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Fifteen Years of Peace-building Activities in the Western Balkans: Lessons Learned and Current Challenges

Michael Daxner [*]

Introduction: Ten Years After the Intervention in Kosovo

While Michael Schmunk's observations presented at the twentieth workshop of the PfP Consortium Study Group on Regional Stability in South East Europe are largely accurate, in this essay I will bring more precise emphasis on a few key issues.[1] I will use the case of the Kosovo intervention as an example for my views on the region, and I shall try to generalize some of my experiences in the light of other, more recent interventions elsewhere. A partially subjective approach is chosen to demonstrate the problems that confront social scientists who attempt to bear in mind both the political and the scientific, while recognizing that they belong to two different systems.

I will start with a few general statements to provide a frame for the considerations presented:

- After the attacks of 11 September 2001, it was to be expected that international interest would shift away from the Balkans to other regions of the world. However, this trend has seemed to be reversing itself recently, suggesting that the Balkans will once again become the focus of some international attention.
- Within the field of intervention analysis, Kosovo (and perhaps Liberia) can be seen as recent blueprints for more massive interventions. Despite the differences between the two cases, the current situation in Afghanistan can be better understood through examining lessons taken from the Kosovo intervention.

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[1] Schmunk has rightly referred to Jan Koehler and Christoph Zürcher's accounts of the situation in Afghanistan in the context of research on security governance. The Research Center (SFB) 700 at the Free University Berlin is currently conducting studies focused on "Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood." See Jan Koehler and Christoph Zürcher, "Assessing the Contribution of International Actors in Afghanistan," SFB Working Papers Series, No. 7 (Berlin: Free University Berlin/SFB 700, 2007); and Jan Koehler, "Die internationale Intervention in Afghanistan, SFB Working Papers Series, No. 17 (Berlin: Free University Berlin/SFB 700, 2008).

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- Most conflicts in the Balkans—and certainly those that have taken place since 1989—are so difficult to completely resolve because of their un-embedded character.[2] This explains both the violent excesses during the wars in the 1990s and the difficulties in finding common ground for a durable peace.
- Interveners—the so-called "internationals"—should consider their legitimacy and capability to build a civil society, beyond their contributions to building state structures. The intrusiveness of the intervention is a crucial factor in later peace building.[3]
- Corruption is often mentioned as a detrimental element in the normalization process. Partly, it is often a "quasi-indigenous" problem in the society and culture where the intervention takes place. But partly it is also an imported phenomenon, one that should fall under the responsibility of the interveners.
- Ethnic and religious divisions have often tended to increase after interventions due to the interveners' policies and misperceptions.

The debate must produce some disillusioning uncertainties. If we assume that the Kosovo intervention of 1999 was more or less justified (if not mandated) by the UN; if we further hold that the UN mandate under Security Council Resolution 1244 was viable, though dangerously incomplete; if we also consider that UNSCR 1244 does not even attempt to create a *regional* solution to problems, but remains fixated on Kosovo[4] – then UNMIK and the main actors in the theatre did a fairly mediocre job. This means that we could have done much better, but also that we could have failed totally. Neither is the case.

The *accomplishments* of the intervention in Kosovo are not negligible, if we speak of durable de-escalation of violence among states and large ethnic groups, and if we consider the options that are still possible. "Realistic" positions never meet the necessarily "idealistic" visions of marginalized neo-romantic state-builders. However, the option of enlarging the EU and completing the integration of the Balkan states into membership is one of the real foci for aligning policies. The partial failure of the missions (UNMIK, KFOR, EULEX) and the various master plans (UNMIK, Eide, Ahtisaari) is evident, but it must be analyzed further. Internal reasons should not be neglected, though the main problem is still the lack of clarity in coordination among the main actors regarding their interests and a realistic weighing of the chances to turn them into reality.

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[2] The concept of embedded conflicts has been derived from the theories of Georg Elwert. See Julia Eckert, *Anthropologie der Konflikte: Georg Elwerts konflikttheoretische Thesen in der Diskussion* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2004).

[3] See Werner Distler, "Die Bedingungen der Intervention: Interaktion in einer Ausnahmesituation," in Thorsten Bohnacker, Michael Daxner, Jan Free, and Christoph Zürcher, eds., *Interventionskultur: Zur Soziologie von Interventionsgesellschaften* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2010), 119–40.

[4] The failure of the Dayton Agreement on this issue remains one of the bleeding wounds of international diplomacy.

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Analysis of Options in Kosovo

Never have I seen so many illusory "what if" options than were presented on behalf of Kosova. Below, this essay will address the more promising options available, irrespective of the rhetoric of status negotiations, and the reasons for which they are promising, never losing sight of the uniqueness of the situation facing the international community. In doing so, I will address the following questions:

- Is division along the Ibar River still an option? Are partition and the changing of borders still anathema, since the UN and EU have decided not to consider them?
- Is an exchange between Presevo (with an Albanian majority) and the North of Kosovo[5] (with a Serbian majority) an option? Is a population exchange of any kind an option?
- Will China and/or Russia drop their reservations in the Security Council against the recognition of the state of Kosovo?
- Can Russia/Serbia be compensated? What will be the costs, and for whom? Will there be a new (type of) broker?
- Can Kosova, Montenegro, or even Serbia become a member of NATO prior to achieving any EU affiliation or membership? The question is of imminent interest, since the potential deployment of Kosovar (and, perhaps, Serbian?) troops *out of area* would be realistic.
- Can the international community insist on opening a labor market between Serbia and Kosovo as a condition for negotiations and an incentive for increased support?

The question of partition has been frequently broached; the more popular discussion has been about whether cantonization (as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or BiH) or decentralization (as proposed for Kosova) is the most preferable option. The argument against partition is that it would repeat—and would, in fact, complete—the ethnic cleansing and separation of peoples that was begun under Milosevic. An argument for partition would be that in Kosovo, as opposed to BiH, the two main ethnic groups had never lived together, but rather lived cheek-by-jowl but apart from each other in a kind of volatile co-existence. This is true for some stretches of the peoples' common past, but is untrue for other periods. The journalist Tim Judah has a more optimistic view of the situation, and his comments on a possible population exchange make worthwhile reading.[6]

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[5] I shall use the term *Kosovo* in the usual English reference, when I speak about the country, but call the state after 2008 *Kosova*. For characterizing the people, I have chosen the term *Kosovar*.

[6] Tim Judah, "At Last, Good News from the Balkans," *New York Review of Books* (11 March 2010).

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Such questions are uncomfortable, however, because they deal with choices that, by and large, were never real options for real players. Some answers are ephemeral, others are simmering under the cover of a highly regulated politically correct language, and none is a trump card in the hands of a strong player. Explanations for why that is so can be drawn from very different and incompatible theories and assumptions:

- More than one major actor operates without sufficient information
- Interests in a specific resolution of the conflict are blurred, or irrelevant, or superseded by other, more important interests
- The complexity of the situation is such that its reduction can lead to severe damage to other systems
- There are too many conflicts of identity that defy resolution
- Actors stick to dogmatized practices learned from previous experiences, and thus fail to become aware of the need to change their approaches
- The root conflict is not very violent at the moment, but the chances to socially embed it are too great to leave it to Kosovo and Serbia alone; or, alternatively, the two must solve the main problems, and in this case external interference and intrusion might be detrimental.

For this article, I have chosen an unusually subjective approach. There is a specific reason for that: for me, Kosovo represented my initiation into a scientific field that could be called the *anthropology of interventions*. Of course, there is a wide and elaborate spectrum of scholarship on all aspects of peacekeeping, peace-making, and peace-building in the context of nation-building, state-building, and a wide range of interfaces with fields such as Responsibility to Protect (R2P), Human Security, governance in areas of fragile statehood,[7] post-conflict governance, etc. Ethnology has played an important role in most interventions of longer duration, and embedded anthropology has become a major preoccupation in situations like the counter-insurgency in Afghanistan. The concept of security has grown to dimensions that are much more complex than the re-establishment of a monopoly on the legitimate use of force or the establishment of local or national security forces or creating a certain sustainability of delivery of other public goods depending on sovereignty. Power, violence, and fragmented social structures have changed their appearances, and many interventions have been carried out by actors that were unprepared for the consequences that followed upon their intervention.

Even if we select only the most reputed and widely accounted analyses and assessments of the intervention in Kosovo in 1999 and its long-lasting post-intervention effects, there is no dominant theoretical judgment about the quality and outcome of that intervention. Many of the empirical findings and normative positions in politics are used to bolster certain theories on intervention, peace-building, and post-conflict so-

[7] This consideration has brought me to collaborate in the SFB 700 (Research Center on "Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood," website at www.sfb-governance.de).

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cieties, but none of them is so compelling as to push politics beyond a certain point of resignation and "wait-and-see" acceptance. I shall give a subjective and personal report on a few observations, rather than a systematic review of the situation. It is for this reason that I will not even try to give an overview of the theoretical efforts to get a comprehensive picture of the situation in Kosovo with regard to the major players in the Balkans game.

Most of what I have to report on Kosovo is ready for discussion and open to critical remarks. Since I worked for UNMIK from 2000 to 2002, I have tried to include my experience and my theoretical considerations into a broader frame of sociological, ethnological, and political theories. Looking into the future of Kosovo, much of recent history and the actual experiences that the people have lived through must be reconsidered as the material upon which emerging societies base their identities and their concepts. I am neither an optimist nor a pessimist, nor am I simply a realistic observer. Rather, I was involved on the ground, having had a moderate share in both the governance and effects of UNMIK policy and its interplay with all other actors in the post-intervention society.

My professional and personal observations and analyses on the job have influenced me a great deal since 2002. It has been a while since I was involved in a policy that is now under critical review. Almost ten years have gone by, and after 2003 my position with respect to Kosovo had changed into that of adviser, reviewer, and occasional counselor. I consider Kosovo as a blueprint for some lessons learned, and it has come a long way from the discussions of "soft footprints" and "robust mandates" to the present-day disillusioned exercise of state-building. Of course, the events of 9/11 had little impact on the Balkans, but they made for the easier recruitment of willing partners in the fight against terrorism. However, this new form of global terrorism has changed some of the terms of intervention in other parts of the world. The "Global War on Terror" has lost its appeal, and we have returned to more realistic (and adequate) policies and expectations. However, I am still "in" the issue, both through theory and through being involved in the research of my graduate students and political partners. Meanwhile, the world of theory and the actual assessment of the events have both changed. Younger scholars have a strong inclination toward "objectivation"[8] in their account of the recent history of an intervention, partially by de-contextualizing it from the overly complex situation of some of the main actors (such as Germany or Austria) in their decision to become players in the game and to change their expected post-war roles. On the other hand, these younger scholars are certainly much more expert than we (the practitioners on the ground) were when it comes to dealing with issues of gender, human rights, and civil society. These considerations were not alien to us, but during the emergency period—until, say, mid-2000—they could not gain the prominence that their absence finds now in judging the results of the UNMIK and KFOR policies. Finally, let me say something personal: as a matter of loyalty and duty, public criticism

[8] The term is very important in the context of the theories of Pierre Bourdieu, who claims a strong empirical *objectivation* of both constructions and theoretical deductions in "real" social environments.

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of UN policies is most difficult if you are a member of the mission. Much of what has been criticized from the beginning of the mission was debated heatedly during our assignment, albeit internally. Criticism *ex post facto* is always easier, but with the stale taste that if we had acted as we knew we should, things would have developed in a better direction. Maybe this is the case.

But on the other hand, it is not likely that even under best practices UNMIK could have changed the determination of the United States to push forward Kosova's independence at almost any price. Nor is it likely that UNMIK could have changed the texture of Kosovar society beyond ethnic lines without much more decisively meeting the expectations of a very strong mandate—a mandate which, however, has never become fully "robust." I am not sure whether a more massive peacekeeping intervention would have supported more effective peace-building, but I am sure that much of the present political quagmire could have been avoided. Thus, I am not altogether happy with the outcome of the UNMIK mission, which, in the beginning, seemed to be a step into a new era of global governance. But sociologists should not be happy about what they analyze; they should draw conclusions and try to understand what they explain.

Inside the UNMIK Mission

When I started to work for UNMIK, in January 2002, my knowledge of the society in which and for which I was supposed to work had been pre-formed by many years of higher education, and by my early tourist experiences from the 1960s. Higher education in former Yugoslavia (FRY) had become a critical issue for the European higher education community. The Bologna Process-in-the-making focused on the virtual enlargement of the EU, and the confrontation with reality was characterized by new states and old systems producing overlapping structures.[9] My reminiscences of tourist visits in the 1960s was important for a certain inscription of the country and its people into the cultural memory of a person whose perspective was that building peace and reconstructing society under the auspices of diminished or fragile statehood were much more important than state-building. Despite the fact that I was relatively well prepared, and had some knowledge about the region and its history and social structure, I felt a permanent need to make up for issues that have never previously been important in either my academic discipline or in my cultural attitudes. One eye-opener was certainly the practical importance of Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans*.[10] The consequences of Todorova's insights were enormous. The ethno-political approach being taken by the UN (through Resolution 1244) was on shaky ground from the beginning; understanding the Balkans had to start with understanding ourselves, both in historical

[9] For more on the adaptation to "European" standards under the pressure of intervening externals, see Michael Daxner, *A Coherent Policy on Soft Sectors for South East Europe* (Vienna: BMBWK, 2003). For more on the persistence of management under changing social circumstances, see Michael Daxner, "The Imagery of Enlargement," in *Higher Education Management and Development*, eds. Attila Pausits and Ada Pellert (Münster: Waxmann, 2007).

[10] Maria N. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

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perspective and in the present. All at once, my practice became split into the executive office, where I served as quasi-minister of education and higher education for a protectorate and as a powerful administrator of one of the most demanding sectors of civil reconstruction, and into the function of an intellectual observer, who meticulously studied his own actions under the rigid norms of social science and humanitarian aspirations. What is the purpose of "Lessons Learned" when you meet them in the field? This is true not only for those working in civil administration, the diplomatic service, and NGOs, but also for the armed forces, of course. Kosovo has produced a good number of personal reports, diaries, and spontaneous history, such as General Reinhardt's voluminous account of his mission. Today, even blogs are used to enforce particular mindsets, and thus add to the proliferating discourses that are part of society building in the countries under intervention, and to the homeland discourse, which becomes an increasingly important source of legitimacy for the conflicts we are involved in, whether they are violent or not.

A political expert entering a protectorate administration does not have enough time to theoretically consider the structure of the institutional player. My experience so far had been either to be a scientist advising politicians, or a political delegate using a very limited range of executive power within established institutions, such as the European Rectors Conference or the Council of Europe's respective bodies.

I do not want to compare the Kosovo intervention with the French intervention in Algeria in 1960, but my personal experience can well be translated into Pierre Bourdieu's decisive perception of a "society of intervention." He did not use this term, but very early on I made an entry into my diary: "we need more *anthropology of intervention*." It was clear that it is not enough to sensitively approach the local people; we must also understand ourselves and our role, in order to make the local people understand why we are here, what we are doing, and what will be their prospects under our regime. Isn't this an almost trivial foundation of most post-colonial and humanitarian interventions? Yes and no.

UNMIK's practice of building a protectorate and starting reconstruction of a society had a sensible rationale: peacekeeping through administration. But "To what end?" and "How?" were questions that were insufficiently answered, for many reasons. One reason was that *society*-building and *nation*-building or *state*-building,[11] let alone any peaceful regional reorganization, had no solid normative base. Neither Resolution 1244 nor the NATO directives for KFOR gave more than a vague orientation, which

[11] During the conference it became clear that "nation-building" in the U.S. context and "state-building" in the European context need permanent translation and re-interpretation by the partners from the two continents if they work together on the same agenda. The strong contractual notion of "nation" in Europe has furthered the trend to exclude the Balkans from the ability to build nation-states; Balkan nationalism has, indeed, supported the building of new *ethnic people states*, but this is not due to the Western interpretation. I just want to warn against taking over American notions of "state" and "nation" too readily without translating them into the European context.

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was permanently modified by strong actors like the U.S. State Department and military and other transnational or local players in a complex game.

The learning process in such incoherent situations is not so easy. When it comes to the strong player's executives, their rationale of concrete action—deciding, legitimizing, "doing"—is prefigured and highly determined, with and without their conscious awareness (at least, this is the case *before* they start to doubt some of their basic presumptions). This learning process was not really supported by the peers within the mission. Moreover, the political side of a mission—the political officers, the heads of department, those with significant social capital and a broad area of responsibility towards society—are quite different from those who run a mission, going down from the Director of Administration, and straight into the secure bed of best practices as customary imperative. For many reasons, I felt privileged to be allowed to learn fast. One reason was certainly the close contact I had with local people who were at the same discursive level – academia had by then already achieved a global *habitus* and a set of common interests. Another reason was my relative closeness to both Bernard Kouchner, the Special Representative to the Secretary-General of the UN (SRSG), and to Tom Koenigs, the Deputy SRSG for Civil Administration. They helped me to understand that not everything that I learned was based on intentions and strategy.

When I say that we played at "statehood," this is a fundamental insight into a process that is relatively new to the UN (perhaps rivaled only by the situation in East Timor at that time, and going back to the Trusteeship Council, which was abolished after the era of decolonization in the 1960s). We behaved like a government, we developed governance as if we were laying the foundation for a real state, and we had our lessons learned (e.g., we included local peers from the beginning). But it was an experiment being conducted under vague conditions.[12] Veton Suroi has stated that statehood for Kosovo Albanians was never better than under the parallel system after 1989.[13] And indeed, UNMIK—assisted by GOs, NGOs, the EC, and other institutional and national actors—tried hard to establish a state, even though it lacked sufficient legitimacy to do so. Instead, we just created fragile statehood and a government that would not really match the expectations of a new fully sovereign nation-state. Not even today, after the unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008 and the installation of the EULEX mission, is Kosovo what you would call a functioning state, despite the fact that some internal institutions and procedures resemble normal structures in normal states, and despite the fact that sovereignty is not the only element of a sound state. The arguments of *Vetenvendosje*, "self-determination," reflect this observation.[14]

[12] Richard Rottenburg, "States of Emergency, Interventions, Experiments," presentation at the SFB 700 workshop on "Glocal Practices of Security Governance in the Postcolony," Free University of Berlin (22-23 January 2010).

[13] Veton Suroi, "Past as Prologue?" *The International Spectator* 35:1 (2000): 27–33.

[14] STS Solidarity International, "Transitional Justice in the Republic of Kosova" (18 June 2008); available at http://intersol.dk/intersol/english_articles/1260/transitional-justice-in-the-republic-of-kosova.

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From my double position, what I was doing seemed to be strange, and it does not look much better from today's perspective. The society we had been working in was not what societies ought to be in a strict theoretical sense: it was a society (and remains one), of course, but one with many elements and structures that grew directly from the intervention. The result of this observation was the theoretical construct of a "society of intervention" – this is now a standing term in the European debate and within the scientific community. *Societies of intervention* have been the grand theme of my research since my experience in Kosovo, and this area of study has become a recognized field—by no means a niche—in research on peacekeeping and nation-building.[15]

Kosovo follows the main features of such societies of intervention:

1. Every intervention creates a society of intervention after the cessation of military violence ending the original conflict. It is not necessarily a post-conflict society, because it develops its own follow-up conflicts. These are not necessarily linked with or dependent on the root conflict.
2. All societies of intervention are *structurally* similar; this is true independent of the circumstances of government, indirect rule, strong or weak pressure on the interveners, etc. It does not mean that societies of intervention do not widely differ with regard to cultural and social phenomena.
3. The entanglement of interveners and the intervened as a temporarily "new" society is typical for societies of intervention. This "blending" of elements is not necessarily true for all private and contingent encounters and interactions between the two groups. Even if there are clear structures of subordination and dominance, there is no clear one-dimensional hierarchy like in colonial structures, or under purely military occupation. Quite often, we find a *collusive* relationship among actors from both groups.
4. The close relationship between interveners and the host produces new social entities and groupings. This is important for governance, especially on the level of *Lebenswelt* (or lifeworld)—the lived realm of culturally-rooted understandings and mutual accommodations—because traditional qualities, such as values, conflict regulation, rituals, etc. no longer function. Such a loss of identity on the lifeworld level is also true for many interveners. The interveners are much more dependent on the homeland discourse than they may think (the "homeland discourse" is the narrative pertaining to the entire intervention in the home country). In addition, there are competing discourses whenever more than one intervening nation is involved. Of course, the hosts also develop their homeland narrative in the process of intervention.
5. There is a great deal of cultural and social reinterpretation of the society required if both interveners and host want to collaborate. If they follow their own intentions or develop diverging perspectives, a society of interventions will not allow embedded conflicts, but will instead create the potential for an

[15] Bohnacker, et al., *Interventionskultur*.

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> escalation of follow-up conflicts. This is the field in which concepts of identity, dignity, honor, and informal institutions become relevant to the structure of an entire society, insofar as the acceptance of norms and rules, as dictated from the systems level, is not granted.[16]

The problem in Kosovo was that the orientation of the host (the Kosovar people) towards a symbolic issue (independence) and, for the Albanian majority, the expectation of getting rid of Serbian domination overarched any strategy directed toward attaining statehood. The state was not a realistic goal to achieve; its formal qualities, however, had been imperative for the politics of the main actors. On the symbolic level, self-determination and liberation were stronger than pragmatic considerations of becoming party to a regulated game with clear rules.

It was clear that our status as "liberators" would soon change into the role of "occupiers," or, at the very least, unwanted foreigners who hinder self-determination. Within the legal and structural framework of the new Europe, it is hard to imagine full self-determination with state-based governance that simultaneously grants security, the rule of law, welfare, and builds a stable republican society. As *liberators*, UNMIK could credibly implement "peacekeeping through administration." (This was a dominant role, even if the participation of the intervened only *simulated* equal status.) But the next step, after the period of emergency, did not go so smoothly. "Peace-building through development" needed more than local "partners"; it needed a shared interest within the society of intervention. The absence of such a common interest can help explain the partial failure of the entire experiment.

But the intervention was not a total failure; it would be unfair to say that the regional actors (Albanians, Serbs, other ethnic groups) would be unable to govern their affairs. What we have seen is that governance could not be enhanced, due to the poorly-coordinated impact of the bigger players (the U.S. as the patron of the new state, Russia and China as antagonists in the Security Council, the EC as an undecided partner of the new state, with more interest in stabilizing Serbia and Bosnia, and NATO in search of a new role at large). Thus, we observe governance beyond and away from the state, which reduces the impact of the question whether the rule of the elite is legitimate and a sustainable structure upon which sound statehood can be built.[17]

Conclusion: Lessons Learned

We were able to anticipate some of these developments, but not all of them. Simulating statehood is not that easy, if one attempts to create functioning and operational admini-

[16] For more on this, see Michael Daxner, "Das Konzept von Interventionskultur als Bestandteil einer gesellschaftsorientierten theoretischen Praxis," in *Interventionskultur*, eds. Bohnacker, et al.

[17] See Tanja Börzel, "The Shadow of Hierarchy," SFB Working Paper Series (Berlin: Free University Berlin/SFB 700, 2010).

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stration, institutions and trust, and to deliver public goods as no one else would. Faced with this situation, I found three aspects rather important:

- UNMIK acted—as many of the regular staff freely admitted—according to an established pattern. There was a proven, legitimate practice, and *within* the experiment of statehood by mandate there should not be any more social experiments than this practice indicates as a "doxa" (but for one exception: the introduction of the Euro by SRSG Kouchner in 2001). In other words, inflexible practices replaced the impact of both theories and adaptations to the situation as analyzed from a wider angle, i.e. the end of the intervention.
- Our administration was forced to hand over ideological and political power to the local partners before they were given authority over money and instruments. (This happened in the course of implementing the provisional constitution and self-government in 2001–02, under SRSGs Haekkerup and Steiner.) It created a certain sense of irresponsibility and negligence towards the self-determined building of a bureaucracy (Max Weber) and effective institutions by the Kosovars.
- The level of collusion between Kosovars and interveners was relatively high. This was detrimental more for the credibility than the functionality of institutions. But I think that this is how protectorates function.

In retrospect, the civil administration would have needed a clear mandate to build a new nation-state among other states; these states had been created as consequences of the dismemberment of the FRY, and they are more likely to become fragile ethnic-people states than nation-states. Shared trusteeship with an equally clear, open-end mandate would have allowed UNMIK to turn the game of statehood into one of state-building. Of course, the first option was not only blocked by the Security Council and the United States' determination to take the side of the Albanians in Kosovo; it also created a precedent (in Georgia, Republika Srpska), and it hampered subsequent state-building efforts, including recognition and embedding into supra-national structures (as an incentive and realistic option for both Kosovo and Serbia). The second option would have been more realistic, but it would have required more careful and thoughtful design of the protectorate states, and less of a transition from liberation into independence on unclear terms. Even the debate on models like the UN-brokered accord on South Tyrol were silenced or tabooed. (SRSG Steiner's refrain of "Standards before Status" was nice wording, but pragmatically inappropriate, since the governance of the state was dominant in many sectors that did not need the legitimacy of status, except for ideological and identity reasons.)

While some of the formal institutions with which I was involved—especially legislation on schooling and higher education—could be seen as a success, I was dissatisfied because it was impossible to negotiate beyond very insignificant issues that regional privileges (such as the cross-boundary labor markets, or accords on the recognition of former titles and rights) would be established prior to political agreements at a higher level. Even today, this is one of the weaknesses of both the Ahtisaari Plan and

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its subsequent developments. This may even serve to strengthen the existing non-state actors, and would seem to imply a government that would need internal legitimacy more than recognition.

All these (and more) questions are "rational," and they are "choices" beyond the interaction of institutions at the present stage. The model seems to be too complex for *rational choice*, but not for systemic conflict analysis. This analysis can be part of the political process, turning our initial position—scholars doing politics—into the opposite—politicians doing the science of intervention.

It is not terribly difficult to uncover a few scenarios going far into the past and to name (and shame) many responsible actors and groups. It is not always helpful to do so, because the explanation of so many inconsistencies and failures does not always open our eyes to corrections and new options. This is why Michael Schmunk's checklist of failures and recommendations may be helpful for an accurate assessment. My own point of view may introduce some complementary aspects:

- There is not enough awareness of the social and cultural texture of the societies; their lifeworld is neglected by the view from the systems level (and inversely, traditional and customary features have undergone more massive changes than people might be aware of)
- Occupation, intrusiveness, and inconsistencies on the part of the external actors have created a certain sense of irrelevance in the local actors, and, at the same time, an attitude of (un)comfortable accommodation with little accountability for their own future
- *Security* and *stability* are not congruent; both are necessary ingredients for a sustainable new order in the region, but they do not replace long-lasting peaceful structures and perspectives.

The time that will be required to accomplish the goals and missions of external intervention has been underestimated at the beginning of virtually every intervention; now, diachronic developments dominate the windows of opportunity.

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