



CONCILIATION



International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation

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IIMHC Mission Statement:

The IIMHC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-governmental organization based in Brookline, Massachusetts, USA, founded in 2001. We convene skilled diplomats, politicians, religious leaders, academicians, practitioners and new talents to work on the most serious problems of our time, including abiding hatreds and their enactments in mass violence. At the IIMHC, we believe that by bringing together opposing parties to face their past with the help of skilled mediators, we can curtail the growing incidence of violent ethnic and religious conflicts in the world. We believe that memories of past grievances, indignities, and pain all contribute to these feelings of hatred and indifference, and enduring peace can only be possible by first addressing these issues and not only pecuniary interests. We act as mediators and facilitators of dialogue; as advocates for historical conciliation and awareness; and as trainers of local people who can work on the problems of their region and country. We are running or have active partners in ten projects on three continents.

The International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation (IIMHC) is unique in that it focuses on the role of history in the resolution of political conflict. Most organizations concerned with conflict resolution and mediation shy away from questions of historical acknowledgement, fearing that such issues are too sensitive or too explosive, focusing instead on narrowly tailored local interventions linked to interests. Unlike this approach, the mediation we promote combines traditional methods of problem solving with a "Narrative Model" that elucidates and clarifies the historical narratives of pain, fear, and the needs and the hopes of the parties, individually and jointly. Residual enmity and hatred are corrosive forces, for individuals, groups, communities, and nations. Resolutions that focus only on financial and criminal culpability, on territory and compensation, often are short-lived and can even plant the seeds of future violence.

Photos on the cover:

Background: A Hindu temple, mosque, and a synagogue stand side by side in Cochin, India for centuries. Their natural symbiosis is a source of inspiration and hope.

Collage (left to right, clockwise: Students at DC School of Management and Technology in Kerala partake in role play exercises; Korean Comfort Women – sex slaves during World War II – at a weekly protest outside the Japanese Embassy in Seoul; IIMHC President and fellows at a consultation with a Naga official in Nagaland, India; Israeli Jews and Arabs in Yaad and Mi'ar discuss land claims, historical grievances, and prospect of a shared future.

Disclaimer: Articles written for this newsletter represent the views of their authors, not necessarily of the Institute.



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Boston, March 2006

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Letter From the President

I am happy to share with you this first copy of our newsletter in continuation of our efforts to bring our Board members and friends along with us in all of our endeavors. You will immediately note that unlike the occasional letters that I addressed to you since our founding, this letter includes several other voices sharing experiences and reflections. This marks an important moment in our history and I am delighted to celebrate it with you.



It is only a bit more than a year ago that the International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation introduced its Fellows program. The idea, as approved by the Board in 2004 was to begin to train talented young people in the Institute's special approaches to mediation and peacemaking. This unique "post-Doctoral" program would involve on the job training for its fellows, not only in the substantive work, but also in the day-to-day running of a local NGO with an ever-widening outreach to some of the worlds most disturbing and dangerous conflicts. While we anticipated that this approach would lead to a different type of training than that offered by schools of public policy, diplomacy, and international affairs and the like, what we could not foresee is that recruiting the talented and enthusiastic people that we were fortunate to find would lead to a wholly different organization. This newsletter that you are about to read is ample evidence of the new insights and energy that run the new organization that we are becoming.

Our first full-time Fellows were David Baharvar, JD from Harvard Law School and Dasha Kusa, political science graduate from the Comenius University in Bratislava who is about to finish a second doctorate at Boston University. These two Fellows contributed so significantly to every aspect of our work and the manner in which we carry out that work. They are joined by our other Fellows, including Nir Eisikovits, JD and PhD, Brigitt Keller, JD, Jina Moore who is completing advanced degrees in both journalism and international affairs at Columbia, and Mary Moorman, JD who is completing her Doctorate in Theology at Yale Divinity School, and Adam Saltsman, our man in Cambodia, all of whom enable us to expand our commitments and improve the quality of our services, in facilitating our approaches to peacemaking, advocating for those approaches, and training the people who can undertake this work, now in nearly ten countries and expanding.

They work on a day-to-day basis with Tudor Goldsmith, our Director of Coordination in enabling us to use our website, not only to promote our work, but also to educate other professionals in our techniques. They do the basic research on funding sources that support our activities, and they develop material, such as our Annual Report that enable us, with elegance and precision, to tell of our activities at a small fraction of the cost that organizations most often spend in developing such tools. And the particularly intense involvement of two of our Board members, Dinah PoKempner and Claire Gaudiani, provides our Fellows a quality of supportive and knowledgeable supervision and guidance that they would find nowhere else.

With these Fellows we have created a critical mass of thinkers and doers, that brings together theory and praxis, teaching others and teaching ones self. They join the Board, not only as another set of stakeholders, but as the cadre of professionals that will promote our work, both within the IIMHC and in other organizations that are doing similar work. The organization, the passionate concern, the quality of work related to these Fellows has been of sufficient interest that busy leaders of the foundation world have made site visits, coming to observe us, in person.

This first volume, of what we hope to be a more than occasional newsletter, is a product of this wonderful type of organization. It is addressed to you with an invitation to join us with our work in anyway that you can. We want to take you, not only behind the scenes of complicated and well-executed interventions, but into the discussion that leads us to do things in one-way and not in another; that encourages us to undertake one project rather than another. We look forward to your comments.

As always,

Hillel.

IIMHC Projects

Current Projects:

India: Helping to Save the World's Largest Democracy

By Dasha Kusá, IIMHC Fellow

India is undoubtedly among the most progressive, fastest developing countries in the world at the moment. It is also one of the few developing countries with a long democratic tradition. Unfortunately, India is also ridden with inter-communal violence. Riots and clashes between Muslims, Hindus, and others often reach alarming levels of bloodshed. In 2002 over 3,000 people died in Gujarat. This year we have witnessed bomb blasts in New Delhi and in Varanasi (see Rohit Gupta's article in our [News Corner](#)). The Institute has become engaged in projects that seek to study the causes of violence, countervailing forces to it, as well as strengthen the people and activities that successfully stop the riots that weaken India's development and democracy. We design programs in cooperation with Indian non-profits to prevent communal, ethnic and religious animosity and foster peace.

DC School of Management and Technology in Kerala



Business schools produce highly skilled professionals in the area of management, technology, or public relations. These professionals, aside from the business side of their professions, also have a prime access to shaping relations at work places, influencing communities and societies. They can wield significant influence on political and community leaders, as well as on the grassroots members of the community they work in. The Institute therefore has embarked on a project that seeks to train future business leaders in skills that promote ethnic, religious, and communal tolerance and harmony.

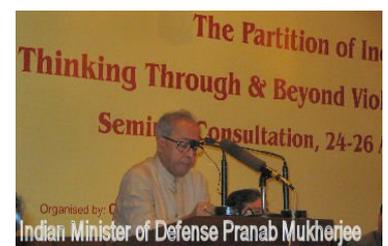
In August 2005, we have visited the DC School of Management and Technology (DCSMAT) for the third time. This visit was preceded by long preparations and work with the school's faculty and students. Our work in Kerala focuses mostly on the student group Shanti, which we helped to establish in February 2005. This is a student-run organization, which seeks to explore the reasons and conditions of situations where communal violence did not take place, even though it easily could have. We have trained 47 students in a four day long intensive workshop (for details, please see David Baharvar's *IIMHC Trainings: Personal as Political* below). Students that undertook the training in mediation, communication skills, and historical conciliation are currently preparing for their first field trips into cities in Kerala, where they will be working with local non-governmental organizations, universities, institutes, and authorities.

This March, Institute's President Hillel Levine, and our Indian partner Dr. Andreas D'Souza, Director of the Henry Martin Institute in Hyderabad have visited another business school: the Indian School of Business (ISB). This university is among the most prominent business schools of India, so much so, that President Bush has stopped at the school during his recent visit to India. Our Institute hopes to develop programs with ISB that will involve training and community engagement to prevent conflict and foster harmonious inter-communal relations in businesses and society.

Partition of India Revisited

Anniversaries often spur new incidents of violence and tensions in India. Whether they are religious holidays, pilgrimages, or markings of important political events, there tend to be renewed clashes between the Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and others. Historical conciliation, the approach that our Institute promotes, seeks to reconcile diverging historical narratives between different groups of people and use anniversaries as opportunities for greater understanding and communal healing.

We have partnered with the Jadavpur University's Centre for Refugee Studies (CRS) in Kolkata and several other Indian non-profits. Together we developed the idea of a colloquium that would bring together political leaders, journalists, grassroots activists, artists and academics on the topic of the legacy of the Partition of India and Pakistan. The Colloquium has received wide coverage and attention. Among the present leaders were the Indian Minister of Defense Pranab Mukherjee, and West Bengal's



Governer Gopal Gandhi. We are continuing to convene non-governmental organizations in order to develop further programs of peace education, art exhibits, oral history documentaries, research, and other activities, that aim to culminate in August 2007, which will mark the 60th anniversary of the Partition. We are also advising representatives of the Indian Government on how to use commemoration of the Partition to stop violence

Brokering Peace in Nagaland

The Northeast of India has a history of violent insurgency against the Indian Government. This dates to 1947, when these territories were handed over under India's administration. Nagaland is among the states that engaged in over five decades long armed struggle, with the final goal of establishing an independent state of Nagaland. In 2001, Naga leaders have agreed, after a long time, to sit with the representatives of the Indian Government at a roundtable and launch long series of talks that will determine the future form of association of Nagaland with India. The Institute consulted for both sides involved in negotiations on several occasions. We are providing advice to all sides of the conflict on how to foster economic development as an integral part of peacemaking. We also have visited Nagaland in August 2005 to meet with a number of non-governmental organizations, young activists and church leaders as well as to lead a mediation training for a group of young leaders who are involved in community work and peace movement (for details see the article immediately below).

IIMHC Trainings: Personal as Political

By David Baharvar, IIMHC Fellow

In August 2005, three Fellows and the Institute's President led a three-day training in Nagaland with about 20 young Naga leaders. These were 20-30 something activists, founders of newspapers, missionaries, scholars, and they all had in common a desire to make a difference with their lives in the future of Nagaland and to reduce the inter-tribal and interstate violence of that region. We also held two trainings in southern India, of two days each, for graduate students interested in peace-building, at the DC School of Management.

Preparing to lead these trainings is a huge learning experience for our Fellows. Among the role plays we carefully researched and drafted for our India trainings were:

- A mediation between Muslim and Hindu community members in Ayodhya, India, about coexistence in the wake of the burning of the Babri Masjid mosque a decade earlier, the debate over the history of the site and the "mob killings" on both sides after the burning.
- A mediation between Christian seminary students in southern India and Hindu autorickshaw drivers over an incident involving suspicions of religious proselytizing, labor organizing, and religious discrimination.
- A mediation between members of an Israeli Arab community evacuated from their homes, and the Israeli Jewish community living and expanding on land previously inhabited by the Israeli Arabs.
- A negotiation between the foreign ministers of Japan and China over issues of history as well as more immediate pecuniary interests and political issues such as UN status.

Like other international peace-oriented organizations, our trainings have the ultimate goal of helping young leaders, identified by our local partners to avoid violence that stems from ethnic or religious hatred and division. But what is different about our trainings is the focus on participants' personal connections to history-based narratives, on leadership, and on the ability of individuals to squarely face their history and themselves and draw something useful from it. In our trainings we create a space and encourage participants to first identify, then approach the narratives of ethnic or religious conflict that have been passed on to them as individuals from family, neighbors, teachers, politicians, etc. in a new way. We emphasize the power of the individual to recast conflict-saturated stories and memories in a light that draws out the capacity of these stories to serve as the very basis for peace, for a sense of shared history rather than a basis for division.



How do we accomplish this? We first get to know participants and introduce them to our method of casual, personal, no "right or wrong," group learning, while giving them a crash course on basic dispute resolution concepts that have become popularized in business, law, and political science. We use fishbowl exercises and open, circular group discussion to cover topics such as active listening, the components of identity, positions versus interests, prioritizing interests, and mediation versus adjudication. But where that

is the end of most “conflict resolution” trainings delivered by a host of other international NGOs, for the IIMHC that is just the beginning. We then spend most of our intense trainings discussing more personal issues by case studies where we have participants step into the shoes of parties to conflict – some in far off regions of the world, some very close to home – where the contours of good and evil are murkier, multifaceted, complicated, and, frankly, more realistic than the role play scenarios offered by other organizations. Rather than avoid confronting divisive, emotional, “hot button” issues of history, identity, and memory, we delve right into this danger zone. To be sure, many participants get quite emotional during our role play exercises. Some get angry at us. They insist that we have left out key facts from the history. They are uncomfortable role playing a member of a group whose perspective they have never had to consider in such depth, much less advocate. The exercises are designed to draw out the personal feelings that go along with political issues of conflict. It is these feelings around which any enduring – not just “functional” or “interest-based” – peace must be centered. Our trainees, who examine their fear and pain can better understand and manage hatreds based on their experiences but also conveyed to them by parents and teachers, become effective peacemakers.

Then, if participants are ready, we take it one step further toward the personal with our own version of the “role reversal” exercise, where participants play someone in their own life with whom they have felt or experienced ethnic or religious divisiveness. We have had excellent and amazing results in using this exercise thus far, and continue to develop exercises to make the personal political and to make a lasting impact on people. Our trainings serve as a laboratory for research on new methods to make such an impact. We are planning to do an interactive seminar/workshop with mediation and historical memory professionals in Boston within the next year, to spread our methods and insights to the wider conflict resolution community, which we believe needs much reforming in its methods.

Transitional Justice in Cambodia

By Adam Saltsman, IIMHC Fellow

At the Center for Social Development in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, a group of university students and young professionals gather each week during their free time to plan a curriculum and hash out the logistics of implementing rural workshops. They seek to address the upcoming Khmer Rouge Tribunal and the complexity of Khmer Rouge history with local community members. The group works with Adam Saltsman, an IIMHC Fellow based in Cambodia, to generate questions, discussion topics, and role-play exercises that will be used in the coming months in the capitol’s surrounding provinces. The material will be used to both educate those living beyond the reach of Phnom Penh’s news sources on the structure and prospective content of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal as well as to inspire new ways of thinking about community social development.

The workshops will serve as an introduction to alternative modes of conciliation beyond the quest for justice and they are geared toward inspiring debate within communities about the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, officially known as *The Proceedings before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia for the Prosecution of Crimes Committed during the Period of Democratic Kampuchea*. Aside from presenting information about the Tribunal, goals for this project include providing agency for survivors and lower level perpetrators marginalized by the politicization of the reconciliation process; assisting a community level movement to increase youth sympathy about the suffering of Cambodia’s older generation; offering new ways of assessing and dealing with local level conflicts; and training a group of young Cambodian leaders on some of the IIMHC’s techniques.

In addition, the IIMHC is working with the Center for Social Development, a non-governmental organization devoted to fighting corruption and the transitional justice process, to co-organize a series of public forums focusing on the issue of national justice and grassroots reconciliation. The first forum, held on March 16, 2006 in Pailin, Cambodia opened constructive debate and dialogue in an area inhabited by primarily top Khmer Rouge leaders that have lived relatively closed off from the rest of the country since their integration in the late 1990’s.

Projects in the Making

Easing Inter-Communal Relations in Hadar, Haifa

Nir Eisikovits

The neighborhood of Hadar on the Eastern slopes of the Carmel mountain was, until the 1940's, the seat of Haifa's intellectual and economic elite. In the 1950's other communities began to attract the city's well to do, and Hadar's fortunes began to decline. An influx of low income immigrants, the slow deterioration of local businesses, the settlement of former Palestinian collaborators with Israel, and the internal migration of poor Israeli-Arab families from downtown Haifa have turned Hadar into one of the most troubled, violent neighborhoods in Israel.

In 2004, the Municipality of Haifa, in conjunction with the Haifa Police and the University of Haifa embarked on a project to revive and rehabilitate the neighborhood. The reinvigoration plan included substantial investment in public infrastructure, extensive renovations of residences, strengthening community policing, job creation and a stress on effective social services. The IIMHC in conjunction with its partner in Israel - The Israel Center for Negotiation and Mediation (ICNM) have been invited by the municipality of Haifa to join this project. Specifically, our mandate was to ease inter-communal tensions between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs residing in the neighborhood.

We convened the first group of Jewish and Arab residents of Hadar in February of 2006. While it is too early to judge whether this effort has been successful, our mediators are very encouraged by the participants' commitment as well as by the open and candid dialogue that has developed so far. The reactions and feedback we have been receiving from the members of the group, as well as the municipality's commitment and enthusiasm, suggest that this initial group will spin off further ones, including 'train the trainers' sessions. In addition to improving communal relations in Hadar, we believe that these sessions will provide our mediators with valuable experience towards another vital project we are working on- the creation of inter communal intervention teams that could intercede in cases of renewed widespread ethnic strife inside Israel (see *The IIMHC's Crisis Response Project for Israel* by Brigitt Keller below).

The IIMHC's Crisis Response Project for Israel

By Brigitt Keller

The IIMHC's Crisis Response project builds on an already existing inter-ethnic group of mediators who were trained by the IIMHC in collaboration with American and Israeli partners.¹ Members of this group, Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs, are experts in the field of Arab-Jewish community relations and have already shown a commitment to working towards a peaceful co-existence between the two ethnic groups.²

The goal of the Crisis Response project is twofold. Our short-term goal is to prevent the outbreak or escalation of riots during times of heightened inter-communal tension. The project's long-term goal is to improve the relationship between Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens and to create permanent inter-communal networks. Research, comparing riot-prone with riot-free cities in India, suggests that inter-communal networks are diminishing the likelihood of future ethnic violence.³ To reach the short-term goal, the mediators will utilize crisis intervention techniques, among them facilitating emergency meetings between all stakeholders, creating a local crisis response team, and advising the opposing groups in de-escalation strategies. The second goal, improving the relationship between the different ethnic groups and establishing inter-communal networks, demands that root causes for the violence are addressed. It is the task of state institutions to tackle causes such as marginalization and poverty, and to work towards equality for all citizens. We at the IIMHC believe, however, that it is equally important to confront another cause for ethnic violence, the role of disputed history and memory. Memories of past grievances and indignities contribute to feelings of hatred

¹ Yona Shamir, Director of the Israel Center for Negotiation and Mediation; Eileen Babbitt, Professor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy; Shirli Kirschner, Esquire and Resolve Advisor trainer; Pam Steiner, clinician and facilitator.

² These mediators have already conducted an intervention, the Yaad-Miar Fears, Needs & Hopes Workshop, and are currently involved with the Israel Center for Negotiation and Mediation (ICN), the University and the municipality of Haifa, to bring a series of mediation sessions to the multi-ethnic neighborhood of Hadar.

³ Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society," *World Politics* 53 (April 2001).

and indifference that ultimately enable violence against others. Addressing these grievances will be achieved through the IIMHC's Historic Narrative method.

Every step in the process will be reached in close cooperation with the local government and community members to create local ownership of the conflict resolution strategies. For the intervention to be successful it is crucial that the mediators help establish a relationship between law enforcement and community leaders that is based on mutual respect and the shared goal of de-escalating a potentially violent situation. An integral part of the project thus consists of training police forces to be partners in this endeavor. Ideally, the training would include instruction at the academy level as well as in-service training for veteran police officers and should consist of communication and problem solving skills, mediation techniques, cultural awareness training and personal stress and anger management strategies.

The IIMHC's director Hillel Levine has introduced the project to people in Israel and the initial reactions are very positive. Currently, the ICN's director Yona Shamir is in contact with the Israeli Police to consolidate the next stage of planning as we continue to consult with agencies within the U.S. Department of Justice that have vast experiences implementing such projects in different parts of the world.

Organizational Developments

2006 will be a momentous year for the Institute. We have more Fellows on board and more programs running than in any previous years. The previous year was devoted to development of our focus, methods and training manuals. As a result, we are growing stronger as an organization and are making an imprint in the areas of our work as well as in the larger field of conflict resolution.

In the past months, there have been significant organizational developments of which we are very pleased. At the most recent Board meeting on November 30, 2005, the Board discussed new directions for capacity building. With a grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, we have undertaken a systematic assessment of how the IIMHC might develop in the next five years. We are particularly grateful to Stephen Heintz, the President, for his support and good advice. Through Mr. Heintz, we have come to Vista Consultant of Cambridge, MA. Alice Howard and Joan Magretta are experienced consultants in this area, specializing not for profit organizations. We are very pleased to be working with them and look forward to sharing the results with you.

Further leap towards better management and strategy will be embodied in the post of a new Chief Operational Officer. The COO will supervise the work of everyone at the Institute and report to the President and the Board. He or she will be responsible for strategic planning for the Institute and coordinating the work of the staff and fellows in accordance. The Institute hopes to find the right future COO within the next few months.

As of September 1, 2006, we will be working with the Harvard Business School's Social Enterprise Program, which will take our strategic planning to still another level and provide significant bridges for its implementation. We are very honored by the interest of this program in our work and look forward to the exceptional services provided by old friends and new at the Harvard Business School.

The Fellows are planning a Spring Retreat for all the Institute's Fellows and staff on April 14-15. Retreat will focus on what we do and how we do it will be at the center of the agenda. It will review the Institute's projects and methods and develop strategies for the near future. We appreciate your good advice on all these subjects.

News Corner

Checking the Pulse of Hindustan: A note on the Varanasi explosions in Uttar Pradesh, India.

By Rohit Gupta

Rohit is a freelance writer in Mumbai, India, and a friend of the Institute.



Moral aspects aside, terrorism is communication via media. While Varanasi cannot be called a Mecca of Hinduism, it is the oldest engine that produces Hindu culture and consciousness, the most preferred "spiritual tourism" destination of foreigners in India. The targets were a) the Sankat Mochan temple, devoted to Lord Hanuman "he who destroys all troubles" and b) the Cantonment railway station - the main conduit of pilgrims into the holy city. The timing was orchestrated for maximum damage, during an *aarti* (mass) and the arrival of a major train, respectively. The sender knew the pulse of Hindu life, and put his finger precisely there to check the temperature.

The culprits are likely to be a Muslim outfit from Pakistan, that is what the government usually suggests, citing repetition of patterns (e.g., the use of pressure cookers). They refuse to consider the possibility of mimicry, of course. Whoever the sender of this message, for a completion of the communication "act", they need a response from retaliationists. Before this acknowledgement of receipt happens, the act of terrorism remains incomplete. In the view of this mechanism, the Varanasi attacks were a clinical test of Hindu reflexes and Hindutva's atrophying political muscle.

Muddling Through Kosovo: End of an Era?

By Dasha Kusá

Serbia and Kosovo are slowly turning a new page in their history. Ibrahim Rugova, the moderate leader of Kosovo who made the negotiations with Serbia last year possible has lost his battle with cancer this February. His death has made the current round of talks on the future of Kosovo more difficult. Former Serbian dictator Slobodan Milošević died in his prison cell but a few days ago. Both deaths have stirred lots of emotions and reopened old wounds between Serbs and Kosovar Albanians. The difficult path ahead of Serbia and Kosovo's co-existence has just gotten even trickier.

Milošević, the ruthless leader that was single-handedly responsible for massive bloodshed in the countries of former Yugoslavia has passed away before the International Crimes Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) carried out a sentence in the trial against him. He was charged with 66 counts of war crimes in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo. The time of his passing is most inopportune. Serbia was just beginning to come to terms with its recent turbulent past. Only at the end of last year, some of the trials of war criminals were transferred from the Hague into Serbian jurisdiction. Few months back, television stations across Serbia aired the footage of bound Bosnian men being shot by Serbian paramilitary police forces during the Srebrenica massacre in 1995. Video came to the public as somewhat of a shock. More voices started to speak against the nationalist tendencies, denouncing the violence, and accepting responsibility for it. In the past few months, Serbia was showing signs of some healing.

Milošević died less than a week after former Croatian Serb leader Milan Babič committed suicide in the same prison in Scheveningen. Standing of the ICTY took a significant hit in the eyes many people. Milošević in some ways symbolized the Tribunal. Moreover, victims are being heard that justice has not been carried out and that the Tribunal is taking too long with the proceedings.

"With Milošević deceased, Serbia might see this as an end to an era and this might have a positive influence on them handing over Mladić and Karadžić," law professor Wouters said for Reuters on March 11. I wish I could share that optimism. Reactions to Milošević's death within Serbia indicate that his passing was "grains on a mill" of current Serbian nationalists, seeking to turn him into a martyr of the Serbian nation and inciting hatred amidst the fragile peace again.

Serbian leaders never publicly have accepted the possibility of an independent Kosovo. Kosovo is an important myth in Serbian imagination (dating all the way back to the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389, where defeat brought on half a millennium of Ottoman rule). Milošević skillfully tapped into emotions related to this myth, and worked them into a frenzy. He rose and he fell with Kosovo. Current leaders will not dare to go against this symbol. Albanian leaders, on the other hand, exclaim that Kosovo's independence is the only road to peace in Southeastern Europe. The UN lead negotiations on the status of Kosovo will most likely push for Kosovo's independence. Without either side budging anytime soon, this corner of Europe may go through more rough weather in the near future.

Young leaders from the non-governmental sector are ready and interested in taking upon themselves the challenge of facing their past and thus moving forward towards shared future. A future of different communities living together, and not merely side by side. Our President's recent visit to Belgrade brought new friendships and budding of cooperation with Serbian and Kosovar non-profits, institutes, and teachers.

Holocaust Denial and the Law

By Nir Eisikovits

The case of David Irving, the British Historian jailed in Austria for charges of Holocaust denial, raises several questions pertinent to the IIMHC's mission. I would like to take this opportunity to raise them without necessarily trying to provide answers, in hope that the questions themselves will spur some fruitful discussion.

First, is there a problem with laws that prohibit the denial of specific acts of genocide? Since the Austrian law is aimed at Holocaust deniers rather than genocide deniers, we run up against an obvious problem: Irving gets locked up while others spouting trash about the Armenian genocide or the Rwandan genocide can do so uninterrupted. On the one hand, this disparity suggests that any regulation of such speech needs to take aim at genocide in general, rather than this or other genocide. On the other hand, there is the importance of subject position: don't countries like Austria, Poland and Germany, which were actively involved in the annihilation of Europe's Jews, have a special obligation to forbid the denial of these atrocities? In this sense, an English legal prohibition specifically aimed at the denial of the holocaust would be distasteful, while a similar law in Austria, Poland and Germany expresses a mature understanding of the country's history.

A second question concerns the stage at which a specific genocide is contested. Presumably a historian questioning the crimes of the Khmer Rouge or the atrocities against the Armenians could be more dangerous than an Irving taking aim at a catastrophe that has already been seared into the collective consciousness. Put differently, in 2006 a denier of the Khmer Rouge genocide can do more damage to the cause of historical memory than a denier of the Holocaust can, because there is a difference in the level of historical cementing of both cases. Should we be making these kinds of distinctions?

Finally, it is worthwhile remembering that the existence of an enemy can do wonders for the level of one's commitment to a certain idea or received historical notion. Vigorous, even disgusting challenges to received knowledge makes that knowledge matter to us on a gut level. This point is not mine. It is part of John Stuart Mill's famous defense of the freedom of speech in On Liberty. He writes: "Both teachers and learners go to sleep at their post, as soon as there is no enemy in the field." And later: "even if the received opinion be not only true, but the whole truth; unless it is ...vigorously ...contested, it will, by most of those who receive it, be held in the manner of a prejudice, with little comprehension or feeling of its rational grounds". Mill would argue that silencing the Irvings of the world not only makes martyrs of them - it also deprives us of a chance to become actively and emotionally committed to our historical knowledge, since such active emotional commitments come about when one is disgusted by and defending against people like Irving. Should we take such motivational factors into account when thinking about legal bans?

*I'm grateful to Dinah PoKempner and Adam Saltsman for a fascinating discussion of these topics via email in February of 2006.

Reading Room

Fellows' Writing, Diaries and Notes on the Margin on their Peacemaking Work

IIMHC website will be opening a new section on its website. In the Reading Room, you will be able to find articles by IIMHC fellows, as well as their diaries and observations from their work and travel, discussions on various topics, and links of interest. To see what our fellows are up to, visit www.iimhc.org/ReadingRoom. Below are excerpts from some of their writings. You will find the full versions in our new Reading Room soon.

Indian Diary of a Street-Smart, Worldly Traveler

By Dasha Kusá

Sunday August 21, DC School of Management and Technology, Pullikanam, Kerala.



Rising bright and early – Nidhin comes to wake us up at 6:30 (do they ever sleep here?). Me, Jasmine, and David decided to go to the church today with the students. It sounds like a joke: A heathen, a Sikh, and a Jew head out to church... but it isn't. They all go to church here together – Christians, Muslims, Hindus... It's the same God anyway, they say. We get into a little bus that huffs and puffs up the rocky dirt road. The church is stunning.

Small simple white building perched in a monumental valley of tea plantations, palm trees, and flowers of all colors and shapes, under a turquoise sky and a kind warm sun. You can smell the colors in the air.

People here are farmers. They are much darker than Indians in the North. Jesus, however, is whitest of whites, with pale blue eyes in every single painting. Funny, if you ask me. The sermon is in Malayalam. They sing a lot, which is great. We sit on the floor, sometimes kneel, sometimes stand up. Sometimes try to stand up, wriggling about awkwardly. First twenty minutes is fun. Then it gets a bit old. Half an hour in, I start scrutinizing every single painting on the walls. And on the ceiling. And the floor...

Today is the third day of trainings at DC School. We start teaching the second batch today. These kids are even quicker and sharper, and we are getting to be even more stellar. They say they admire our teamwork, how well we work together, help each other out, are nice and polite to each other. Go team! What they don't know is that that requires training, too. We are modeling relationships for them. It rules to have a good program lined up and then see it happen as it should and better. Role plays and exercises are a part where we can observe how much the students took in. Some of them are very good. They could become mediators tomorrow.

Tonight we join the entire Shanti student group for dinner. That's a group that we helped to establish in February. They research. They want to meet with us, even though they have a tough exam tomorrow. We bring in the faculty and mediate and agreement between students and faculty about the future of the Shanti program. Faculty promises to devote one month of internships to allow students to intern at non-profits. Those who will work for Shanti will receive credits towards their degree. They will get training certificates for our training and the school will send out a special letter of recommendation to participants' job placements.

Jasmine and Hillel are packing up after dinner; they are leaving early in the morning. Hillel to New Delhi where we'll join him a day later at the *Partition Revisited: Thinking Through and Beyond Violence, Trauma, and Memory* colloquium.

Suddenly we hear a yell: "Jaasmiiiine! Daaaaashaaaaaaa!" That would be David, returning into his room. We sprint over there. "There's this white thing over there. Look! I saw it crawling on the window, then it jumped on Hillel's suitcase and there it is sitting right there, on his shirt!" We look, skeptically at first. What *IS* that? It's white, it looks almost as a jelly-fish, but how would it get into the midst of a rain forest? It doesn't move, probably startled by the light. Being extremely brave, I come closer. I see six or eight legs – it is a giant spider, size of a tarantula! But white. It's an albino tarantula! We shriek and run out of the room. What do we do? Do we dare to capture it? David doesn't, I'm more than hesitant. But then if we don't, it can kill us all overnight. We look around. There is an empty wastebasket that might do the trick, provided that the albino tarantula doesn't move. We make a battle plan. It involves the wastebasket and Jasmine. She's Punjabi, and least frightened (I swear this logic made sense at the time). We all approach the tarantula cautiously. It's still there, pretending to be dead. Jasmine hurls the wastebasket over the monster. It's trapped! We're alive! Now we have to get it away from Hillel's shirt somehow. My turn. Warily I move the basket, dreading the moment when the mini Odula starts scuttling about. It doesn't. I notice it leaves small white traces as I move it with the basket. Am I injuring it? The traces look very much like...pieces of...napkin or ...wet paper... I have a sudden flashback to this morning: three women came in to clean. They were washing windows, among other things. With white paper towels that, when damp, can look a lot like albino tarantulas. One piece must have gotten stuck on the window and fellow as David entered the room, letting in a draft from outside. I take the basket

off and grab it with my hand. Jasmine and David shriek. I explain what just happened. "There can be a spider *inside!*" David maintains. Well, I can't argue with that, but relief is felt all around. Not among our bravest moments, but certainly among the funniest. Mind works in mysterious ways. It's white, it's scary, it must be an albino tarantula, but of course. What could possibly be more logical?

We managed to use the experience the next day in the training: David and I played it out to demonstrate how fear, new situation, stereotypes, etc... can warp our thinking. Students got an immense kick out of it. I think it will stay in our bag of tricks for good.

Rwanda: Twelve Years After By Jina Moore, IIMHC Associate Fellow

December 21, 2005

Today was visitor's day at the prison, a toppling brick affair on the side of a hill that says "PRISON" very big in English just beneath the entrance gate. And they don't mind if you enter, unannounced, as long as you leave your cell phone. At least not if you come with Sam, who knows everyone and translates impeccably.

We could only stand in the courtyard because we didn't have permission to go anywhere else. But on visitor's day, the courtyard is its own drama. About 15 feet in front of me stood a clump of about 100 women. They wore a half-dozen different shades of pink skirts and tops—tops with black buttons, tops with pockets, tops with tailored sleeves—or, less often, one-piece dresses that look like Salvation Army showcases of decades-old prom attire.

Some of the men in prison wear pink too—short sleeved tops and pockets and long shorts. I'd seen a dozen of them yesterday, at the soccer field near Nymarambo, the thin linens rippling a bit when there was a breeze. "Ah, they are accused of genocide," my Rwandan friend David said. "That is why they wear pink."

On my left was a hive of people, dressed in dozens of colors, noisy and carrying baskets heavy with heaven knows what—bananas I saw, but I'm sure there must have also been mangos and passion fruits and beans, maybe even a spot of meat if a family could afford to share it.

I don't know what these 100 women in pink were accused of, but I can't stop myself from imagining. Did the tall, thin woman in a pink suit raise a machete against someone else? Did that chubby woman standing alone throw someone in a well? If I asked them how many people they killed, would they tell me, as others would in my month here, that they didn't actually murder anyone? They just followed the crowd, in the back, could barely see what was happening. Would this be true? Would I believe it? Does that matter?

The female prisoners were much less talkative than their visitors, and looked almost bored. Maybe, I thought, they're nervous. Even after 10 years, it cannot be easy to receive food from a son you wouldn't recognize on the street, or a sister who's raising your kids. These people chattering on the hill are here because one of them is missing. They are the others left behind by the genocide, the relatives of the accused. In some towns, they've bonded with survivors—women without husbands must work twice as hard, whether widowed by death or by the imprisonment of a husband who killed someone else's. They've recognized a symmetry in their present situation. But in the prison on visitor's day, when the people who are said to have killed get food from their families, it's hard to feel that symmetry.

At 2 p.m., about 75 of them walked single-file toward a row of benches. Across from the women was another empty row of benches; behind that, a long white stripe, like a 50-yard line. A guard stood on the

line, and the hive of people, not nearly as orderly as the prisoners, arranged themselves behind it. The guard waited a few minutes—to settle the crowd? to prove that he could? to give him a minute to think about something else?—and then blew a whistle. The visitors rushed the prisoners, and a noisy roar rippled down the 50-yard line. There are so many prisoners—my translator Sam tells me between 6 and 7,000—in this prison that each of these visits lasts only five minutes, just enough time to give the prisoner the basket of food you've brought. In Kigali, you cut to the chase at visiting "hours": how are you, how's the family, here's your food. Next.

Crisis Response Teams Around the World

By Brigitt Keller, IIMHC Fellow

Wherever ethnic/racial riots happen, they pose a serious challenge to the stability of a country's political system and negatively impact its economic infrastructure. Ethnic riots, as the violent manifestation of preexisting inter-ethnic tensions, threaten the life, safety and wellbeing of individuals and call into question the possibility of peaceful coexistence of a diverse population. Protracted communal violence, furthermore, undermines the authority of the state, and measures commonly employed to regain control, such as curfews and restrictions on the right to assemble, tear at the democratic fabric of the state. Many communities around the world have experienced and still experience ethnic or racial tensions and they have employed remarkable strategies to address the problem.

In the USA, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 created the Community Relations Service, a mediation service located within the US Department of Justice. Ever since its creation the CRS mediators have helped innumerable communities all over the United States to prevent and resolve ethnic and racial conflict and civil disorder. The service utilizes a variety of conciliation and mediation techniques, and works in close cooperation with the local government, the police, school officials and community groups. For more information go to: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crs/>.

During its transition to democracy, South Africa created a unique and intricate system of peace committees on the national, regional and local level to ease tension between the different stakeholders. The peace structure was an integral part of the National Peace Accord of 1991, the result of months of confidential negotiations between members of the different political parties, the government, the military and police and representatives of civil society, such as churches, business associations and unions. This particular structure, however, was disbanded after the 1994 elections⁴. In India, peace committees exist in different regions of the country. Some of the committees spontaneously grew out of preexisting inter-ethnic groups in times of heightened ethnic tension. In the town of Bhiwandi, neighborhood committees (mohalla samitis) were initiated by the new police chief who was determined to put an end to the notoriety of deadly ethnic riots that had plagued the city for years. The Bhiwandi committees consisted of an equal number of Hindus and Muslims and for every two or three committees a police officer acted as a liaison. In times of peace, the committee would discuss "matters of mutual concern," during times of heightened tension they patrolled the streets, calmed tempers and suppressed rumors. See: Ashutosh Varshney, Civil Society and Ethnocommunal Conflict, Working Document for the III General Assembly of the Club of Madrid.

While communities around the world share many of the challenges related to violent civil unrest, the unique historical, legal, political and cultural realities of every country shape the characteristics of its Crisis Response Teams.

By the World Forgot: *Realpolitik* and the Armenian Genocide

Nir Eisikovits

Article was published in *In the National Interest*, Vol. 3, Issue 35

Between 1915 and 1916, through a campaign of slaughter and deportation, the nationalist 'Young Turk' government of the Ottoman Empire killed over 1 Million Armenians. To this day, Turkey refuses to accept responsibility for this genocide, claiming that the number of casualties was far smaller and that most had been killed in fighting between the

⁴ See: David Baharvar, Crisis Response or Peacebuilding? An Analysis of the South African Local and Regional Peace Committees, Cornell University, May 2001.

parties rather than in one-sided massacres. It seems that Turkish genocide-deniers are now receiving assistance from an unexpected source. In a recent article, the Israeli daily *Haaretz* reported that several Jewish groups in Washington have been involved in blocking attempts to procure Congressional recognition of the atrocities.

This involvement was much more proactive last year than it is now, but, to quote the article, “a central activist in a Jewish organization involved in this matter clarified that if necessary, he would not hesitate to again exert pressure to ensure the resolution is not passed and the Turks remain satisfied.” Surprising? Not really. Israel has systematically refrained from recognizing the extermination of Armenians. Senior officials, including former foreign minister Shimon Peres, have spoken of a “tragedy,” which “cannot be compared to genocide.” The position taken by Israel and some Jewish organizations is animated by two considerations. One has to do with the uniqueness of the Holocaust. The other is pure *realpolitik*. Let us examine these in turn.

Recognizing the Armenian genocide, so the first argument goes, could eclipse the singular magnitude of the crimes perpetrated against the Jews during World War II.⁵ This claim is both morally warped and empirically unfounded. It is morally warped, because we Jews do not have a monopoly on pain. Our catastrophes are not in a separate category; we do not feel any more agony for the obliteration of our families than others do. When Armenians are pricked, they bleed; when they are poisoned they die.⁶ If human suffering is essentially democratic, Jews cannot, simultaneously, attack those who deny the Holocaust and assist others who deny the Armenian genocide. The concern for the legacy of the Holocaust is empirically unfounded, because other cases of genocide have been recognized without the Holocaust being forgotten or sidelined. The massacres by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the Tutsi by the Hutu in Rwanda are now universally acknowledged. Such recognition has not eclipsed the discussion of Nazi atrocities. It has, rather, served as a reminder that human cruelty is as much a reality now as it was in 1915 and 1939.

As for *realpolitik*, Israel sees Turkey as an all-important strategic ally in the Middle East – a moderate democratic Muslim state in a region where both moderation and democracy are in short supply. Thus, keeping the Turks happy is taken to be an essential Israeli interest. Two observations are in order. First, the appeasement of Turkey does not seem to be working. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has recently accused Israel of “state terrorism” and compared its policies towards Palestinians to the actions of the Spanish Inquisition against Jews. Turkey is said to have rolled back planned contracts to purchase military equipment from Israel and is now reconsidering a planned deal to transport 15 Million cubes of water annually to the water-poor Jewish State. Apparently we have sold our moral integrity in vain. Second, realism in international affairs, with all its merits, must be subordinate to a nation’s most basic principles rather than dictate them. In the case of Israel, the most deep-seated of those principles is that the state was founded as a barrier against genocide, as a safe-haven for Jews the world over to protect them from future persecution. The refusal to recognize other cases of genocide undermines this fundamental tenet. It provides invaluable ammunition to those who claim that history is written by the victors. If that position takes hold, no group, including the Jews, would ever be safe from hounding, and Israel would have undermined the main reason for its own existence.

On August 22, 1939, days before the Nazis invaded Poland, Hitler addressed his military chiefs in Obersalzberg. “The aim of war is not to reach definite lines,” he told them “but to annihilate the enemy physically. It is by this means that we shall obtain the vital living space that we need.” He then went on to ask them a rhetorical question: “Who today still speaks of the massacre of the Armenians?” The Israeli government, for one, does not. History, it would seem, has a cruel sense of humor.

⁵ In early 2002, after Israeli ambassador to Georgia and Armenia Rivka Cohen rejected any comparison between the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide, Israel’s foreign ministry released a statement including the following text: “...Israel asserted that the Holocaust was a singular event in human history and was a premeditated crime against the Jewish people. Israel recognizes the tragedy of the Armenians and the plight of the Armenian people. However, the events cannot be compared to genocide. This does not in any way diminish the magnitude of the tragedy.”

⁶ W. Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, Act 3, Scene 1.

Reviews

Talking It Over: Israelis And Palestinians Debate Their Past

Review of *Shared Histories*

(Paul Scham et al., eds., Sept. 2005, Left Coast Press)

By David Baharvar



Shared Histories is a different kind of book. It is not making the case for any cause or argument. Rather, it is a public record of a series of powerful private dialogues between prominent historians and other influential thinkers, about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The participants hail from varied backgrounds and perspectives: Arabs, Jews, Israelis, westerners. The focus of the book is on the years before the actual creation of the State of Israel, starting in the 1800s. A second volume focusing on the decades between 1950 and our current times is currently underway (the IIMHC is involved in the planning and execution of the second stage).

The book raises some fascinating questions about the process of deciphering the history of the conflict. These include the conflicting claims of validity between professional historical research and collective memory and national myths (pp.228-229); the connection between disagreeing about facts and denying others' rights (p.45); the meaning, risks and difficulties of truly listening (pp. 229, 273).

While Shared Histories is an educational book for the layman, it is also a groundbreaking work for the professional -- politician, journalist, scholar or otherwise -- who seeks illumination on how parallel language and narratives have emerged to describe the same events. These narratives maintain a distance between Jews and Palestinians that can and must be bridged for any peace to endure. While the dialogue does not aim to take on the task of actually bridging these "histories," it effectively accomplishes the first step toward that end: acknowledgment. Acknowledgment needs to happen by those at the highest levels of knowledge on all sides; acknowledgment of the other side's perspective. Such a goal can and has been elusive in a number of past dialogues of this sort.

But to more fully accomplish acknowledgment on a subject as controversial as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, guidance is needed to keep the conversation constructive. In Shared Histories, it was evident that such guidance was at times lacking. Many of the dialogues, while enlightening, also have a wandering, overly academic feel that is detached and unfocused at many points. It was unclear whether there was any mediator, facilitator or moderator in any of the discussions. Explicit mediation of the dialogues by a trained and experienced professional of that art might have provided more focus and cohesion to the dialogue. The point of having a mediator would not be to ensure some neutrality or objectivity, for there is no such thing even in discussing the history of conflicts such as these (although some of the participants seemed to think otherwise). Rather, the point would be to help steer people away from debating, to highlight the way language is used differently to refer to the same things, to highlight parallels, similarities, and common ground between competing narratives, to encourage participants to acknowledge and address each others' valid concerns, to make sure that certain narratives are not simply passed over, dismissed, or suppressed.

To elaborate, an amazing tool that was never used in Shared Histories is to explore the power and emotional import of using certain words in talking about the conflict, and how these words are used differently by people from different sides. The examples are myriad: 'Holocaust' is used on both sides; 'Independence' vs. 'Naqba'; 'evacuation of Palestinians' vs. 'expulsion' vs. 'transfer', 'refugees' vs. 'returnees', 'freedom fighters' or 'martyrs' vs. 'terrorists'; 'Riots of 1929' vs. 'Revolts of 1929'. The aim of such language-focus sessions can identifying the relevant language that is used, how such language amounts to conscious or unconscious rhetorical moves, how such language calls for or evokes a certain response from the other side and leads to framing a story of the conflict in a certain way, and how things could be stated differently, by both sides, both in retrospect and in the future, to co-author a different pattern of dialogue and consequently a less conflict-saturated story about the conflict.

To the credit of Paul Scham, Walid Salem, Benjamin Pogrund and the other editors, the dialogue in Shared Histories is powerfully instructive in that it does not focus on which side is right or wrong on any point. Where the participants begin to do so, others re-focus the conversation. They model the sort of behavior that, if leaders at the top and mid-

levels of government in Israel and Palestine were to emulate, would make a huge difference toward lasting peace. The next step, and one that the participants only began to take in Shared Histories, is to draw out peoples' personal stories about their fears, needs, and hopes with regard to the conflict. These are the personal burdens of pained memories on which, after all, the Israel-Palestinian conflict depends in order to continue to persist as a conflict. Sharing those stories is a necessary step and a beginning of conciliation.

The issue remains, in the end, what are we left with from Shared Histories that can help the broader society? As unique and multi-perspective as the dialogues are, it would take a great deal of work to glean textbook material from them, material that can be disseminated to a wide and lay public. How can the transcripts be used to have the largest impact? For Shared Histories 2, it is hoped that more than token gestures in this direction will be taken.

CSA: The Confederate States of America (2004)

Written and Directed by Kevin Willmott

By Adam Silver, instructor of American History at Boston University



In this insightful mock documentary, Kevin Willmott uses a possible Confederate Civil War victory to explore the issue of race in the contemporary United States of America. Ultimately, through some bits of humor, Willmott shows us a society, albeit exaggerated, in their imperialist characteristics and approach to race relations that may not be as different to our own society as we might like to think or as is popularly perceived.

Kevin Willmott depicts the story of the Confederate States of America through the lens of a BBC style documentary. He points out that the Confederacy was one victory shy of securing British and French support, which would have probably turned the tide of the war. Furthermore, the director uses actual Confederate plans, should they be victorious, to expand the new Confederate empire to Central and South America to secure the sugar crop. The ensuing actions and growth of the Confederacy mirror the imperialist dealings of the United States in the late 19th, early 20th centuries.

However, the more provocative aspects of the film involve race. Slavery still exists in the Confederate States of America in the 21st century, and shows no signs of abating. Since the end of the Civil War many free blacks fled north to Canada. Although, in the United States, the peculiar institution ended with the passage of 13th Amendment (1865), the treatment of African-Americans as second-class citizens continued well into the 20th century. Willmott employs “fake” commercials to portray the legacy of this treatment and attitudes into the 21st century; many of which update products that appeared in actual ads as late as the 1950's, not to mention the still employed Uncle Ben and Aunt Jemima. The upshot is a provocative and well conceived movie which forces us to take a second look in the mirror.

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