assistance to the locals in war-torn countries or contribute to its development and modernisation. What makes the countries of the Western Balkans even more intriguing and challenging is the undisputable fact that they are geographically a part of Europe, a supposedly exemplary model of civilisation and modernity,[4] a role model that should be followed and obeyed. And yet, as a Kosovo Albanian political analyst and journalist that I spoke with sarcastically put it, somehow the countries of the Balkans do not seem to understand and respect that, making the mission of Europeanisation of the Balkans increasingly difficult and thus endangering the peace and stability of the region.

The Balkans is creating mixed feelings of exciting uneasiness due to its illusive status as a fractal that fails to comply entirely with the modern invention of a Western European nation-state. Again, this makes it fascinating for international staff and professional public and offers a convenient case study on the implementation of nation-building according to the Western European civic model. It was Stane Južnič who said that nineteenth-century Europe was obsessed with the question of the nation-state and the obsession is still present in those parts of the world where nation-states are not firmly established (1993: 307). Similarly, Sarah Green argues that the Balkans might seem inherently chaotic and

---

[3] The countries of the Western Balkans include Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania.

[4] "At its simplest, modernity is a shorthand term for modern society or industrial civilisation. Portrayed in more detail, it is associated with (1) a certain set of attitudes towards the world, the idea of the world as open to transformation and human intervention; (2) a complex of economic institutions, especially industrial production and market economy; (3) a certain range of political institutions, including the nation-state and mass democracy." (Giddens and Pierson 1998: 94)

challenging to European commentators because of their inability to "classify this place according to the principles of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century modernist ways of thinking about things" (2005: 132). The post-war reconstruction of some former Yugoslavian countries seems a perfect opportunity to impose the preferred values and norms through agencies of reconstruction and development, Europeanise the area and promote the civic model of nation-building.

In the Western Balkans, ethnic mobilisation with nationalistic tendencies has been present ever since the wars in the nineties and, indeed, long before that. It should be noted that differences between nations and ethnicities were not a cause of the war, which was led largely for political and economic reasons, but were used as an ideational war resource. In an excellent article on the obstacles and perspectives of post-conflict peacebuilding in multicultural societies, Berit Bliesemann de Guevara argues that "in their function as identity generating symbolic resources, ethnicity or other cultural characteristics of differentiation are very important for the maintenance of warfare" (2004: 69). One can safely agree that this was indeed the case in the wars following the disintegration of Yugoslavia. However, the situation needs to be grasped as it presents itself to us in this specific period of time. Even if we are aware that the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia were not fought in the name of ethnicity or nationality, the fact remains that, *post partum*, ethnic and national differences have become a driving force in claims for independence and the creation of nation-states according to ethnic genealogy. The changing minorities and majorities in the Western Balkans and their discontents, seemingly irreconcilable differences between ethnic minority communities stemming from the wars, secessionist tendencies and irredentist movements all pose contemporary threats to the stability of the region. The large-scale involvement of the international community[5] to promote reconciliation has been noted in most post-Yugoslavian-war countries, with the recent focus on Kosovo. A new generation of peacekeeping has come to life there, entailing administration and governance over the territory according to the models promoted by the international community through a specially established United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

In the article I will argue that the new generation of peacekeeping in Kosovo involves a mission of nation-building according to western preferences. I will explore the measures taken by the international community to promote and implement the civic Western European nation-building model as a preferred solution for Kosovo. To achieve this, I will examine the role and activities of UNMIK and other pillars of international administration within the process of nation-building. Finally, I will offer a sociological account of the management of ethnic communities by UNMIK and PISG[6] to show compatibility with the promoted model.

---

[5] By the term international community in Kosovo I am referring to the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), European Union Mission in Kosovo (EUMIK), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and foreign diplomatic and liaison offices.

[6] PISG stands for Provisional Institutions of Self-Government that were set up in 2001. Provisional

Mojca Vah

FIRST COMES STATE THEN COMES NATION: APPLICATION OF THE CIVIC-TERRITORIAL MODEL OF NATION-BUILDING TO POST-WAR KOSOVO

From assimilation to multiculturalism

The modern European nation-state[7] was built according to two distinctive forms, concepts and understandings of the nation: ethnic and territorial or civic. In the case of the former, the nation-state was developed by transforming the ethnic ties of a group of settlers, sharing the same culture, into national ties. This model was used in Central and Eastern Europe, whereas the latter model was predominant in Western Europe, including France, Spain, England and the Netherlands. In contrast to the ethnic model, the civic model used territory as the starting point for establishing the nation-state. Ethnic groups, settled on the area that was to become a state, were joined through the unification of the economy, education, rights and through territorial centralisation. The state's core *ethnie* led this process due to its historical predominance and cultural-political domination, and it imposed its lifestyles, myths and symbols on the state and traditions of the entire population (Smith 1989).

Indeed, the creation of a modern, bureaucratic nation-state in Western Europe went hand in hand with the processes of assimilation, one of the most important principles for achieving the civic or republican organisation of states (Šabec 2006). The 'social contract' theorists, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, claimed that individuals submitted willingly to the state in return for the (economic) protection it provided, putting the ethnic component in the background. As Ksenija Šabec argues, it was economic gains and educational opportunities offered to the citizens that made them *willing* to become a part of the nation-state (ibid.). Indeed, the promise of social mobility is a strong factor of motivation and mobilisation, but as we have been constantly reminded throughout the history of humankind, ethnicity has always kept emerging and reasserting itself. Having this in mind, it becomes questionable whether the efforts of the western nation-building model to establish a nation-state that will supersede ethnicity can be successful in the war-torn countries of the former Yugoslavia. Has it even been successful in the countries of Western Europe? The ethnic nationalisms that the implementation of the model was supposed to suppress are far from being a thing of the past, as it is evident from their emergence in some Western European countries. In all fairness, the agenda the civic model proposes is clear and the results it anticipates are optimistically promising, but is it indeed a winning formula that can work everywhere?

The mechanisms of assimilation that the western model of nation-building had been using since the eighteenth century were replaced after the Second World War by

---

governmental institutions include the Assembly of Kosovo, the Government and the Office of the President of Kosovo (UNMIK Regulation No. 2001/9).

[7] The adopted and widely used term *nation-state* is misleading as it suggests that state is congruent with the nation, which is rarely the case.

the concept of multiculturalism.[8] Western European countries were convinced that the process of the creation of nation-states had been completed because the rural population had already been assimilated and the Paris Peace Conferences (1919–1920) confirmed the territorial divisions as desired by the Western European states (Šabec 2006). However, the independence movements that emerged after the infamous year of 1989 and the fall of communist regimes in the eastern parts of Europe presented a new challenge for Western European nation-states. The nationalistic claims of small nations for a nation-state of their own were regarded as in opposition to the modern and rational nation-building model in accordance with the Enlightenment movement. Especially the complex ethnic situation in the Balkans and secessionist claims by a number of nations within former Yugoslavia reinforced its reputation in Western Europe of being semideveloped and semicivilised (Todorova 1997) due to its inability or unwillingness to adopt the values of the modern (western) world and implement the civic-territorial model of nation-building. True, assimilation is no longer a politically correct tool to achieve the respective objective, and it seems that multiculturalism is the new preferred concept for European countries, including those of the Western Balkans. A case study of Kosovo will show the variety of measures taken by the international community to promote the civic nation-building model, including the use of peacekeeping operations as the necessary medium through which the international governance over the territory can be put into effect.

A new generation of peacekeeping with a mandate for nation-building: UNMIK & Co.[9]

The conflict in Kosovo did not receive much international attention during the 1990s despite Serbian repressive conduct against the Kosovar-Albanian population. Conflicts in other parts of the former republic of Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, occupied international society and the less violent conflict between the ethnic groups of Kosovo was more or less ignored. However, as the other conflicts in the rest of the former Yugoslavia came to an end and the oppression in Kosovo escalated to atrocities and forced expulsion of Albanian populations, international society could no longer watch in silence. Unable to obtain a UN mandate, NATO initiated an attack against Serbia in March 1999. As the air strikes approached the closing stages, it was evident that there was a pressing need

---

[8] While multiculturalism seems to be an exemplary model, it is in fact exclusive and unfavourable to individuals belonging to ethnic and national communities within nation-states. By granting them rights to preserve their ethnic and national identities, they are discouraged to assimilate or even integrate into the majority society, making their social mobility difficult. Again, the question is whether such concept of multiculturalism is a successful formula for avoiding the emergence of ethno-nationalist movements. Nevertheless, it is the model that is currently being implemented in Kosovo by the international community.

[9] The expression UNMIK & Co. (UNMIK and company) is frequently used by the international staff in Kosovo and refers to the UNMIK, OSCE, EU and UNHCR missions in Kosovo.

to reconstruct Kosovo as a democratic and multi-ethnic community in order to avoid future relapses into war and ethnic cleansing. The need to prevent future conflicts was obvious, but the question was how to ensure the democratic development envisaged and desired by international society. (Mosegaard Søbjerg 2006: 57)

After the NATO bombings in 1999, the war in Kosovo came to an end.[10] Prior to the war, Kosovo was a province of the former Yugoslavia, with its status upgraded to an autonomous federal entity in 1974. In the late eighties, Kosovo's autonomy was revoked by the Republic of Serbia and it remained under a repressive Serbian security regime until the intervention by NATO. Before and during the NATO air campaign (from 24 March to 10 June 1999) diplomatic efforts were made to create a UN-supported resolution that would allow an international presence in the province. The efforts resulted in the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which enabled the UN to take over full administration of Kosovo. In accordance with the resolution, the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established. The operation is divided into four pillars: Civil Administration (UNMIK), Institution Building (OSCE), Reconstruction and Economic Development (EU), and Police and Justice (under the direct leadership of the UN). Initially, one of the four pillars was humanitarian assistance led by UNHCR, but it was phased out in 2000 and replaced by the Police and Justice pillar.

UNMIK was established as "a peacekeeping mission to provide an interim administration for Kosovo, pending a political process and settlement in regards to the final status of Kosovo" (KIPRED 2005). The tasks that UNMIK has been entrusted with, however, are not the tasks usually covered by peacekeeping operations. First-generation peacekeeping, also referred to as traditional peacekeeping, was employed in the late 1940s and included operations such as the UN Truce Supervision Operation, the first blue helmets (the UN Emergency Force) in the Sinai in the mid 1950s and UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus in the mid 1960s. The doctrinal pillars of first-generation peacekeeping included consent, neutrality and the non-use of force, except in cases of self-defence. Their major advantage was conceptual clarity, but in terms of conflict resolution the operations were static (Kühne 2005). After the cold war the mandates of UN peacekeeping forces were no longer limited to the monitoring of ceasefires.

Emergency aid, ensuring basic public security, infrastructure and administration as well as the rule of law, repatriation of refugees, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of armed groups, preparing and conducting elections on local and national levels as well as economic reconstruction and other non-military issues were added to the list of tasks. (ibid.: 103)

This type of peacekeeping is referred to as the second generation and includes elements of peacebuilding. More UN involvement, however, meant more responsibilities

---

[10] For a discussion of the legitimacy of bombing and the right to sovereignty see e.g. Mosegaard Søbjerg 2006.

and risk-taking and it unfortunately resulted in an increased number of civilian casualties involved in peace operations. As was to be expected, the Security Council allowed the limited use of force for peace operations in the 1990s, which became known as third-generation peacekeeping.[11]

Although not yet regarded as such in the relevant literature or by the UN, I agree with Kühne that the UNMIK/KFOR operation differs from all three abovementioned generations of peacekeeping in one important aspect: international involvement. While the mission holds a mandate to perform all of the tasks of third-generation peacekeeping, it also holds a mandate to govern. Making a simple comparison, one can easily recognise similarities with trusteeships, although in the case of UNMIK the international community (and not individual states) is involved in administration. Mosegaard Søbjerg explains (2006: 60):

> Both within international law and international relations theory, there is continually a significant difference between peacekeeping and peacebuilding on the one hand and trusteeships on the other in terms of the amount of responsibility and authority placed with the UN. In a peacekeeping operation, the UN works with the existing government in a territory or a state, while the role of the UN in a trusteeship is to be the government.

As UNMIK & Co. was sent to Kosovo with a mandate to administer the entire territory, Kosovo became a *de facto* trusteeship. The responsibilities and tasks of the mission included: (1) carrying out basic civilian administration; (2) organising the establishment of democratic institutions; (3) supporting the reconstruction of infrastructure; (4) supporting provision of humanitarian aid; (5) maintaining law and order; (6) protecting and promoting human rights; (7) assuring the safe return of refugees; (8) promoting the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-government (KIPRED 2005; Mosegaard Søbjerg 2006). These officially and publically declared tasks and responsibilities reveal the agenda of nation-building. Implicitly all components have been put in place to carry out the project of the resocialisation of the Kosovar nation in the direction of implementing the civic nation-building model and adopting western values.

All eight identified tasks are inextricably linked with the efforts to achieve reconciliation between different ethnic groups settled in the Kosovo territory. This is the major and

---

[11] It is important to distinguish between different types of peace operations: peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. "While peacekeeping aims to provide an environment of stability to facilitate the processes of both reconstruction and progress … peacemaking is a diplomatic and political endeavour applied strategically to confrontation situations, through such undertakings as mediation and negotiation, in order to arrest the conflict or at least prevent it from escalating. Peacebuilding is the peaceful political and socio-economic reconstruction of a country." (Iribarnegaray 2002: 8) In second, third and fourth-generation peacekeeping, however, the three types became largely intertwined and are now frequently joined under the term peacekeeping operations. Examples of second-generation peacekeeping include UNPROFOR (UN Protection Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and UNAMIR (UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda). Typical examples of third-generation peacekeeping include IFOR (Implementation Force) and SFOR (Stabilisation Force) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

most important challenge for the international community, as the success of the mission and subsequent operations lies in its ability to provide a safe and stabile environment for the implementation of future agendas. Achieving reconciliation between the two main ethnic groups, Kosovo Albanians and Serbs, is also a necessary prerequisite to successful implementation of the civic nation-building model and therefore a top priority of UNMIK & Co. Let us take a closer look at what they are up against.

THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE: ACHIEVING POST-WAR RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES TO ENABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIVIC NATION-BUILDING MODEL

According to the OSCE estimate, the population of Kosovo came close to 2.4 million in 2000. The area is the most densely populated in the region, with 220 inhabitants per km². The growth rate is a staggering 1.3 per cent and half of the population is younger than twenty years of age. The majority ethnic group are Kosovo Albanians, comprising around 90 per cent of the population. The second largest ethnic community are Serbs with 5.3 per cent, followed by four other ethnic minority communities: RAE (Roma-Ashkali-Egyptians), Turks, Bosnians and Goranis. The last reliable, but now completely outdated census, was conducted in 1981, and therefore the numbers and percentages above are only an estimate. There was another census in 1991, but it was largely boycotted by Kosovo Albanians and is therefore not credible (PISG 2004).

The major problem that Kosovo is facing is a low rate of economic development. The economy, in fact, is barely existent and as a result the poverty rate in Kosovo is the highest in the region, with unemployment rate reaching 49 per cent in 2004 (PISG 2004). Another problem is the largely rural character of Kosovo:

> The basic dilemma of rural Kosovo is not new. In 1979, the World Bank wrote that poverty in Yugoslavia is "basically rural." While it held out hopes for employment growth in most of the less developed regions, it did not see much prospect of change in Kosovo: "The exception is Kosovo, which cannot, even under optimistic assumptions and even if the plan's growth targets are achieved, be expected to absorb the increments to its labour force." Since then, Kosovo's population has continued to grow rapidly, but neither the number of jobs nor the availability of agricultural land has kept pace. (ESI 2006: 1)

The traditional strategy for survival has been emigration of family members, especially to Western Europe, who sent home remittances. Since the conflict, the assistance received from family members in the Diaspora has constituted half of Kosovo families' budgets (PISG 2004). Currently, labour migration to EU member states has been restricted and therefore social stability is further endangered.[12]

---

[12] In 2006, European Stability Initiative (ESI) issued an excellent report on migration, families and the

Managing ethnic communities: some confusing propositions

The Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo, enacted through UNMIK Regulation 2001/9, outlines a comprehensive catalogue of human rights, prohibits discrimination and names the relevant international documents to be observed and ensured by the PISG as domestically applicable legislation[13] (KIPRED 2006). The Constitutional Framework does not refer to minorities, which is the commonly accepted terminology in international documents, but uses the term community to denote members of the same ethnic, religious or linguistic group. It is worth pointing out, however, that "the use of the term "community" instead of "minority" does not have any impact on obligations of the PISG to observe and ensure internationally recognised documents pertaining to "minorities"" (ibid.: 5). As already mentioned, no credible census has been conducted since 1981 and therefore no statistical data exists on any of the abovementioned communities living in Kosovo. There are, however, certain estimates of their numbers according to UNHCR and OSCE reports.

The Serb community is the largest ethnic minority community in Kosovo. As the Republic of Serbia does not recognise the UNMIK administration or PISG, parallel Serbian institutions operate in almost every Serbian enclave within Kosovo. "So far, parallelisms have been most salient in health and education (approved by UNMIK and paid by both UNMIK and often paid double by Belgrade structures) and courts (not approved by UNMIK but tacitly allowed to operate)." (KIPRED 2005) Other parallelisms include security structures and administrative structures related to property issues. Two reports on parallel structures have been issued so far by the OSCE mission in Kosovo, stating that in Kosovo-Serb inhabited areas parallel structures continue to answer directly to Belgrade, hence exerting its control over parts of Kosovo (2007).

Relations with other communities are significantly better than with Serbs, although Roma are also experiencing discriminatory treatment on many levels. The Roma have been joined by the Ashkali and Egyptians in a single ethnic grouping called the RAE community, due to the commonality of their problems.[14] They have been stigmatised

---

future of Kosovo. *Cutting the lifeline* is available at http://www.esiweb.org.

[13] The main documents in question are: The Universal Declaration on Human Rights; The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols; The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Protocols thereto; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; The Convention on the Rights of the Child; The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; and The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

[14] As noted by KIPRED, the use of the RAE formula denoting the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities as a single political grouping is a deviation from progressive guarantees of the Constitutional Framework (2006: 6): "In spite of probable noble motives aiming to amplify their voice by the creation of a larger grouping, the perceived attempt for the creation of a new identity has created serious identity and political troubles for these communities. As such, it goes against the basic right of members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to preserve and promote their individual

and kept away from well-paid jobs due to their historical discrimination resulting in low qualifications and due to prejudices. The major difference is that Ashkali and the Egyptians speak Albanian as their native language, are fairly well integrated into the Albanian community and have traditionally lived in Albanian neighbourhoods, whereas the Roma have preserved their own language and are living in separate dwellings. An additional factor for the resentment of the Albanian population towards the Roma is their alleged collaboration with the Milošević's regime during the war. Therefore, the Roma refugees that returned to Kosovo after the war were not welcome in predominantly Albanian regions, but ironically also not in Serbian enclaves.

The Turkish community is, on the contrary, very well-integrated, and their economic situation is good even compared to the Kosovo Albanians. They speak the Albanian language, have the same religious affiliation and have traditionally had good relations with the Kosovo Albanians. The Bosnians also have good relations with the majority community, mainly due to the common sense of victimhood as a result of the war and a shared religion. Divisions remain, however, and indirect discrimination has been reported several times, together with fear of using the Bosnian language in public. Another minority community are Goranis, who live almost exclusively in the hills of the most southern and one of the least developed municipalities. They are of Slavic origin, practice Muslim religion and are reportedly politically siding with the Serbs. Due to their geographic isolation, however, they are currently not facing any security threats (KIPRED 2005).

The first step towards the implementation of the civic nation-building model in Kosovo was and still is the promotion of the right to return "through a return planning strategy which emphasises a return to multiple geographic areas in an incremental, low-profile and orderly fashion" (KIPRED 2005: 24). Other tasks of UNMIK & Co. include addressing and managing problematic of ethnic diversity in fields that became UNHCR and OSCE focal points in preparing assessments of the situation of ethnic minorities: security and freedom of movement for minorities, access to justice, discrimination and access to essential services (education, employment, social services, health care), housing and property rights, and access to public, civil and political structures (UNHCR and OSCE 2003). Needless to say, the rules that were set and the measures demanded to be taken regarding each of those issues by far exceed the standards that most European countries have adopted (and implemented) for the protection of ethnic or national minorities. Due to limited space, I will not offer a detailed analysis of all the measures taken for establishing a peaceful multiethnic society in Kosovo. I will, however, offer a few examples to show that the international community has been trying to achieve reconciliation between ethnic communities with demanding and often confusing measures, in order to enforce its preferred nation-building model.

---

identity and to declare themselves as members of the same. Hence, the use of RAE formula may be seen as being in collision with the institutional right of every person to declare himself a member of any community."

Promoting ethnic minority overrepresentation in governmental institutions is one important example (KIPRED 2005, 2006):

> In elected bodies representation of minority communities is guaranteed by the Constitutional Framework. Apart from the seats that political entities of each community win in the proportional system, out of 120 seats, the Kosovo assembly allocates 20 additional seats for members of minority communities, according to the following distribution: 10 Serbs, 4 RAE, 3 Bosnians, 2 Turks, 1 Gorani. (…) We could think of no minorities in Europe that are overrepresented to this degree. (…) Minority communities enjoy guaranteed representation in the government too. According to the formula established by the Constitutional Framework, the Kosovo Government should have at least one minister representing the Serb community and one representing other communities.

There are two official languages in Kosovo: Albanian and Serbian. Other ethnic minority communities that constitute a substantial part of the population in a municipality, however, are enjoying special rights regarding language use too. According to the UNMIK Regulation,[15] meetings of the Municipal Assembly and its committees and public meetings are to be conducted in both the Albanian and Serbian languages. In municipalities where a community lives whose language is neither Albanian nor Serbian they are also to be translated, when necessary, into the language of that community. The same goes for official documents and official signs indicating or including the names of cities, towns, villages, roads, streets and other public places. Upon analysing the existing data, OSCE researchers realised, however, that there have been very few instances of RAE, Turkish or Bosnian communities putting forth specific requests for additional language usage in any form (OSCE 2006). All ethnic communities in Kosovo also have the right to education in their own language and pupils and students of most communities tend to exercise that right. In addition, they have the right to study the history and culture of their ethnic community with different curricula designed in Prishtina, Belgrade, Sarajevo or Ankara (KIPRED 2006)[16]. Another example is establishment of the Human Rights Cells in every ministry of PISG, with protection of ethnic minority rights being one of the priority tasks.[17]

While integration and multiculturalism are both simultaneously trying to be implemented in Kosovo, there is another concept that the international community has been

---

[15] UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 on Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo.

[16] In this regard, the situation of the RAE community is least favourable, as they have no mother country that can assist them in carrying out education. The available curriculum contains almost nothing about their history and culture (KIPRED 2006). Needless to say, there are significant problems in implementing the right to education in different languages across Kosovo. This, however, is not a subject of discussion in this paper. The objective is to provide examples of demands set by the international community that PISG needs to meet. For a more detailed discussion on minority language use in municipalities see OSCE 2006.

[17] See, for example, the PISG Report on Activities in the areas of anti-discrimination, anti-corruption, anti-trafficking in human beings and human rights (2007).

trying out: the process of decentralisation. Through the decentralisation process "the international community is trying to ensure that the rights of the Serb community will be constitutionally guaranteed and their competences will be significantly empowered in the municipalities where they constitute the majority" (KIPRED 2007). The process of decentralisation is primarily aimed at pacifying the Serbian community, and to a lesser degree other non-Albanian communities, and is perceived as such also by the Albanian public.[18]

> A substantial number of Kosovars consider the process of decentralisation as controversial and ethnically motivated. As an earlier study indicated 50-60 per cent of Kosovo Albanians find the following issues as "unacceptable": (a) increasing the powers of Serb-majority municipalities more than in other regions, and (b) allowing these municipalities to receive direct financial and other support from the government of Serbia. (KIPRED 2007: 7)

Fears have been expressed by some interest groups that the decentralisation process will endanger the territorial integrity of Kosovo and widen Belgrade's power over the Kosovo enclaves, "which will vanish because they will be unified" (Kurti in KIPRED 2007: 10). And although the international community has been promoting decentralisation as a process to bring Kosovo closer to becoming a multiethnic society, it is frequently argued that new municipalities are being formed along ethnic lines. Therefore, the ethnic component is actually being strengthened. There is another unwelcome consequence stemming from the decentralisation plan. As KIPRED argues (2007: 15):

> Once these municipalities are up and running, their sustainability will be put to the test. Henceforth we can safely predict that once the immediate threat that Serbs currently perceive is gone, hardship realities will kick in, and some Serbs will seek to be incorporated back into bigger municipalities. In the future, more and more services will depend on "own revenues", and those municipalities that do not have a solid tax-base will be unable to raise funds and will offer less services to their citizens.

CONCLUSION: SIMCITY KOSOVO EDITION

Let me conclude in the same manner than I started, by turning to the agents of nation-building in Kosovo. While conducting my research in Prishtina, I was strongly aware of the international presence, especially when walking up the main street in the centre of the town and meeting development workers and other international staff from various ethnic backgrounds. The service sector started developing according to their needs and some excellent restaurants and coffee shops have been blooming by a popular demand. In

---

[18] The Kosovo decentralisation plan was adopted by the Kosovo Government in March 2005.

downtown Prishtina, where most of the international organisations seek and buy premises, the prices of real estate have skyrocketed. The same is true for certain prestigious neighbourhood areas that are occupied almost exclusively by UN staff. UN jeeps can be seen everywhere around the town and the rest of the country, especially in the divided town of Mitrovica. The international community is setting the norms, imposing values, writing laws on every imaginable matter, Europeanising the rural areas and providing security through its imported military and civilian staff. It is moulding the vulnerable post-war territory of Kosovo according to the principles promoted by a supposedly successful civic nation-building model.

The similarity to the city-building computer simulation game SimCity is obvious. The players of the computer game can establish, shape, build and manage the territory while not being personally affected by the choices they make, which bears a strong resemblance to the UNMIK and KFOR staff, who are only temporarily residing in Kosovo. Moreover, their associated property, funds and assets are immune to any legal proceedings, and UNMIK has also been reluctant to accept the jurisdiction of the Office of the Ombudsperson. KFOR, on the other hand, falls entirely beyond its jurisdiction. As argued by KIPRED: "Considerable progress has been made in clarifying applicable international standards, however, protection from legal proceedings of KFOR and UNMIK officials sets a bad example in the eyes of Kosovo authorities and citizens at large." (2006: 5)

Nevertheless, regardless of sharp criticisms of UNMIK administration, especially its confusion about the role it should play in Kosovo, I am reluctant to stigmatise the mission merely as a failing, illegal, neo-colonial intervention of the international community. It is a popular opinion in Kosovo that peace and progress could not be imagined without an international presence and therefore a welcome is still extended to UNMIK & Co. by the locals. The initial euphoric reaction that accompanied their arrival, however, has after a few years been replaced by a growing indifference and a few isolated oppositions.[19] The promoted transition of Kosovo to a market economy might not be a preferred solution for many anti-globalists but the fact remains that a successful transition is Kosovo's way out of the deadlock situation. Being an isolated island in the middle of global capital(ist) flows cannot be considered a preferred solution.

In the article I argued that the post-war territory of Kosovo has been the site of fourth-generation peacekeeping that includes a mandate to govern and conduct nation-building. UNMIK was established as an administrative body and was joined by other UN agencies, the EU, OSCE and KFOR to promote reconciliation between several ethnic communities settled in the territory, especially Serbs and Kosovo Albanians, in order to provide a safe ground for the further reconstruction of Kosovo. To achieve these goals, international staff was imported to the territory of Kosovo, where they play the role of nation-building agents in trusteeship-like governance. The model of nation-building chosen by the international

---

[19] The most influential is a pro-independence movement led by Albin Kurti. Kurti is an activist and founder of the Kosovo Albanian organisation called Vetëvendosje (Self-Determination), whose slogan *No negotiation* can be seen written on the walls throughout Kosovo. Kurti is a strong critic of UNMIK administration. He is currently in home arrest, facing charges for a call to resistance.

community has been the Western European civic type, perceived and promoted as successful and appropriate. However, due to irreconcilable differences stemming from the war, UNMIK has encountered a number of problems on the way to achieving its goals, which it tried to resolve through the employment of more or less successful measures. It is argued that the measures PISG was required to implement far exceed the measures being taken by the existing EU member states to ensure the protection and equality of ethnic minority communities within their borders. Some examples are provided to prove this point. Finally, it is argued that the problems encountered by the international community in implementing preferred models in Kosovo often reflect an inability to provide clear and unambiguous solutions. While the task of promoting the integration of ethnic minority communities into the majority society has been in full course, a new proposition was simultaneously being developed that promotes the implementation of processes of decentralisation and the creation of new municipalities, mostly along ethnic lines. Unfortunately, due to weak stability of the region caused by the recent independence of Kosovo, such confusing solutions are a luxury that the international community can no longer afford.

REFERENCES

Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit (2004). Obstacles and Perspectives of Post-Conflict Peace-Building in Multicultural Societies – a View from Peace and Conflict Studies. *Perspectives of Multiculturalism: Western and Transitional Countries* (ed. Milan Mesić). Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučičišta: Hrvatsko povjerenstvo za UNESCO, 67–83.

Debeljak, Aleš (2004). *Evropa brez Evropejcev*. Ljubljana: Sophia.

ESI (2006). Cutting the lifeline: Migration, Families and the Future of Kosovo, http://www.esiweb.org (25. 6. 2007).

Giddens, Anthony and Pierson, Christopher (1998). *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: Making Sense of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.

Green, Sarah F. (2005). *Notes from the Balkans. Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian border*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Iribarnegaray, Deanna (2002). Peacekeeping's New Partnerships, http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/docs/peacekeeping.pdf (12. 1. 2008).

Južnič, Stane (1993). *Identiteta*. Ljubljana: FDV.

KIPRED (2005). *Administration and Governance in Kosovo. Lessons learned and lessons to be learned*. Prishtina: KIPRED.

KIPRED (2006). *Integration of Minority Communities in the Post Status Kosovo*. Prishtina: KIPRED.

KIPRED (2007). *Ethnic Centralisation and the Perils of Confusing Solutions*. Prishtina: KIPRED.

Kühne, Winrich (2005). Peace Operations and Governance: Lessons learned and perspec-

tives. *Peace Operations after 11 September 2001* (ed. Thierry Tardy). London, New York: F. Cass.

Mosegaard Søysberg, Lene (2006). The Kosovo Experiment: Peacebuilding through an international trusteeship. *Kosovo between War and Peace. Nationalism, Peacebuilding and International Trusteeship* (eds. Tonny Brems Knudsen and Carsten Bagge Laustsen). London, New York: Routledge, 57–75.

OSCE and UNHCR (2003). Tenth Assessment of the situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo, http://www.unmikonline.org/press/reports/MinorityAssessmentReport10ENG.pdf (15. 1. 2008).

OSCE (2006). Minority Language Use in Municipalities of Kosovo*,* http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2006/12/22607_en.pdf (18. 1. 2008).

OSCE (2007). Parallel Structures in Kosovo 2006-2007, http://www.osce.org/documents/mik/2007/04/23925_en.pdf (15. 1. 2008).

PISG, Institute for Spatial Planning (2004). Kosovo Profile, http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/bridges/kosovo/8/2+.pdf (12. 3. 2008).

PISG, Office on Good Governance (2007). Report on Activities in the Areas of Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Corruption, Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings and Human Rights, No.7. Prishtina: PISG.

Smith, Anthony (1989). *Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford, New York: B. Blackwell.

Šabec, Ksenija (2006). *Homo europeus: nacionalni stereotipi in kulturna identiteta Evrope*. Ljubljana: FDV.

Todorova, Maria (1997). *Imagining the Balkans*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

UNMIK (2001): On a Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo,

UNMIK/REG/2001/9, http://www.unmikonline.org/regulations/2001/reg09-01.htm (15. 1. 2008).

UNMIK (2000): On Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo, UNMIK/REG/2000/45, http://www.unmikonline.org/regulations/2000/reg45-00.htm (15.1.2008).

POVZETEK

MIGRANTI Z MANDATOM ZA FORMIRANJE NACIJE. MEDNARODNA DEJAVNOST NA MULTIETNIČNEM OZEMLJU KOSOVA

Mojca Vah

Avtorica v članku zagovarja tezo, da je povojno ozemlje Kosova prizorišče implementacije dejavnosti nove generacije operacij za ohranjanje miru, ki vključuje (civilno) upravljanje teritorija in mandat za formiranje nacije. Administrativno telo, ki ga je ustanovila mednarodna skupnost in kateremu je bila ta naloga zaupana, je Misija Združenih narodov na Kosovu (UNMIK), ki nalogo opravlja skupaj z EU, OVSE in misijo KFOR. Ena izmed primarnih agend omenjenih organizacij ostaja pomiritev etničnih skupnosti, predvsem kosovskih Albancev in Srbov, za zagotovitev varnosti in nadaljnjo rekonstrukcijo Kosova. V ta namen se je na Kosovo priselilo veliko število mednarodnega osebja, ki sodeluje pri formiranju nacije po vzoru zahodnoevropskega teritorialnega modela, promoviranega kot uspešnega in primernega. Zaradi konfliktnih odnosov med etničnima skupnostima, ki so posledica vojne v devetdesetih letih, se mednarodno osebje spopada s številnimi težavami pri implementaciji želenega modela formiranja nacije. Posledično so zato predlagane nejasne, slabo učinkovite, celo nasprotujoče si strategije in ukrepi za dosego zastavljenega cilja. Avtorica ugotavlja, da je bila integracija etničnih manjšinskih skupnosti v večinsko kosovsko albansko družbo sprejeta kot primarna strategija, hkrati pa poteka implementacija decentralizacije in oblikovanje novih občin, večinoma po etničnem ključu.