



AAAS NEWS AND NOTES

edited by Tiffany Ayers

REPORTS

AAAS Reports on Exodus of Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo

It's been almost a year since the United Nations took control of Kosovo, yet there is concern that fighting could resume. Also, questions remain about the violence and destruction that occurred there last spring. Were the hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians who left Kosovo fleeing conflict between Yugoslav troops and the Kosovo Liberation Army or moving to escape NATO air attacks? Or was their departure the result of a campaign of ethnic cleansing?

A new AAAS report shows that the most plausible explanation for the exodus was a deliberate Yugoslav policy of "cleansing." The report, written by Patrick Ball, deputy director of the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, uses border registries, surveys of residents of refugee camps, and other data with innovative statistical methods. *Policy or Panic? The Flight of Ethnic Albanians from Kosovo, March–May 1999* can be found online at hrdata.aaas.org/kosovo/policyorpanic and will be available in English, Albanian, and Serbian.

By comparing the number of people who left each municipality over time to the times when NATO bomb attacks occurred, the study concludes that only a small fraction of ethnic Albanians fled Kosovo as a direct result of NATO bombing raids. According to the study, the mass exodus of refugees from Kosovo occurred in patterns so regular that they must have been coordinated. "In the context of qualitative accounts given by refugees, the most likely explanation for the migration is that Yugoslav authorities planned and implemented a centrally organized campaign to clear at least certain regions of ethnic Albanians," the report said.

"Unlike previous analyses which have relied exclusively on refugee testimonies, this study examines the causes of the refugee exodus by evaluating the statistical patterns of the exodus itself," the report said. "Using innovative statistical methods, the study breaks new ground for human rights analysis by contextualizing the claims made by witnesses with analysis of

objective administrative data."

This report is based on administrative records maintained by Albanian government officials who registered hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo as they passed through the small border post near the village of Morina between March and May 1999. The report also examines other official records of refugee movements and surveys conducted in refugee camps in Albania, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

More than 850,000 ethnic Albanians were forced from their homes and fled Kosovo during this period. Refugees arriving in the camps gave detailed accounts of massacres, rapes, and other atrocities. Families told stories of being forced from their homes, being stripped of their identities, and seeing their men taken from them, unsure of what became of them.

"The first priority of a people who have suffered atrocity is to establish the truth," Ball said. "Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic suggested that Kosovars fled their homes to escape NATO's bombing, although most of the refugees themselves told of being shelled by Yugoslav forces or of being threatened with death if they did not leave."

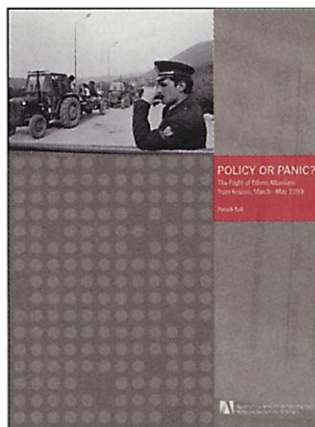
Ball traveled to Albania last spring and worked closely with Human Rights Watch, and Physicians for Human Rights, and Albanian and Kosovar partner organizations such as the Tirana-based Institute for Policy and Legal Studies to collect data from the refugees. Ball and Fritz Scheuren, a top statistician and AAAS member, set up a framework to scientifically measure the human rights abuses. Their methods included probability sampling, conversational inter-

views, relational databases, and statistics.

Science has proven to be a helpful tool in the often politically charged process of gathering and analyzing evidence of human rights abuses. Ball helped Guatemala in its investigation of the last three decades' history of human rights violations. The truth commission used quantitative analysis to show that, in several crucial regions, rates of indigenous people killed by the state were five to eight times greater than rates among non-indigenous people. Ball also furnished technical assistance to the truth commission in South Africa, which used quantitative analysis to show that the overwhelming majority of killings before 1990 were committed by the South African police.

"The work of the commissions in Guatemala and South Africa has shown how establishing the truth about past atrocities is the basis for restoring a human rights culture to a nation," Ball said. "Agreeing on a history which acknowledges who did what to whom is the first step in building a culture in which human rights are respected by the state and its citizens. Although much work remains to be done in Kosovo, we hope that the

AAAS report will help its people begin the process of discovering the truth and finding a path to reconciliation."



A guard at Morina crossing, April 1999. Photo by Gilles Peress.

AWARDS

Top Journalists Discuss Challenges of Reporting on Science

A new booklet published by AAAS looks at 50 years of science journalism, focusing on the theme of communicating science to the public and the challenges faced by journalists reporting on science. AAAS published the booklet, *A Measure of Excellence*, to mark the 50th anniversary of the AAAS Science Journalism Awards this year.

Several science journalists contributed articles to the booklet, which honors the field of science writing. Natalie Angier of *The New York Times* provides the introduction, where she talks about her love of sci-

ence writing. David Perlman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and John Noble Wilford of *The New York Times* take a look at the history and the future of science journalism in their two articles. And Paula Apsell of *NOVA* and Nick Tate of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* address some special issues in science writing, including the challenge of communicating science to the public and communicating global science to a local audience.

Angier says she finds that one of the best things about science writing is that it's good news. "Science is about humanity getting it right, a fraction at a time. Science is about looking up at the black bowl of night and knowing what we're seeing. Science is about integrating results from paleontology, botany, and molecular archeology to sketch a portrait of the Earth's first flower and to estimate when it lifted its revolutionary petals toward the sun."

The book concludes with a lively discussion piece among a science journalist (Curt Supplee, *The Washington Post*), a scientist (William Haseltine, chairman and chief executive officer of Human Genome Science, Inc.), and a science teacher (Jim Jarvis of Chantilly High School in Virginia).

"On the whole, I think scientific journalism is good," Haseltine said. "There is more good science journalism than bad science journalism. There's a lot more of it and I hope it will continue to increase. For example, there's a real hunger for health stories. Whether there continues to be a hunger for other stories depends on how economically relevant they are. But when they are rele-

vant, you'll read about them."

The booklet also pays tribute to the winners of the awards over the last half century, with a complete list of their names.

The AAAS Science Journalism Awards represent the pinnacle of achievement for professional journalists in the science writing field. Independent screening and judging committees comprised of scientists and science journalists select the winning entries. The winning entries are published each year and used as teaching tools in science writing programs at universities and colleges throughout the country. The awards are given in five categories: large newspaper, small newspaper, magazine, television, and radio.

A sixth category—online science journalism—has been added this year, in celebration of the 50th anniversary and in acknowledgement of the changing field of science journalism. With the increase in the number of Web sites devoted to the dissemination of news and the growing number of reporters who write for online sites, AAAS saw a need for the addition of an online category. It will also lend support and recognition to those who seek to apply the same standards of journalistic excellence in this new and changing medium.

Since their inception, the awards have honored more than 300 individuals for their achievements in science journalism and have recognized outstanding reporting for a general audience. The winning journalists have helped to foster the public's understanding and appreciation of science. Winners have written stories on life, physical,

and social sciences; engineering and mathematics; and policy issues that are grounded in science and technology.

The awards were established in 1945 by the Westinghouse Electric Corporation, through its Westinghouse Foundation, as part of a centennial celebration in memory of the birth of the company's founder, George Westinghouse. Westinghouse funded the awards for the next 45 years. In 1995, The Whitaker Foundation began funding the awards. Headquartered in Virginia, the foundation supports research and education in biomedical engineering.

For a copy of the booklet (\$7 for AAAS members and \$10 for nonmembers), contact the AAAS News and Information Office at 202-326-6440 or media@aaas.org.

INTERNET

Project 2061 Launches Spanish Version of Web Site

AAAS's Project 2061 has been working to help children become literate in science, mathematics, and technology. Now the project is expanding its work with policymakers, educators, and families in Hispanic communities as well as Spanish-speaking countries.

Project 2061, a long-term science, mathematics, and technology education reform initiative, recently launched a Spanish version of its Web site. The Spanish site, at www.project2061.org/español, is fully searchable and features the complete Spanish editions of two of the project's most influential publications. *Science for All Americans* (1989) defines what every citizen needs to know in science, mathematics, and technology, and *Benchmarks for Science Literacy* (1993) specifies learning goals for students to achieve by the end of grades 2, 5, 8, and 12. Both books have been widely distributed by the Ministry of Education in Mexico.

The new Web site also describes Project 2061's professional development programs for teachers and links to Project 2061's main site, which provides advice for parents with an interest in their child's school, connections to other relevant Web sites, and a variety of studies and reports, such as Project 2061's evaluations of science and mathematics textbooks.

Project 2061 has been working increasingly with educators from Latin American countries, particularly Panama. Professional development workshops have provided insight into U.S. standards and help for teachers in creating curricula that align well with the specific learning goals recommended in *Benchmarks for Science Literacy*.

PUBLICATIONS

AAAS Introduces Two New Science Publications

AAAS is now offering members two new publications from the editors of *Science*. *The Best of Science—Neuroscience* brings you the best work published in this field straight from the pages of *Science*. This collection of cutting edge articles and research reports covers circadian rhythms, neurodegeneration, and aging and includes a special introduction by Floyd Bloom, editor-in-chief of *Science*. *The Best of Science—Neuroscience* is a limited edition volume that is available now. For pricing information and to place orders, go to www.aaas.org/membership/neuroscience.htm.

The premier edition of *Science Roundup*, the members-only electronic newsletter from AAAS and *Science*, was sent to all AAAS members who provided their e-mail addresses by the last week of March. *Science Roundup*, sponsored by Informax, will be e-mailed quarterly and will review some of the more interesting and groundbreaking news, research, and opinion that has appeared during the quarter in the pages of *Science*—with hyperlinks to take you directly to the relevant parts of the journal's electronic sister publication, *Science Online*. If you are a AAAS member and did not receive the premier issue of *Science Roundup*, but would like to receive the next one, go to <http://secure.aaas.org/membership/roundup.htm> to subscribe.

