ORE AND PEACE

Bringing Natural Resource-Related Peacebuilding Down to Earth

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I, Bridget Storrie confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

ABSTRACT.

The concern of this research is what it means for people to live well together, in conflict-affected places rich in natural resources. While mining companies are increasingly encouraged to help build peace in fragile contexts by the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN Global Compact and The World Bank in particular, the peacebuilding prescriptions on offer are top-down technical tools. What sort of peace will they engender? And who is it for? In this thesis I draw on post-intentional phenomenological and post-phenomenological thinking to explore the human geologic relationship at three mines in the Balkans. In so doing, I focus on the literal and metaphorical 'voices from below' that have been neglected in peacebuilding so far, including the geologic. I offer a new way of conceptualising natural resource-related peacebuilding that is not top-down but bottom-up, grounded in the orebody itself and the people whose lives are most entangled with it.

This thesis contributes to knowledge in the theory and practice of natural resource-related peacebuilding by challenging the problem-solving approach in the literature that is concerned with how geology can be more fairly divided up and shared out for peace, premised on the norms of extractives-led capitalist growth and situated within the philosophical remit of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm. In this thesis an orebody emerges not as inert geology but animated by the conflicting and converging promises people embed in it in precarious post-conflict, post-socialist contexts. As such (drawing on the work of Lauren Berlant) an orebody can be understood as a 'problematic object' not because it is problematic per se but because of the contradictory, difficult and irrational things that people want it to do for them both near and far to the sites of its extraction. I draw on narrative mediation theory to argue that this problematic orebody can be 'externalized.' We can ask where our relationship with it is taking us? How well does this destination suit us? And what alternatives exist? In so doing I place natural resource-related peacebuilding into the potentially more transformative terrain of the *just transition*.

IMPACT STATEMENT.

The insights contained in this thesis are relevant to the challenge of natural resource-related peacebuilding. They are intended to slow down the gaze of policy makers, peacebuilders, mining industry professionals, mineworkers and other stakeholders in places such as Kosovo and Bosnia by highlighting the complexities inherent in the human geologic relationship and in so doing, perhaps contribute to generating better natural resource-related futures for the people that live there. This will be incremental and context specific and will depend on the continuing dissemination of what is contained here within the academic community, and among industry professionals, public policy makers and members of the general public. While this research has focused on orebodies in conflict-affected contexts, the methodological slowing down of the gaze on the human geologic relationship it advocates may also be useful in other places where there are issues over the long-term legacies of mining, conflict over mining development and where the context is to some extent fragile, such as Mongolia and in places where mining intersects with issues of indigenous reconciliation, such as the Canadian Northwest Territories (NWT).

The insights contained in this thesis are also relevant to the broader challenge of non-renewable resource extraction and have the potential to create new ways of thinking about the human geologic relationship, what humans want geology to do for them, and what geology might have to say about this. While this research focuses on the experiences of mineworkers in Kosovo and Bosnia this thesis argues that an orebody draws us all into a relational community and collapses the problematic dichotomies that exist in peacebuilding between local and global, top-down and bottom-up, and (for this research) producer and consumer. While natural resource-related peacebuilding can start with the mineworkers, the question of how we live well together with our natural resources is a problem that concerns us all.

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For Richard. Who has gold inside him.

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

Conflict: Refers to violence that takes many forms; physical, structural, cultural, epistemic, psychological, ecological and intergenerational. Johan Galtung argues that conflict exists where resources are unevenly distributed or exist 'in some districts and for some groups only.' (Galtung 1969, 171)

Negative Peace: A lack of violent conflict. See Positive Peace.

Orebody: A solid mass of rock that is rich in minerals and/or metals that are deemed to have commercial value and that has contours that separate it from the surrounding rock

Peacebuilding: The long-term commitment to establishing positive peace in countries emerging from violent conflict. This research draws on Galtung to define peacebuilding as the negotiation of social goals for the future that may be 'complex and difficult, but not impossible to attain' (Galtung, 1969: 167). Significantly peacebuilding and *peacemaking* are two different things although they are frequently conflated.

Peacemaking: The process of ending of violent conflict through the negotiation of ceasefires and peace settlements.

Positive Peace: More than a lack of physical violence, positive peace is connected with development, the restoration of relationship, the non-violent resolution of conflict and the creation of political, social and economic systems that meet the needs of everyone. It has been defined as the 'optimal environment in which human potential can flourish' (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019).

Post-Conflict/Conflict-affected: I use the terms 'post-conflict' and 'conflict-affected' to describe the places under study in this research because they are widely accepted and easily understood. However, they are both problematic. Post-conflict implies that conflict ends

when the fighting stops which is not the case. It also suggests that there is a neat, definable 'pre-' and 'post-' to conflict that does not reflect the messy reality on the ground and the ways in which peace and conflict run alongside each other and emerge and subside as they do so. 'Conflict-affected' escapes this problematic conceptualization of conflict as a bell curve but also implies that being 'conflict-affected' is a condition of societies emerging from violent conflict rather than something that affects all societies everywhere to some degree or other. And so, while both terms are used here, they are used with the acknowledgement that they come with implications to which this research does not subscribe.

A NOTE ON SPELLING.

The spelling of place names in northern Kosovo are spelt two ways. Indeed, Kosovo itself is spelt two ways. Kosovo/Kosova, Trepća/Trepça, Kosovska Mitrovića/Mitrovicë. The mine Stan Terg is spelt three ways; Stan Trg/Stari Trg/Stan Terg. The first reflects a British misreading of the place name, the second is Serbian and the third Kosovar Albanian. Spelling is therefore a political issue in this part of Kosovo.

My intention is to avoid making any sort of political point about who belongs where in the spelling I adopt and to follow predominant usage where possible. In the course of this research, I refer to Kosovo rather than Kosova because it is more conventional. I adopt Stan Terg rather than Stari Trg because this mine is managed and mined by Kosovar Albanians. I use the neutral Trepca, rather than Trepća or Trepça and refer to the divided city of Kosovska Mitrovića/Mitrovicë as Mitrovica.

Large detailed political map of Central Balkan Region with major cities – 2008. Published by Vidiani.com under CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://www.vidiani.com/large-detailed-political-map-of-central-balkan-region-with-major-cities-2008/). Annotated by the author to show the approximate location of Olovo Mine, Sase Mine and Stan Terg Mine.

The English Colony at the Stan Terg mine, Kosovo. Photo taken by the author, 2018

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INTRODUCTION.

Indeed, a company's 'bottom-line' can no longer be separated from peace, development and the other goals of the United Nations - Kofi Annan (Banfield et al, 2005)

In 1937 the British travel writer Rebecca West visited the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo. At that stage, Stan Terg was owned and managed by the British mining company Seltrust and West is enchanted by the 'lyrical quality' of the English-style mine houses with their pretty front gardens and their windows reflecting the setting sun (West, 2006: 930). Against a troubled political and social backdrop, the nearby town of Mitrovica seems 'drenched with a rising tide' of increasing prosperity, and newly civilized by the presence of the mine (West, 2006: 926). The Scottish general manager is proud that he employs both Albanians and Serbs and optimistic that they will be able to work together. 'This country' he tells West 'is getting over its past nicely' (West, 2006: 933).

Just over 80 years later that little settlement above the mine is ruined, the mining houses cratered with bullet holes. While the conflict between Serbia and Kosovo was not ostensibly

associated with natural resources, an eight-day strike by the Kosovan Albanian miners in this mine in 1989 was a catalyst that led to the violent break-up of Yugoslavia, culminating in the conflict in Kosovo in 1999. Now, the vast Trepca industrial complex and the associated mines and infrastructure (including Stan Terg) are divided between Serb ownership and operation to the north west of the river Ibar where the population is majority Serb, and Kosovan Albanian ownership and operation to the south and agreeing the future of the complex is the most contentious issue still to be negotiated between Belgrade and Pristina (B92, 2015; B92, 2015a; B92, 2017; RTK Live, 2017; Balkan Insight, 2013). As the process stalls, people live, work and raise their families amid the collapsing mine buildings, the destroyed mine houses and the ruined gardens, where the hopes and wishes of the past, particularly related to natural resource extraction seem to collide with the present but have little to offer for the future. If, as Ingold suggests, a landscape is never complete, but is 'perpetually under construction,' eighty years after Rebecca West's visit, it is hard to see what is being constructed here (Ingold, 1993: 162).

The concern of this research is what it means for people to live well together, in conflict-affected places rich in natural resources. While mining companies are increasingly encouraged to help build peace in fragile contexts by the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN Global Compact and The World Bank in particular (Banfield et al, 2005; Bannon and Collier, (2003); Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; Lujala, Aas Rustad, & Kettenmann, 2016; Maconachie, 2016), the peacebuilding prescriptions on offer are largely top-down technical tools and I wonder what they mean for the people who actually live and work in these places. What sort of peace will they engender? And who is it for? I take a phenomenological approach that focuses on the literal and metaphorical 'voices from below' (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015: 825) that have been neglected in peacebuilding so far and offer a new way of conceptualising natural resource-related peacebuilding that is not top-down but bottom-up, grounded in the orebody itself.

The objective of this research is to explore the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship in three conflict-affected contexts in the Balkans. In order to do this, I seek to answer three questions:

1. What is the relationship between humans and geology in conflict-affected contexts?

2. What difference does a geological orebody make to this relationship?

3. What does this mean for building peace?

This thesis contributes to knowledge in the theory and practice of natural resource-related peacebuilding by challenging the problem-solving approach in the literature that is concerned with how geology can be more fairly divided up and shared out for peace. This is premised on the norms of extractives-led capitalist growth and situated within the philosophical remit of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm. Instead, this thesis reconceptualizes an orebody as central to constructions of what a good life is and who that good life is for in the aftermath of violent conflict. It affords a sense of security in a world that may have already shown people the worst it has and in which people must 'keep on living on' regardless (Berlant, 2011: 24). I draw on the work of Lauren Berlant to propose that an orebody can be understood as a cluster of conflicting and converging promises that people want it to make to them about the future and that these promises animate it and make it lively. As such an orebody can be understood as a 'problematic object' (ibid) not because it is problematic per se, but because of the contradictory, difficult, rational and irrational things people want it to do. But an orebody is also problematic because it is what it objectively *is.* In other words, a slow sedimentation of geological time that is not renewable in human life scales, at least. Whatever we want geology to do, it cannot do it indefinitely. I draw on narrative mediation theory to argue that this problematic orebody can be 'externalized' (Winslade & Monk, 2008: 13). In other words, we can ask where our relationship with it is taking us? How well does this destination suit us? And what alternatives exist? In making this move I unshackle natural resource-related peacebuilding from the logic in the literature that mining equals prosperity equals peace and place it somewhere potentially more transformative; in the emerging conversation about just transition and how to resource the future through less mining rather than more.

1.1 THE PROBLEM OF PEACEBUILDING. THE GAP IN THE LITERATURE.

This thesis takes as its starting point literature published as a result of a research collaboration between the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Environmental Law Institute, the University of Tokyo, and McGill University in which it is argued that natural resource

management is essential for supporting post-conflict peacebuilding (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012: 141). The premise is that natural resources have the potential to drive either peace or conflict and must be properly managed to ensure they do the first and not the second. Properly managing natural resources for peace means curtailing belligerents' access to resource revenues (Le Billon, 2012), mitigating conflict risks by improving environmental and social standards (Shankleman, 2012), improving transparency through commodity and revenue tracking (Grant, 2012; Wright, 2012) ensuring the fair distribution of revenues (Ross et al, 2012; Maconachie, 2016) institution building (Collier & Hoeffler, 2012) and encouraging dialogue between adversaries (Boege & Franks, 2012).

It is not the intention of this research to argue against the need for mining to be better managed in *all* contexts, including places that are recovering from violent conflict. The UNEP literature, however, offers technical prescriptions for peace that prioritize issues of human security over a more holistic exploration of what peace actually means for the people who live and work in conflict-affected areas that are rich in natural resources, and how to achieve it. While peacebuilding in general is undergoing what is described as a *local turn* (Paffenholz, 2014; Lederach, 2005) that focusses on the 'voices from below' (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015) as a means of emancipating local agency this local turn is not evident in the high value natural resource-related literature. But peacebuilding is not just establishing security, delivering basic services, restoring the economy and rebuilding inclusive political processes, although these are all essential. Peacebuilding is also the negotiation of complex and difficult social goals for the future (Galtung, 1969: 167). It is working out how people can live together again in the aftermath of conflict. It is asking, as the peacebuilder John Paul Lederach proposes, a 'simple and endlessly complex' question '*How do we transcend the cycles of violence that bewitch our human community while still living in them?*' (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 207, emphasis original).

There is a gap in the literature therefore that will be explored in more detail in Chapter Two. This research intends to address this gap by taking a 'bottom-up' approach to natural resource-related peacebuilding. Here I follow Lederach, who argues that the *real-politik* approach to building peace is 'blind to the existence of social spaces, relationships, ideas and processes that do not fit its preexisting definition of what counts' and is in danger of

neglecting the *in situ* seeds for positive social change that may already exist. (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1255). He advocates an approach that is rooted in the local context in which peacebuilding solutions are not imposed from above but generated from below. The concern of this research is therefore the space of the orebody itself and the two questions that Lederach argues peacebuilders must ask themselves early and often: 'What exists? And how are we in relationship to it?' (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 2304).

There is also a gap in the literature in that long post-conflict contexts such as Bosnia and Kosovo have been neglected, partly perhaps because they present a low risk of lapsing back into violence. Instead, there is a focus on places where the threat of armed conflict resonates more loudly: Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Niger Delta, Iraq, Sudan (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012). Natural resource-related peacebuilding, as it appears in the literature, is less about building peace in these places and more about avoiding exacerbating conflict. And yet, at the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo, the Sase mine near Srebrenica, the Olovo mine north of Sarajevo and the ArcelorMittal mine in Prijedor, for example, natural resources play a role in the enduring post-conflict dynamic that exists. In each place geology seems to add its peculiar heft to the shaping of territorial divisions, to the prosecution of war ends by other means, to accounts of what happened that are diametrically opposed to each other, and to the conjuring of wished-for futures in which one group thrives at the expense of the other.

Finally, there is an ethical imperative for this research. Both peacebuilding and reconciliation are difficult and contested concepts (Bloomfield, 2006: 3; Crocker, 2002; Dwyer, 2003; Hamber and Kelly, 2004; Prager & Govier, 2003). As Johan Galtung, one of the founders of peace studies writes 'reconciliation is a theme with deep psychological, sociological, theological, philosophical, and profoundly human roots – and nobody really knows how to successfully achieve it' (Galtung, 2001: 4). And yet as Susan Dwyer notes, reconciliation is urged 'upon people who have been bitter and murderous enemies, upon victims and perpetrators of terrible human rights abuses, upon groups and individuals whose very self-conceptions have been structured in terms of historical and often state-sanctioned relations of dominance and submission' (Dwyer, 2003: 92) and it is being urged in mining contexts, too (Boege & Franks, 2012; Del Castillo, 2008). Furthermore, there is a striking example in the Balkans of an externally mediated attempt at reconciliation between a mining company and

a divided community that has gone wrong. The failed attempt to forge an agreement on how (and if) to memorialize the Omarska death camp, situated on the property of the ArcelorMittal mine in Prijedor, Bosnia Herzegovina has caused enduring psychological harm, particularly to those who were imprisoned there, and their families (Sivac-Bryant, 2015).[1] The idea that resource extraction can contribute to reconciliation, or that mining companies can be involved in peacebuilding, should therefore be handled with extreme care.

1.2. CONTEXT.

The context for this research is Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina both formerly part of socialist Yugoslavia. In the 1990s Yugoslavia collapsed into conflict and the fighting was particularly fierce and enduring in Bosnia Herzegovina where Muslims, Serbs, and Croats struggled for territorial control in a republic that had always been ethnically mixed during which approximately 200,000 people died or went missing, two million were displaced, the concept of 'ethnic cleansing' emerged and a crime was committed at Srebrenica which was subsequently classed as an act of genocide (Southwick, 2005). The war was ended by the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in Ohio in 1995. But while the Dayton Accord brought the armed conflict to an end, it was, like other peace agreements, a 'social and political antacid' designed to calm symptoms rather than heal what had caused them (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1027).

Two ethno-nationalist geopolitical entities were created at the end of the war: The Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina, which controls 51% of the country and Republika Srpska, which controls the other 49%. The 2013 census confirmed that the two entities are aligned with ethnicity, with 92.11% of all Serbs living in Republika Srpska, and 91.39% of Bosnian Croats and 88.23% of Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) living in the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina (Toè, 2016). The Dayton peace accord therefore paradoxically laid the foundation for the long-term separation of ethnic and religious populations that used to be mixed. As Christopher Bennett writes it is an arrangement that is the perpetuation of war aims 'by other means' (Bennett, 2016: 2).

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[1] For an account of how this mediation process unfolded, see Pelz & Reeves, (2008).

While the armed conflict ended in 1995 there is not yet peace in Bosnia Herzegovina (Lippman, 2019: 2; Bennett, 2016). Instead, as the Bosnian economist Boriša Falatar notes in an article published in *The Guardian* in 2017, at the political level there is a pervasive 'rhetoric of secession and war,' a drifting away from the EU, and a consequent migration out of the country by Bosnian citizens (Falatar, 2019). For Bosnians, what exists is, as Bennett notes, something akin to *Groundhog Day* in which politicians continue to use 'the same provocative, insensitive and irresponsible rhetoric', trapping Bosnians in a seemingly never-ending loop of political, social and economic paralysis (Bennett, 2016: xviii). To say there is not peace in Bosnia does not imply there is physical violence, however. While the threat of violence remains to some degree, the conflict that exists now is structural, cultural and economic. What is required in Bosnia is not peace*making,* or the introduction of measures to stop armed conflict, but peace*building*, or the negotiation of how people can live better lives together in the future.

The war in Kosovo started in early 1998 and ended in June 1999. It was fought between the forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which at that time consisted of Serbia and Montenegro, and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), and was stopped after a NATO intervention to end a Serbian campaign of ethnic cleansing. While Bosnia Herzegovina has been an independent country since the end of the Bosnian war in 1995, the status of Kosovo is still disputed after declaring independence in 2008. While over 100 countries recognize Kosovo as an independent country, including the US, the UK, France, Germany and Turkey, Serbia, Russia and China do not. As James Ker-Lindsay writes in an article published in *Balkan Insight* the acrimonious battle for recognition is becoming 'increasingly hostile' (2019). Certainly 'Kosovo je Serbija' (Kosovo is Serbia) is a common graffiti on the streets of Belgrade.

Kosovo remains 'desperately poor' and still prone to violence, (The Economist, 2018) and there is an FCO travel advisory in northern Kosovo, where four Serb-majority municipalities resist integration into Albanian-populated Kosovo (Bancroft, 2020: 74). The north of Kosovo remains a contested space and there are periodic outbreaks of violence here. The nearby town of Mitrovica is divided between Kosovan Albanians to the south of the river Ibar and ethnic Serbs to the north and the Trepca industrial complex is located in this uneasy landscape

with the Stan Terg mine and the huge Trepca industrial park to the south, and the smelter, the flotation plant and the small Belo Brdo and Crnac mines to the north. Once the flagship of Yugoslav-era 'brotherhood and unity,' Trepca is now divided too.

Both Bosnia and Kosovo are in a similar process of transition that is multiple. They are not just 'post-conflict' in other words, but post-socialist, post-authoritarian and to some extent post-industrial too. What this means is that the liberal peacebuilding project does not just involve transitioning from conflict to peace but also fundamentally changing the political and economic structures that had previously existed. As Timothy Donais writes, in the Balkans not only was Humpty Dumpty to be put back together again, 'he was to be given a new identity and a completely different personality' (2006: kindle location 144). Part of this includes membership of the EU but the accession process is mired in difficulty. As a result, people are trapped in a state of impasse between what has ostensibly past and the waning fantasy of what is yet to come.

Three mines were chosen as research sites for this project, the Stan Terg lead, zinc and silver mine in Kosovo, the Olovo lead mine in the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina and the Sase lead and zinc mine near Srebrenica in Republika Srpska, Bosnia Herzegovina. The mines were chosen because they illustrate something different in the human geologic relationship. At Stan Terg humans and geology have been in an industrial-scale relationship for over one hundred years and the orebody is deeply implicated in the state of intractable conflict that exists in this part of northern Kosovo. The ore-rich strata subtend a surface landscape in which people are divided, with Kosovar Albanians south of the river Ibar and ethnic Serbs to the north. At Sase, the mine sits within a landscape associated with the massacre of over 8,000 Muslim men and boys by Serb forces in 1995. People have re-mixed since the war but not necessarily happily and two incompatible versions of what happened here exist. While people have mixed on the surface, underground it is a different matter. The Sase mine is run by Serbs and no Muslims are employed there. At Olovo, the population un-mixed during the war and has stayed that way. The town and surrounding area are almost entirely populated by Bosnian Muslims and what exists below the surface reflects what exists upon it. Unlike Stan Terg (and to a lesser extent Sase) this is a young mine at the start of its life. And yet there are already signs that the promises embedded in this orebody are incompatible.

1.3. RESEARCH AIMS. ADDRESSING A PROBLEM OR A PARADIGM?

When this research began its aim was to contribute to wellbeing in areas that have experienced violent conflict by improving the way mining companies operate. It took what Martin Ince, the author of a workshop summary on sustainable prosperity terms a "better business-as-usual" problem-solving approach (Ince, 2014: 12) that is congruent with the one that is manifest in the UNEP literature.[2] This assumes the inevitability of resource extraction within the existing liberal peacebuilding paradigm and focusses on the *process* of extraction as the issue that requires attention rather than the viability of the paradigm itself. As the research progressed however this perspective was unsettled by a growing sense of urgency about climate change that emerged alongside this project. The years 2015, 2016 and 2018 were the hottest on record, President Trump announced the withdrawal of the US from the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the Extinction Rebellion movement gathered momentum and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its 2018 report warning that 'rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society' were needed in the next twelve years to avoid catastrophic levels of warming (IPCC, 2018).

This research is concerned with the mining of metals and minerals rather than fossil fuels such as coal which are more urgently connected to climate change. But all mining is part of an emerging debate about the transition to a 'green economy' that is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive, and how the mining industry can resource a zero-carbon future in a way that meets growing demand for certain metals on one hand but extracts less of them on the other (Allwood et al, 2019; CEE Bankwatch Network, 2016; Swilling & Annecke, 2012. See also UNEP, 2011). It is a debate that involves issues such as circularity, life-cycle efficiency, recycling and tailings recovery as means to make mining more efficient. It focuses attention

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[2] The workshop was hosted by The British Academy and the ESRC. Ince notes that 'There was almost universal agreement at the meeting that sustainability in the environmental sense cannot be attained without firm social and economic foundations built upon equity and justice. At the same time, sustainability involves a wide range of resources questions, including climate change, food, water, energy, population, and environmental conservation. The sheer size of this challenge suggests that a wide range of approaches is called for. There could be a place for incremental reform, characterized at the meeting as "better business-as-usual," as well as more radical change, such as a severe reduction in the developed world's levels of consumption' (Ince, 2014, p 12)

on improving mine closure practice and a *just transition* to post-mining futures and acknowledges the need for 'a public discussion about future lifestyles' (Allwood et al, 2019. See also Harrison et al, 2019). An *extractive* resource after all, is a *consumptive* one too (Bakker & Bridge, 2006: 12). In this context I argue there is a risk that the mining = prosperity = peace formula evident in the literature risks trapping people and places recovering from violent conflict on a trajectory of their own in which peace is conceptualized as coming from more mining when other people in other contexts are considering how another type of peace might come from less. In other words, while a 'better-business-as-usual' approach might help solve one problem, does it do it at the risk of exacerbating another?

In addition, as I thought more about the human geologic relationship, I found myself engaging with the work of Bruno Latour (2004, 2018), Jane Bennett (2010), Kathryn Yusoff (2013, 2015, 2017), Nigel Clark (2017) Elizabeth Povinelli (2016) and Marcia Bjornerud (2018) all of whom draw attention to the need to reconsider our relationship with the geological strata that subtend us in the context of climate change. While the UNEP literature understands the social and the geological realms as separate, and geological resources as unproblematically existing for the use of humans, Bennett, Clark & Yusoff, Latour, and Povinelli all argue in different ways that this dichotomy is a false one and that the human and geologic are intimately intertwined. As Latour writes, what has shifted in the context of climate change is that the prefix "geo" now 'designates an agent that participates fully in public life' (Latour, 2018: 41).

What all these writers have in common is a concern with how humans and geology can live better lives together. Latour's call is to look more closely at the places in which we dwell and the other beings that dwell there with us; the birds in the sky, the people, the humus, the dust, the materiality of the ground itself and the geology that subtends them. The point of this, for Latour, is to imagine a better way of being for all beings, human, non-human, organic, inorganic, bios and geos in the 'new climactic regime' (Latour, 2018). A dwelling place for Latour is not a home but a certain ecology that pulls people together in relationship. It is '*that on which a terrestrial depends for its survival* while asking *what other terrestrials also depend on it?* (Latour 2018: 95, emphasis original). If that is the case, is an orebody a dwelling place too? Latour argues that we must ask new 'geo-social questions' about what it means to live

together that transcend established ideas about how earth and society work (Latour, 2018: 63).

For Jane Bennett the point of her vital materialist perspective is to 'promote greener forms of human culture and more attentive encounters between 'people-materialities and thing-materialities' through the figure of matter, including geological matter, that is not inanimate but lively, vibrant and agential (Bennett, 2010: 91). The geologist Marcia Bjornerud argues for an attitude of geological 'timefulness' in the hope that understanding our common geological heritage will help solve the 'intractable environmental, social, and economic problems' that currently face us (Bjornerud, 2018: 18). Clark and Yusoff introduce the *geosocial formation* as a means of opening social thought to the geological and the ways in which 'social and political agency is both constrained and made possible by the forces of the earth itself' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 3). The point of this is to think 'beyond existing dependencies of social worlds upon particular geological strata and to imagine alternative ''geosocial' futures' (ibid).

I place this research within this emerging thinking about the human geologic future. My aim is to think beyond the dependency of peace upon the extraction of geological strata as it appears in the literature and to conceptualize the relationship between conflict, peace and natural resources in a way that goes beyond the ideas established within it about how earth and society work. This requires a reconceptualization of two entities that emerge unproblematically in the literature but are, in fact, problematic. The first is *ore* and the second is *peace*.

1.4. WHAT IS ORE?

This research offers a place-based approach to natural resource-related peacebuilding that is grounded in the orebody itself. But this is not an orebody as it appears in the literature in which natural resources exist as *extractive* resources (for example Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; UNEP, 2015). In other words, they are naturally and inevitably 'in-place' to be instrumentalized by humans. As Bakker and Bridge argue this conceptualization assumes a 'common sense naturalism' to resources (2006: 9) that neglects the 'dynamic properties of 'non-living natures' and risks reinforcing the perceived division between nature and society

(2006: 11). I draw on Deleuze and Guattari's figure of the *rhizome* (2016, Chapter 1) to argue that an orebody is not just a bounded geological entity but is rhizomorphic. It is buried but vibrant with the potential of what people want it to do for them. Like a botanical rhizome it puts out roots in the subterranean mineshafts and corridors and sends up shoots across the surface of the Earth, in the mining infrastructure, the processing plant, the industrial park in northern Kosovo, and the seeds from these shoots travel near and very far - under oceans, to the moon, into people's hips and their hearts. Anyone who uses a smartphone, takes an antidepressant, buys a handgun or installs solar panels is part of the same rhizomatic ecology. Like Deleuze and Guattari's example of couch grass the orebody is connected underground with other rhizomes, other geological strata, other mines, other metals and minerals and all the things those rhizomes touch. Metals are taken up to the surface in the ore and brought back down to the depths. They are *deterritorialised* and *reterritorialized*, in the metals of the mine shaft, the miners' lamps, their phones, my camera, the bullets in the bodies being exhumed from the mass grave in the tailings at the Sase mine. As Deleuze and Guattari write, any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, 'and must be' (Deleuze & Guattari 2016: 5)

An orebody is therefore both a 'grounded' and a 'boundless place'. (Relph, 2008: preface. See also Richardson & Weszkalnys, 2014: 18).[3] It pulls us into relationship with each other and with the geological strata with which we share our lives and in so doing it collapses some of the troubling dichotomies in peacebuilding; between global and local, top-down and bottom-up, centre and periphery. The point of this is that it offers a more radical perspective for peacebuilding. As the geographer Edward Relph argues the effective resolution of this century's most pressing challenges such as climate change and economic disparity depends on us having a firm grasp of their 'simultaneously grounded and yet boundless characteristics, which is the very quintessence of understanding place' (Relph, 2008: preface). Taking a place-based approach that is grounded in the orebody is therefore not intended to imply that the problem of natural resources, conflict and peace is only a local one but that it is global too.

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[3] Relph writes that '[t]he recognition of what might be called the boundlessness of place is, I think, the most important contribution to understanding place.' (Relph, 2008: preface).

What the figure of the rhizome also offers is a reminder that the logic that exists in the literature that well-managed mining can lead to peace is not inevitable. As David Harris has said, the rhizome 'allows us to see that the links and patterns that exist in certain systems are not the only possible ones and they shouldn't make the claim they are the only possible ones although they often do (Harris, 2016). Instead, they may be rhizomes that have become 'stable, limited or blocked' (ibid). The point of this is that it makes space for radical politics that entail not just operating within the choices offered by existing systems but realizing entirely new possibilities (ibid).

Lastly, what the figure of the rhizome offers is an alternative methodological approach for peacebuilding to the tools of conflict analysis such as conflict trees, actor mapping tools, and other techniques for peacebuilding that are concerned with identifying 'windows of vulnerability' and 'windows of opportunity', 'dividers' and 'connectors', drivers of conflict and 'drivers of peace' (Levinger, 2013; Ramsbotham et al, 2013) that have arguably made peacebuilding a technical rather than an imaginative endeavour (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1458).[4] I draw on the post-intentional phenomenological approach advocated by Mark Vagle that is concerned with how things connect rather than what things are and that sees philosophically-oriented work 'as generative, creative, and complicated' (Vagle, 2014: 117). Vagle refers to Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome and the 'lines of flight' concept associated with it to argue that social, ethical and political relations are not stable, singular and final and do not lend themselves to 'simplicities and essences' (2014: 118). He encourages phenomenological researchers to follow the lines of flight that 'explode' out of their research as a means not of understanding what a phenomenon 'is' but what it might *become* (Vagle, 2014: 119).

1.5. WHAT IS PEACE?

In the UNEP literature peace is associated with development, growth, raised living standards, and economic equality (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012: 3). The objectives of peacebuilding are to

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[4] Lederach writes 'My feeling, is that we have overemphasized the technical aspects and political content to the detriment of the art of giving birth to and keeping a process creatively alive. In so doing we have missed the core of what creates and sustains constructive social change.'

establish security, deliver basic services, restore the economy and livelihoods, and rebuild governance and inclusive political process (ibid: 5). What is missing in this conceptualization of peacebuilding is an idea of what peace actually is for the people who live in conflict-affected contexts that are rich in natural resources. I draw on the work of Michael Pugh, Neil Cooper and Mandy Turner the editors of *Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding* (2008) to argue for a reconceptualization of natural resource-related peacebuilding that is less preoccupied with notions of security and more concerned with what it means for people and (in the case of this research) people *and geology* to live well *together.* As Pugh et al write in the peacebuilding field in general there is a need for a new paradigm that 'takes local voices seriously, rejects universalism in favour of heterodoxy, reconceptualizes the abstract individual as a social being and limits damage to planetary life' (2008: 398). They call this a 'life welfare paradigm' and it is intended to encompass 'alternative notions of life (the individual, community, the biosphere and planetary environment) and alternative understandings of the political economy of peacebuilding in war-torn societies' (2008: 398). It is therefore intended to challenge liberalism and the economies of power inherent within it as the only normative construct for peacebuilding and to look beyond the human in order to optimize life potential for people and planet (2008: 398).

Pugh et al argue that achieving this sort of peace requires 'serial negotiation' rather than implementation from above. In a similar way I conceptualize natural resource-related peacebuilding not as a question of leveraging resource extraction to establish security, deliver basic services, restore the economy, and rebuild governance although that may all be part of it. Instead, I propose it means negotiating a vision for the future that optimizes the life potential of both the social and the geologic together and the complex, difficult but 'not impossible' steps required to achieve it (Galtung, 1969: 167).[5] It means asking not just what it means to live well, nor what it means to live well *together,* but what it means to live well together *here,* in this particular place with this particular geology. Significantly, for Pugh et al the transformative element of the life welfare perspective is that it advocates a focus on what

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[5] Here I draw on Johan Galtung's conceptualisation of peace as social goals that are 'at least verbally agreed to by many, if not necessarily by most' that may be 'complex and difficult, but not impossible, to attain' (Galtung, 1969: p 167)

exists *outside* a conflict-affected society. It is intended to shine a light on the taken-for-granted assumptions of the capitalist norms of the liberal peace. For this research it means interrogating the extractives-led growth paradigm that underpins it.

1.6. 'CRUEL OPTIMISM'. AN ANALYTICAL LEVER.

This research draws on the work of archeologist Bjørnar Olsen and the social and literary theorist Lauren Berlant as an 'analytical lever' for understanding the human geologic relationship. Olsen's concern is the *difference* objects, places and landscapes make to the ways in which people 'live, think and act' (Olsen, 2010: 31). He concludes that 'durability' and '"in-place-ness"' (2010: 172) are the two most significant characteristics of landscapes, objects and places for affording people a sense of existential security. Our '[s]treets, buildings, airports, boats, tents, fireplaces, quartz quarries, and reindeer fences' (Olsen, 2010: 160) are there every morning when we wake up, reassuring us that the world as we know it goes on. If this is the case, there is nothing more durable and 'in-place' than the geological strata beneath our feet. Unlike an airport, a boat, a tent or a reindeer fence people can embed promises into the geological realm and expect them to endure. All over the world the durability and in-placeness of geological resources have created a centripetal force, pulling people in and holding them together, often in remote and seemingly inhospitable places; the coal in Spitzbergen, the diamonds in the Kimberley in the northern part of Western Australia, the copper and gold in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia. In each place their geological heft appears to ground society and the inequalities, hierarchies and asymmetries that exist within it.[6] But there is also nothing *less* durable and in-place than an orebody. Mining is the process of blasting, drilling and extracting the geological strata beneath our feet. It is brought to the surface, crushed, floated in chemicals, roasted, powdered and shipped off far from the sites of its extraction. If a geological resource offers a sense of existential security and the prospect of a certain future on one hand, mining, paradoxically, is the process of disrupting it on the other.

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[6] As Latour writes "it is when power is exerted through things that don't sleep and associations that don't break down that it can last longer and expand further' (Latour, 2004: 225).

I place this research at the heart of this paradox. In the course of this thesis, I use Lauren Berlant's concept of *cruel optimism* (2011) as an 'analytic lever' for understanding our paradoxical relationship with geology (Berlant, 2011: 27). Cruel optimism is the idea that people can become attached to things – objects, people, ideas, political projects, *geological bodies* - that are an obstacle to their flourishing. Berlant writes that at the center of cruel optimism is 'that moral-intimate-economic thing called "the good life" and the "good-life" fantasies that we are attached to even though we know they are fragile, or they don't work, or they have a cost (Berlant, 2011: 2). It is a relationship of expectation that '*this* time, nearness to *this* thing will help you or a world to become different in just the right way' (Berlant, 2011: 2) even though the evidence is that *this* thing doesn't bring the prosperity it promises. Cruel optimism is therefore about projecting an idea of what a good life is onto something. It is asking it to make promises to us about what a good life is and who it is for that it cannot necessarily keep. It is, as Berlant explicitly states 'the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object *in advance of its loss'* (Berlant, 2010: kindle location 1293).

In *Cruel Optimism* Berlant's concern is the contemporary moment in the US and Europe and she looks at 'precarious bodies, subjectivity, and fantasy' in terms of 'citizenship, race, labor, class (dis)location, sexuality, and health' in the light of the withdrawal of the state from the post-World War Two project of the expansion of economic opportunities and the optimism associated with this (Berlant, 2011: 2). The territory of *Cruel Optimism* is the post-1990s world in which the project of real structural transformation has dissolved and left in its place a set of 'fraying' fantasies; that there will be 'upward mobility, job security, political and social equality, and lively, durable intimacy' in a world that seems consistently to demonstrate that life is neither reciprocal nor fair and that the mechanisms through which it is supposed to add up to something do not work the way they should (Berlant, 2011: 3).

How does mining fit into this? At first, cruel optimism seemed to abstract a concept to be applied to something as grounded as an orebody. The relationships of attachment Berlant deals with are to things like a new dress, a new diet, a new lover, a new political project and the things they promise, and these attachments are deeply tied up in late capitalism and the fantasies of flourishing that exist that both sustain people and disenfranchise them from

political and economic processes and rob them of their agency. In addition, the theory seems embedded in its northern American and western European context. The post-socialist, post-conflict, post-industrial world of the Balkans is not a natural setting for a theory that is about mobility, job security, equality, intimacy and 'constructing cushions for enjoyment' in a contemporary world of relative wealth where subjects are worn out by the 'labor of reproducing life' in a late capitalist context amid the evidence that this life might not amount to what is hoped for (Berlant, 2011: 3). In Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina, in contrast, people may be worn out by conflict, by the collapse of socialism, by peacebuilding promises that have not been kept, by the long transition to seeming nowhere.

And yet the concept of cruel optimism kept emerging as this research progressed, not as a preformed, neatly packaged way of understanding the human geologic relationship in its entirety but as a lens that persistently proved itself useful. It draws attention to an orebody that affords 'compromised conditions of possibility' (Berlant, 2011: 24) and speaks of an attachment to geological formations that have never delivered the good life they promise without a cost; to the environment, to people's health, to human relationships, to future generations and to the formations themselves. But perhaps the ultimate cruel optimism is the idea that peace can come from mining. What sort of long-term, sustainable peace can be built by extracting, removing and discarding the very thing upon which hopes for peace are placed? In the end, cruel optimism functions in this research in the way that Berlant argues it should; as a 'deictic' or a phrase that becomes meaningful in relationship with the context in which it is used and that points to a 'proximate location' rather than dictating what that location is (Berlant, 2011: 27). For this research it invites a question. How do we make a relationship of cruel optimism more sustainable?

1.7. PHENOMENOLOGY FOR 'A PARTICULAR POLITICAL PURPOSE.'

I take a phenomenological, qualitative case study approach in order to consider the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship 'in its real-world context' (Yin, 2014: 2). I draw on Vagle's post-intentional phenomenological approach to develop a methodology for this research that is not phenomenology for the sake of phenomenology but for a 'particular political purposes' (Vagle, 2014: 117). To that end, I follow Vagle's exhortation not only to

identity a phenomenon of interest 'but also to situate the phenomenon in context, around a social issue (Vagle, 2019: 1). The phenomenon of the human geologic relationship is therefore situated within the issue of natural resource-related peacebuilding. Describing my approach as a 'case study' raises questions in terms of what this means and why it is important. I am using 'case study' in a way that is close to the sense in which Burawoy used it on the Zambian copper belt, as a means of extracting the 'general from the unique, to move from the "micro" to the "macro," and to connect the present to the past in anticipation of the future, all by building on pre-existing theory' (Burawoy, 1998: 5).

I understand phenomenology as an investigation of the relationship between self and other (Lea, 2009: 374). For this research it is an exploration of the relationship not just between people but between human bodies and orebodies and the role geology plays in how people understand themselves. As Lea writes, phenomenology is a means of gaining insight 'into the ways in which space is lived, and how lived space is integrally related to our sense of self' (ibid) and in so doing it affords a 'spatially specific understanding of who we are' (ibid). What spatially specific understanding of 'who we are' does an orebody afford people in the aftermath of conflict? While Lea refers to surface place this research investigates our relationship with what is underground. Here I answer Robert MacFarlane's call to pay more attention to what he refers to as the 'underland' that has been neglected so far in social thinking. As MacFarlane writes

> The underland is vital to the material structures of contemporary existence, as well as to our memories, myths and metaphors. It is a terrain with which we daily reckon and by which we are daily shaped. Yet we are disinclined to recognize the underland's presence in our lives, or to admit its disturbing forms to our imaginations. Our 'flat perspectives' feel increasingly inadequate to the deep worlds we inhabit, and to the deep time legacies we are leaving (MacFarlane, 2019: 13).

I place this research within the emerging post-phenomenological trend in phenomenology that understands the intentional relationship not in terms of Husserl's imaginary in which intentionality moves from the subject to the object in a way that presumes a preexisting subjective consciousness *of* something but as an 'emergent relation with the world' (Ash & Simpson, 2016: 48). I draw on Ingold's dwelling perspective to understand intentionality as

emerging in the relationship between people and the places in which they dwell, and all the other people, animals, birds, rocks, stones, buildings that dwell there with them. The way in which humans perceive and experience an orebody is therefore not a perception or experience *of* the orebody but emerges in relationship *with* it. The ontological and epistemological position of this research is therefore that the world objectively exists, and that humans and nonhumans make 'socionature' together (Bakker & Bridge, 2006: 19). But while this research is concerned with the human geologic relationship it acknowledges that an orebody has its own existence withdrawn from this relational significance. This is consistent with the post-phenomenological approach advocated by Ash & Simpson (2016). They write that post-phenomenology rethinks intentionality as an emergent relation with the world whilst recognizing that objects 'have an autonomous existence outside of the ways they appear to or are used by human beings' (2016, 48).

The methods used will be explored in Chapter Two and also in Chapter Five. They involved desk research, semi-structured interviews with mineworkers, a post-reflexion journal for interrogating my own changing understanding of the phenomenon as it emerged (Vagle, 2014: 132) and photography. In order to decentre the voice of the human and counter the privileging of sight and the surface orientation that emerged as this research progressed, I used 'extended listening' techniques as a means of taking an attitude of what Bennett calls 'sensory perceptiveness' to what exists in the three research sites, human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic. Following MacFarlane, using extended listening was an attempt to 'see more deeply' what exists on a vertical as well as on a horizontal geographical axis (2019: 13).

1.8 THESIS STRUCTURE.

The thesis is arranged in three sections PROSPECT, EXTRACT and RECONCILE that reflect three stages of a mining operation and also reflect the research process, although the process through these stages was not linear. Prospect refers to the process of prospecting, exploring or *fossicking* ground that appears promising for signs there may be something significant underground. For Agricola, writing in the 16th century, it meant looking out for plants that had been frosted by the 'warm and dry exhalation' of the veins of ore in winter (Agricola, 2014: 37) and the use of forked twigs to interpret to the power of the veins; hazel for silver, ash for

copper, pine for lead and tin (Agricola, 2014: 38). Now it requires maps stereoscopes, GPS, and magnetometers but as Gandhi and Sarkar point out, the 'most expensive equipment of all is the "geologist's imagination"' (2016: 58). Extract is the process of bringing what is valuable to the surface, but in the context of this research it is a problematic term. It implies that a phenomenon has resident meaning, waiting to be *unearthed*, uncovered, or discovered in the course of a research project (Paley, 2017: 78) As Paley writes you cannot surface meaning by 'digging down into the soil for something buried there' (ibid). What is surfaced in this research is not something that objectively exists, but a new way of understanding the human geologic relationship based on the data as it emerges and my interpretation of it. Reconcile for a mining company means checking the objective reality of what has been extracted with what was forecast and making operational decisions based on this. For this thesis, having taken apart the human geologic relationship, reconcile means putting it back together again in a creative way in order to create something different.

Part One PROSPECT consists of two chapters. In Chapter Two I draw on Pierre Bourdieu to argue that the symbolic power of the agencies that have generated the literature on the extractive sector and peacebuilding has created a 'consensus logic' that well-managed resource extraction can lead to prosperity that can lead to peace. In the context of climate change, however, this seems an increasingly moribund way of understanding the human geologic relationship. The theoretical framework for this research is introduced that understands peacebuilding as a local endeavour. I weave the work of peacebuilder Lederach (2005) together with Olsen (2010) and Latour (2004; 2018) to argue for a peacebuilding approach that is grounded not just in the local people but in the local *place* too. This chapter concludes by considering the ethical implications of taking a place-based approach to peace. In Chapter Three I explore how the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship began to manifest itself in the three research sites and with it, the methodological approach for this research and the methods for data gathering that were adopted. Part Two, EXTRACT is made up of three chapters. In Chapter Four I introduce the three research sites in their historical and geographical context in order to explore how the human geologic relationship has been 'entangled and provoked' in space and over time (Vagle, 2019: 10). I draw on the work of Clark and Yusoff to argue that each one can be understood as a unique *geosocial formation* in which human and geologic lives have evolved together. In each one, a relationship of cruel

optimism can be discerned to some degree. In Chapter Five I draw on the interviews with the mineworkers and surface a relationship of optimistic attachment to the orebody, that in different ways and to different degrees is also a cruel one. But while an enduring attachment to an orebody may seem irrational, what is *not* irrational is an enduring attachment to the idea of the good life it promises in the aftermath of war. In Chapter Six, inspired by the work of Olsen (2010) and the vital materialism of Bennett (2005, 2010) in particular I turn my attention to the orebody itself. What is it, apart from an object of attraction? What difference does it make not just to how people live, think and act but to how they live, think and act together?[7] I find a lively, geological entity, animated by the promises embedded in it and able to mediate human relationships. Part Three, RECONCILE consists of two chapters. In Chapter Seven I ask what this means for building peace. While a 'problem-solving' approach emerged in the data, a more transformational perspective did too. Chapter Eight concludes this thesis by arguing for a more geologically 'timeful' approach to building peace.

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[7] Olsen writes, 'Mountains and plains, rivers and lakes, forests and fields, oceans and fjords – what difference do they make to the way we live, think, and act? Are they all just open ended, receptive, and polysemic, or do they have a say – also beyond suggesting metaphorical and ritual associations' (Olsen, 2010: 31).

The swimming pool at the English Colony above the Stan Terg mine. Photo taken by the author, 2018.

PART ONE

PROSPECT

Above the carcass of the destroyed outdoor swimming pool on the hillside above the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo, a track winds through a mess of young trees, white stemmed birches, and beeches still holding on to their brown leaves from autumn. The forest is encroaching here, taking over the places where people used to swim, and sunbathe and picnic. Even in the early spring sunlight it seems bleak. I am with one of the workers from the Stan Terg mine. He is Albanian and used to swim and picnic here when he was a teenager. As we walk up the hill he points to a small unexpectedly pretty plant, a cluster of blue ray flowers nestled in the dead bracken. 'That's a sign that there are minerals and metals underneath,' he says. A tiny, temporary starburst sent up by the orebody every spring. What is it trying to tell us? This little flower is not leadplant, amorpha canescens, the rangy, purple-spired shrub that is native to the US prairie and believed to indicate bodies of lead ore. Nor is it the rare blue 'zinc violet' (Viola Lutea) that grows in only one place in Germany. Instead, it is the little native Serbian bellflower campanula poscharskyana. Perhaps the first thing it is trying to tell us then, is that no two orebodies are the same but sit uniquely within the natural and social worlds they underpin. (Excerpted from research journal, 15th March 2018)

2

THE SOUND OF THE CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM.

When efforts are made to plead almost any kind of policy – say technical assistance, increased trade, tourism, new forms of education, irrigation, industrialization, etc. – then it is often asserted that that policy, in addition to the other merits, will also serve the cause of peace. This is done regardless of how tenuous the relation has been in the past or how dubious the theory justifying this as a reasonable expectation for the future (Galtung 1969: 167)

'Conflict is the sound made by the cracks in a system, the manifestation of contradictory forces coexisting in a single space…[it is] the voice of a new paradigm, a demand for change in a system that has outlived its usefulness (Cloke 2001, p 8, emphasis original).

This chapter engages with the policy literature on mining and post-conflict peacebuilding that has been generated by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), The World Bank, and the United Nations Global Compact in particular (Banfield et al, 2005; Collier et al, 2003; Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; UNEP, 2009; UNEP, 2015; United Nations Global Compact, 2013). The peace prescriptions it offers are largely technical solutions to technical questions about how mining practice can be improved to avoid exacerbating conflict and contribute to

building peace, post-conflict. Natural resource-related peacebuilding is therefore an extension of the liberal peace-building paradigm in which peacebuilding is imagined as a process of exporting and establishing certain institutional frameworks (Chandler, 2013: 17). But if conflict is the '*sound of the cracks in the system*' (Cloke, 2001, emphasis original), what is heard in this chapter is the creaking of the liberal peace building paradigm and with it the assumption that extractives-led growth can lead to peace.

The first section of this chapter explores the evolution of liberal peacebuilding paradigm and the critiques that have emerged in response, in order to put the literature on natural resources and peace in context. The second section draws on Bourdieu's theory of *symbolic power* (1977) to argue that the international agencies that have generated the literature have created a 'consensus logic' or common sense that is largely uncontested; that properly managed natural resource extraction can contribute to prosperity and therefore peace in the aftermath of violent conflict. As a result, there is a dominant 'extractives-led growth' model for conflict-affected contexts that is backed by the UN, the extractive industry and multilateral development banks (Bailey et al, 2015: 2). While similar 'extractivist logic' is questioned in other fragile contexts, such as the Arctic (Wilson & Stammler, 2016; Stammler & Ivanova, 2016) it is not questioned for people and places emerging from violent conflict where transparent, equitable resource extraction is still proposed to be the 'best bet' for post-conflict recovery (Bailey et al, 2015: 3). The problem that Wilson and Stammler identify with the extractivist logic in the Arctic, is that it 'can stifle other ways for local communities to imagine the future' (2016: 1). I argue that in conflict-affected places the same argument might apply. The third section of this chapter introduces the theoretical framework for this research that is grounded in Lederach's 'web-approach' to peacebuilding (2005) and understands the importance of local people and places for catalyzing positive social change and the danger of a *realpolitik* approach to peacebuilding that has a record of destroying public confidence and public engagement rather than engendering it (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1256). The final section explores the ethical implications of taking a place-based approach to building peace.

The task of this chapter is a phenomenological one in the post-intentional sense that Vagle describes (2014). While the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship is experienced

by individuals and it is the experience of mineworkers that will be a concern for this research, it is also situated within a broader social, or following Clark and Yusoff (2017), *geosocial* issue which is the problem of natural resource related peacebuilding, and (for this chapter) how this problem emerges in the literature. The human geologic relationship understood in a post-intentional way is 'made and unmade through all sorts of complicated contextual, historical, and political influences, as well as individual lived experiences' (Vagle, 2019: 12). It is therefore produced and provoked in the literature with which this chapter engages, and in the conclusions that are drawn here that are framed by my own perspective. In this way, as Vagle writes to do post-intentional phenomenology is to do 'ongoing political work' (bid).

2.1. THE LIBERAL PEACE: CURING STRANGENESS.

The policy literature on natural resources, conflict and peace has emerged from the liberal peacebuilding endeavour that began after the Cold War ended. Peace is the 'just peace' articulated by former US President George Bush exactly a year after 9/11. In an opinion piece for the New York Times entitled 'Securing Freedom's Triumph' Bush wrote 'we seek a just peace where repression, resentment and poverty are replaced with the hope of democracy, development, free markets and free trade' (Bush, 2002). Liberal peacebuilding is therefore largely a technical process of exporting and establishing institutional frameworks to support democracy, good governance and a market economy, and removing the local elites that oppose them (Chandler, 2013: 17). Since then, peace through democracy and a free market has become a mantra for the US, the EU, the UN and for the World Bank (Pugh et al, 2008: 2). As Paris writes, liberal peacebuilding is

> an enormous experiment in social engineering – an experiment that involves transplanting Western models of social, political, and economic organization into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict: in other words, pacification through political and economic liberalization (Paris, 1997: 56).

In effect, peacebuilding efforts that began with the intention to 'save strangers' from war and abuse have morphed into efforts to 'cure strangeness' (Pugh, 2011: 147) At its heart, peacebuilding conceptualises the ' post-Cold War intra-state and regional conflicts as a social regression from modernity that occurs in an imaginary 'borderland' where 'traits of barbarity,

excess and irrationality' contrast with *metropolitan* characteristics of 'civility, restraint and rationality' (Duffield, 2002: 1052). Liberal peacebuilding is a process of statebuilding intended to cure countries of the 'political, social and economic illiberalisms' that are assumed to have led them into disaster (Pugh, 2011: 147).

The liberal peacebuilding-as-statebuilding endeavour reached its apogee in post-Dayton Bosnia Herzegovina, and in Kosovo, both of which are still semi-protectorates of the EU and mired in a 'seemingly endless' transition to liberal democracy and a market economy which by and large has brought 'general impoverishment, huge public and private indebtedness facilitated by a flow of foreign credit, widespread deindustrialization, social degradation, depopulation through diminished life expectancy and emigration, and general unemployment' (Horvat & Štiks, 2015: 66, 74). This is not to argue that the liberal peacebuilding paradigm has been pointless. After all, post-Dayton Bosnia has been peaceful, in terms of physical violence, for over twenty years. Likewise, the UN and EU endeavour to stabilize Kosovo has indeed achieved a measure of stability. It is, however, to assert that as a macro-level process, peacebuilding-as-statebuilding has, like the processes transforming the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, left little space for considering the unintended consequences, the adjustments and the coping strategies in 'the micro world of day-to-day life' (Burawoy & Verdery, 1999: 1).

Ironically, in Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina, two decades into the liberal peacebuilding project, the unintended consequences of transition have resulted in a 'strangeness' that seems entrenched. In the literal, rather than the metaphorical borderland of northern Kosovo, there is strangeness in the un-plated cars, the police checkpoints, the Serbian flags hanging from the lampposts, the uneasiness of mine security and the stories that abound of illegally accumulated gold revenues financing conspicuous buildings. There is 'strangeness' too in the difficulty of negotiating access to the mineworkers here, in the prickliness discernible around mining infrastructure, in the conversation I had with a professor at the Faculty of Mining in Belgrade about what we should say we were doing there if we were stopped. Horvat and Štiks point out that neoliberal reforms 'are opening up more opportunities for corruption and predatory behaviour by local elites (Horvat & Štiks, 2015: 209) and that the 'weak state' or 'failed state' does not arise because of inherent unruliness

in the 'East' as opposed to the 'West' but as an inevitable product of transition (Horvat & Štiks, 2015: 296). What I see in northern Kosovo is not inherent therefore but a product of a transition that is not a transition but an impasse.

2.1.1 The Critique of the Liberal Peace

The liberal peacebuilding endeavour is not 'monolithic' (Mac Ginty, 2010: 391) and nor is it static (Chandler, 2010: 141). But the paradigm in general is criticized for reflecting the geo-strategic, political and economic interests of the 'western' states, the EU, the UN and the international finance institutions, rather than the interests of the people who live in countries undergoing transition from socialism or conflict, or both (Pugh, 2005: 1; Richmond, 2009). It is, argues Richmond, a triumph of 'process, technocracy, bureaucracy and ideology over substance, and more directly, over the lives of millions of ordinary people' (Richmond, 2010: 1). As a result, it is undergoing what Oliver Richmond describes as a crisis of legitimacy.

> In many post-violence environments local perceptions of the liberal peace project and its statebuilding focus indicate it to be ethically bankrupt, subject to double standards, coercive and conditional, acultural, unconcerned with social welfare, and unfeeling and insensitive towards it subjects. Indeed, it may even have incited resistance, reflecting the common emergence of a local post-colonial narrative about liberal peacebuilding's endorsement of an international-local relationship, configured as managers and subjects' (Richmond, 2009: 557).

The critique of liberal peacebuilding has been divided broadly into two approaches in the field of international relations (1) 'ideas-based' and (2) 'power-based' (Chandler, 2010; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Tadjbakhsh, 2011) although as Chandler (2010) and Richmond (2013) point out these two strands are interconnected. 'Ideas-based' critiques are broadly policy-oriented, 'problem-solving' approaches that understand the problem of liberal peacebuilding as a technical problem of application. It is not the philosophical or theoretical tenet of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm that is the problem, therefore, but the way it is both understood and implemented (Paris, 2004; Paris, 1997). Significantly, it is argued, liberal peacebuilding fails to account for local complexity and the 'non-liberal context in which intervention takes place' (Chandler, 2010: 143) and for the fact that the evolution of democracy is a tumultuous and lengthy process, all the more so in countries recovering from violent conflict (Paris, 1997: 57). But Chandler has critiqued this critique for implying that the

problem is that liberal peacebuilding (and the Western states that implement it) are 'too liberal' and the non-Western 'others' therefore too 'illiberal' for peacebuilding to work (Chandler, 2010: 155). As he writes this is likely to offer 'succour and consolation to the policymakers rather than critique' (Chandler, 2010: 139).

More radical 'power-based' critics argue against the legitimacy of the paradigm itself (Chandler, 2010; Pugh, 2011). Chandler categorises power-based critiques into three main strands, although there is considerable overlap between them. The first draws on Marxist theory to highlight how 'neo-liberal economic practices are naturalised as technical solutions to development and reconstruction, marginalising or preventing political discussions of economic alternatives better suited to post-conflict societies' (Chandler, 2010: 140). For Pugh et al (2008), there has been a lack of attention to the political economy of peacebuilding that is rooted in an 'economic determinism' that understands capitalist models of economic development as natural and inevitable, and privileges 'technicist frameworks' for intervention at the expense of local knowledge and understandings (2008: 2). While Pugh et al do not engage directly with the literature on natural resource extraction and peacebuilding they call for a paradigm shift in the political economy of peacebuilding and a 'life welfare paradigm' that encompasses the lives of individuals, communities, the biosphere and the 'planetary environment' (2008: 398). Peacebuilding is less about human security and more about how to optimize the life potential of all beings. As I argue in Chapter Six this has much in common with the way peace and the task of peacebuilding are conceptualized in this research.

The second strand draws on Foucauldian biopolitics to argue that the projection of liberal interests into zones of conflict is designed to save, develop or secure 'the other' while legitimizing external regulations and control (Chandler, 2010: 141). It is an 'us' and 'them' framing that, as Duffield argues, draws an intentional veil across any similarities and responsibilities we may possess (2002: 1052). It is also a framing that justifies external intervention as an effort to reform societies that have apparently failed to evolve. Liberal peacebuilding is therefore justified and made legitimate by imagined borderland spaces where there is 'breakdown, excess and wont' in need of governance (Duffield, 2002: 1053). As a result, as Richmond notes, the citizens of the new 'liberal' states have 'remained subjects and objects rather than becoming agential, liberal citizens' (Richmond, 2009: 324). Certainly,

as will be discussed below, in the literature on natural resource extraction and peace, the people who live in post-conflict places emerge as potential 'spoilers', likely to oppose mining development violently if they are poorly engaged, marginalized or excluded from dialogue (Gryzybowski, 2012; Le Billon, 2012). Or they are perceived to be inevitably locked in competition, either 'over access to resources' or just inevitably between themselves (Lujala et al, 2016: 241; UNDG-ECHA, 2013: 4). Alternatively, they emerge as disenfranchised, fragile and weak and incapable of negotiating with mining companies until they have undergone a painful (and potentially impossible) process of reconciliation (Boege & Franks, 2012). The context analysis in the UNDG-ECHA report, for example, recommends investigating issues around 'disenfranchisement, marginalization, expropriation and/or degradation in relation to natural resources' and the ways in which these interact with existing societal cleavages. Issues such as resilience, cooperation and collaboration are ignored.

The third strand comes from critical theory and while it argues that the liberal peace is 'political and power based' it also suggests that it can be 'successfully challenged by other more reflective, emancipatory, or 'bottom-up' approaches to liberal peace, suggesting that there is not necessarily a clash of interests between those intervening and those intervened upon' (Chandler, 2010: 142). This thesis fits in here to the extent that while 'mining for peace' can be understood as serving the interests of the international community, it may also be compatible with the interests of many people in the local communities, although not necessarily all of them. The problem is that the paradigm of extractives-led economic growth is looking increasingly untenable in the context of climate change. This research therefore advocates a 'better business as usual' approach, that works within the paradigm *and* a radical re-thinking of the paradigm itself. The first is not intended to stifle the second. Indeed, there is precedent for this within critical IR theory. Pugh, for example, offers a power-based critique of the political economy of peacebuilding that offers solutions for both problem-solving within the paradigm, *and* for a shift of the paradigm itself (Pugh et al, 2011: 392-400).

Out of the two broad critiques of peacebuilding it is the 'problem-solving' approach that has gained the most traction among international organisations and institutions concerned with peace and development. As Mac Ginty and Richmond write, it is the problem-solving approach that has found 'plenty of opportunities to work with states, international

organisations and international financial institutions (IFIs) as these have, collectively and individually, sought to deal with 'fragile states', 'complex social emergencies', 'ethnic cleansing' and a range of pressing humanitarian and political problems' (2013: 767). The next section will outline the contours of the landscape created by the policy literature on natural resource extraction and peacebuilding. In terms of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm this literature sits broadly within the 'problem-solving' critical approach. In other words, it approves the paradigm of internationally led political and institutional change and advocates technical solutions to make it work. It is concerned with the 'how' of liberal peacebuilding and what businesses need to do to be 'active agents of peace, stability and long-term development' within the liberal peacebuilding paradigm (Miklian & Schouten, 2014: 2) rather than the 'if' of the paradigm itself. While the literature can be critiqued from a Marxist, a Foucauldian or a critical theory perspective it is read here through the lens of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power as a means of highlighting the possibility that the logic it contains about resource extraction and peace is not natural, but arbitrary and that other ways of understanding this relationship may exist.

2.2. THE POWER TO MAKE A WORLD. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> Symbolic power - power to constitute the given by stating it, to show forth and gain credence, to confirm or transform the world view and, through it, action on the world, and hence the world itself, quasi-magical power which makes it possible to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained by (physical or economic) force, thanks to its specific mobilization effect – is only exerted insofar as it is <u>recognized</u> (i.e. insofar as its arbitrariness is misrecognized) (Bourdieu, 1977, pp 82-82. Emphasis original).

In this section I argue that the symbolic power of the UN and the World Bank has created policy literature with a consensus logic that natural resources can contribute to peacebuilding through economic development that has almost 'quasi-magical power' (Ibid). According to this logic, peace will emerge if mining companies and international agencies manage unpredictable local dynamics in conflict-affected contexts in order to extract the peace dividends that natural resources represent. This logic risks trapping people in conflict-related

identities, over-emphasizing conflict-related dynamics and may shut down alternative constructions and the peacebuilding potential they contain.

The power of "world-making" resides in the power to impose what Bourdieu refers to as *'the vision of legitimate divisions'* (1989: 22)*.* In other words, it is the power to construct groups, and to categorize people in a way that seems so like 'common sense' that people comply. This, writes Bourdieu, is political power 'par excellence' because it confirms and transforms not just how people view the world but how they voluntarily act within it (1989: 23). The force of symbolic power then, is its assumed legitimacy to differentiate between certain groups of people, and (as argued below) certain categories of 'things' (Bourdieu, 1985: 731). The world-making with which this chapter engages is the vison that categorizes geologic resources as in need of management, local people as in need of intervention and international agencies as possessing the knowledge, the skills and the ethical imperative to do the intervening.

The purpose of looking at the literature through the lens of symbolic power, is that it opens up new spaces for political action based on a different sort of logic. As Topper writes

> Bourdieu's efforts to identify the precise ways in which contingent social norms, practices, and structures become "naturalized" is intended to open new spaces of political agency and resistance, to liberate social and political actors by enabling them to shape and act upon those forces that previously shaped and acted upon them, and to facilitate interventions in those chains of causality that restrict the development of more vital democratic institutions and practices (Topper 2001: 31)

Following David Harris' logic (Harris, 2016), the systems and patterns evident in the literature can therefore be understood not as logical and inevitable, but as a sedimented rhizome that invites a consideration of more radical alternatives. Indeed, drawing on Latour (1993) I argue that tugging on the logic in the literature pulls not just the power dynamics behind it into view but the entire ecology of our relationship with natural resources, unravelling as it does so the discernible division that exists between Human and Nature, local and global, conflict and peace. While the world that is created in the literature is one in which a partition exists between 'a natural world that has always been there, a society with predictable and stable

interests and stakes, and a discourse that is independent of both reference and society'
(Latour, 1993: 11) what comes tumbling out is a 'continuous chain' on which (as Latour writes)
'the chemistry of the upper atmosphere, scientific and industrial strategies, the
preoccupations of heads of state, the anxieties of ecologists' (and I would add, the 'good life'
aspirations of all of us) are linked (ibid).

The policy literature on natural resources and peacebuilding has been developed within two
separate but interconnected strands of thinking. The first is Business for peace (B4P) that was
launched as part of the UN Global Compact in 2013 and the second is Environmental
Peacebuilding that is being developed principally through the United Nations Environmental
Programme (UNEP). [8] Literature has also been produced by the World Bank (Bannon & Collier
2003; World Development Report, 2011; United Nations and World Bank (2018), and the
London-based international affairs think tank Chatham House (Bailey et al, 2015; Brown &
Keating, 2015). With the exception of the Chatham House literature that is more circumspect
there is broad consensus around the technical solutions that are required for peace which
include improving governance, increasing financial transparency, controlling illicit resource
flows and improving commodity tracking (Ross, 2003; Swanson, Oldgard & Lunde 2003;
Crossin, Hayman & Taylor, 2003. See also World Development Report, 2011; United Nations
and World Bank, 2018). In addition to the policy literature, in 2016 a Special Section on the
extractive industries, mineral sector reform and post-conflict reconstruction in developing
countries was published by the journal *The Extractive Industries and Society* in 2016, edited
by Roy Maconachie. The conclusions in the contributions were aligned with the dominant
logic, that while natural resources can 'stimulate reconstruction, generate employment and
achieve unprecedented economic growth' they can also 'de-rail post-conflict peacebuilding
and development' (Maconachie 2016, p 313).

While it is not the intention of this chapter to disagree with the idea that mining should be
better managed, more transparent, more inclusive and more equitable it *is* the intention to

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[8] The UN Global Compact describes itself as the world's 'largest corporate sustainability initiative'. Its
mission is 'to mobilize a global movement of sustainable companies and stakeholders to create the world
we want' by supporting companies to align their business practices with Ten Principles and to advance
the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

suggest (following Bourdieu) that a "world" has been created in the literature that perhaps favours a certain sort of peacebuilding intervention, a certain sort of political and economic structure, and perhaps a certain sort of people. The next section looks at both strands individually. I argue that while they have slightly different orientations, they both take a top-down approach in which peacebuilding may be as much concerned with creating favourable conditions for resource extraction in conflict-affected contexts as it is about building long-term peace.

2.2.1 Business for Peace (B4P)

Business for Peace (B4P) urges multinational corporations 'to enter conflict zones and fragile post-conflict environments as an alternative to traditional development aid' (Miklian & Schouten, 2014: 1). As Miklian and Schouten argue, B4P is a child of liberal peacebuilding, although while liberal peacebuilding assumes that free markets are 'positive-sum games' (2014: 5) and that businesses should therefore concern themselves only with business, the B4P agenda is concerned with the relationship of businesses, particularly multinational corporations, with the contexts in which they operate and the steps they might need to take to ensure their presence drives peace rather than conflict (Miklian & Schouten, 2014. See also Nelson, 2000; Nelson, 2006; Powell et al 2010). Much of the literature has been generated by the UN Global Compact with an express focus on driving businesses to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Jane Nelson has also been a major contributor as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government (Nelson, 2006). She argues that businesses operating in fragile contexts should work on a continuum from compliance, in which companies 'benchmark their local practices against internationally agreed laws, conventions and standards' through risk minimization to value creation, which is the proactive generation of 'positive societal value' through 'social investment, stakeholder consultation, policy dialogue, advocacy and civic institution building, including collective action with other companies' (Nelson, 2000: 7). The argument is that through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies, companies (particularly mining companies) have the funds and the expertise to make a difference. But while Miklian & Schouten suggest that B4P has the potential to catalyze a paradigm shift in global peacebuilding (Miklian & Schouten 2014: 2) it also rests on some of the problematic

assumptions associated with liberal peacebuilding. The principle one of these is that by implementing macro-level reform, micro-level peace will automatically follow.

The extractive industry holds a privileged position within the B4P paradigm for three main reasons. In the first place a well-established link between resource extraction and conflict has been identified (Le Billion, 2007; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Bannon & Collier, 2003; United Nations and World Bank, 2018).[9] This is rooted in the 'greed and grievance' framing of civil war developed by Collier and Hoeffler (2004) which states that while greed, grievance and opportunity are all significant factors in promoting armed conflict it is the economic factors that are most important and that 'the true cause of much civil war is not the loud discourse of grievance but the silent force of greed' (Collier, 2000: 91-96 quoted in Bensted 2011: 86).[10] The revenues produced by high-value natural resources are therefore perceived to be a major source of conflict. In the second place, as Nelson notes, the 'costs and risks of conflict are likely to be higher for the 'big footprint' investors in the extractive, infrastructure and heavy industry sectors' (Nelson, 2000: 22) which invariably disrupt the places and the local people where they operate and are therefore unlikely to be 'conflict-neutral' (Bailey et al, 2015: 44). Added to this there is an awareness that while local communities often bear the environmental and social brunt of mining, the benefits accrue elsewhere (Bridge, 2009). And finally, the business of extraction itself has been associated with a dampening effect on economies, a phenomenon known as the 'resource curse' (Auty, 1994; Bannon & Collier, 2003; Bridge, 2009: Brown & Keating, 2015; Collier, Elliott et al, 2003; Le Billon, 2003; Le Billon, 2006; Le Billon, 2008).

Mining then, is perceived as inherently conflictual. The counter argument is that if natural resources can contribute to violent conflict this 'underscores their potential significance as pathways for cooperation, transformation and the consolidation of peace in war-torn

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[9] In 2002, for example The World Bank formed the 'Governance of Natural Resources Project in response to increasing awareness that developing countries that are highly dependent on natural resources face 'substantially higher risks of violent conflict and poor governance (Bannon and Collier, 2003: ix).

[10] Although as Pugh et al write the greed and grievance debate is 'now rather passé' (Pugh et al 2011: 1). Collier's methodology has also been criticized for its 'causal approach to the social world' that assumes that all the things that make a difference to the way people act 'are measurable and that, furthermore, the actor will behave like Homo economicus' (Bensted, 2001: 87).

societies' (UNEP, 2009. See also Maconachie, 2016; UNDG-ECHA, 2013: 5). At the heart of this is a sense that the revenues produced by mining can be harnessed as 'peace dividends' and that peace can be attained through socio-economic development including the provision of jobs. Furthermore, it is argued, extractive companies have an ethical imperative to ensure their operations drive peace. As Kofi Anan wrote in the foreword for a comprehensive set of guidelines published by International Alert for extractive industries working in conflict-affected contexts, an extractive company's bottom line 'can no longer be separated from peace, development and the other goals of the United Nations (Banfield et al, 2005).

A significant set of guidelines for the extractive industry operating in conflict-affected contexts has been published within the B4P paradigm (Banfield et al, 2005). The project-level Conflict Risk Impact Assessment includes over 42 sample questions intended to map local power imbalances, patterns in inclusion and exclusion, leadership profiles, NGO relationships and legitimacy, the role of local media, the political and economic interests of migrants, refugees and IDPs, and the relationship between local and political elites (Banfield et al, 2005: section 3, p. 14) While this will undoubtedly be of use, it is an objectivist approach, concerned with grasping the specific logic of existing systems of conflict in a way that implies these are universal and rational and that a straightforward and predictable relationship exists between cause and effect. I argue it is therefore at risk of substituting an 'ahistorical, theoretical model for the reality of practice itself' (Topper 2001: 35). Or to use the language of Deleuze and Guattari, it risks producing a 'tracing' of what exists, rather than a map (2013, 12). What this approach may miss are the complex ways that social identities are constructed, narratives generated, and difficult conflict-related histories assimilated, relative to natural resources. As Lederach writes, as peacebuilders, sometimes our 'modus operandi drives us toward problem analysis and problem solving' at the expense of frameworks for addressing the 'deepest questions of collective story, identity, and place' (2005: kindle location 2961).

2.2.2 Environmental Peacebuilding

The second strand of literature comes from environmental peacebuilding. Environmental peacebuilding is a field of study that has emerged from the UNEP literature (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2013; Lujala, Aas Rustad & Kettenmann, 2016) and is concerned with the centrality of the environment as a potential cause for conflict. Its focus is

on natural resources rather than on business but as far as high-value natural resources go, the conclusions are similar: a natural resource is a double-edged sword that can drive either peace or conflict and must be properly managed to ensure it does the first and not the second (Lujala & Rustad, 2012: 3). To an extent, the debate is getting more urgent as climate change and global warming are highlighting the issue of "environmental security" as resources become scarcer (Peclard, 2009: 2) although this framing is more common for renewable resources, such as water and timber rather than non-renewables such as metals and minerals.

The biggest body of literature on natural resource extraction and peacebuilding has been created by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; UNEP, 2009; UNEP, 2015). The UNEP's Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding (ECP) programme was created in 2008 to address what the UN recognized as a critical gap in the knowledge of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture (UNEP, 2015: 2) which was 'a nuanced and evidence-based understanding of the different roles that natural resources and the environment could play across the peace and security continuum' (UNEP, 2015: 2). Between 2008 and 2015 the role of the ECP was to collect evidence, develop policy and catalyze the adoption of new practices, and the work of the ECP is being fed into UNEP's approach for addressing conflict risks and opportunities from natural resources and the environment in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically goal 16, on the development of peaceful societies (UNEP 2015: 2). The main achievement of the ECP is the publication of six books on post-conflict peacebuilding and natural resources, one of which focuses on high-value natural resources and the extractive industry (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012) and the establishment of the new field of environmental peacebuilding within which this research locates itself. The research generated by the UNEP is being used for policies formulated by the EU and The World Bank.

The volume on high-value natural resources and peacebuilding is divided into five sections, dealing with extraction and extractive industries, commodity and revenue tracking, revenue distribution, allocation and institution building, and livelihoods, reflecting the general concern in the literature for macro-level political and economic reform in order to ensure transparency, equitable revenue sharing, and institution building as a means for encouraging economic growth. Among the thirty-one chapters that make up this volume, there is only one

that addresses the concrete local-level steps a mining company might take when developing mines in post-conflict settings (Boege & Franks, 2012). Boege and Franks argue that every mine that is reopened or developed in a post-conflict setting has the potential to intensify the fragility that exists or help stabilize the situation and in so doing to 'contribute to peacebuilding' (2012: 87). They argue that reopening or developing a mine must be *conflict sensitive* and *conflict relevant* and must give 'priority to reconciliation' (2012: 110). Reconciliation is seen as a precursor to any mining-related negotiations. As they write 'communities must reconcile within themselves and with other communities, even before negotiating with mine operators and government representatives' (ibid) and supporting, facilitating and engaging in this process is seen as an 'essential part of establishing sustainable company-community relations' (ibid). Reconciliation is therefore perceived as an end result that can be achieved through 'genuine and focused dialogue, in which each side presents its perception of the history and its ongoing effects' (2012: 111). But this belies the emotional and psychological difficulty of reconciliation. Furthermore, as Alexander Keller Hirsch writes in his edited volume *Theorizing Post-Conflict Reconciliation. Agonism, restitution and repair* (2012) arguing that differences must be resolved in order for politics to begin risks bracketing deep difference, disrespect and discrepancy in a way that looks 'more like quietist surrender by the victim to the perpetrator than harmonizing reconciliation' (2012: kindle location 233).

A world has been created in the literature therefore in which natural resources are unproblematically in place to be instrumentalized by humans, in which geological bodies need to be 'managed' to ensure they drive peace and not conflict, in which local people are peace spoilers that need 'bankrupting' (Le Billon 2012) or disenfranchised and in need of international intervention and in which corruption, greed and grievance related to natural resources are endemic in one context but not the other.[11] Peace emerges as a loosely conceptualized ontological state that will be engendered through dividing an orebody up and sharing it out and the sustained growth and rise in living standards that will bring (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012: 4; Roy, 2017; UNEP, 2015). It will also arise through bankrupting peace spoilers (Le Billon, 2012) through re-establishing governance frameworks, repairing physical

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[11] As Horvat and Stiks write 'corruption in reality seems to be a direct consequence of the post-1989 neoliberal scramble for Easter Europe, and, furthermore, a behaviour endemic across the EU itself' (2015: 305)

infrastructure, and rebuilding social and human capital (Nelson 2008:4), and through increased environmental and social responsibility (Shankleman, 2012). All of which may help avoid conflict. But what sort of long-term peace will they achieve? If, as Dustin Sharp notes 'particular conceptions of peace can be associated with logics of dominance and imposition' (Sharp, 2018: 1) then is the tacit conception of peace that exists in this literature the sort of peace that is required for the trouble-free extraction of natural resources? Is it more akin to a social license to operate (SLO) in a fragile context, than actual *peace*? In which case, is it associated more with a logic of domination, than emancipation? As Pugh writes

> [t]he means for achieving the good life are constructions that emerge from the discourse and policy frameworks dominated by specific capitalist interests – represented as shared, inevitable, commonsensical or the only available option - when they correspond to the prevailing mode of ownership. Economic wisdom resides with the powerful' (Pugh 2005: 13)

Or as Johan Galtung has argued peace thinking is 'very often designed more to let "peace" glorify certain means than to show how these means lead to peace' (Galtung, 1967: 6).

2.3. A 'SYSTEM THAT HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS'?

In fact, the idea that peace can be attained through economic growth is problematic and there is an increasing awareness among policy makers not just that top-down peace prescriptions do not necessarily achieve what they are supposed to, but that the whole paradigm of peace through economic development might be based on assumptions that do not hold. The authors of *Pathways to Peace,* a report published by the United Nations and the World Bank Group in 2018 write of the upsurge in complex intrastate violence that has occurred since 2010 in an increasingly volatile world of new risks and opportunities created by climate change, population movement and IT advances (United Nations and World Bank, 2018: xi). As they write '[t]aken together, these trends challenge the long-standing assumption that peace will accompany income growth, and the expectations of steady, social, economic, and political advancement that defined the end of the 20th century' (ibid: xvii). In addition, as Sarah Atkinson notes, there is increasing awareness that while economic status is associated with health and wellbeing 'economic performance should be seen as part of the means to human

flourishing, not the end itself' (Atkinson, 2013: 137). At the same time, emerging thinking about sustainable prosperity *without* growth is challenging the conventional extractives-led growth model and re-imagining what it means to prosper in a world of environmental limits' (Jackson, 2017). Meanwhile, Clark & Yusoff (2017), Bruno Latour (2018) and Jane Bennett (2010) are all dismantling the division that exists between human bodies and geological bodies and arguing for fresh analyses of how the two are intertwined.

Finally, in a report published by the Energy, Environment and Resources Department at Chatham House in 2015 there is an acknowledgement that the human geologic relationship may be more complicated than the greed or grievance framing that has dominated the policy literature so far and that natural resources may be important for people for reasons that are not wholly connected with their material worth (Brown & Keating, 2015). As Brown and Keating write, natural resources can be loaded with historical, cultural and spiritual significance that goes 'far beyond their instrumental value' (2015: 11). They call for more analytical competency as a first step for understanding the social, political and institutional context of resource disputes and advocate future research to establish the links 'between natural resources and identity, and so on' (2015: 27). In his book *Mediating Dangerously* Kenneth Cloke argues that conflict is the sound made by the cracks in the system (Cloke 2001, p 8) It is '*the voice of a new paradigm, a demand for change in a system that has outlived its usefulness'* (ibid). What may have outlived its usefulness is a number of ideas that underpin the literature on natural resources and peace; the idea of the liberal peace, of extractives-led development, and the notion that peace can be attained by removing the very thing upon which hopes for peace are placed.

In the wider peacebuilding field there has been a 'turn to the local' in response to the critiques of the liberal peace, based on the premise that peace is both generated and rooted in 'the social milieus of everyday life' (Chandler, 2013, 23) rather than in 'Western knowledge or resources' (ibid) but this local turn is not yet evident in the literature on natural resource extraction and peacebuilding and as Bailey et al (2015) and Brown and Keating (2015) argue, this lack of attention to what actually exists at the local level is an oversight. In the following section I introduce the theoretical framework for this research that is intended to fill the gap identified in the literature. Based on the work of Lederach (2005), this is a 'bottom up'

peacebuilding approach that is not (as Lederach writes) a technical manual or a toolkit (2005, kindle location 85) but a way of thinking about peacebuilding that is immersive, intuitive, and deeply concerned with understanding what exists 'on the ground', and in the case of this research *under* it, also.

2.4. THE 'VOICES FROM BELOW'. A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING PEACE.

This section outlines the theoretical framework for this research which in turn informs the methodological approach outlined in the next chapter. In the previous section I argued that the logic in the literature that well-managed natural resource extraction can lead to peace can be understood as a blocked rhizome. This is not to argue that it is wrong, but rather that the links and patterns that exist in the paradigm as it stands are neither natural nor inevitable but have emerged to an extent in relationship with the symbolic power of the international agencies that have produced it. In the context of climate change, thinking in a new way about this relationship has become particularly urgent. What is missing in the literature, as Brown and Keating (2015) imply, are the voices of the people who live in conflict-affected mining contexts themselves, and (more radically) the voice of the orebody itself. What other way of understanding natural resource-related peacebuilding can a more place-based approach engender?

In the first part of this section, I introduce the 'local turn' that is occurring in peacebuilding and argue that while this local turn has become established in peacebuilding as a whole it is not yet evident in the policy literature on natural resource-related peacebuilding. I explore Lederach's web-approach to building peace that informs the theoretical framework for this research. But while place is important in Lederach's approach it is only important in terms of its ability to hold people together in relationship. I argue that this misses two things. The first is the significance of place for a sense of wellbeing (Atkinson et al, 2012; Atkinson 2013). As Claire Bambra writes in the foreword to *Wellbeing and Place* (Atkinson et al, 2012) 'Wellbeing and place are inextricably interconnected. Our economic and educational opportunities, our social and political relationships, our environment, and our imaginative, cognitive and creatives worlds are all profoundly impacted by where we live and who we live alongside' (Atkinson et al, 2012: kindle location 231). The second is the potential agency of the place

itself. What is required for natural resource-related peacebuilding is therefore not just a turn to the local people but a turn to the local place, too, and an exploration of how human lives and geological lives are intertwined. In the final section of this chapter, I explore the ethical implications of taking a place-based approach to building peace.

2.4.1. Taking a Local Turn.

In response to the critique of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm there has been a significant 'turn to the local' in peacebuilding and transitional justice in recent years (Obradović-Wochnik, 2018; Paffenholz, 2014; Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013) and a growing awareness of the importance of 'non-linear' (Chandler, 2013) 'hybrid' (Mac Ginty, 2010; Richmond, 2009; Richmond, 2012) 'post-liberal' (Tadjbakhsh, 2011) and 'eirenist' approaches to peacebuilding in the field of International Relations that understand peace(s) as 'multiple and often agonistic' and existing across 'local, state and international contexts' (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013: 762; Richmond, 2009a). Peace does not come through institutional and political reform, according to this local turn, but through intervening in the politics of people's everyday lives and the ways in which they choose to live them. As Mac Ginty and Richmond write '[a]t all levels there are subjects exercising their agency for peace or against it, doing their best to maintain a viable everyday existence in the face of governmentalism (global government, for example, in the name of liberal peace) and structural power (where power is exercised regardless of its implications for order or peace)' (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013: 764). This local turn has not made it into the mining and peace paradigm, however.

The difference between these approaches is subtle. Hybrid peacebuilding moves away from the idea of 'pristine, hermetically sealed entities' and instead sees human societies as the result of complex interchanges of ideas and practices (Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012: 3). International actors do not intervene on a blank slate, therefore but in contexts with rich histories. Hybridity is what emerges when top-down and bottom-up forces come together. As Mac Ginty and Sanghera argue, hybridity as a concept presents a picture of peacebuilding that is 'messy' and 'awkward' and that challenges the notion that external, technical solutions can be unproblematically applied to conflict-affected contexts without being adapted, resisted, subverted, or delayed in the contact zone between international and local (2012: 4).

Hybridity is a useful analytical device for focusing on the interchanges between actors, the fluidity between groups, the significance of non-elites, and as a means of encouraging peacebuilders to look to local actors (Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012: 4).

Oliver Richmond argues for an eirenic approach that requires reflection on 'who peace is for, and what it means' in order to evaluate both the transparent and the hidden claims of the liberal peace (Richmond, 2009a: 558). He argues that the problem-solving approach of the liberal peace negates, or dictates lived experience rather than pay attention to it (2009a: 565). Significantly for this research he also identifies that there is an issue with its inability to engage in a way that is environmentally sensitive (2009a: 566). Richmond proposes that moving beyond the limitations of the liberal peace would require an 'ontological commitment to care for others in their everyday contexts, based upon empathy, respect and the recognition of difference' (2009a: 566). This requires engaging not just with civil society and those that the international actors find accessible and amenable but with people at the 'local-local' level that may have their own ideas about what is broken and how to fix it (ibid).

Indeed, Horvat and Štiks argue that since 2008 new progressive and radical movements for change have emerged across the Balkans that are challenging the post-socialist regime unassisted and taking on the political elites, their attached businesses, their Western partners, their associated NGOs, organized crime, and 'predatory foreign-owned banks' (Horvat and Štiks, 2015: kindle location 306). Rather than requiring empathy and care, they argue this 'explosion of original radicalism' has much to teach similar movements across the globe about 'the forms and methods of subversive and rebellious politics in the twenty-first century' (Horvat & Štiks, 2015: kindle location 331). While conflict 'shouts' on the streets across the Balkans, so does a lively, subversive, poignant, frequently mysterious and often funny carnival of spray-painted cows promoting veganism ('my tits, my milk'), foxes saying 'f**k fur', 'welcome refugees' stencils, and a host of other vibrant opinions on the present; 'f**k society', 'f**k Putin', 'f**k the EU'. The local it seems, has plenty of ideas about how to 'fix' itself.

Non-linear perspectives represent a shift away from linear understandings of peacebuilding that assume 'Western 'blueprints' could be imposed upon non-compliant elites' (Chandler,

2013: 17). The focus of non-linear approaches to peace is on the subject embedded in the local context and the ways in which peace is both facilitated and blocked through what people do and how they relate to each other in particular places (Chandler, 2013: 25). What non-linear approaches attempt to do is understand how social relationships that trap people in intractable conflict are produced and reproduced so that they can be transformed. The subject of peacebuilding becomes the people rather than the political and economic structures that shape their lives. To an extent this is a subjectivist perspective that focuses on free choices, individual responsibilities and the need for empathy and care from those who are doing the intervening.

In the field of peacebuilding, as Chandler notes, Lederach's work has been pioneering. He was the first policy-academic to problematise 'top-down' approaches and offer instead a relationship-based framework in which the role of external actors is to assist in establishing an infrastructure for peace and reconciliation that emerges from within a conflict-affected society rather than being imposed upon it, and in which local people are understood as resources for peace, not recipients (Chandler, 2013: 22). But Lederach's most significant departure, as Chandler also notes, was not just an eschewing of top-down intervention, but the whole premise that conflict is a linear process that can be logically 'resolved' (Chandler, 2013: 23). What is required, according to Lederach, is a paradigm shift in peacebuilding away from resolving specific issues and towards the 'restoration and rebuilding of particular relationships in particular places' over time (Lederach, 1997: 24). This means that rather than applying rational, mechanical and technical solutions that may be 'ineffective, irrelevant or 'offensive' (ibid) peacebuilding needs to be rooted in and responsive to the realities that shape people's lives. It is not conflict *resolution,* or the solving of a particular problem, but *transformation* that is required. In other words, the long-term leveraging of conflict to turn violent relationships into peaceful ones (Paffenholz, 2014: 13).

Lederach therefore places the concept of reconciliation as relational repair at the heart of any peacebuilding endeavour. He argues that the internal nature of contemporary conflict often leaves conflicting groups living in close geographic proximity as is the case at Stan Terg, Sase and to a much lesser extent, Olovo. Their experience of violent trauma may be the result of a history of grievance that has accumulated over generations (Lederach, 1997: 23). As Lederach

notes, while people live as neighbours they may be 'locked into long-standing cycles of hostile interaction' characterized by deep-rooted animosity, fear and stereotyping (ibid). Reconciliation, for Lederach is therefore a process of probing hatred and fear in order to work out how to catalyze and sustain the rebuilding of relationships in the aftermath of conflict (Lederach 1997: 25).

The 'strategic where' of peace.

For Lederach, what is at stake is the 'where' of peace as well as the 'who'. The challenge for a peacebuilder is to locate the places and spaces where people who are different, the 'not like-minded' and the 'not like-situated' naturally cross and come together (Lederach 2005: kindle location 1714). According to Lederach, these are places like markets, schools, street corners, cattle dips, transportation service centers, youth soccer clubs – as he writes 'the list is interminable and different in every context' (2005: kindle location 1746). They are places in which people who are different are thrown together in a relationship of (temporary) interdependence. They are relational hubs, and as Lederach writes they are the "strategic where" for peacebuilding (2005: kindle location 3615). The theory of change here is that strategically strengthening strategic relationships in many different strategic places will affect the societal system as a whole. Social change does not depend on establishing critical mass, or in other words persuading the greatest number of people to subscribe to some 'greater truth' but identifying and nurturing what Lederach describes as 'critical yeast' in which linkages between people who are different are built in relational spaces. As Lederach writes, the question for a peacebuilder is '[w]ho has to find a way to be connected to whom?' (2005: kindle location 1799). It is a theory of change that depends on interdependence.

> Key in this process is the capacity to locate strategic anchor points that link different but necessarily interdependent constituencies, processes, and geographic localities if change is to be generated and sustained. Specifically, those building social change must intentionally seek to link people who are not like-minded and not like-situated in the context. Peacebuilders, no matter their location or persuasion, must eliminate the erroneous notion that change can happen independently of people who are not of common mind and are not located in similar social, political, or economic space. This is true of high-level diplomats as much as local community workers. Interdependence is. Period. Constructive change and peace are not built by attempting to win converts to one side or another, or by forcing one or the other's hand. Web making suggests that

> the net of change is put together by recognizing and building relational spaces that have not existed or that must be strengthened to create a whole that, like the spider's web, makes things stick (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1715)

This conceptualization of peacebuilding broadens the field for a mediator. Mediation becomes less a formal process confined to the political sphere and more part of a broader and deeper process of change that is distributed across many different places as a means of interacting with the many different relationships that come together within them. Mediation becomes what Lederach refers to as 'mediative capacity' (2005: kindle location 1939). In other words, mediation skills are used to engage with the challenge of how people can initiate 'a journey of relationship-oriented transformation' that can sustain change processes over time 'through the thick and thin, the ebb and flow of how societies move from interactions defined primarily by division and violence toward coexistence, cooperation, and constructive interdependence' (2005: kindle location 1986).

The central premise for the theoretical perspective of this research is that an orebody presents a potential "strategic where" for peace. An orebody pulls different people together and holds them in relationship. It is a place where the 'not like-minded' and the 'not like-situated' cross and come together. Or it is a place where they *have* crossed and come together but no longer do. Or it is a place where people *should* cross and come together but for some reason are unable to. The objective of this research is to explore what exists in the relationships that come together there. But what Lederach's approach misses is the place itself; the attachments people have to it, what it means to them and the difference it makes not just to the ways in which people live, think and act (Olsen 2010: 31) but to the ways in which they live, think and act *together*. For Lederach, bus stations, marketplaces, hospitals, riverways are neutral containers for the human relationships that cross and come together within them and not significant in themselves. But as Olsen writes in order to understand how society works and is made possible, we have to become more liberal and inclusive.

> we have to […] acknowledge that far more constitutive entities than humans (and their thoughts, knowledge, and skills) are woven into its fabric. In other words, we have to take into account that societies consist of myriads of real and co-working entities composed of both humans and nonhumans' (Olsen 2010: 6).

The theoretical framework of this research is premised on the idea that wellbeing and place are inextricably linked (see next chapter), that wellbeing is both relational and situated (Atkinson, 2013; White, 2015) and that a local turn is required in natural resource related peacebuilding that is not just a turn to the local people but to the local places too. As Atkinson et al write '[w]ellbeing, however defined, can have no form, expression or enhancement without consideration of place' (2012: kindle location 292). In the case of this research this means a turn to the geological place of the orebody. What sort of good life does it promise people? Who is that good life for? What role does it play as a non-human entity in 'enabling and securing' what exists in places recovering from violent conflict? (Olsen, 2010: 2).

2.5. THE ETHICS OF PLACE: BRINGING *ETHOS* AND *TOPOS* TOGETHER.

There are ethical issues associated with taking a place-based approach to peacebuilding, however. As the philosopher Jeff Malpas points out, '

> [w]e need only look to the sites of much contemporary conflict – to sites such as Palestine and Kosovo, and perhaps even the Korean peninsula – to see how ideas of place, and of belonging to place, can be associated with, and even to foster, an ethics and politics of violence and exclusion' (Malpas 2012: 9).

For Chandler, locating peacebuilding at the local level is imbued with the implication that it is the 'local' that is therefore the problem (2010: 137; 2013: 31). Significantly for this research Chandler is specifically concerned about the extension of agency to the non-human, in the work of Jane Bennett and Bruno Latour in particular, because (according to Chandler) it creates geographically located assemblages of the human and non-human that seem to exist independently of politics and in so doing puts them out of reach of political solutions (Chandler, 2013: 31)

There are therefore ethical considerations in taking a place-based approach to peacebuilding. The counter to this, forwarded by Malpas is that a sense of place is also essential for fostering 'environmentalism and sustainability; community development and regeneration; and indigenous politics and reconciliation' (Malpas, 2012: 14-15) all concerns that are inextricably linked with place. Place therefore swirls with potential, for peace, for exclusion, for

nationalism, for reconciliation, for conservation, for extraction. The urgent need, according to Malpas, is therefore to understand what place attachment is 'and the different forms in which it may be articulated' (Malpas, 2012: 23. See also Relph 2008: preface). For Malpas, a true ethics of place is one that looks at the specifics of our engagement with the environments in which we live and the things we find there - 'the local, the particular, the singular, and the concrete' – not to unearth and engender what is comforting and familiar but what is challenging, difficult, contrary, and likely to stand in the way of human flourishing rather than promote it. It is, he argues to 'have a sense of one's own uncertain and fragile locatedness in the world, and to have to take responsibility for that' (Malpas, 2012: 28. See also Latour, 2018). For Malpas what needs to be articulated are the ways in which *'ethos'* and *'topos'* belong together (Malpas 2012: 29).

For the purposes of this research bringing *topos* and *ethos* (or *ore* and *peace*) together means focusing on the specific relationship with the orebody - the 'local, the particular, the singular, and the concrete' – as a means of understanding what might be challenging and difficult in people's relationship to place, post-conflict. Focusing on the relationship with the orebody therefore looks at the specifics of people's engagement with it and asks what it might mean to live well in its presence. From a mediation perspective this shifts the analytical gaze from the potentially risky territory of people's relationship with other people and locates it somewhere potentially safer – their relationship with a specific place and only by extension (and not directly) the other people who are in relationship with that place also.

But there is more to the ethics of place than this. The decision to focus on the relationship with the orebody is also informed by Edward Relph, who argues in the preface to the second edition of his book *Place and Placelessness* that the concept of place has changed significantly since the 1970s. Globalization means that our homes have become permeable to the world. While home is still a specific place, it also transcends this place. Every place and every home is therefore 'simultaneously grounded and boundless' to some degree at least (Relph, 2008: preface). As Relph writes

> we know from our own experience that there is no contradiction in this; I am
> situated here, in this room in my house or in this café on a local street, drinking

fair trade coffee from El Salvador made in an Italian machine, thinking about somewhere else, or reading e-mail from friends in far-away places (ibid).

Indeed, in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo people use imported goods, connect on social media, and work overseas. But it is not just people, ideas, WIFI, and 'coffee from El Salvador' that is on the move in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo. The deep strata also travel out of a geological home on a rhizomatic line of flight; red bauxite goes to aluminium smelters and from there perhaps into aircraft wings, lead from Stan Terg might turn into batteries and end up in people's torches. Perhaps the zinc from the Sase mine near Srebrenica goes into house paint. Geological place therefore is both radically grounded and boundless, too (see also Richard & Weszkalnys, 2014: 18).

For Relph, the recognition that place can be both grounded and boundless is 'the most important recent contribution to understanding place' because of the ways in which it brings together the local, the global, the general and the specific together (ibid). This, argues Relph, makes place a locus for addressing intractable contemporary challenges.

> Place, both as a concept and as a phenomenon of experience, therefore has a remarkable capacity to make connections between self, community, and earth, between what is local and particular and what is regional and worldwide. It is the intimate and specific basis for how each of us connects with the world, and how the world connects with us. In this respect I have come to think that sense of place has the potential to serve as a pragmatic foundation for addressing the profound local and global challenges, such as megacity growth, climate change, and economic disparity, that are emerging in the present century. Indeed, effective resolution of these challenges may be possible only through a firm grasp of their simultaneously grounded and yet boundless characteristics, which is the very quintessence of understanding place (ibid).

A place-based approach to building peace that is based in the orebody is therefore not (just) local, bounded and tied up with a specific location but also global. It is intimate and specific and also regional and worldwide. The problem of natural resource-related peacebuilding is not (just) something that happens over *there* but is a political ecology that involves us all.

3

PUTTING PEACE IN ITS PLACE.

Developing a Methodological Approach.

Places […] pose a challenge. They implicate us, perforce, in the lives of human others, and in our relations with nonhumans they ask how we shall respond to our temporary meeting-up with these particular rocks and stones and trees. They require that, in one way or another, we confront the challenge of the negotiation of multiplicity. The sheer fact of having to get on together; the fact that you cannot (even should you want to, and this itself should in no way be presumed) 'purify' spaces/places. In this throwntogetherness what are at issue are the terms of engagement of those trajectories (both 'social' and 'natural'), those stories-so-far, within (and not only within) that conjuncturality' (Massey, 2005: 141).

INTRODUCTION

During the pilot study for this research, I drive from Pristina to Mitrovica nearly every day with either Ed or Behar, who are interpreting for me. If it's Behar, we stop off at a large, new service station just outside the city. Behar fills the car and chats with the people who work there, and I go into the restaurant and buy us both a double take-out espresso. It's a strange morning ritual; the service station feels like a 'placeless place', a wayside stop in a formless, man-made 'subtopia' (Relph, 2008: 105).

And the drive to Mitrovica is appalling. It is early spring, the trees are bare, and there is nothing to distract from the litter caught in their branches, or the half-finished, neglected-looking brick and concrete houses with their dark and glassless windows. The sodden stray dogs by the side of the road. The discarded plastic chair, upside down in the river. I feel like I travel across rather than through this landscape and am relieved to be separated from it by the car, by my life back in Belgrade, by the fact that my stay here is temporary. It's an unsettling feeling. As Nordstrom writes landscapes are ways of seeing 'not only outward to culturally constructed realities, but inward to ideas and ideals of self and identity' (Nordstrom, 1997: 179). This landscape forces my gaze uncomfortably inwards. Who am I and what am I doing here?

Each day I talk with Ed and Behar as we drive. With Ed it is mostly his frustration with Kosovan politics. But for Behar, who was brought up in Mitrovica, the road has been part of his geography since he was born. As we drive, he begins to point things out as we pass them; the house where his uncle used to live and the graveyard where he is buried. The skeletal ruins of the houses that marked a wartime checkpoint. And day by day, as we get to know each other better, the road begins to swirl with stories. Of Behar's uncle who was killed by his Serb neighbours and of the annual family gatherings they have in the graveyard. Of how Behar once crossed the wartime checkpoint with a broken arm on the way to hospital in Pristina. In a small way, through my daily routines, through this 'regular pattern of life activity' as Ingold puts it, I feel more like an inhabitant (Ingold, 2004; 154). A dweller. And every day the world of the road reveals more of itself to me and takes on a different significance (Excerpted from research diary, 10th November 2017).

In the previous chapter it was argued that peacebuilding in general, and mining-related peacebuilding in particular has been a top-down endeavour that has neglected local people. I argued for a bottom-up approach grounded in the orebody itself. John Paul Lederach's web-approach to peacebuilding was introduced as the theoretical framework for this research (2005). But Lederach's approach only goes so far, particularly for natural resource related peace. As I argued in Chapter One, what it misses are the 'voices' of the local places including the natural resources themselves. Lederach is not alone in this. As Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler write, space and place 'have been one of the 'silences' in the study of the contentious politics of peace (2017: 1). And yet, as indigenous scholars and activists have long argued conflict and peace take place in particular geographic spaces (Alfred & Corntassel 2005). But if the human relationship with space is one of the 'silences' in peacebuilding, the relationship with *geological* place has been neglected entirely.

The phenomenological methodological approach adopted for this research, the methods associated with it and the ethics that subtend them have grown out of my experience as a foreign news producer and journalist in Moscow and across the former Soviet Union in the early to mid-1990s, as a consultant within the mining industry in Mongolia, through work with indigenous people in Australia and Canada, and through my training as a mediator. They are informed by my own experience of working in central Bosnia during the war in 1993 and in Chechnya in 1994/1995. What I have learned over time and in multiple different places is the importance of understanding, or trying to understand, how people perceive their lives beyond the dominant externally constructed narratives of how we (journalists, mining executives, mediators, peacebuilders) *think* they perceive them and the everyday lived reality of any particular economic policy, development proposal, wartime event, or mining activity. But it is not just these easily recognizable facets of who I am that are woven into the way in which the phenomenon of this research and my methodological approach have emerged. So too are things less easily acknowledged, or at least more uncomfortable to admit; that I am a woman in her fifties whose children are leaving home, that I am to some degree a 'trailing spouse' married to a mining engineer. Over the past twenty years we have lived in Namibia, Alaska, South Africa, Australia, northern Canada, Mongolia and Serbia. Whatever 'home' my children are leaving is transient, unpredictable, changeable and unconnected to the geographies of their childhood. How coincidental is it then, that the concept of mining and dwelling has emerged in my hands? Someone whose connection to the mining industry means I do not easily or conventionally *dwell,* myself. The contours that the phenomenon has assumed are not neutral but are deeply implicated with me, and what frames my seeing (Vagle, 2014: 30).

This chapter is an account of the methodological approach adopted and how it emerged as a result of my engagement with the literature (see previous chapter) and during the trips I made to Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina in the early design stages of this research,
all the time asking myself the two questions that Lederach argues peacebuilders must keep present early and often: 'What exists? And how are we in relationship to it?' (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 2304). As Lederach writes, peacebuilders must approach a context with care and respect; '[w]alk carefully. Watch and listen to those who know the setting. Do not presume to know solutions or to provide preconceived recipes' (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 2214). Like a geologist, my attention had been caught by something curious in the

world that I am familiar with; the suggestion that mining companies must prioritize processes of peacebuilding and reconciliation and claims on some company websites that they are doing exactly that. But 'reconciliation' and 'peacebuilding' are complex and contested terms even in the field of conflict and peace studies (see for example Bloomfield, 2006). How would they emerge in the hands of a mining company? And what would this mean for the people that live and work in the conflict-affected contexts themselves?

While it wasn't my intention to take a phenomenological approach at the beginning of this process it became clear that the human geologic relationship was less a problem to be solved and more a phenomenon to be explored. The question was how best to surface it? What would be the most ethical way of approaching it? What emerged, particularly during those car journeys with Behar was the importance of stories as a means of honing an existential sense not just of *who* but *where* we are in the aftermath of conflict. I became aware that Behar's human lifeworld is intimately connected to the road we were travelling, and the places that exist along it. The lifeworld that exists here is not just a human one, although it is the human story I am hearing. Instead, it is made up of people, buildings, cars, stray dogs, litter, rainclouds, me, memories, stories and somewhere, underneath it all, geology. I sensed that if I want to understand something about the relationship between this place, the people who dwell in it and myself as a researcher relative to it, then it will be through listening to people's 'causal stories' and the accounts they give about 'what led to what, and the explanations they offer about how things got to be where they are' (Paley, 2017: 114). As Ingold writes 'telling a story […] is not like unfurling a tapestry to *cover up* the world, it is rather a way of guiding the attention of listeners or readers *into* it' (Ingold, 2000: 190)

The first section of this chapter argues that place matters for peacebuilding. Following Theodore Sarbin (1983) I argue that through our relationships with the places in which we dwell and the human and nonhuman others that dwell there with us we maintain a coherent narrative of 'what led to what' (Paley 2017: 114) and how we fit into it. I also argue that geological place seems to matter too. Places have volume and depth as well as surface, after all (Bridge, 2013; Graham, 2016). Ingold's dwelling perspective is then introduced as the ontological and epistemological framework for understanding the life stories of humans not as existing in a geographical and geological vacuum but as evolving in relationship with the

life stories of everything in which, on which and with which they dwell. If places are a 'simultaneity of stories so far' as the geographer Doreen Massey argues (2005: 9) they include those of entities that are nonhuman and inorganic, including the geologic. But taking a phenomenological approach also risks reducing geology to its relationship with people and neglecting the immense *before, beneath,* and *below* to the human presence that it possesses (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 16). I place this research 'on the edges of things' (Vagle, 2014: 111) in that while it is concerned with the human geologic relationship on one hand it acknowledges that there is far more to geology than this on the other. The final section of this chapter explores the ethical challenges inherent in researching conflict-affected contexts and the methods employed within the post-intentional, post-phenomenological epistemological framework adopted. I introduce four methods, desk-based research, interviews, my research journal and photography. A fifth method, 'expanded listening', evolved as the research progressed. Its emergence is explored in Chapter Six. The chapter concludes with an explanation of how the data was analyzed.

3.1. PLACE MATTERS.

The absence of place in peacebuilding so far is surprising. As David Seamon writes, the lived fact is that 'human being always necessarily involves human-being-in place' (Seamon, 2014: 12). Or, as Edward Relph puts it, '[t]o be human is to have and to know *your* place (Relph, 2008: 1). The fact that place matters seems evident as I drive around the places where Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the two entities that now make up Bosnia and Herzegovina, rub shoulders. The bullet-holed buildings and the roadside graveyards speak of the recent conflict here, reminders that people have fought over these places. But more than this, the Serb flags flying at road intersections, the Red Star and Partizan murals on the walls of the football pitches, the conflict-related graffiti on the bus stops, and the school walls – the places where people cross and come together - tell conflicting stories of what happened here and what is continuing to unfold.[12] While the phenomenologist David Seamon defines place as an integral phenomenon to human life that 'holds lifeworlds

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[12] As Relph writes, 'crossroads, central points or focuses, landmarks whether natural or man-made, tend not only to draw attention to themselves but also to declare themselves as places that in some way stand out from the surrounding area' (Relph 2008: 35)

together spatially and environmentally, marking out centers of human meaning, intention, and comportment that, in turn, help make place' (Seamon, 2014: 12) the lifeworlds that are held together here, are held together in a way that seems uneasy. There seems no consensus about what the meaning of these places is, or how to 'fix the memory' of them (Relph, 2008: 5). This is not to suggest that every crossroads, landmark or memorial in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo declares itself in this way. While there is hate graffiti and splashes of anger in the red paint daubed on road signs there are also roadside benches under trees, shoes lined up beside outside sinks, bullet holes turned into painted sunflowers. Some places are more problematic than others.

The fact that place matters is also evident in the substantial body of literature on the relationship between people and the places they inhabit and the fact that the concept of place *attachment* has emerged as a 'prominent focus for exploring the relationship between humans and the environment' (Patterson & Williams, 2005: 361). Place attachment is defined as 'a positive emotional bond that develops between people and their environment (Stedman, 2003: 672) and the concept has been developed by scholars ranging from humanist geographers who argue that space becomes place through human interaction (Buttimer, 2015; Relph, 2008; Relph, 2015; Tuan, 1977) to recent post-humanist propositions that landscapes and the features they contain have an ontology separate from human understanding and an ability to mediate human behaviour (Ash & Simpson, 2016; Lea, 2009; Olsen, 2010. See also Bennett, 2010). While the centrality of the human subject is debated, place is still understood as significant in the construction and deconstruction of human relationships.

Environmental psychologists, like humanist geographers have also argued for the environment as a 'locus of meaning' (Williams, 2014; 90). Proshansksy, Fabian, and Kaminoff published a key paper in 1983 in which they critiqued the notion of identity as disembodied and proposed that the construction of self-identity is not restricted to distinguishing between self and other but extends to space, place and the objects and things that exist there (Proshansky et al, 1983: 57). Our relationship with the places in which we live is therefore instrumental in constructing our relationship with ourselves. What is at stake, they argue is maintaining the psychological wellbeing of oneself by protecting and adjusting self-identity in

response to the physical world. This adjustment is attained through cognitively engaging with and evaluating the world around us and in so doing engaging with and evaluating our position relative to it.

Theodore Sarbin re-works Proshansky's formulation by proposing that 'place identity' is constructed through epistemic acts through which we locate ourselves in particular geographies; 'spaces and places, rooms and halls, built and natural habitats, seascapes and landscapes, *mount*ains and plains, forests and deserts, and so on' (Sarbin, 1983: 338). The organizing principle for this, he proposes, is not cognition and evaluation as Proshansky et al suggest, but something he terms 'emplotment' through which we 'construct personal narratives complete with plots and sub-plots, dramatis personae, settings, goals, beginning and endings, climaxes and anti-climaxes' and insert ourselves within them (Sarbin 1983: 340). We create a coherent story about ourselves, in other words, through the stories we tell about how and where we live our lives, relative to the other entities, human and nonhuman with whom our lives are entangled.

Central to emplotment is the idea that people must be able to discern *who* and *where* they are as a means of establishing and maintaining their equilibrium, particularly in the presence of a perceived threat to their survival, and for Sarbin, these two questions are intimately linked. You can't have one without the other. But asking *where* and therefore *who* we are is not just a means of positioning ourselves, but of positioning those around us also. *Dramatis personae* are plural, after all. This concept of emplotment seems close to what I experience with Behar in the car on the road from Pristina to Mitrovica. Behar is telling me a story about the places along the road; his uncle's house, the graveyard, the spot where the checkpoint used to be, the garage where his friend works, and *emplotting* himself within them. In so doing, he emplots the Serb soldiers who stopped him when he was a child with a broken arm, the neighbours that killed his uncle, his relatives that gather in the village to mourn him. And he emplots me, too.

Finally, place is significant for recently emerging conceptualizations of wellbeing that perceive human wellbeing as intimately tied up with place. As Clare Bambra writes in the Foreword to *Wellbeing and Place* (2012) 'wellbeing and place are inextricably interconnected. Our

economic and educational opportunities, our social and political relationships, our environment, and our imaginative, cognitive and creative worlds are all profoundly impacted by where we live and who we live alongside' (Atkinson et al, 2012: kindle location 231). For Sarah Atkinson wellbeing is 'relational and situated' (2013). It is not something to be acquired but something that emerges in the complex assemblage of relations 'not only between people, but also between people and places, material objects and less material constituents of places including atmosphere, histories and values (Atkinson 2013: 142). Wellbeing is produced in our situated, habituated routines as we go about our everyday lives.

3.2. GOING BELOW THE SURFACE.

It is not just places on the surface that matter in the three research sites in the Balkans. Geological place seems to matter too and yet geology has been neglected in the place attachment literature so far, in keeping perhaps with what Stephen Graham describes in his book *Vertical* (2016) as the 'remarkably *flat* perspectives' on human societies that have dominated geographical thinking (2016: kindle location 190). In his book *Place and Experience. A philosophical Topography* Jeff Malpas argues, for example, that places exist *only* on the surface, connected together to form the visible landscape that people must navigate (Malpas, 1999: kindle location 693). For Malpas landscape that needs no 'deeper topography' to be understood; 'the lie of the land is given – almost literally – *on* its surface rather than being hidden *beneath* it' (ibid). For Ingold, too, life is lived in the zone where earth and sky meet, 'in which earthly substances and aerial media' together weave the textures of the land (Ingold, 2008: 1796). It is not surprising then, that the places in the place attachment literature are surface places - homes, plazas, forests, cities, foreign settlements, wilderness areas, lakes, polluted places, disputed territories, coastal towns, holiday parks, and low-income housing sites, for example.

But looking across the natural resource-rich landscape in certain parts of the Balkans it seems geology has a way of making itself known. It is there in the acidic yellow of the waste material by the smelter in northern Kosovo that has been there since Rebecca West visited in the 1930s. It is there in the muddy-banked tailings ponds by the industrial park. Behar and I stand by the hospital and peer at the ponds together through a tangle of brambles and a wire fence.

'I used to swim in those, when I was a child', he says. But more intangibly it also seems to be there in the miners' monument, in the bridge that separates and divides Mitrovica, in the flags that mark out the flotation facility and the smelter as Serbian rather than Kosovan in this 'make believe space' (Navaro-Yashin, 2012) that is neither officially one nor the other. Likewise, as I drive from the small town of Milici to Srebrenica, along the high ridge that curls past the bauxite mines at Palež it is there in the red bauxite dust that coats the road and the crash barrier that runs alongside it. To my left the open pit of the mine appears and disappears through the trees as I drive. On my right I spot the diamond-shaped red sign with the white skull and crossbones warning of another sort of mine, unexploded in the woods. Bauxite buried to my left, landmines to my right. Mines and mines. The subsoil seems to interfere with the surface in these places and yet there is little in the literature on the human/place relationship or in the peacebuilding literature to account for what is going on here. It is this gap this research intends to fill. What is the relationship between human bodies and geological bodies in a conflict-affected context? What stories do people tell here about the earth beneath their feet? And how do they emplot themselves (and others) within them?

What has been argued so far is that places are important for people's sense of existential security particularly in the aftermath of violent conflict. Through understanding *where* we are, we understand *who* we are relative to the people, objects, and places with which and in which we dwell. But places are more than implied by Sarbin, for example. The stories in which we emplot ourselves are not projected on to places but emerge in our relationship with them and the ways in which we navigate and negotiate the 'time-deepened ensemble of things and beings' that helped create them (Lea, 2009: 376). In addition, places are also more than on the surface but have depth and volume too. In the next section I introduce Tim Ingold's 'dwelling perspective' as the ontological and epistemological lens for this research as a means of understanding conflict-affected societies not as purely social but as unfolding in relationship with the non-human world and all the life, organic and inorganic, that exists there, including the geologic. The question is not just how people are meaningfully attached to the places in which they live but how those places and all the human and non-human things that exist with them, might influence what that attachment is (Ash & Simpson, 2016: 55. See also Olsen, 2010).

3.3. THE DWELLING PERSPECTIVE. NEITHER 'COSY' NOR 'COMFORTABLE'.

The ontological and epistemological lens for this research draws on Tim Ingold's 'dwelling perspective'. This perspective is based on a human being not as a self-contained a priori subject confronting a world 'out there' (Ingold, 2002: 4) but as one who grows and evolves within a continually unfolding field of relationships with other beings, human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic who also grow and evolve (ibid: 4-5). The concern of the dwelling perspective is therefore to understand how people 'negotiate their relationships with one another, and with their non-human environments in the usual course of everyday life' and what emerges as a result (Ingold, 2002: 161). While for Ingold, inhabiting the world means to live life 'in the open' (2008: 1796) I argue it means living in a zone of entanglement that includes the sky, the weather, the surface 'textures of the land' and the geological presence beneath it.

But the dwelling perspective as originally conceived by Ingold is also problematic. It suggests a continuity with the past and a gentle layering of task, time, people and place that doesn't account for environments in which task, time, people and place have been disrupted by war. Ingold argues, for example, that people dwell together by being attentive to each other. He likens it to a musical performance in which orchestral players must pay careful attention to each other for a successful outcome. People *resonate* with each other in a way that is harmonious (2002: 196). Ingold illustrates what he means by interpreting Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting *The Harvesters.* In his interpretation people can work together, rest under the same tree, walk the same paths, attend the same church in untroubled ways (2002: 202). But this idea of untroubled, uninterrupted resonance doesn't necessarily fit a conflict-affected context where lifeworlds have been knocked off one trajectory onto another and years have been lost in the process of post-conflict recovery. There are people who can't work together in the Balkans, certain paths that can't be travelled by certain people, bridges that shouldn't be crossed and churches that can no longer be attended. What sort of dwelling is occurring here?

In a later work, 'Epilogue: Towards a Politics of Dwelling' (2005) Ingold acknowledges that this lack of attention to the politics of dwelling is an oversight. As he writes

> [t]he trouble with 'dwelling' is that it sounds altogether too cosy and comfortable, conjuring up a haven of rest where all tensions are resolved, and where the solitary inhabitant can be at peace with the word – and with him or herself. This is not what I intended; for while we may acknowledge that dwelling is a way of being at home in the world, home is not necessarily a comfortable or pleasant place to be, nor are we alone there (2005: 503)

The people in this later paper by Ingold don't attend to each other or work together unproblematically as they do in *The Harvesters* but inhabit a messy world full of structures left over from different periods, that make different claims – 'murderous and monumental' – about how life should be, and they 'pick their way as best they can between them, turning every closure into an opening for the continuation of their own life projects' (Ingold, 2005: 502). This sort of dwelling doesn't evolve easily and inevitably in relation with the world but is the experience 'of having to weave a path through a medley of structures built by others for you to live in, according to designs that answer not to your particular background and circumstances, but to some generalized conception of pan-human needs' (Ingold, 2005: 502). I think of the ruined 'English Colony' above the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo and the monumental claim it made in the 1930s about *how life should be*. What is the experience of weaving a path through a medley of structures like this that once promised so much and have been damaged by war, and now seem designed for a world that no longer exists? How do people weave a path *together* through what exists here now? Drawing on Sarbin (1983), what 'who am I?' and 'where am I?' stories do people tell here?

What I see as I drive around Bosnia and Kosovo is not a post-war *society* – a tangle of human relationships – which is the predominant perception in the field of peacebuilding, but a tangle of human, environmental and geological lifeworlds all held together in place. As Olsen writes, societies are not 'cognitive sketches resting in the minds of people; they are real entities solidly built and well tied together' although they may be tied together with difficulty (Olsen, 2010: 5). The significance of this for peacebuilding is that while Daniel Bar-Tal et al argue that the 'conflictive ethos' that exists in post-conflict places 'that enables a society to adapt to the conflict situation, survive the stressful period, and struggle successfully with the adversary' is

a social construction (Bar Tal, 2000; 351. See also Zdravkovic-Zonta, 2009; Noor et al, 2012), I argue through the dwelling perspective that it is constructed in collaboration with the memorials, the graveyards, the homes that have been rebuilt, the mine buildings that were used as death camps and a myriad other crossing places in these landscapes, including the geologic. Places matter not as neutral containers for human activity, but as spaces and entities that are intimately tied up not just with how people live, but how they live *together* in the aftermath of conflict.

3.4. NEGOTIATING NONHUMAN AGENCY. THE DWELLNG PERSPECTIVE AND PHENOMENOLOGY.

The relevance of the dwelling perspective for this research is that it draws attention to how certain features of the environment, particularly those that had caught my attention in the landscapes – the monuments, the ruined houses, the graveyards, the ruined mining infrastructure, the smear of bauxite on the side of a road, Behar's uncle's house – make a difference to people's everyday lives. The dwelling perspective is significant for this research therefore because it allows a re-thinking of agency and intentionality. As Lea writes dwelling references 'togethernesses, foldings, and involvements of human and nonhuman' (2009: 376). As such, the dwelling perspective facilitates the shift from a phenomenological to a more post-phenomenological perspective that locates intentionality neither in the subject nor the object but in the relationship between them.

Post-phenomenology is, as Tom Roberts notes, not a coherent school or tradition (Roberts 2018, 545) but offers a "rereading" of phenomenology that is intended to unsettle the anthropocentrism of what Vagle refers to as the 'old' phenomenology in the tradition of Husserl (Vagle, 2014: 111) in which intentionality implied a relationship directed towards an object by a subject. An approach informed by post-phenomenological thinking understands intentionality as emerging in relationship *with* the world and post-phenomenological geographers are re-visiting Ingold's dwelling perspective in order to incorporate what Lea describes as the 'pull of the world' into their work (Lea, 2009: 374). But post-phenomenology also poses problems. Roberts argues that post-phenomenology is now positioned 'at the forefront of debates concerning the more-than-human constitution of social and cultural life'

which object-oriented ontologies have further energized (Roberts, 2019, 542). Indeed, Tom Sparrow declares that the object-oriented ontology of speculative realism spells the 'end of phenomenology' because of the inability of phenomenology to deal with reality on its own terms. Phenomenology, argues Sparrow, leaves its practitioners stuck in a correlation with the world which means they can only gesture towards the outside 'without ever stepping out of the house' (Sparrow, 2014: 244).

Certainly, this research has been both energized and destabilized by the influence of non-phenomenological thinkers and concepts such as vibrant matter (Bennett, 2010), geological timefulness, (Bjornerud 2018), geosocial formations (Clark & Yusoff, 2017), the four 'figures' of Povinelli's geontology (Povinelli, 2016) which all point to the idea of geology not as a *dramatis persona* in somebody else's story but as an entity with its own story, on its own narrative arc withdrawn from the human. Significantly, it is these writers who argue for a more ethical engagement with geology, particularly in the context of climate change. In his book *The Democracy of Objects*, for example, Bryant writes that we should not ignore the role of the nonhuman when considering this particular challenge.

> technologies, weather patterns, resources, diseases, animals, natural disasters, the presence or absence of roads, the availability of water, animals, microbes, the presence or absence of electricity and high-speed internet connections, modes of transportation, and so on. All of these things and many more besides play a crucial role in bringing humans together in particular ways […]in an age where we are faced with the looming threat of monumental climate change, it is irresponsible to draw our distinctions in such a way as to exclude nonhuman actors (Bryant, 2011: 24)

If the conversation about a more ethical engagement with geology is happening among object-oriented ontologists and vital materialists does this mean I should take a more object-oriented approach to this research?

In addition, I was having my own struggles with geology during the early stages of this research. I was experiencing what Vagle calls a 'mysterious attraction to things that are supposedly "anti-phenomenological"' (Vagle, 2014: 111). At Stan Terg, for example, geology seemed 'chattier' than it was in other places. The vast smear of waste rock by the smelter,

the little pieces of ore perched on tills in shops, and arranged in windows, the Trepca café in Mitrovica, the dead-looking tailings ponds all seemed to have something to 'say' about the human geological relationship and how it has emerged here over the decades. I felt myself drawn to object-oriented ontologies that put things at the center of being as autonomous objects, but according to Tom Sparrow (2014) paying attention to the orebody in this way would mean abandoning a phenomenological approach.[13] As he argues in his book *The End of Phenomenology. Metaphysics and the New Realism* (2014) phenomenology forbids me from stepping out of my correlational relationship with an orebody to know what its autonomous existence is, independent of me. Nor am I even allowed to admit that it has one.

I disagree with Sparrow, however. The post-phenomenological approach I adopt here is aligned with Ash and Simpson's definition of post-phenomenology as a rethinking of intentionality as an emergent relation with the world, rather than an '*a priori* condition of experience' that *also* recognizes the autonomy of objects withdrawn from their relationship with humans (2016: 48). Following Ash & Simpson I argue it is therefore not inconsistent to pay attention to the materiality, the agency and the *vibrancy* of the orebody as part of a post-phenomenological study (2016: 55). The approach of this research is therefore post-phenomenological in that it focuses on the emergent intentional relationship between humans and geology on one hand whilst acknowledging that the 'stratified orders' of geology far exceeds this relationship on the other (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 16).

This research is therefore located in an 'in between' space (Vagle, 2014: 111) that is often uncomfortable, between the grounded orebody and the orebody in flight, between phenomenology and the more material approaches advocated by Latour (2014; 2018), Bennett (2010) and Olsen (2010), between the human and the non-human, the local and the global, the extractive and the consumptive. Rather than emerging as a neat package, with a neat methodology the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship manifested itself as akin to the orebody itself, a wild thing on its own rhizomatic line of flight out of (and back into) its geological home. But as Vagle writes, following these Deleuze-Guattarian lines of

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[13] As he argues in his book The End of Phenomenology. Metaphysics and the New Realism (2014) phenomenology forbids me from stepping out of my correlational relationship with an orebody to know what its autonomous existence is, independent of me. Nor am I even allowed to admit that it has one.

flight is to be encouraged in the post-intentional phenomenological approach he advocates that assumes that 'all things are connected and interconnected in all sorts of unstable, changing, partial, fleeting ways' and that knowledge "takes off" in directions that we may not be able to anticipate' (Vagle, 2014: 119). The point is to pose a political challenge to simplicity, rigidity, structure and the binary thinking that is unlikely to reflect the ways in which phenomena 'are always already exploding through relations' (Vagle, 2014: 118). The aim is not to make an uncomfortable place more comfortable but to sit with its contradictions and its difficulties and to wonder what they mean.

3.5. ETHICS, METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS.

What an intense day! I meet one of the participants, a small, dark-haired man, wearing a dark green jersey in the Mine Workers' Union office at Stan Terg. He sits smoking, using an old sardine can as an ashtray. I give him an information sheet to read then sit down at the end of the table with him and start talking about the interview and ask if he has any questions. He asks where I will use the information. He is on 'lists' in neighbouring countries because he was one of the organizers of the strike and he still can't travel to Montenegro. But he is very keen to do the interview and rebuffs my suggestion that he might prefer not to. As we speak, he begins to tell me about his role in the strike, his time in prison and the beatings he received there. He stands up and shows me the curvature of his spine from the rough treatment he received. He sits down and talks more about hiding information about his involvement in the strike and of going to Germany to seek asylum. I realize he has begun to cry silently and put my hand on his elbow. Ed stops translating. The man starts apologizing, over and over again. I say that nobody who has been through conflict, strikes, prison ever need apologize for weeping. He signs the consent form, and we talk a little about visiting painful memories during the interview and the risk it might stir up trauma, but it doesn't deter him. 'It's life' he says. (Excerpted from research diary, 12th March 2018).

3.5.1. An Ethics of Care.

The methods employed for this research are informed by an ethics of care that demands I pay careful attention to the people with whom I will be working, and to the relationship between us. This is an ethics that is permeating the peacebuilding field (Murithi, 2009; Neufeldt, 2014; Neufeldt, 2016). Neufeldt argues this is partly because while peacebuilding rests upon claims 'about the good offered through peacebuilding initiatives' (2014: 427) it has been criticized

for causing further harm in fragile contexts by imposing top-down peace prescriptions that do not necessarily fit the people and places to which they are applied (ibid. See also Chapter One). The problem, according to Neufeldt, is that the liberal peacebuilding project is imbued with a 'narrow reading' of moral values based on consequentialist and duty-based thinking that is not sufficient 'to weigh and guide actions in the diverse, complex and relationally fractured contexts' in which peacebuilders work (2014: 428). But it is not just top-down peacebuilding that carries ethical risk. Anyone working in a conflict-affected context can unintentionally do harm when attempting to do *good* (Neufeldt, 2016: 9).[14]

From an ethics perspective, what is at issue is what constitutes the 'good' and the 'right' in peacebuilding, who has the power to decide this, and how it can be achieved (Neufeldt, 2016: 119). As was argued in Chapter One, the 'good' and the 'right' in natural resource-related peacebuilding has been defined by international institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank and the extractive companies themselves. The concern of this research is what constitutes the 'good' and the 'right' in the conflict-affected places. The ethics of care adopted for this research therefore means abandoning preconceived notions of how things *ought* to be, in favour of discovering how they really are (Neufeldt, 2016: 13. See also Lederach, 2005). This poses a particular problem for this research. How about the moral framework I take with me that is concerned with climate change and understands the 'good' and the 'right' as associated with a zero-carbon future and (consequently) a far more sustainable relationship with geological resources? To what extent is this a 'top-down' imposition of a moral framework that doesn't necessarily fit the conflict-affected context to which it is applied? An ethics of care therefore requires a researcher to reflect on the values she takes into a conflict-affected context, and to be aware that she is part of a moral community that is not universal but particular, that other moral communities exist and that the task of peacebuilding is the

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[14] Neufeldt writes 'Bad things happen, even when we aim to help people. Sometimes the bad things are clear, as when people's lives are lost as a direct or indirect result of our actions. Many times, however, the bad things are less clear, such as when we contribute to projects that divert resources, send subtle messages about the inferiority of local ways of doing things, or suggest interventions that poorly match with what the local community wants or needs. In these cases we might discover we were wrong years later when we find, for example, that our work made no difference, or work we did to empower one group generated painful new rifts and even was a factor in retaliatory violence in the community' (Neufeld, 2016: 9)

task of operating 'in and between' multiple ways of understanding what 'good' and 'right' means in particular places, and how to achieve it (Neufeldt, 2016: 46).

The Ethics of Care and Phenomenology.

A phenomenological approach has been adopted for this research because its concern is with what matters to people, how social relations and modes of perception take shape in people's lives and what it means to be human (Desjarlais & Throop, 2011: 88. See also Jackson, 1996). It is a means, in other words, of paying empathic attention to other people's lives and the ways in which they perceive them (Jackson, 1996: 2). Significantly, in a conflict-affected context, phenomenology creates a space for considering how our experiences and perceptions are constituted through our engagement with the *other,* including people, buildings, social structures, conflictive narratives, geology. Phenomenology affords a means of understanding what it means not just to 'keep on living on' (Berlant, 2011: 24) in a conflict-affected context that is rich in natural resources but what it means to keep on living on with those around us, human and nonhuman. Finally, phenomenology is intended to unsettle and destabilize 'received ways of seeing the world' (Jackson, 1996: 4). As Seamon writes, phenomenology declares that 'assumed notions and perspectives, whether of the specialist or layperson, are often out of accurate contact with the entities they purport to see, know, or interpret' (Seamon, 1982: 119).

But the phenomenological approach also raises an ethical question about the power differential between researcher and participants and how a phenomenon emerges within that relationship. Phenomenology is the act of paying attention to a particular phenomenon in the context in which it exists (Vagle, 2014: 122). It brings something into the foreground by focusing on it, and in so doing allows other elements of lived reality to recede (Ram & Houston, 2015: 9). While the paying of empathic attention may appear to be an inherently ethical endeavour it is not neutral. The phenomenon of the human geologic relationship and the elements I bring to the foreground to explore it and how I represent them are all filtered through a power differential in which I (as the researcher) am the one paying attention and others (people, landscapes, objects) are the ones that attract it, or do not. The things upon which my gaze settles, what I photograph and how I choose to frame them, who I listen to and how I think about it are all means of foregrounding certain things and not others, filtered

through what frames my preconceived (and yet evolving) understanding of what exists. It is because I am who I am, in other words, that certain parts of the world come alive for me while other parts do not. As Ram writes '[t]he world does not appear evenly arrayed or neutrally in front of us,' instead it appears

> in uneven light and in shade, foreground, and background – and this appearance is owed to our activities and concerns themselves, which "pick out" for us particular aspects of the world as important for present purposes, throwing other aspects into a fuzzy tacit presence, while those aspects of our history which are quite irrelevant for that context fall right away (Ram, 2015: 37)

The contours that the phenomenon has assumed in this study are not neutral therefore, but deeply implicated with me, and what frames my seeing (Vagle, 2014: 30).

A phenomenological study is therefore a loaded process of engendering and creating meaning by attending to particular aspects of lived experience while ignoring others, or at least relegating them to the background. The ethical issue at stake is who and what might be overlooked as a result? With this in mind what is offered in this thesis is an exploration of the human geologic relationship that is based on an ethics of care and explicitly acknowledges that what exists in the everyday lived worlds at Stan Terg, Sase and Olovo far exceeds what is presented here. Undoubtedly there are things that matter more, or differently to people at Stan Terg, Sase and Olovo than their relationship to geology. Attempting to bring this relationship to the surface is therefore not intended to imply that this is all, or even the most important thing that matters but rather that it is part of an uneven, conflict-affected world that still merits our attention.

The Ethics of Care: Taking Care

Taking an ethics of care into fieldwork in conflict-affected contexts means considering how to insert yourself into places where outbreaks of violence may be likely, where your presence will attract attention, where certain things cannot be talked about, at least not easily, where what happened in the past is still contentious, and where people are living in a state of economic, social, psychological and emotional precarity. While fieldwork in conflict-affected environments is 'essential for understanding the lived experiences of security and insecurity' (Campbell, 2017: 91) there are ethical, practical and methodological 'pitfalls' associated with

it (ibid). Recognizing this, there is a growing awareness of the enhanced significance of issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, safety and beneficence in conflict-affected contexts and calls for more training to ensure researchers are able to identify potential harms and benefits (Campbell, 2017).

Issues such as consent, confidentiality, safety, beneficence and the overarching risk of doing harm to people that have already suffered the violence of conflict are highly context-specific and require tailored responses. In northern Kosovo and in certain places in Bosnia Herzegovina the risk of doing harm includes unwittingly retraumatizing people, compromising their economic, psychological and emotional security, initiating destabilizing rumours, exacerbating pre-existing divisions, raising expectations, and (in northern Kosovo) being caught up in violence. In the methods section I explore the methods adopted and their ethical implications. Here I discuss three significant, overarching ethical challenges that arose in the course of this research. The first is related to issues of access, the second is the risk of retraumatizing people and the third is the issue of timing.

- *Issues of Access*

The first issue of access is connected to the physical act of entering and moving around a conflict-affected context. There is an FCO travel advisory in northern Kosovo advising against all but essential travel and moving around this area required careful consideration of how I should travel, who I should travel with and where it would be advisable to go. I took local advice from faculty members at the University of Belgrade, from the leader of a local NGO based in northern Kosovo, from members of the diplomatic community in Pristina, Belgrade and Kosovska Mitrovica, from business professionals in Serbia and Kosovo and from OSCE staff. As Campbell writes, for the researcher conducting fieldwork in conflict environments, 'the task is to be humble; to acknowledge what she knows and does not know; to fill the most important gaps; and to ask for guidance and support when she needs it.' (Campbell, 2017: 99). In the earliest stages of designing the fieldwork for this research I therefore had to be mindful of who I was (lone, female, in my fifties, the British wife of a British mining engineer based in Serbia) relative to where I was, what I was doing, who I would be meeting, what we would be talking about and what the implications of that might be.

One particular challenge involved weighing up conflicting advice about the advisability of driving around Kosovo; the local guide who told me it was perfectly safe to drive my Belgrade-plated car in Pristina on one hand, for example, but refused to get in it on the other. Or the hotel receptionist who agreed it was safe but that he always 'felt sorry' when he saw someone driving a Serbian car in Kosovo. Or my interpreter who laughed at my concern in Kosovo but wouldn't drive his Kosovo car into the Serb-majority municipalities in the north.[15] In the end I took the precautions I could and planned my trips to avoid driving in the dark, familiarized myself with the route, and used GB stickers on the car depending on where I was, north or south of the Ibar. All the time I was aware that what seemed to count to me as an outsider would be different from what would count to me if I lived there and the attendant risks were part of my everyday reality. But the issue of my car was a much bigger one than what it meant for me and my security. It was also connected to the people around me and how they would feel if a car with Belgrade number plates parked outside their workplace or their home or the café they visited every day. I worried too that parking a Belgrade car outside a contested mine would raise suspicions and create rumours in the volatile atmosphere that existed there. In the end, I took the bus or borrowed a local car and left mine in a secure garage, out of sight as much as possible.

The second issue of access that emerged was access to people. My hope at the beginning of this research was that I would be able to interview people who worked for the mines in northern Kosovo that are (contentiously) owned and operated from Belgrade and are at the heart of Serb claims to this area. However, while I made a number of attempts to access the mines with the help of professors at the Faculty of Mining at the University of Belgrade it was clear that the local mineworkers would not be permitted to speak with us, and it would be risky for them if we persisted. Word reached us indirectly that the mineworkers had been told they would lose their jobs if they talked to journalists or researchers and so we stopped trying.

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[15] In addition, there were the things I experienced; the man in front of me in the queue at the border taking his number plates off, the police checks by the side of the road, the awareness as I drove around that I was an unusual sight and therefore conspicuous. But there were also contrary clues; the conversation with the garage attendant in which he told me 'ethnicity doesn't matter' and the help I got from pedestrians in Pristina when I got lost.

The difficulty gaining access seemed to reflect the difficult status of this contested part of Kosovo and the particularly difficult geosocial reality that currently exists there.

- *The Issue of Timing*

There were similar issues of access at the Sase mine in Srebrenica, although this highlighted a different ethical issue that is connected to timing. Timing in conflict resolution is associated with conflict *ripeness* which has been used to refer to the readiness of people to engage in serious and sustained negotiations (Zartman, 2001). As Zartman argues, people resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so (2001: 1) For Zartman ripeness is something of a rational calculation, connected to people's perception that they have more to gain by talking than by not and it is associated with what he describes as a 'mutually hurting stalemate' and the recognition that it needs to be broken (Zartman: 2001: 19). To an extent at Sase, the mutually hurting stalemate is disrupted by geology. There are no Bosnian Muslims at the mine and so mining jobs benefit one ethnic group more directly than another. It is possible that the Serb miners here, like the Serb miners in northern Kosovo have nothing to gain by disrupting a precarious situation.

But something else emerged at Sase, too. The mine was part of the geography of the genocide that unfolded here in 1995 and mineworkers played a role in the killing and the disposing of bodies that ensued. There are things buried here that are not yet safe to express and while permission was initially granted to talk to the mineworkers it was later withdrawn. One of the UK mine staff told me 'we are worried about what you might unearth.' Losing the opportunity to talk with the miners was a blow to this research and yet Sase remains in the thesis for a reason. What it speaks to is the idea that not all natural resource-related conflicts are ready to be resolved, or are amenable to resolution, and that there may be things buried in conflict-affected places that are not ready to be excavated.

- *The Risk of Re-traumatization*

As I discuss in the methods section interviews with mineworkers form the empirical heart of this research. Significant care is required when interviewing people who are retelling stories related to conflict and who may be unsettled, upset and traumatized by revisiting war-related experiences and during the interviews a number of participants wept as they spoke. When

people showed signs of being upset, I stopped the interview at the first appropriate moment to ask them if they were comfortable continuing and to remind them that there was no need to talk about anything they did not want to discuss. As the interviews resumed, I was careful to follow a participant's lead so they could frame their stories the way they wanted. Specifically, I found that asking an open 'what happened next?' question kept an interview moving without forcing a participant in a direction they might not want to go. I also found myself drawing on the work of Daniel Bowling and David Hoffman (2003) who argue that the qualities of a mediator and her ability to 'bring peace into the room' are significant for creating a safe space for people who are in difficulties. My responsibility, in part, was to be a calm presence not as a means of eliciting information but so that people felt comfortable as they chose if (and how) to continue.

Although all the interviews ranged over unhappy ground the response to being interviewed was positive. People thanked me for listening, gave me crystals from the mine at Stan Terg as gifts, and offered to help me more if I needed it. One of the participants said, 'I only want for us miners to be heard' (P.4.) And yet, the interviews still raised an ethics-related question. To what degree does the value that seems to inhere in giving people time and space to talk about what is important to them balance out the distress some participants experienced as they talked, the danger of raising expectations among people who are used to being disappointed, or of establishing another 'extractive' relationship with people who already feel exploited by others? As Dauphinée writes, knowledge is property and formalizing knowledge in the process of research is akin to appropriation. (2007, p. 21). This is difficult ground for a researcher. It is a question that needs to be constantly revisited and responded to as a research project unfolds.

3.5.2. Methods

The methods adopted for this research are informed by an epistemology that understands the domain of knowledge as 'inseparable from the world in which people actually live and act' (Jackson, 1994: 4). Knowledge is not the achievement of a disembodied mind (Pink, 2015: 30) but is created through lived experience in a way that is social, participatory and embodied. Knowledge therefore emerges in the entanglement of me (with my history, memory,

perception and imagination) with the people and places under study (Pink, 2015: 5). I am not just learning about particular people and a particular place through employing particular methods but am temporarily joining my story with theirs (human and nonhuman) to see what comes out of it. It is not just collecting data but helping to create it (ibid).

Pink argues that methods are malleable and flexible and can change over time. 'In short', she writes, 'methods have biographies' (Pink, 2015: 58). The biography of the methods employed for this research is one in which a more conventional 'journalistic' approach centered on talking to certain people in certain places evolved as I realized that the human geologic relationship was manifesting itself in what I saw, what I heard and how I felt and it was clear that I needed to pay attention not just to how the mineworkers were emplaced, but to my own emplacement as an individual 'in and as part of' the specific contexts in which I was working (Pink, 2015: 27). While it was not the intention of this research to take a multi-sensory approach, a multi-sensory approach emerged as the research progressed. In the following section I outline four main methods that were employed: desk-based research, interviews, photography and a post-reflexion journal. In Chapter Six I explore the emergence of a fifth method, 'expanded listening' that was intended to capture a more profound or deeper type of knowledge that was hidden from observation and interview (Pink, 2015: 5)

- *Desk-Based Research*

The first task of this research was to understand how the human geologic relationship has been produced over time in space (Vagle, 2019: 10). I drew on desk-based research to begin putting the human geologic relationship in place at Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase. This included academic literature, local media and social media. I used letters, photographs and reports from the Selection Trust archive at LSE, and witness testimony from proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). I drew on Rebecca West's book and the memoirs of a Serb settler to Mitrovica, Bato Tomasevic both of whom were in Mitrovica when the Stan Terg mine was being developed. I am struck by where the voice of the orebody manifests itself; in the hand-written, courteous letters from the 1920s in the Selection Trust archive for Stan Terg, in the horror of the ICTY proceedings for Sase. I used some interview data including a recorded interview with Dominic Roberts, the COO of the Mineco Mining Company and casual conversations with people I met while I was visiting the

research sites; the wife of a local religious leader, a family visiting northern Kosovo from Germany, a young Serb man who tells me he isn't worried about violence from Albanians but of getting caught up in fighting between Serb fans of rival football teams and is horrified by the idea of working in the mines. What emerged were three different *geosocial formations* (Clark & Yusoff, 2017) in which human and geologic lives have emerged in unique ways over time in the three places under study (see Chapter Three).

- *Interviews*

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out with mineworkers at Stan Terg and Olovo in order to find out something about the human geologic relationship from those whose lives are entwined most closely with the orebody. As discussed in the previous section it was not possible to interview mineworkers at Sase or at the other 'half' of the Trepca complex although some informal conversations with retired miners are included in Chapter Seven. At Stan Terg and Olovo I had permission to interview the mineworkers at the mine site and the participants were selected by the head of the Mineworkers' Union at Stan Terg, and by the chief mining engineer at Olovo. Because of the power dynamic inherent here, I took time at the start of each interview to check that each participant understood that their participation was voluntary.

 In total I interviewed fourteen mineworkers at Stan Terg and thirteen mineworkers at Olovo.[16] The decision to focus on the mineworkers was taken for a number of reasons. The first was that it fits the 'bottom-up' methodological and philosophical premise of this research. If the 'voices from below' have been missing from peacebuilding, as Leonardsson and Rudd argue (2015) then talking to the mineworkers is a way of including them. Focusing on the mineworkers was also a means of putting a boundary around a phenomenon that is limitless. The human geologic relationship, after all, encompasses everyone. While the mineworkers have the most immediate relationship with geology other people who don't work at the mine also live lives that are connected with it; the university lecturers, the shopkeepers, the local politicians, the students, those who love hiking, fishing, camping.

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[16] In addition, at Stan Terg I interviewed two spouses and two adult children during the pilot phase but did not carry this further into the research partly because of logistical difficulties (time and money), partly because the interviewees were not forthcoming, and partly because it felt intrusive to do so.

Those who are concerned about pollution, and the lead levels in their children's blood. And those who, like the Serb woman I chatted too on the hill overlooking the smelter, think they should just 'sweep it all away.' They all have a taken-for-granted sense of what a good life is and the role the orebody plays in how they might achieve it. Focusing on the mineworkers is therefore one entry point among a multitude of other possible ones. An anonymized list of participants is included in the Appendix.

The decision to focus on the mineworkers was also a means of managing the 'message' of the research, particularly at Stan Terg where the mine is an explosive political issue, and where rumours related to the mine develop quickly, travel far and have the potential to destabilize this region and put me and my fellow participants in potential danger. Just as significantly, the research ran the risk of raising expectations by implying that my interest in the miners' wellbeing meant I had to power to improve it, or that I was working on behalf of someone else who could. Focusing on the mineworkers, with the help of senior Union officials meant the research aims could be carefully discussed and clarified. Finally, focusing on the mineworkers meant I could spend as much time as seemed appropriate with each one. There was no need to cut people short who were sharing memories of fleeing conflict on tractors, of narrowly avoiding being shot in the head ('the gun didn't want to kill me that day'), of difficult sadness that life has not turned out the way they hoped.

The interviews were in-depth and semi-structured and focused on people's life stories, related to the orebody. I adopt Paley's argument that 'phenomena, experience, data' do not have meanings waiting to be 'unearthed' by a phenomenological expert of scholar (Paley, 2017: 116). Nor do meanings exist in any ontologically existing space, or special 'realm' between words and objects (Paley, 2017: 96). Instead, meanings are rooted in the 'causal stories' people tell 'about what led to what, and the explanations they offer about how things got to be where they are' (Paley, 2017: 114). Specifically, meaning lies in the implied 'therefore' or 'and so' these stories contain (ibid). But more than this, meaning is also implicit in the causal stories that underpin my understanding of them (Paley, 2017: 115). The interpretation I give them in Chapter Four and Chapter Five is not the only way of understanding what was said but is the result of the *therefore* that emerged for me as I moved

between the stories, my photographs, my research journal, my theories and the literature in the process of analyzing the interviews and writing this text bit by bit.

The interviews were therefore focused on the mineworkers' life stories and were conducted organically. This means being curious about what participants were saying, to ask follow-up questions, to be alert to what was not said, or what seemed difficult to say, to listen out for things that are repeated, circled around or that seem incongruous and (within reason) to let the interview run where it needed to. Each interviewee had the option to go somewhere more comfortable than the mine offices at Stan Terg and Olovo. Although I conducted two walking interviews and met some mineworkers in cafés, on the whole they often seemed tired after a shift and it was more convenient for them to chat at the mine. Although the interviews were conducted organically, I had four questions that I asked all research participants (it if seemed appropriate in the context of the interview) as a means of creating a comparison between them all:

1. How do you relate your wellbeing to the orebody?
2. What are your hopes for the future?
3. What are your anxieties for the future?
4. What would the orebody say to you, if it could talk?

- ***Post-Reflexion Journal***

The phenomenon of the human geologic relationship did not emerge only in the stories the mineworkers told. It was evident in the incongruity I noticed between *what* people said and *where* they said it. It manifested itself in the posters on the wall in the office 750 metres underground, in the graffiti on the buildings in the nearby town, in the conversations I had with border guards. It was there in the persistent problem Behar, Ed and I tried to solve of how an English woman, a Serb car and an Albanian interpreter could all visit the Miners' Monument in northern Kosovo safely together. It came up in the conversations I had with professors at the faculty of mining at the University of Belgrade. It appeared in the interactions I had at conferences, in the reactions to this work as I presented it, and through my involvement with an EU H2020 research consortium working in Olovo. It was there in the fear I felt at the bottom of the Stan Terg mine and it emerged in my growing awareness that

my own relationship with natural resources is irrational, optimistic and cruel. Knowledge inhered everywhere, in other words as this research and I emerged together. Perhaps most significantly it was there as I looked out across these landscapes from the fortress at Zvečan, or high on a hill above Olovo, or from the bauxite-red road curling around Srebrenica and wondered what I was seeing. How well did the causal theories I was developing seem to fit?

The phenomenon of the human geologic relationship therefore emerged in ways that were fleeting, partial, multisensory and often unexpected. In order to capture this, I kept a research journal on my laptop and took photographs. In my journal I tracked where I was, what I was doing, what I had seen and heard, what literature I was reading and what I thought about it, how I was feeling and any insights that occurred to me. It became a conversation with myself as I worked through what surprised, challenged, delighted, bored, confused and worried me during the unfolding of this research. It is a place where I pick up theories and put them down, head off into intellectual cul-de-sacs, wrestle with philosophies that are new to me and have moments of clarity that are dotted around the document, highlighted in yellow. It also tracks my own disquiet as I make three natural resource-related house moves in one year, from lithium in Serbia, to uranium in Namibia and on to diamonds in the Canadian Northwest Territory. The journal therefore serves several purposes. It fixes the emergence of the phenomenon by holding time open and allowing the phenomenon *to become* rather than just *to be*. As such it offers a place for revisiting the phenomenon at a particular time in its emergence and to see it from a different perspective from the one I see it from now. As Tavory and Timmermans write in their book *Abductive Analysis. Theorizing Qualitative Research,*

> Field notes, photographs, and transcriptions can all be seen as contrivances for revisits. They are materially designed to ensure that our experience is revisited again. They take advantage of the ways in which the same observation changes as it is perceived at different points of time or from different theoretical vantage points' (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, p 60)

It also operated as a mnemonic, bringing things I had forgotten from the past into whatever I was working on in the present. It kept the research 'honest'. It is easy to re-work the past, to make things fit, to hone a particular story or account of what happened and the 'narratives we already wanted to tell' (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014: 52). My journal reminded me of

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the incongruities, the difficulties, the inconveniences that existed as the research unfolded. Finally, the journal is a record of how the research changed me. Seamon writes that a test of validity for phenomenological research is *intersubjective corroboration* (Seamon, 1982: 122). Does my understanding of the phenomenon help me to realize more about my own life? Does it make me more able to empathize with others? (ibid) And does my understanding of it 'resonate with wider spheres of human existence and meaning'? (ibid). As I argue in the conclusion to this thesis the answer to all these questions is *yes.*

The journal therefore operates as a 'post-reflexion' space in which I was able to see 'what frames my seeing' (Vagle, 2014: 30) relative to the phenomenon. Vagle argues that the concept of *post-reflexivity* in post-intentional phenomenology is an 'outgrowth' of the focus on bracketing in descriptive phenomenology (2019: 11). Bracketing is the suspension of our "natural attitude" or the taken-for-granted perspective through which we perceive the world. It is a means of putting aside our orientations so we can understand a phenomenon in a new way. The concept of post-reflexion acknowledges that bracketing is not possible (see for example Paley, 2017: 35; Jackson, 1996: 9). We cannot genuinely step out of the theoretical framework through which we understand ourselves and the world. Post-reflexion is therefore concerned not with setting assumptions aside but drawing our prior knowledge and beliefs into a research project and exploring the role they might play in producing it (Vagle, 2014: 133). Extracts adapted from my research journal are included throughout this thesis, in italics and indented in order to distinguish them from the main body of the text. They are there because they illustrate something; the way the methodological approach of this research developed, a particular manifestation of the human geologic relationship at a particular time, or an incongruity that attracted my attention. They are intended to add something to the text as it unfolds.

Photography

I used photography partly as a mnemonic device. I knew that if I couldn't write something into my journal immediately (as was usually the case) a photograph would jog my memory. In addition, visual images help tell a story. They can reveal things that weren't spotted at the time. They can enrich a narrative and unsettle it. From a phenomenological point of view using photography is a way of acknowledging that phenomena 'do not exist in vacuums and

that intentionalities run all over the place' (Vagle, 2014: 86). Taking photographs of spaces and places is therefore (as Vagle suggests) a way of exploring (in part) how a particular phenomenon is being lived (2014: 86). My intention was not to focus on the monumental and specific but to take snapshots of the everyday, the mundane and the ordinary, sometimes out of a car window and often without looking too carefully as a means of capturing scenes that would help me think about the day-to-day dwelling in the places I visited - people's gardens, streetscapes, flowerbeds, shop fronts, bus stops. It was a means of capturing everything that existed visually in a place so that I could think about it later. For a phenomenological study grounded in the dwelling perspective photography is a means of augmenting my gaze; who and what can be seen here together?

But photography is also problematic in that it privileges a spectatorial epistemology and a surface, horizontal orientation to geographical thinking. The depth it creates is a visual depth of field between me, the objects I am photographing and the horizon. Indeed, I realized early in this research that I have a tendency to think and write from the vantage points of high fortresses, monuments on hills, from car windows. It is a linear, visual perspective that places me in a particular position relative to what I am observing. What this spectatorial epistemology neglects, therefore, is vertical depth. And yet, I argue we must see more deeply than this (MacFarlane, 2019) if we are to live well with what is under our feet. As Robert MacFarlane writes 'our 'flat perspectives' feel increasingly inadequate to the deep worlds we inhabit, and to the deep time legacies we are leaving' (2019, p. 13). In Chapter Five I draw on the work of Jane Bennett (2010) to explore the vital materiality of the orebody and the difference it makes to the human relationships with which it is entwined. Bennett argues that we must take an attitude of 'sensory attentiveness' if we are to discern the vitality of matter (2010: 164). But how do we take an attitude of sensory attentiveness to something that is buried? I explore the emergence of 'expanded listening' as a means of thinking and perceiving not just what a landscape *is*, but what it *does* along a vertical as well as a horizontal geographical axis. Following the artist James Bridle (2019), I argue this attitude of sensory attentiveness provides a 'new way of seeing' what is ordinarily invisible beneath our feet and that this in turn may engender a relationship of care with what exists there.

3.5.3. Blue Flowers and Rocky Outcrops. Data Analysis.

The practice of data analysis is a 'way of knowing' (Pink, 2015: 142). Like the process of data creation, it entangles things in ways that makes them meaningful. It is not a process that happened independently as a structured phase in the research but occurred all the time as the research unfolded (Pink, 2015:143). The process of analyzing the data and developing this thesis was therefore abductive and iterative (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014). With Locke et al I understand abduction as the ampliative and conjectural generation of ideas through moments of surprise, anomaly, incongruity and puzzle that arise in the data (Locke et al, 2008: 908). Abductive analysis is therefore akin to recognizing the rocky outcrops and the blue flowers that indicate the presence of something geologically significant below the surface. They are puzzles that should give us pause.

An abductive approach to data analysis is a natural fit for a mediator. As Locke et al write the abductive approach is a process through which we 'engender and entertain hunches, explanatory propositions, ideas, and theoretical elements' (Locke et al, 2008: 908). In a similar way, mediation involves working on hunches and ideas in the presence of doubt, surprise, curiosity and danger (Bush and Folger, 2005; Cloke, 2001). In addition, mediation is the abductive process of producing a 'how possibly' model of what might be going on. It is the art of reframing conflict rather than proving what it is, or how it works, and it requires some imaginative work. The concept of 'musement' resonates particularly strongly with mediation training and practice. As Locke et al write [m]usement is the a-critical generation and exploration of ideas, a free-ranging and exploratory flow of thought and action in which we search into and entertain possibility' (Locke et al, 2008: 909).

The data was analyzed as it emerged. In the first place this meant collecting responses to the four common questions I asked participants in order to compare responses between Olovo and Stan Terg. As I did so I found myself asking the data more questions as I listened to the interviews, my attention caught by anomalies, incongruities and commonalities in what was said: 'How does an orebody mediate the ways people live, think, and act? How does an orebody mediate the ways people live, think, and act *together?* What cluster of promises is attached to the orebody? What does this mean for building peace? One particularly useful technique involved writing what the orebody would say if it could talk in a rough circle on a large piece of paper. It was the geological voice (but filtered through human imagination) in

the shape of an orebody. The human responses to certain questions were then written over it. What emerged was a visual illustration of the promises embedded in geology and what geology has to say about them and the orebody not just as a tangle or a 'cluster' of promises (Berlant, 2011: 23) but as an entity with some sort of say about what these promises are. What it really illustrated was an incongruity central to this thesis that there are miners who claim their wellbeing is tied up with the orebody who yet imagine the orebody telling them they are fools for touching it. This technique also partly engendered the idea of the *geosocial formation* that forms the foundation of Chapter Three.

The tools outlined so far were a way of organizing the data, particularly the interview data and of beginning to understand what was emerging. However, the real work of analyzing the data occurred as I wrote this text. It involved me with my own relationship with the phenomenon moving between the interview transcripts, my research journal, my photographs, the literature, my theoretical perspectives and the text that I was crafting. My perspective would change as I did so, and I would see the story that was emerging in a new light. I would write a little bit more then move back to the interview transcripts, notes, photographs, and theories. In the process this text developed, getting stuck, and going on 'lines of flight' as it did so (Vagle, 2014: 118). In addition, what is presented here did not only emerge in relationship with my perspective but also with the perspectives of others in the field. I presented early insights from this research at the 'Nature of Peace' conference at Lund University in Sweden in April 2018. It was part of a keynote speech I delivered at the 'Extreme' conference in Longyearbyen, Spitzbergen in January 2018 and it was brought into conversation with academics working in the field of just transition and the circular economy during a side event at the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. Significantly, it was presented during the closing conference of the H2020-funded 'Impact' research consortium in Cornwall in March 2020. At each event my perspective was destabilized and stabilized by coming into contact with the work of others in similar fields. Finally, my perspective was destabilized and stabilized by trips I made to Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina during the process of writing up the research. These trips were an opportunity to bring the ideas I had formulated down to earth. To ask how well they seemed to fit what I was seeing and hearing as I moved around these places.

I was also stabilized and destabilized by spending time in other mining contexts; Swakopmund in Namibia and Yellowknife in the Canadian Northwest Territory as I wrote this thesis. In both places I wondered how what I was seeing in one conflict-affected mining context fitted another. The ideas that I was formulating gained strength by seeing different geosocial formations based around different geological resources that had different voices but where the human geologic relationship seemed to manifest in a similar way. What I was developing as I talked with people and visited places was a 'community of inquiry' (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014: 103) that was human and non-human through which my theories emerged and were tested. What energized this process in particular was *doubt* (Locke et al 2008: 3) Locke et al argue that doubt is the 'energy of abduction' because of the way it provokes us to 'generate possibilities, try them out, modify, transform, or abandon them, try again, and so on, until new concepts or patterns are generated that productively satisfy our doubt' (2008, p 3).

In the introduction I argued that Berlant's theory of cruel optimism formed an 'analytical lever' for this research. What does that mean in the context of a phenomenological abductive enquiry? Was the approach I took really abductive or did it smuggle in a deductive endeavour to make a 'favourite' theory fit a particular context? I was certainly aware of the fineness of this line as I worked. What this concern speaks to is a central dilemma in phenomenology. Earlier Husserlian phenomenology argues that theories must be bracketed so they do not predetermine the human experience of the world. As Vagle writes, bracketing theories is a 'non-negotiable commitment in phenomenological research during data collection and early analysis' for those following Husserlian descriptive phenomenology (Vagle, 2014: 74). However, Vagle argues that this is not a realistic proposition (see also Paley, 2017: 154, Aagaard, 2017: 529). We cannot 'unthink' what we already think about a phenomenon and the way our understanding of it has itself been entangled and provoked. Rather than being bracketed, theories should be acknowledged and interrogated to ensure they do not 'dominate or determine' what emerges as data is gathered and analyzed (Vagle, 2014: 74). Using cruel optimism as an analytical lever didn't mean seeking cruel optimism out but being open to the idea of its existence; where it manifested itself, and where it did not and what this seemed to say about the human geologic relationship. It meant being willing to abandon it if it distorted the data and proved to impede rather than illuminate the phenomenon under

investigation. In the end it remained a useful construct for framing the human geologic relationship and the peacebuilding approach outlined in Chapter Six.

3.5.4. Challenges, Limitations and Problems.

A significant challenge for this research was the withdrawal of permission to talk to the mineworkers at Sase. The result is a gap in Chapter Four where the interview data with the Sase mineworkers should be and there is an asymmetry in this thesis as a result. The problem of this asymmetry could have been resolved by removing Sase as a case study, but this would also remove a third 'geosocial formation' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017) that had emerged differently from either Olovo or Stan Terg and seemed to have something unique to say about the human geologic relationship even without the interview data. Specifically, it says something about geology and genocide and the silencing of human and geologic voices in the aftermath of atrocity. I have kept Sase in this thesis as a means of exploring the concept of silence and as an illustration of an important aspect of peacebuilding of any sort, which is that not every 'problem' can be solved, or transformed, or thought about within familiar frameworks. There are certain conflicts in certain contexts that might not be ready to be probed, and where any sort of intervention might cause harm. Sase is a reminder that mediators and peacebuilders ultimately have to listen to what a context tells them and take responsibility for that.

Another limitation of this research is the scarcity of women's voices among the interview participants. This reflects the fact that while there are female mineworkers in Bosnia Herzegovina who work in other mines, at Stan Terg and Olovo there are none that work underground. The female voices included here come from an administrative assistant at Stan Terg and a geochemist at Olovo. However, focusing on the mineworkers allowed each research site to 'speak' to the other and was an appropriate ethical approach within the phenomenological framework of this research and the fact that the interview participants were mostly male is part of how the phenomenon manifested itself. The drawback is that there are a multitude of different, local voices that are missing, including those of women. What is offered here is therefore one entry point into the rhizomatic human geologic relationship, whilst acknowledging that there are a multitude of others. Local government officials, members of NGOs, students at the local university, shopkeepers in the nearby towns and villages, the owner of the watermill down the road from the Stan Terg mine, for example,

would all undoubtedly have something to say about the orebody under their feet and what it promises them and their community.

Miners' helmets at the Stan Terg mine, 2018. Photo by the author.

PART TWO
EXTRACT

4

THREE GEOSOCIAL FORMATIONS.

Mountains and plains, rivers and lakes, forests and fields, oceans and fjords – what *difference* do they make to the way we live, think and act? (Olsen, 2010: 31)

INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the three case studies that have been selected for this research in their historic and geographic context. What has been created (and continues to be created) by the disturbance of geology in these places? What sort of trajectory are they on for the future? This is a peacebuilding endeavour in itself. As Pugh et al write, from the standpoint of the political economy of peacebuilding the 'life welfare paradigm' they advocate requires researchers to focus on the 'archaeology and history of communities and their projected futures, rejecting the temporary, ameliorative interventions of international agencies and coalitions preoccupied with 'exits' that rely on quick or technological fixes' (2008: 398). The aim here is not just to focus on the archaeology and history of the social worlds that exist at Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase but to understand something about how geology has worked there too. As Latour writes '[n]o science of the social can even begin if

the question of who and what participates in the action is not first of all opened up, even though that might mean letting elements enter that, for a want of a better term, we can call *nonhumans'* (Latour, 2005: 226) How has the orebody participated 'in the action' so far? (Latour, 2005: 226). What difference has it made to the social worlds with which it is entangled?

The first challenge, however, was deciding how to conceptualize these places and specifically how to refer to them. The vocabulary that exists (mining community, mine-impact area, mine site) does not seem to do full justice to the volumetric nature of these places and the complexity that exists within them, nor to the ways in which the social and the geologic may be intertwined. The first part of this chapter therefore introduces Clark and Yusoff's concept of the '*geosocial formation'* as a means of understanding Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase as places where the geologic and the social have emerged together to create a geosocial entity that is unique and on its own trajectory (Clark & Yusoff, 2017). The *geosocial formation* is therefore useful for understanding mining landscapes in a way that acknowledges their hybridity. They are the product of geologic and social processes combined. But more than this, the geosocial formation has peacebuilding implications in and of itself. As Clark and Yusoff argue it is by probing the stratified geosocial past that we inherit, that we can understand the geosocial present and surface possibilities for the future 'that engage with the geologic' in different ways (2017: 6). The second part introduces the three research sites under investigation - the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo, the Sase mine near Srebrenica and the Olovo mine in central Bosnia Herzegovina. I argue that in each place humans and geology have emerged differently together and that this should invite an attitude of curiosity. What trajectory are these geosocial formations on? What sort of peaceful future do they promise? And who is that peaceful future for?

4.1. BRINGING GEOLOGIC AND SOCIAL LIVES TOGETHER.

Mining companies typically refer to 'the environment' and 'the community' to refer to the local places in which they operate but these terms miss the complexity that seems to exist in these landscapes. Melissa Ey and Meg Sherval have developed the concept of the 'minescape' as distinct from the more traditional 'mine site' as a means of engaging with mining terrain

(Ey & Sherval, 2016: 177). While 'mine site' suggests the inevitability of resource extraction, 'minescape' speaks to resources as entities that are culturally and relationally constituted and opens up space for understanding the mining terrain as something other than a set of 'technological, economic and political relationships' (Ey & Sherval, 2015: 178). But the 'scape' prefix is also imbued with the implication that these are places spread out on the surface of the earth, to be looked over across a horizontal plane in a way that neglects the fact that they have depth and volume too.

For this research I draw on Clark and Yusoff (2017) and conceptualise the three research sites as three different *geosocial formations.* Clark and Yusoff describe this concept as a 'minimal staging ground' for bringing geoscience and social science together and opening social thought to a deeper understanding of earth processes (2017: 3). At its heart is the idea that all social and political formations are woven in with and through certain geological formations. Geological life, in other words enables social life. The geosocial formation is therefore a means of refocussing attention from the 'organization of the *surface* of the earth' to 'its layering or multi-dimensionality' and what lies beneath it (Clark, 2017: 214). For this research the geosocial formation points to the disrupting of particular geological strata in particular places and the particular social and political formations that emerge as a result. I use it as a means of drawing attention to the geological strata that exist beneath the surface and the relationship that exists between surface and depth, the geologic and the social, over time and in place.

I propose every mining context can be usefully understood as a geosocial formation; the diamonds in the Canadian arctic, the town of Yellowknife, the Salvation Army, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the winter ice road, the issue of substance abuse, the trucks idling outside the Co-Op in the winter, the cross-country ski club are part of a geosocial formation in a particular part of the Canadian Northwest Territories. In Mongolia the copper and gold under the Gobi Desert, the Oyu Tolgoi mine, the Chinese construction camp, the push-back by some politicians, the gers of the local herders, the town of Khanbogd, the construction boom in UlaanBataar, the Mongolian ornithologists that work in the mine environmental department, the members of the Rangeland NGO are part of another. In Namibia, the uranium under the Namib desert, the seaside resort town of Swakopmund, the German

bakeries, the issue of mine closure, the new gin distillery, the recent murder of a mine manager in the town of Arandis are part of a third. In all these places geology, geography, and humans create a geosocial formation that is emerging and unique. In the Balkans conflict is also part of the geosocial formation. In each of the three research sites geology and conflict have a relationship that has emerged over time and is still emerging. The geosocial formation at Sase includes the town of Srebrenica, the cemetery at Potočari, the cavernous battery factory that housed the Dutch UN Peacekeepers. At Stan Terg it includes a divided city, monuments people can no longer visit, houses they don't necessarily feel safe in.

What is particularly resonant for this research is that the concept of the geosocial formation plays on the idea that social formations and geological formations are both process and outcome in which 'the emergence of the new is made possible by the compositions or orderings that have materialized at previous junctures' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 6) and in which the social and the geologic 'become' together, although there is an asymmetry to this (Yusoff & Clark, 2017).[17] The geosocial formation therefore does not speak to something fixed but something unstable and evolving that contains multiple potential trajectories for the future. Specifically, it invites an attitude of curiosity towards what exists in the past, not only to understand the present, but also to surface alternative ways of being for the future. As Clark and Yusoff write, 'thinking the becomings of earth and society together might help us probe the richly layered formations we have inherited for the overlooked, marginalized or as yet unactualized geosocial possibilities murmuring within them (2017: 6). The geosocial past, in other words, offers insight (perhaps hidden) for a different sort of geosocial future. While they don't use the term, what Clark and Yusoff are referring to here is a process akin to reconciliation. It is probing the layers of the past we have inherited to see what can be salvaged, or what has endured, or what is yet unrecognized that can help construct a better future.

The danger of transplanting a concept into a research project is that it might leave some of its philosophical complexity behind and I acknowledge this is the case here. There is more to

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[17] In their video introduction Yusoff and Clark point out that while geological formations always subtend social and political formations, there are countless geological formations that have emerged out of contact with humans (Yusoff & Clark, 2017).

the *geosocial formation* than is being utilized for this research (see Clark, 2017; Yusoff, 2017). But the usefulness of the concept for this research, which is about peacebuilding and not geography, is that it offers an entry point for a mediator to consider what has been objectively constructed between people and geology and what better alternatives might exist. The geosocial formation is therefore a means of conceptualizing the three different research sites as three unique geosocial formations with their own story to tell about the human geologic relationship, how it is evolving and where it might be heading. It is a means of understanding the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo, the Sase mine in Republika Srpska, Bosnia Herzegovina and the Olovo mine in the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina not as mines, or communities, or environments but as organic, unstable entities in which social worlds are partly a product of geologic forces and vice versa. In the next section of this chapter, I explore the history of Stan Terg, Sase and Olovo as geosocial formations. While they are different from each other what holds them together as an assemblage seems to be optimism. Since Roman times in different ways and to different degrees geology has promised a version of the "good life" to different people. What is poignant, as this chapter demonstrates, is that if geology promises one thing it often seems to deliver another.

Finally, for this introduction, it will be noticed that the three research sites are not treated evenly. There is far more attention paid to Stan Terg, for example than there is to Sase and Olovo. This is because, like hills or mountains, some geosocial formations are more significant than others; they are older, bigger, better known, and more thoroughly documented. Their contours are closer together and easier to discern. Or as is the case with Stan Terg, they demand our attention because the issues associated with them are urgent. They are not treated equally in this chapter, therefore, but *uniquely*, on the grounds that this disparity is significant. Each of the three geosocial formations has its own history and its own heft. In each one the geologic and the social interact in different ways. Each one has something different to say about the human geologic relationship and where it might be leading us.

4.2 STAN TERG, KOSOVO. 'A PAPER TRANSPARENCY HELD AGAINST THE LIGHT'

> I never realised before,' said my husband, 'that a garden is a political thing'. For weeks past we have never seen a country house which was not planned on the

definite understanding that the people in it were bound to be frightened most of the time, and for very good reason. Unless houses were in the centre of a town they turned blank sides to the road, and surrounded themselves with high walls, to halt the attack of the Turkish soldier, the brigand, or the tax-collector. But here we saw windowed walls freely exposed to the four quarters, their irises and their roses and green peas and runner beans left unguarded before every eye. Here nobody's grandmother had been raped and hamstrung, nobody's grandfather had had his entire crop stolen by brigands and been marched off by the disappointed tax-collectors to do a season's forced labour for the Pasha and never seen again. Some of the windows were brightly giving back the westering sun, and it seemed like a blast blown by a jolly trumpeter, who had never known despair' (West 2006: 920-921)

4.2.1. Selection Trust 1927 - 1940. 'In their own fashion'

On the hillside above the Stan Terg mine near the town of Kosovska Mitrovica in northern Kosovo there is a ruined Roman Catholic church. It is not ruined because of the war but because of its age. It was built in the 13th century by Saxon miners originally from Hungary, and merchants from Kotor and Dubrovnik on the coast. This church is not the first sign of mining activity at Stan Terg, however. The Romans were also active here and traces of Roman activity were discovered during the development of the Stan Terg mine in the 1920s. Geology has therefore pulled different people here for millennia, all of whom had an idea of what it meant to live a 'good life' that was related to some degree to the natural resources that exist here. Mining on an industrial scale, however, began after the British company Selection Trust bought the concession to the mine at Stan Terg in 1926 and formed Trepca Mines Limited (Nikolić & Tajković, 2017). Kosovo had been newly conquered and amalgamated into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the mine was referred to as 'Stan Trg', a nonsense construction based on a misreading and a misunderstanding by the British of 'Stari Trg' which means 'Old Square' in Serbian.

For the British geologists prospecting the Stan Terg orebody, this is 'a romantic looking spot in a narrow gorge-like valley, with some rocky bluffs 100 ft high rising from the little Trepca stream' (Titcomb, 1927). What they found here was an orebody that was 'highly irregular in shape' but promised 500,000 tonnes of good grade ore with physical characteristics that meant the mining costs were likely to be low (Kidd, 1982: 169). As a result, starting in the autumn of 1929 a five-mile road was built from Kosovska Mitrovica to Stan Terg, along with offices, stores, workshops, residential accommodation, a four-mile aerial ropeway to

transport the ore to the smelter at Zvečan, and a crushing plant, all of which were completed by the following August (ibid).

For Bato Tomašević, the nearby town of Mitrovica was 'a wild, backward little place of muddy streets with no drainage or sewage system, rife with disease and often ravaged by epidemics' (Tomašević, 2008: 4). Tomašević and his family had arrived there from Montenegro in 1920 in response to the appeals from Belgrade for the 'reconquest' of Kosovo by Orthodox families, part of a policy by the newly declared Kingdom to adjust the ethnic demographic profile of what had been Kosovo in its favour at the end of the First World War. For the Tomašević family the arrival of the British was a disruptive event. These foreign newcomers moved into specially built bungalows modelled on Cornish mining towns and lived there, as Tomašević notes, 'in their own fashion' (2008: 72). They had a model farm, and horses for riding, and dances during which men could embrace 'someone else's wife or daughter' in a way that was inconceivable in Kosovo at the time (ibid). A new optimism emerged for the Tomašević family, centered on the mine, and mostly instigated by Tomašević's two sisters who were delighted at the prospect of such novel pursuits. Instead of the traditional Sunday excursion to Kosovska Polje to commemorate the defeat of the Serbs in 1389, the family began enjoying the hospitality of the British, learning to ride horses and to speak English, and in the case of Tomašević's uncle Mihajlo, developing an admiration for British democracy and social order (2008; 74).

But Selection Trust disrupted local lives in another way. The Mitrovica that Tomašević's family moved to, was a place where they lived with a daily fear of being attacked or ambushed by Albanians and where the house had a 'tall wooden fence of sharp-pointed stakes, to stop any Albanians getting in' (Tomašević, 2008; 1). It is a fear that was no doubt mutual. The re-conquest of Kosovo by the Serbs after the First World War was 'brutal' (Judah, 2008: 42). Against this backdrop, as travel writer and ethnographer Rebecca West noted when she visited in 1937, the English-style mining houses are a bold, political statement. Built with their windows confidently facing the road, with their irises, roses, green peas and runner beans 'left unguarded before every eye' they seemed to promise a new era of openness, trust and shared prosperity, based on the natural resource body beneath them.

This little mine settlement was therefore built on optimism that mining would bring peace to this part of the Balkans. It is an optimism that is articulated by 'Gospodin Mac,' the Scottish General Manager of Trepca in 1937. Despite receiving complaints from a Serb government official, West reports that he is determined to employ Albanians and Serbs together.

> 'I said straight out we employed them, because we found them decent, hard-working fellows, and we'd go on employing them. But that's something that's getting better. The Serb administrators all get to like the Albanians and less and less make a distinction between them and their own people. This country is getting over its past nicely' (West, 2006; 931).

West, however, is not so sure. With prescience she writes 'Was there, one wondered, unity among these workers? Were the English and Americans, who formed the high command of the mines, as it were, sensible of the necessity to make this enterprise an instrument of life instead of death?' (West, 2006; 932). As West seems to intuit, the roses, the sweet peas and the runner beans represented an imported idea of the 'good life' that was based on mining in the UK, not Kosovo and on a system of capitalism that had not, in any case, been universally beneficial. If those houses exuded an air of confidence, it might have been one they didn't much feel.

Under British ownership, Trepca expanded and the workforce grew from 1,100 in 1930 to 3,100 by the start of the Second World War (Kidd, 1982: 26). As the mine developed so did Mitrovica and the villages around it. The muddy, malarial backwater grew into somewhere with shops, a decent hotel, a photography studio and a growing air of self-importance. As West's husband remarks 'I see that everybody moves quickly and lightly […] this little place has a pride, as if it were somewhere like Bitolj' (West, 2006: 920). [18] The town became more heterogenous too. In those early days it attracted an English travel writer, a Scottish general manager, American investors, Serb settlers, British geologists, White Russians who had fled the Russian revolution in 1917, Kosovar Albanian locals and other local staff not indigenous to the district but who had made their way south from the more developed areas in the north once Trepca began operating (Kidd, 1982: 169).

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[18] Bitolj or Bitola is a strategically placed town in Macedonia where many European countries had their consulates during the Ottoman era.

Partly what pulled these people together was optimism. For the Tomašević family the orebody promised an alternate future to the one they thought was theirs when they moved to Mitrovica. For the British geologists and mining engineers it afforded adventure (Jackson, 1933).[19] For the local farmers-turned-miners it promised a higher than average salary and a paid alternative to working their land (Kidd, 1982: 153).[20] For the expatriate staff and their families it promised a journey from London to Belgrade on the Orient Express, a life of bridge parties, swimming and tennis tournaments, interspersed with trips to the local town to see a film in the 'musty' Hotel Jadran and dance to a two piece band until 3 o'clock in the morning (Kidd, 1982: 169). Or they could fish in the rivers and 'shoot small game' in the countryside where they would be 'invited into the villagers' primitive houses to partake of slivovica and perhaps a rough crust of bread and cheese' (ibid: 181). And for the new kingdom of Yugoslavia, it promised a new future and a 'new stage in the history of ancient Trepca' (Trepca Mines Ltd, 1930).

Olsen writes that 'it is hard to conceive of society and culture without the durability and "in-placeness" of things' (Olsen, 2010: 172). The durability and 'in-placeness' of the orebody drew disparate people together and held them in a relationship that was, it seems, to some degree based on optimism. But even in those early days, this optimism was tempered by quieter concerns. Harold Titcomb, one of the early prospectors, knew the lead at Stan Terg was a potential hazard after working at the Broken Hill and Mount Isa mines in Australia. In a memo he advocates a protocol for Stan Terg that includes hand washing, the use of respirators and Epsom Salts to 'keep the bowels well open' although he acknowledges this protocol will not be entirely protective (Titcomb, 1930). Gospodin Mac, the General Manager, seems aware that in the process of animating the orebody, bringing it to the surface and into the social world something valuable about the place is in danger of being lost. In particular, West reports him expressing regret about a particular land transaction with a local Albanian farmer.

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[19] Jackson writes 'brush up your Serbian, come on along, freshen up your impression of the country and let us see if we can find a little more ore' (Jackson, 1933).

[20] Kidd writes '[n]o difficulties were experienced in obtaining an adequate supply of suitable labour. The coming of a large industrial concern to what had previously been one of the poorest and most backward parts of Yugoslavia proved a boon to the local inhabitants' (Kidd, 1982: 153).

We gave him two thousand pounds for the place and every step of the transaction was a pleasure, he was so honest and polite, and he knew perfectly well we were being fair with him, and he would have cut off his hand rather than not be fair with us. I often grieve that we should have put an end to the way he and his family were living, for it was producing fine people. Every now and again he comes in for advice, because he trusts us, but I don't know that there's much of his two thousand left. It's not easy to find investments in this country that give as good return as land, and it's not easy to live a life in a little town that's as good as life in your own place up in the hills. There's no sense trying to fool oneself, not every change is for the better (West 2006: 933)

Even during these early days, the confidence and optimism embedded in this orebody is tempered by a quieter concern that it might poison people, result in reputational damage and change communities in a way that is negative and irreversible. West is ambivalent also. For all that she seems entranced by this modern mine she is also skeptical about the capitalist model of resource extraction and industrialization that has been exported to this non-capitalist corner of Europe and doubtful about its chances of success. After all, industrialization in England and America had, she argues, proved 'unable to maintain its workers as it had at first promised' geared as it was to grant immediate benefit of the richer classes rather than with 'regard to its perpetuation' (West, 2006: 932). She writes '[m]y instinct therefore was to warn the miners who were coming in at the door, grinning with happy appetite, "Do not be deceived. Whom you suppose to be your benefactor is in fact your enemy, and will enslave you and take from your children what you never lost even under the Turk, the right to work"' (West, 2006: 931). What West seems to discern here is an attachment to an idea of the good life that mining and industrialization can bring that disregards the evidence that it has consistently proven itself unable to do so, certainly to the degree it should.

It is a monstrous piece of bogus liberalism to deny that industrialism has done much for the highest interests of humanity by raising the standard of living. It is as foolish to deny the harm it has done them by not raising it enough, by poisoning the skies and fields with cheap cities, and taking away the will of its employees by keeping them in political and economic subjection (West, 2006: 932).

What was lacking in those early days, as Eggert Hardten notes in his 2012 report on the development of Mitrovica (prepared for the Kosovar Stability Initiative) was a local idea of what sort of natural resource-related good life could be achieved at Mitrovica, or any local initiatives for development beyond what came from outside. The people that were pulled together here, after all, didn't necessarily have Mitrovica's interests at heart. As Hardten writes '[a]rmies, traders, artisans and industrial workers came regularly from outside. There were no significant initiatives for development from inside the town (Hardten, 2012: 12). As a result, 'the garrison, the bazaar, the railway station, the mines were constructed to exploit the resources and to use the advantages that Mitrovica provided largely for foreign benefit' (ibid). While the orebody promised one dominant version of prosperity, it was an imported one, that drowned out other local initiatives and created conflict. There is, as Hardten writes, a lesson to be learned (ibid) and it is this that lies at the heart of this thesis. Natural resource related peacebuilding must include local people, local places and the relationship between them.

4.2.2. Socialism and Trepca's 'golden age'. 1960 – 1981.

The British tenure at Stan Terg was relatively short lived. During the Second World War the staff and the mining records were evacuated back to the UK and the mine was taken over by the German military and used to supply the Nazi war effort. After the German military withdrew the mine was taken over by the communist Partisans and then placed under the administration of the Yugoslav government (Kidd, 1982: 256). When James Jackson, the former mine manager made it back to Stan Terg in 1945 he found the smelter chimney 'disfigured by a motley collection of placards bearing communist slogans' including "There are no more capitalistic masters. This place belongs to the people."' (ibid).

During the era of Tito's Yugoslavia Trepca became the setting of a 'socialist economic revolution' based on increased production and job opportunities and was heavily invested in by the government (Hardten, 2012: 15). Between 1960 and 1981 direct and indirect employment expanded massively (Palairet, 2003: 9). The combine paid a comparatively decent wage, the standard of living was high, and the orebody became associated with a different kind of optimism for a different kind of 'good life' for different kinds of people. As Hardten writes the daily lives of the people in what was then called *Titova* Mitrovica 'revolved

in and around this significant company. They used Trepca facilities for health services, spent their leisure time in Trepca hotels and ate at the Trepca canteen' (Hardten, 2012: 16). This was Trepca's 'golden age' and it established the combine as an entity with 'iconic significance, both to the Albanians and the Serbs of Kosovo, as the one supremely valuable Kosovo asset, and the fount of provincial well-being' (Palairet, 2003: 8, 9).

This is the time that is remembered with nostalgia by the Kosovan Albanian miners (see Chapter Five) and it is the time that is mourned by the Serbian members of the Facebook page "Zavicaj Trepca" (Trepca Homeland) who moved away during the war in the 1990s and now post black and white photographs of their pre-war lives in the 'English Colony' above the Stan Terg mine (Zavicaj Trepca, 2020). And yet this golden age was also a myth. The mines were not invested in properly, the production levels achieved before the war were never matched and Trepca lost money under Yugoslav socialism (Palairet, 2003: 8). But, as Palairet notes, 'so long as the funding kept rolling in the incapacity of Trepca to support itself was nobody's problem' (Palairet, 2003: 9). Furthermore, this fount of wellbeing had, for most of its history, presented a significant health hazard, mostly because the lead roaster complex at Zvečan which was built in 1967 had never functioned as it should and was discharging sulphur dioxide into the air (Palairet, 2003: 79). Despite this, the orebody at Stan Terg grounded a socialist era 'fantasy of flourishing' (Berlant 2011) in which geology was assumed to be able to underwrite thousands of jobs, holidays by the sea, medical facilities, hotels and restaurants indefinitely with little care for the legacy of environmental harm it was leaving behind or for the impact it was having on human health.

The idea of a 'fantasy of flourishing' associated with mining is developed further in the next chapter. Here I use it (in the way Berlant does) to denote the means by which people 'hoard idealizing theories and tableaux about how they and the world "add up to something"' that are unsustainable, or unachievable and will inevitably fray (Berlant, 2011: 2). Not only was the mine a pollutant, geology itself was unable to keep the promises people had embedded in it. Any orebody is a diminishing resource that gets harder and more expensive to extract over time and investment in technology is required to compensate for the cost and difficulty of mining ore that is of a lower grade and harder to access as mining proceeds. But no plans were made for the prudent, long term extraction of this orebody or for what might happen

after it closed down. As Palairet writes, '"Trepča's geology was entrusted to everybody and nobody."' (2003: 12).   The optimism embedded in this orebody that it would indefinitely provide jobs for everyone, a high standard of living and salaries so high that people could save half of what they earned was a *cruel* one. Without the right investment, environmental care, and a concern for people's health the good life the orebody promised turned out to be a good life that was unsustainable, that distorted ideas of what geology could achieve, that swamped other opportunities to flourish and that made this orebody an object of desire so covetable that it is now a central force in keeping people here divided and the conflict between them intractable. To a certain degree it is something that people desire, that has become an obstacle to their flourishing (Berlant, 2011: 1).

4.2.3. 1981 – current. A 'vexed' space (Haraway, 2016).[21]

Tito's death in 1980 ushered in a decade during which his project of 'Brotherhood and Unity' unraveled in a way that led to the violent break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991 which (arguably) started with the 1989 eight-day strike at the Stan Terg mine. The strike was a response to Milošević's attempts to reverse the gains made by Albanians under Tito, but the miners' demands were not met. Instead, many of them were imprisoned and either fired from their jobs or left them voluntarily amid increasing persecution by the Serbs. While there were 2,588 Albanian miners at the Stan Terg mine in 1989, by 1990 there were only 40. The orebody had become central to a different fantasy of flourishing in which the benefits it afforded were for one ethnic group at the expense of another. But in fact, Trepca collapsed during the period 1989 – 1994 partly because of the exodus (forced and otherwise) of the Albanian miners and partly because of a lack of external funds and the combine's own unstable and unsustainable structure.[22]

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[21] Donna Haraway's concern in her book 'Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene' (2016) is with joining 'diverse people and varied critters in shared, often vexed public spaces' (2016: 132).

[22] The combine was put into administration in 1990 and at the end of 1991 owed the banks approximately 105 million US dollars, the equivalent of 23 million Deutschmarks in dinars and owed over 21 million DM to equipment suppliers (Palairet, 2003: 16-17). As Palairet notes the combine was 'utterly illiquid and insolvent' (Palairet 2003: 21). Despite this, Stan Terg continued operating with immigrant miners from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Bulgaria, and with 1,000 Serb refugees from Croatia to replace the missing Albanians.

In 1990 the Albanian members of the Kosovo assembly declared independence from Serbia and the escalating violence between Albanian secessionists and Serb and Yugoslavian authorities 'proved particularly significant for Mitrovica and destabilized its complex social fabric and ethnic equilibriums' (Castan Pinos, 2017: 130). At the mine the Albanian miners who had lost their jobs in 1989-91 but were still living in the little colony above the Stan Terg mine and other villages started a campaign against the mine and its Serbian employees. The Serb miners, for their part were 'armed and ready to defend the mine' (Palairet, 2003: 33). Standing in the geologists' office now you can see the little settlement on the hill and the bullet-holed buildings that used to house the miners. Over eighty years ago Rebecca West walked through this settlement with Gospodin Mac, the Scottish General Manager. At the time these houses offered a standard of living that was unprecedented and despite West's reservations the future seemed bright. Now the optimism once embedded here seems poignant. West writes that 'this modern industrial unit pleased like a paper transparency held against the light' (West 2006: 931). Unwittingly she captured the fragility of the hopes that had been invested here.

After the war the orebody became central to a new fantasy of flourishing based on the norms of liberal peacebuilding, which included the privatization of the socially owned sector, building "good governance" institutions, promoting financial liberalization and a free-market economy (Uberti, 2014: 1-2). However, the privatization process, under the Privatization Agency of Kosovo (PAK) came to nothing partly because of a lack of clarity over Trepca's ownership structure, creditor claims on the complex and because of Serb opposition to Kosovo's plans to privatize something that the Serbs argue is not theirs to privatize. In 2019 the Kosovo Assembly put both sides of Trepca under government control to save if from bankruptcy, by transforming it from a socially owned enterprise into a shareholding company. The move significantly raised tensions between Serbia and Kosovo, with the Director of the Serbian government's Office for Kosovo-Metohija Mark Djuric describing it as an attempt to seize and plunder 'our "Trepca" (The Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2019). A spokesman for Frederica Mogherini, the EU High Representative said that the issue of Trepca should be resolved as part of the EU-mediated negotiations to 'normalize' relations between Belgrade and Pristina (Pristina Insight, 2019), prompting a response from the Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, who wrote on Twitter that 'Trepca is NOT an open issue between

Kosovo & Serbia, and Kosovo institutions & its people will never allow the creation of false topics that clearly aim the partition of Kosovo' (Haradinaj, 2019).

Over the decades the orebody at Trepca has become an increasingly vexatious space, embedded with incompatible and conflicting promises and unable to keep any of them to a significant degree. These have catalyzed the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, contributed to the division of Mitrovica, prompted a controversial (and ultimately failed) privatization attempt by the UN and the EU and led to the subsequent (and highly inflammatory) decision by the Kosovo assembly in 2019 to put both sides of Trepca under government control. Now the orebody is a central force that is keeping the conflict here intractable and people divided. The result is an orebody that swirls with difference, disagreement and discord and yet seems hard to let go. As a result, it seems to vibrate in this landscape. As the American cultural critic and historian Tavia Nyong'o has said 'so long as you continue to hoard it, an object will continue to hum reassuringly' (Barnard Center for Research on Women, 2011).

4.3 SASE MINE, SREBRENICA. 'WHAT WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN, HAPPENED'.

I am visiting the Sase mine, near Srebrenica, with members of an H2020-funded research consortium. After the dereliction of Trepca I am struck by how neat and tidy this mine is. Tucked unobtrusively into the hillside it is orderly, and oddly Christmassy because of the logo and the mine name picked out in fairy lights. The security guards jump into action when we arrive, taking our bags and leading us to our rooms. I have crisp sheets, a desk, a private bathroom, hot water. I open the window and watch the moon riding above the dark wooded hills opposite. It is quiet, apart from the nightingale singing. It is a haunting, magical sound.

The next evening, we go out to a local restaurant outside Bratunac with our Serb hosts from the mine. The Bosnian Serb army operated out of Bratunac during the war and schools and hotels became places of interrogation, torture and murder. Bratunac is a word that reverberates in ICTY witness testimonies. We are in this particular restaurant not just for dinner but also to watch the World Cup on the TV. It is a typical Balkan night with a huge amount of food and drink, animated conversation and laughter. At some point I ask for the WiFi code. It is republikasrpska1995. There are things buried here that are still too dangerous to talk about. (Excerpted from research journal, July 4th 2018)

4.3.1. Introduction

The Sase mine sits high in a valley of forests and farmland in the municipality of Srebrenica, in the central Podrinje region of eastern Bosnia, in what is now Republika Srpska. The valley stretches southwest up from the river Drina which is only 7 kilometres away from the mine and marks the border between Republika Srpska and Serbia. This is the landscape of the Srebrenica massacre, an act that was deemed genocide by a trial chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 2001 (Southwick, 2005: 188). In July 1995 up to 8,000 Bosnian Muslims, mostly men and boys were executed by Bosnian Serbs, and nearly all the Bosnian Muslim women, children, and elderly transported away from this area in a deliberate attempt by the Bosnian Serb leadership to affect the physical disappearance of the Muslim population. As Southwick writes, the application of the term 'genocide' to the massacre was intended to find a word that would both speak to the enduring anguish of the survivors and express international moral outrage (Southwick, 2005: 190).

While the orebody reverberates, or 'hums' in the landscape at Stan Terg, at Sase it seems swamped by the massacre that occurred here. Driving through this part of Republika Srpska my attention is caught not by mine infrastructure, or piles of waste mine material but by the ordered sweep of the Muslim cemetery at Potočari, by the vast carcass of the battery factory opposite that housed the UN Dutch battalion troops, by bullet-holed houses by the side of the road, and by the farm building in Kravica where between 1,000 and 1,500 Bosniaks were killed. In this geosocial formation the geological voice appears to have been subsumed by the material evidence of genocide and the affective frisson that still exists. Indeed, the name 'Srebrenica' has become synonymous with tragedy. As Southwick writes

> Even those unfamiliar with the conflict that consumed the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s have heard of Srebrenica. If nothing else, the word "Srebrenica" carries a pall of tragedy. Uttered with a mixture of historical import and regret, it has become a euphemism for unspeakable events (Southwick 2005: 189).

Srebrenica has also become synonymous with memory that is divided. There is little agreement about what happened here among the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims (van de Ven & Goethals, 2015). Every year there is an annual ceremony of remembrance at the Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial and Cemetery in which the remains of the dead that have been exhumed and identified are buried. In 2019, 33 more victims were buried including a

16-year-old, Osman Cvrk (Muslimovic, 2019). At the commemoration, Lars Gunnar Wigemark, the chief of the EU's delegation in Bosnia Herzegovina said, 'Srebrenica is a deep wound that is opened each time the responsibility for crimes committed is denied and perpetrators are glorified' (ibid). A few kilometres down the road there is a black cross in the village of Kravica that memorializes the Serb victims of Muslim aggression. In an act of bleak irony, it has been erected just a kilometre or so away from the farm building in which approximately 1000 Muslim men and boys were massacred by Serb forces, in 1995. What seems to exist around Srebrenica now is a loud and contested recent history that drowns out the other histories, and the other stories-so-far that exist here including the geologic.

And yet the geological story is here. Unlike at Stan Terg where the orebody subtends prickly borders and where the division between people on the surface is reflected in the division between them underground, the orebody at Sase has something different to say. It lies under territory that has boundaries that were formalized by the Dayton Peace Accord that ended the violent conflict in Bosnia Herzegovina in 1995. The people on the surface are not separated as they are at Stan Terg but mixed because of the number of Bosnian Muslims that have returned to their pre-war homes.[23] This policy of 'minority returns' was written into the Dayton accord as a means of remixing populations that had been 'un-mixed' by war in order to reverse the acts of 'ethnic cleansing' that had been carried out.[24] The orebody therefore subtends a difficult surface context of minority return and the process of reconciliation this re-mixing is intended to generate (Toal & Dahlman, 2011: 10). But it does more than subtend it. Instead, it is a place where Muslims are actively not welcome. Whatever mixing goes on, on the surface, underground it is a different story.

In section 4.3.4 this workplace discrimination will be discussed in the context of transitional justice. Here it is introduced in the context of *silence.* One Bosniak returnee, Zijad Mujić tells

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[23] In the Srebrenica municipality the population has shrunk from 36,666 people in 1991 to 11,698 in 2013. Bosniaks now make up 54.3% of the population and Serbs 45.1%. In 1991 Bosniaks made up 75.12% of the population and Serbs 22.68%.

[24] Minority returns are the return of individuals to places where their ethnic group is no longer in control, such as the return of Bosnian Muslims to Srebrenica, in Republika Srpska, and Bosnian Serbs to towns such as Olovo, in the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

a journalist from *Deutsche Welle* that he had asked about a job at the mine when he got back to his village.

> Kada sam čuo da rudnik traži radnike pitao sam neke komšije Srbe da li primaju i nas Bošnjake. Nisam dobio nikakav konkretan odgovor samo sam iza leda čuo neke kad kažu "Ovaj baš ima hrabosti da pita tako nešto."

> 'When I heard that the mine was looking for workers, I asked some Serb neighbours if they were taking Bosniaks. I didn't get a concrete answer, only behind my back I heard some said, "this guy has courage to ask something like this"' (Sekulic, 2017).

In a similar vein, the British COO of the company that now owns this mine knows this is not something he can talk to the Serb managers about. One of them fought in the war and was badly wounded. In an interview recorded on 24th May 2019 he says 'one tends to carry both physical and mental scars. That's part of the deal, isn't it? I would…I mean, I would…for maintenance of relationship, I would generally stay clear of pushing too hard.' (Roberts, 2019). While the Sase mine website speaks of the mine's community outreach, and their involvement in local reconciliation efforts, the absence of Muslims at the mine is still not safe to discuss.

The issue of silence is central to the geosocial formation that exists around Sase. To an extent, this silencing nods to the concept of conflict resolution 'ripeness' (Zartman, 2001) and the idea that any conflict needs to be ready to be resolved, although at Srebrenica, it seems, what is buried here needs to be ready even to be acknowledged. But it is not just workplace discrimination that is the issue here. The mine was part of the geography of the genocide that unfolded on the other side of the mountain ridge that separates Sase from Srebrenica. Mine buildings were used as a prison camp for Muslim women and children and certain mineworkers played a role in some of the worst excesses of the violence. There is no sign of this now, however. Instead, the area around the mine buildings has been re-landscaped. There is a car park with a shaded picnic area and new walking trails. In the centre of the mine there are neat paths, flower beds and a newly constructed Orthodox church. The past appears

to have been covered up and landscaped out. It is not just people that have been silenced, but the place too. But as Akin Akinwumi, a transitional justice scholar, has argued, attempts to shut the past down are often not successful (Akinwumi, 2013). The ghosts that exist there have a way of haunting the present if they are not properly acknowledged. Indeed, not far from the garden with its paths and flower beds a mass grave has been discovered in the mine waste and the bodies of Bosniak victims have been exhumed. While the subsoil hides and reveals natural resources it also hides and reveals the forensic evidence of genocide that refuses to be ignored. The Sase mine therefore seems to speak of things that are buried, literally and metaphorically; ore, bodies, secrets, truth, As Robert MacFarlane writes, the 'underland' is a place that has performed three tasks across cultures and epochs: 'to shelter what is precious, to yield what is valuable, and to dispose of what is harmful' (MacFarlane, 2019: 8).

As a case study Sase is problematic in that there is no interview data with the mineworkers to compare with Stan Terg and Olovo (see next chapter). Sase remains in this study, however, as a geosocial formation that has come into being in relationship with an act of genocide, where unspeakable things remain buried and which for the time being must remain silent. But despite its silence it still has something to tell us about the relationship between orebodies and human bodies in the context of violent conflict. In particular, in the context of this research, it has something to tell us about the cruel optimism that natural resource-related prosperity – the 'good life' - can come through excluding certain ethnic groups, by burying the past, by being silent, by continuing a war by other means. Towards what sort of future is this geosocial relationship leading people? In this particular context it seems a dangerous question.

4.3.2. Probing the geosocial past. Unity-in-diversity.

While the word 'Srebrenica' has become synonymous with tragedy, it actually refers to the *srebro* (the *silver*) in the geological strata that lie beneath the surface. The name of the town itself therefore points to a longer, more prosperous, more geological history than the one with which it is currently associated. In 2012 Adib Dozic, Edin Mutapcic, and Rusmir Djedovic began a research and publishing project in order to expand understanding of Srebrenica beyond its status as 'a universally known global symbol' of atrocity (Dozic et al, 2012: 5). The

publication they initiated, '*Monumenta Srebrenica*', is intended to highlight Srebrenica's 'rich heritage' (ibid) and the long history of prosperity, multiethnicity, and democracy based on mining.

This long history began in the Roman era, when there was a settlement called Domavia here, but it was in the middle ages that Srebrenica rose to prominence as a significant outpost of the Ragusan republic and an important mining, trading and craft centre that brought economic prosperity to the wider district (Mutapcic, 2012: 16). Indeed, the Sase mine is named for the Saxon miners who came here to extract the lead and silver and Sase was one of the largest mines in medieval Bosnia. Roberts reports finding old Saxon tunnels underground and regularly unearthing artefacts such as buckets, hammers and leather shoes (Roberts, 2019). According to Mutapcic, mining did not decline here during the Ottoman rule as it did elsewhere in the Balkans but continued. Srebrenica is described in the oldest preserved tax register (1519) 'as a silver mine, a town which has an organized fortress, a Dizdar, a cehaja [administrator], a khatib and an imam' (Mutapcic, 2012: 30). The Muslim population almost tripled in the 15 years from 1533 – 1548 and the Muslim inhabitants were craftsmen who were 'engaged in the mine and other mine-related positions' (Mutapcic, 2012: 31). Because of this they were the privileged group in town and exempt from paying certain taxes.

It was mining therefore that pulled different people here and held them together. Dozic writes

> As a result of the social-historical development conditioned first and foremost by mining, Srebrenica is a centuries-old migration meeting-point. [The] indigenous population of Srebrenica came into contact and mixed with the immigrants, first of all people from Dubrovnik, the Saxons, Ottomans, Vlachs and others. Given the fact that the immigrants were by rule of different ethnic and religious affiliation, it inevitably, after the cultural and biological mixing, filled the area of Srebrenica with multiethnicity and multi-religiousness' (Dozic, 2012: 39).

This continued after the Second World War when the Sase mine, like the Trepca complex was part of the planned economy and pulled people together from across Yugoslavia. The mine

was shut down after the war and was acquired by the British Serbian company Mineco in 2003.

Up until the war in the 1990s the orebody was therefore instrumental in creating what Dozic describes as the 'unity in diversity' that characterized Srebrenica then, and became a fundamental feature of Bosnian society as a whole. The significance of this, as Dozic argues is that it was this characteristic of Bosnian society that the genocide was intended to destroy. He argues that the genocide was part of a larger, wider and still unfolding process of sociocide or *Bosniacide* committed by Bosnian Serbs that is concerned not just with destroying people but destroying a society in order to achieve one state for one nation. The attempt to wipe out the Bosniak population by the Serbs, according to Dozic, was therefore an attempt to wipe out the pluralism that makes Bosnia, Bosnia. But more than this, Dozic argues that this Bosniacide is still occurring. Writing in 2012 he argues that 'even 17 years after the genocide committed in Srebrenica, there is 'peace time' killing of Bosnia in Bosnia and Herzegovina' (Dozic, 2012: 98). This 'peace time' killing of Bosnia, according to Dozic, is inherent in the ethnic homogenization of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the war, economic discrimination against Bosnian Muslims in Republika Srpska that leads to poverty and unemployment and the continuing 'political, scientific and intellectual crypting of the truth' about the genocide (Dozic, 2012: 97). It is within this context of the continuation of war aims by other means, and the alternative narratives that would dispute this, that the Sase mine now sits.

4.3.3. The geology of genocide

During the genocide the orebody seemed to lend geological heft to the unravelling of the relationship between Muslims and Serbs. Given that geology brought people together and mixed them up there is irony in the fact that it seemed to play a role in spinning them apart. Geology (or the promises embedded in geology) helped create the essence of Bosnia, in other words, and helped destroy it too. From May 1992 Muslim mine workers left or lost their jobs as tensions increased in the area, armed units appeared in the nearby Serb villages and Serbs occupied the ammunition and explosives depot at the mine (ICTY, 2005c). For Muslims trying to move around this landscape the mine was no longer a workplace but became a vantage point, a landmark and a hiding place. In his witness testimony to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague one witness remembers concealing himself

at Tri Kralja, the old pits of the Sase mines, during a sortie through the wooded hills from Srebrenica to Bjelovac to find food. 'It was the safest place to be' he explains 'because it was put in concrete, so it was quite solid' (ICTY, 2005c: 10374). It was also a place that was familiar to him from his work there in 1983. For some Bosnian Serb mine workers, the war meant being drafted into the army. Men who were truck drivers and mechanics at the mine before the war found themselves being ordered to load bodies onto trucks, to dispose of them in mass graves and later to exhume them and rebury them as part of an organized operation to hide the evidence of the massacre at Kravica. Krsto Simic was born in 1956 and worked at the Sase mine as a driver and an equipment operator. He testifies at the ICTY that by 1995 he had been mobilized into the 3rd battalion of the Bosnian Serb army, part of the Bratunac brigade, and was part of the security detail for the mine (ICTY, 2004). In July 1995 he was assigned by the mine manager to report to the brigade headquarters in Bratunac and ordered to take part in an operation to remove the bodies of the Muslims that had been massacred at Kravica. He describes being part of an operation in which five truckloads of bodies are driven to a mass grave in Glogova. Later he is ordered to dig the bodies up and rebury them at Zeleni Jadar (ICTY, 2004: 7317-7342). Other Serbs were taken captive by Bosniaks. The ICTY 2006 judgement on Naser Orić reports an incident involving a Serb mineworker called Milisav Milovanović who was held at the Srebrenica police station and beaten every day 'with various objects, including sticks, knives and rifle butts (ICTY, 2006: 150-151)

But perhaps most infamously, the Sase mine building was used as a detention camp during the war and Muslim civilians were reportedly killed there, including more than a dozen children (ICTY, 2005a). Edina Karic was a witness for the defense in the trial of Naser Oric in 2005 (ibid). She came from a Muslim family and was fifteen when the war in Bosnia Herzegovina began. Her father worked for the mine and she describes the increasing presence of armed Serbs in the Muslim villages around the mine from 1991; the roadblocks, the night-time gunshots, the rising fear, her family's decision to flee into the woods and their eventual capture by local Serbs when they tried to return home (ICTY, 2005a: 10980-10997). She was taken to the Sase mine with her uncle and her aunt, past the burning house of her neighbor Idriz in the village closest to the mine and was interrogated at the mine by one of her former neighbours (ibid: 11003). The members of the court are surprised by how familiar she is with the Serbs that are mentioned by name and she is asked to describe to the Trial

Chamber what the 'mentality' of the area is where she lived and how she knows the local Serbs, including her interrogator so well. She replies that they all lived in the lower village near the mine before the war;

> we used to play together when we were children. I mean, it is not like it is in the west. We visit one another on holidays, and we all lived together in harmony, all of us together. (ICTY, 2005a: 11005).

And yet, Mrs. Karic goes on to describe the Sase mine as one of the 'worst possible camps' where people were frightened because they had been beaten and because they had witnessed other Muslims being killed there (ibid: 11006). She describes the mortar outside the administrative building, seeing one of her teachers among the armed Serbs and mentions the fact that he is still teaching in the area fifteen years later (ibid: 11019). She also alludes to the Serbs who continued to work at the mine at the time and who were not part of the military but didn't intervene to help their old friends. 'They could see our moaning, our screams and the mistreatment as well as the wailing' Mrs Karic says (ibid: 11021). Mrs. Karic describes seeing a heavily pregnant woman and nine young children being forced into a lorry.

> A. There was a lot of screaming in the hall at that stage, and the children started crying and it was terrible. Words are failing me in trying to describe it but it was terrible. People were being pushed onto lorries, and one woman was unable to get on, and she was hit and then thrown on to the lorry basically.
> Q. After those events, have you ever seen any of those people alive?
> A. No, never, not a single one (ibid: 11028).

Later Mrs. Karic is taken from the mine along with two other Muslim girls to an abandoned house and 'raped and abused and beaten throughout the night' with a gun pointed at her head all the time. She was fifteen years old. The night after this she is raped by someone called Krsto Rankic.

> Q. All right. How did you know Krsto Rankic? Did he work somewhere?
> A. He used to work as a mine expert at the Sase mine.
> Q. Before the war?
> A. Yes, before the war.
> Q. And your father, where did he used to work?
> A. He used to work with him.

Q. What did those people do to you?
A. that evening, we were put in the cars again so we were taken out of the house,
put in some other vehicles and we had to sit in their laps, and they took us around
Bratunac and we ended up in a different house that was used at the time by Novak
Stjepanovic.
Q. What happened to you that evening?
A. We were raped again there.
Q. Do you remember who raped you?
A. Yes. Sasa Cvetkovic, Krsto Rankic, a person from Zaluzje who was called Krle, and
a Milan from Sabac (**ibid:** 11038)

Woven into this orebody then are memories of rape, torture, death, loss, and the violent disintegration of whatever had bound people together here before the war and for centuries before that. The idea of unity-in-diversity and the promise associated with it appears to have been destroyed. Now the orebody is associated with another story that is not unity-in-diversity but unity-in-*unity* in which the orebody promises prosperity to one ethnicity at the expense of another. While the atrocity of the physical violence that occurred here on the surface has been addressed (to an extent) at the ICTY, there is a quieter, hidden, subterranean *economic violence* at Sase that continues unabated. As Dustin Sharp, an Assistant Professor at the Kroc School of Peace Studies argues, in the context of transitional justice, neglecting the economic begs important questions: *'justice for what, for whom, and to what end?'* (Sharp, 2012: 781, emphasis original).

4.3.4. Unity-in-Unity and the Challenge of Economic Violence.

On the Sase mine website now there is a section outlining the history of the Sase mine in which there is no mention of the Ragusans, or the Muslims and not much about the Saxons. Instead, this lead-zinc deposit is described as 'one of the largest in the territory of the former Yugoslavia' and it is the development of Serbia (not Bosnia) and Serbian mining that is connected to this mine, close to which (note the authors) was built an orthodox monastery in 1242, to meet the religious needs of the miners (Gross, n/d). According to the Sase mine website Serbia, orthodoxy, and geology have a long relationship here. Of the Ottoman period all that is noted is that at this time 'na ove prostore rudarstvo zamire' (in these places mining died) (ibid). In contrast to the way the orebody emerges in *Monumenta Srebrenica* as a geological force that pulled people together and mixed them up, on the Sase mine website

the orebody is closely aligned with one country, one ethnic group, one religion and one trajectory for the future.

Although the population in the Srebrenica municipality has re-mixed since the war, the workforce of this mine does not reflect this. Data from the 2013 census shows that the population by ethnic group in the municipality is now 7,248 Bosniak, 6,028 Serb, and 16 'other group' (City Population, n/d). By religion the population identifies as 7,258 Muslim, 5,978 Orthodox, 20 Catholic, 79 other religion and 16 no religion (ibid). Underground, however, it is a different story. The mine employs approximately 500 people and is the largest economic enterprise in the Srebrenica municipality, but all the employees are ethnic Serbs (Roberts, 2019; Sekulic, 2017). To some extent the mine seems to have become a site of 'retrospective worldbuilding' (Basso 1996: 5, quoted in McEvoy-Levy 2012: 2). It is an act of placemaking, in other words, in which space is transformed in order to change 'material realities, social capacities, and narratives' (ibid). The underground world of the mine speaks *not* of the surface world as it exists but a preferred world that does not.

The mine illustrates what is increasingly recognized as one of the shortcomings of transitional justice mechanisms such as war crimes tribunals and truth and reconciliation commissions. While these are mobilized 'as part of a response to violent conflict and must serve as a pillar of post conflict peacebuilding' (Sharp, 2012: 781) they leave the question of economic justice out. As Sharp writes 'ignorance of economic violence continues to be one of the principle blinds spots of the field' (Sharp, 2012: 782). Partly the problem, Sharp notes, is the assumption that 'economics and conflict can be neatly separated' (Sharp, 2012: 784). Sharp advocates 'a more nuanced, contextualized and balanced approach to a wider range of justice issues faced by societies in transition' in which 'transition' is not just a transition to democracy and the rule of law, as per the liberal peacebuilding paradigm but 'a broader transition to "positive peace," in which justice for both physical violence and for economic violence receives equal pride of place' (Sharp 2012: 784. See also Bloomfield 2006: 21, Miller, 2008).

Similarly, a report written by Amnesty International in 2006 highlights workplace discrimination as 'one of the most serious obstacles to the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Amnesty International, 2006: 3). As the authors write, people must

be guaranteed the right to return to their pre-war homes, a right that is written into the Dayton Agreement that 'explicitly recognized the right to return as both a remedy to the human rights violations of unlawful transfers or deportations and as a means to reverse the effects of the "ethnic cleansing" of territories during the conflict' (Amnesty International 2006: 4). Obstacles to return include return-related violence, and 'the persistent and endemic problems minorities face in realizing rights to education, to health including access to healthcare, to social security including access to social services, pensions and, above all, the right to work' (Amnesty International, 2006: 7). Amnesty use the Aluminij aluminium plant in Mostar and the Ljubija iron ore mines near Prijedor to illustrate continuing discrimination in the workplace but the Sase mine also operates as what could be described as an 'ethnically cleansed enterprise' in which only workers of one ethnic group are welcome. The Sase mine therefore disrupts ideas of reconciliation here. The future it promises is not a shared one.

It is more complicated than this, however. Roberts agrees that there can be no peace without economic development. He cites World Bank figures that estimate that for every mining job another four jobs are created in the wider community. While he is uneasy about the mine appearing to be complicit in a project to keep people divided and to benefit some at the expense of others, he is also cautiously optimistic that with time these divisions will 'blur into the past' (Roberts, 2019). But he also acknowledges that the economic resurgence of Republika Srpska relative to the Federation is problematic and wonders about the role of the international community in the annual commemoration at Srebrenica and the extent to which this keeps local Muslims trapped in their identity as victims. His concerns reflect those expressed by Paul Miller in 2006 who worries about 'a justifiable 'cult of commemoration' of the genocide and a 'surfeit of memory' that might become 'hardened and politicized into dogma about the past, well before that past can truly be understood in all its historical complexity' (Miller 2006: 319). Miller's real concern about this surfeit of memory is the 'confrontational and, plainly disgusting way their tormentors in the last war and co-nationals today' have responded to what the majority of Serbs in Bosnia and Serbia understand as 'Muslim propaganda' (Miller 2006: 320). What seems to exist at Sase, therefore, is an unstable, dangerous, geosocial formation that is entangled in the experience and memories of genocide, in which geology offers an economic future for some and perpetuates economic

violence for others and where people's stories about 'how things have got to be the way they are' are perhaps still too difficult, or too dangerous to tell, apart from in private.

And yet in the same way that quieter, subversive, alternative stories emerged in the narratives of the mineworkers at Stan Terg (see next chapter) there seems to be something of this here, too. In the ICTY testimonies Edina Karic remembers the help she was given by Miroljub Todorovic, the Serb commander of the camp at Sase who tried to stop Krsto Rankic from entering mine property after he heard about the rapes and helped her 'not get killed' when Serbs surrounded the mine building and started shooting (ICTY, 2005a: 11022). Mira Filipovic, a Serb woman who was a cook at the mine encountered Muslims who had worked at the mine when her village was attacked by Bosniaks. She testifies that they were kind to her and her children, gave her a home with a Muslim family, made sure she had milk for her baby and tried to protect her from potential problems (ICTY, 2005: 3903). Krsto Simic, the driver from the mine who was part of the operation to load bodies onto trucks after the massacre at Kravica is asked why his colleague had to stop working with him. He answers 'How would I know? Perhaps he was tired. He was just mentally overburdened' (ICTY, 2004: 7329). Roberts recounts how the wounded Serb manager at Sase was the one that helped him open Olovo up, in a majority Muslim town. 'He's a classic Republika Srpska Serb, but he set up Olovo. He started in the office there. He employed Sabina, who was the first member of staff and Sabina is still incredibly grateful and everyone in Olovo liked him' (Roberts, 2019). Perhaps it is not unreasonable to assume that alongside the other unspeakable things buried in this orebody, there are some alternative stories to the one that has become entrenched. For this research it is not yet time to find out.

For now, according to a 2017 article published on DW.com, life is 'equally bad' for Bosniaks and Serbs in terms of how they feel about what happened here (Sekulic, 2017).[25] One Muslim man who has returned to the nearby village is reported to have said

> *Nikome ovdje nije baš dobro, u duši posebno […] Svako nosi svoju bol, to nas tišti I opterećuje. Nema još uvijek hrabrosti I smjelosti, možda ni želje, da se o onom o čemu se priča ili prepričava unutar uskog kruga ili u četiri oka, progovori I javno. Svi mi*

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[25] 'život u Sasama danas podjednako loš I Bošnjacima I Srbima' (Sekulic, 2017).

mještani se ovdje poznajemo, poznavali smo se i prije rata. Činjenica je da se desilo ono što nije trebalo. Da nekih ljudi nema. Govorka se ili pretpostovalja za neke da su odgovoni ili bi mogli bar znati nešto o tim ružnim dešavanjima ali niko nikom to ne kaže otvoreno.

[n]o one here is very well, especially in the soul […] everyone bears his own pain, it oppresses and burdens us. We don't yet have the courage, the boldness, or possibly the desire, to talk about this publicly, we talk about it amongst ourselves, or one-on-one. We all knew each other here, we knew each other before the war. The fact is that what was not supposed to happen, happened. Some people are gone. You either assume that some people are responsible, or they might at least know something about these terrible happenings, but nobody says anything openly to anybody (ibid).

Björkdahl and Kappler argue there is something to be gained by analyzing how places and spaces 'tainted by conflict' are 'transformed to represent and manifest peace' and that space and place are therefore 'vehicles through which peace can be explored' (2018: 2). Something ostensibly peaceful has been created at Sase; the garden, the flower beds, the church, the car park, the picnic site and the small hard-surfaced football pitch all speak of harmonious coexistence. Indeed, in the course of my involvement with the IMPACT research project I find myself sitting on the wooden bleachers in the hot sun, watching a football match between consortium members who have come here from all over Europe, and the mineworkers. The consortium members are dramatically outmatched and put more and more players into the game in an attempt to even the balance but to no avail. I sit behind the general manager of the mine and her husband as they cheer our team on, good-naturedly applauding our attempts to manipulate the game in our favour. We are served wine and rakija as the game progresses. On the surface it is a peaceful, fun event. Underground, there is something else going on here too. Berlant writes that cruel optimism is a relation of attachment 'to compromised conditions of possibility whose realization is discovered to be *im*possible, sheer fantasy, or *too* possible, and toxic (Berlant, 2011: 24). Perhaps what exists in this geosocial formation is an orebody that offers a toxic condition of possibility that has been too easily achieved in the aftermath of violent conflict.

4.4. OLOVO MINE. 'WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF THE FUTURE'

During a visit to Olovo I walk up the hill to the Catholic church. As I linger outside the mosque on the way I meet a local Muslim woman who invites me into her home. She gives me homemade elderflower juice, Balkan coffee and honey cake and we chat about the many ways the Muslim community takes care of the Catholic church near her home, about the catholic priest who attends their celebrations and about the inter-community dialogue and peacebuilding initiatives she takes part in, in Sarajevo. They are organized by a German NGO and she thinks such initiatives are of value for reconciliation. Women of all faiths get together and talk about how life is for them now. 'We are all women' she says. 'We all know pain.' She tells me that the Muslim families welcome the Catholic and the Orthodox worshippers when they return to celebrate significant holidays at their respective churches. We talk about the mine, too. 'Mining can be good and bad' she says 'but local people need jobs' (Excerpted from research journal)

4.4.1. Introduction

The town and municipality of Olovo is in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Zenica Doboj canton. The town is situated 50 kilometres northeast of Sarajevo, on the Sarajevo-Tuzla highway and was on the front line of the conflict during the war when it came under a sustained attack by Serb forces. While Olovo has had a majority Muslim population since the Ottoman era, after the war it has ethnically 'unmixed' even more (Duijzings, 2003). The Bosniak share of the population grew from 75.14% to 95.34% from 1991 to 2013. While the population was nearly 19% Serb in 1991, by 2013 there were only 77 Serbs remaining, making up 0.75% of the population.[26] The orebody at Olovo therefore subtends a human world in which the population is not divided as it is at Stan Terg, or uneasily mixed as it is at Sase but is almost entirely homogenous. This is therefore a peaceful place in terms of the relationship between people on the surface relative to the recent war and the town reflects this. There is no hate graffiti on the streets, no memorials pushing one version of events over another, no different narratives about what happened here and who is to blame. And there are no conflicting promises, related to the war, embedded in the orebody.

Across the main street of the town there is a banner that reads 'DOBRODOŠLI NA GRAD BUDUĆNOSTI' (welcome to the town of the future). It is an optimistic note in a country that is still dragged backwards, to some degree by the past and it is an optimism that is based partly on mining and the re-opening of the lead mine here in 2018. But it is also based on

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[26] Overall, however, the population of Olovo has declined since the war from a total of 16,901 in 1991 to 10,175 in 2013.

tourism, forestry, fly-fishing and the refurbished spa hotel in the centre of the town. The Stupčanica and the Bioštica rivers converge at Olovo and form the Krivaja river that flows north west until it drains into the Sava. This is a karst limestone landscape with wooded hills, rivers and gorges. While it is geology that reverberates at Stan Terg, at Olovo the geological voice is one among other natural resources that are significant for this town including the thermal mineral water. As the Yugoslav ethnologist Milenko Filipović wrote in 1934

> Veće i važnije naselje na mestu današnjeg Olova moglo je postati tek onda kad su se bosanski rudnici počeli da eksploatišu, ali je verovatno da je u plodnoj ravni između sastavaka Bioštice i Stupčanice moglo postojati naselje i pre toga. Veoma je verovatno i moguće da je i u Olovu bilo rudarskog rada i u rimsko doba, kao što ga je bilo i Srebrenici, i da lekovitost olovske banje nije bila nepoznata i pretslovenskom stanovništvu tog kraja (1934: 10).

> The biggest and most important settlement on the site of contemporary Olovo could only become so when the Bosnian mines began to be exploited, but it is likely a settlement existed on the fertile, level ground between the Bioštica and Stupčanica before that. It is very likely that in Olovo there was mining in the Roman period as there was in Srebrenica, and that the properties of the spa were known to the pre-Slav population of the area (1934: 10).

There are nine springs in the municipality, one of which is in the centre of the town itself and the mineralization of the water has reportedly not changed for 100 years. It is not just ore that has resonated in the underground space here over the centuries, but water too.

But while the geological voice is muted, this is still a geosocial formation. As at Sase and Stan Terg geology has played a role in the way in which the social world at Olovo has emerged. The difference between what exists here and what exists at Stan Terg and Sase is that the orebody is not (yet) a 'problematic object' (Berlant, 2011: 3). To a certain degree the 'becoming of earth and society together here' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017) over the centuries has not resulted in division and difficulty but in cooperation and coexistence. The next section argues, as an example of this, that Olovo's iconic landmark, the Church of Our Lady of Olovo is part of the geosocial formation that exists here. Without the pull of geology in the 14th century there would be no Catholic miners, no Catholic immigration from the Dalmatian coast and no shrine. But while the geosocial formation here is a peaceful one Olovo is not a 'deviant case' in the context of this research (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 79). This geosocial formation still has

something to say about the human geologic relationship and the cruel optimism that exists within it.

4.4.2. Our Lady of Olovo. A geosocial formation.

Olovo is named for the *olovo* – the lead – in the limestone rocks beneath it, but the last time lead was extensively mined was in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when the exploitation, processing and export of lead was foundational for the development of the town (Djedović, 2014: 37). The lead mined from Olovo was taken in large quantities to the Neretva River and on to Dubrovnik, from where it was taken to Italy where it was in high demand for the roofs of churches, palaces and towers (Filipović, 1934).

> Bilo je dana kada bi u Dubrovnik stizali karavani s po tri stotine konja natovarenih bosanskim olovom, a to je olovo dolazilo većinom iz Olova a manje iz Srebrenice (u Bosni) I Rudnika (u Srbiji). Bile su dve vrste olova: "plumbum dulce de Olovo" I "plumbum durum Srebrenice". (Filipovic, 1934: 11)

> [t]here were days when caravans with three hundred horses loaded with Bosnian lead would arrive in Dubrovnik and that lead was from Olovo, with a smaller part from Srebrenica (in Bosnia) and Rudnik (in Serbia). There were two types of lead: "sweet lead from Olovo" and "hard lead from Srebrenica" (Filipovic, 1934: 11)

However, as Filipovic notes Olovo never achieved the significance that the much older and richer Srebrenica had (ibid). Geology therefore pulled disparate people together here in the middle ages and ordered life 'as it was in other mining towns in Bosnia and Serbia' (Filipović, 1934). The Saxon miners enjoyed certain privileges as they did at Stan Terg and Sase and lived 'by their own regulations' and Dalmatian people from Kotor, Bar, Split, Trogir, Korcula and Zadran, and Italian merchants were all drawn together here. As a result, Olovo and the surrounding villages had 'a pronounced Latin character' and even the smallest had a Catholic church' (Filipović 1934: 12. See also Eade & Katic, 2016: kindle location 1363). And yet, as time went by, as Filipović notes, the people here all became known as 'Olovljani' (Filipović, 1934: 13)

The most significant Catholic church is the church of Our Lady in Olovo. There has been a shrine here since the fourteenth century and it is considered to be the first Marian shrine in Bosnia (Belaj & Martić, 2014: kindle location 1354). It sits high on a hill above the town,

undamaged from the war. Below it is the newly rebuilt half-timbered mosque, with its bright red roof tiles and its neat minaret. It was shelled seven times during the siege of Olovo. The Orthodox church is visible too, across the river on the hill opposite. While Robert Hayden has argued that there is an inevitable 'competitive sharing of space' in the 'religioscapes' in the Balkans through which a religious structure of one faith must always be more conspicuous than the religious structure of another there is little sign of that here (Hayden, 2013: 320).

Belaj & Martić write that the first record of the shrine appears in *The Dubrovnik Annals* from 1454 and note that Olovo was then 'a mining town inhabited exclusively by Catholics' (Belaj & Martić, 2014: 1364). They conjecture that the Ottomans spared the shrine after the collapse of medieval Bosnia 'maybe because of the Catholic control of the local mining industry' (ibid). After the eventual decline of the mining industry during the Ottoman era and the emigration of Catholics out of Olovo it was the shrine that continued to pull people here and mix them together. Pilgrims from Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, Hungary, Turkey are reported to have visited during the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries – a mixture of Catholic, Muslim, Orthodox, and Jew (Belaj & Martić, 2014: kindle location 1373). Although it was a Catholic shrine, it had a multi-religious character that endures today.

The current church was built between 1929 and 1936, and Muslims and 'other non-Catholics helped in the construction (Belaj & Martić, 2014: kindle location 1407). During the conflict in the 1990s Muslims 'visited the shrine and participated in the Mass when it was very difficult for Catholics to come on pilgrimage' (Belaj & Martić, 2014: kindle location 1417). Now, with only twenty or so Catholics in the town it is the Muslim community that tends the church; one of the local Muslim women told me they clear the steep road, clean the church and look after the priest. The shrine at Olovo therefore disrupts the narrative forwarded by Hayden that religious shrines are inevitably sites for competition and 'antagonistic tolerance' (Hayden, 2013). Instead, the shrine emerges as the site of a local 'lived reality of cooperation and coexistence between different ethnic and religious groups' (Belaj & Mrtić, 2014: kindle location 1247). The point of this, for this research is that this site of cooperation and coexistence is part of the geosocial formation that has existed here since the middle ages. The church, the orebody and the people are all in relationship. They have all *become* together.

What this geosocial formation tells us is that there is nothing inevitable about the conflict that exists in the human geological relationship at Sase and Stan Terg.

4.4.3. Bringing an orebody back to life.

Mining declined in the Ottoman era and in the 20th century the forests around Olovo emerged as the most significant natural resource. During the period of Yugoslav socialism, a sawmill factory was built in the municipality and the 'state-run forest industry together with the factory were bread and butter for several thousands of workers from Olovo as well as the surrounding villages' (Henig, 2012: 6). In addition to forestry the town became known for its warm-water spas, and for camping, hunting and fishing (Muratović, 2017: 57). What was on the surface, in other words was more important for the social world that developed here than what was underneath it. But when Yugoslavia disintegrated the forestry industry declined and living standards dropped considerably. The anthropologist David Henig notes,

> The story of the factory, and the crumbling industrial complex itself are iconic examples of the precarious everyday realities of post-Yugoslavia. Put in this way, the factory bears the memories of what once used to be a "Yugoslav dream' and of a secure life; yet it refers to a 'post-Yugoslav nightmare' reminding everyone of a failed social(ist) experiment that brought uncertainty into people's lives' (Henig 2012: 6)

While it is mining infrastructure that reminds people of the lost Yugoslav dream at Trepca, at Olovo it is the forest and the decayed sawmill factory. Now much of the forest is out of bounds because of the unexploded mines that still exist within it.

Exploration began again at the lead mine in the 1960s and 1970s when the Yugoslav government began opening up the 15th and 16th century adits[27] and tunneling into the mountainside. However as one participant told me the mine had only been producing for a month or two before the war started in 1991 and it was forced to close

> *We stopped working in May of 1992. On the third of May you could see the first guns in the hills. We were at the top of the Bioštica River at the entrance of the mine and they came with the guns and they drew us out […] it wasn't the army at first. It*

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[27] An adit is the entrance into a mining tunnel that is horizontal, rather than vertical.

was the Serb rebel groups. And after that the Yugoslav national army came […]
Everybody who was in the pit, they chased everybody away. It was the first of May
which is International Labour Day and we just couldn't get in. Everything was blocked.
Usually, the Serbs were up in the hills and the miners were down below and they
were shooting from up to down. We just couldn't do anything else. We just had to
go (P.19)

The town was on the front line of the conflict in the 1990s and was at the heart of the Bosnian Serb "End the War" offensive which was focused on blocking aid to Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia, cutting off Tuzla and inflicting a decisive enough military defeat on the Bosnian army that the Bosnian government would be forced to accept a peace settlement on Serb terms. As Robert Block reported in The Independent on 17th January 1994, in one week 'more than 2000 Serbian shells landed [..] in and around Olovo, which even before the latest onslaught has been reduced to a rubble heap.' (Block, 1994). However, the campaign was unsuccessful, and the town never fell into Serb hands. The conditions in Olovo were dire, however, particularly as Muslim refugees fled to the town from neighbouring villages and aid convoys failed to break through the Serb lines (New York Times, 1993). While some of the mine workers at Olovo were drafted into the war, the conflict-related stories they tell are connected to surviving the war in a besieged town. Unlike at Sase and at Stan Terg the orebody was relatively quiet during the war, although the entrances to the tunnels were heavily mined.

After the war the mine was privatized and bought by Mineco, the same company that owns Sase. Unlike Sase which had been an operating mine, with mining licenses and physical infrastructure, Olovo was offered more as a greenfield site. As Roberts says, 'it was an exploration site that had had a mine in it once' (Roberts, 2019). The first task was to try and collect the maps and diagrams from the Yugoslav era that had gone missing. While the hand drawn maps and sections of the orebody at Trepca are carefully stored in the Selection Trust archive in London, Roberts reports that local Muslims hid the paperwork associated with the Olovo orebody in their attics and cellars when the war started so they would not fall into Serb hands. As he says 'it was their mine…in the sense that the natural resource was theirs. It lived in their community' (Roberts, 2019).

Now the optimism embedded in this orebody is for long term jobs and the ability to lead a 'normal life' in the impasse that is the aftermath of violent conflict (see Chapter Four) and local people are hopeful about the mine reopening.[28] As Olga Sidorenko writes, in Serbia and Bosnia industrial development is associated with a socialist system and social growth. Losing mines to war and deindustrialization means losing the swimming pools, the cinemas, the street lighting, the outpatient clinics, and the football clubs that traditionally go with them (Sidorenko, 2020). As a result, the people who live in and around Olovo are transferring 'their impressions of the wealth of a mining community that they (or their parents) experienced in their past onto current mining activities. They believe that mining may bring a new wave of development to their regions' (ibid). Mining sites such as Olovo activate local memories of the past and that it is these memories that shape expectations for the future (ibid).

But this is a small orebody with a limited life operating in a different political and economic context and it may be that it is being asked to promise more than it can deliver. In addition, the mine is also the site of an EU H2020-funded research project looking at a new paradigm of mining that is short-term, small-scale and mobile, and intended to meet European demand for the critical raw materials required for the green transition. This new mining method is called 'Switch On/Switch Off' (SOSO) and the mine equipment and processing plant are designed to fit into a number of shipping containers so that they can be taken to a small-scale orebody to operate for a short period, and moved away again, according to demand. The orebody is beginning to promise a different sort of mining-related future for different people, associated with this H2020 research project and connected to concepts such the circular economy, technological efficiency and radically re-thinking the role of mining in the context of climate change. What the geosocial formation at Olovo points to is the possibility that the optimism embedded in the idea that peace can come through the prosperity that comes through mining, however well managed, may be a 'phantasmatic cushion that has lost its air' (Barnard Center for Research on Women, 2011).[29]

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[28] As part of my involvement with the IMP@CT H2020 research consortium I talked with government officials (environment and tourism), the mayor of Olovo, the head of the community closest to the mine, and officials in charge of managing the rivers and forest around Olovo. All of the were unanimous that Olovo in particular and Bosnia Herzegovina in general need the jobs and income from mining investment.

[29] This is a quote from Berlant during a 'Public Feelings Salon with Lauren Berlant' organized by the Barnard Center for Research on Women, 2011.

4.5. CONCLUSION.

In broad terms the three orebodies at Stan Terg, Sase and Olovo are all part of the same geological trend. They are part of a zone of genetically related strata that runs northwest to southeast down the western Balkans. The ore-rich bodies within these strata were formed at the same time, by similar events. But the ways in which the orebodies have emerged and mixed with human bodies is unique. In each place, to different degrees and in different ways geological lives and human lives have created a geosocial formation that has its own peculiar past and that seems to make a particular future in some way inevitable. What has emerged in this chapter, therefore, are three different geosocial formations in which the 'durability' and '"in-placeness"' (Olsen, 2010: 160) of the three orebodies, over time and in their particular place, have grounded ideas about what the 'good life' is and who it is for. What seems to tie the three together is optimism that geological strata will help a world become better in 'just the right way' for different people at different times (Berlant, 2011: 316). But in each place, there are problems with this. At Stan Terg the 'good life' that geology has promised has not turned out to be a good life after all, or at least not in the way it was originally conceived. At Sase it delivers a good life that may be toxic, in that it is a good life for some at the expense of others. At Olovo it promises a good life that it may not be able to deliver for long. This optimism therefore seems to raise a question. Is it a *cruel* one? Does an orebody stand in the way of the good life it promises? Does it tether people to a future that might not necessarily suit them?

Tunel i Parë near the Stan Terg mine. Photo by the author.

5

MAKING THE PRESENT LIVEABLE.

INTRODUCTION.

The last chapter looked at the phenomenon of the human geological relationship as it has emerged over time in the three research sites. It argued that each place can be understood as a geosocial formation held together in part, by optimism in which people and geology seem to bring a certain wished-for future into view. This chapter looks at the contemporary relationship between people and geology at Stan Terg and Olovo. It primarily uses data from the interviews with mineworkers at Stan Terg and Olovo to further explore the human geologic relationship. I argue that this relationship is one of *attachment* that functions as the 'collective project of making worlds' (Berlant, 2011a: 686). What emerges in this chapter is an attachment to an orebody that is deeply connected with people's sense of what it means to 'keep on living on' in the aftermath of conflict (Berlant, 2011: 24). This relationship of attachment seems to provide continuity with what has past, makes some sort of sense of the present and brings a certain future into view. It helps define who and where *I* am and

therefore (at Stan Terg and conjecturally at Sase) who and where *you* are too in the context of political, economic, social, psychological and emotional precarity.

This relationship of attachment seems akin to the way in which Berlant conceptualizes attachment as 'the affective dimension of being propped on and relying on an object onto which fantasies of flourishing are projected, such as those of what a good life is, who one's people are, what kinds of politics, ethics and values make things make satisfying sense' (Berlant, 2011a: 686-687). The orebody seems central to the creation of a world which is an 'infrastructure for continuity' (Barnard Centre for Research on Women, 2011) and an 'infrastructure for proximity' (Berlant 2011a: 684) in places where proximity is an issue. This infrastructure for proximity is a means through which people bind themselves to the world in which they find themselves and in so doing bind themselves to the people they find there also (Berlant 2011a: 684). It is at the heart of a normative project. The point of this, for peacebuilding, is that we can ask; *at what cost?*

Berlant argues that the mechanism for this relationship of attachment is *promise.* People attach promises to things (people, objects, ideas, institutions, political projects) that they want them to make possible for them (Berlant 2011: 23). Certainly, promises emerged in this research. The mineworkers attach promises to the orebodies at Stan Terg and Olovo about what a good life is and who it is for. Furthermore, these promises are not created in a vacuum but emerge in relationship with the 'becomings' of the particular geosocial formation in which they exist and the compositions and orderings (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 6) that have gone into its construction. At Stan Terg, for example, the mineworkers embed promises in the orebody that are demanding, ambitious, and deeply imbued with the conflict dynamic that exists and are implicated in its intractability. The orebody promises to shore up a project of political independence, to bring prosperity for Kosovo 'and not for the country that occupied us', to reunite the two divided halves of Trepca, and to bring the miners a sense of dignity and self-respect. There is not unanimity in what the mineworkers want it to do for them, however. For some it promises an opportunity to work with former Serb colleagues again. For others it promises to keep them separate. It promises that life will be like 'it was before' on one hand and will be transformed on the other, so that Kosovo will be 'a different country, like

Switzerland.' But most of all, as will be explored below, it promises that the strike, and the war and the loss and hardship these entailed, which to some extent endure, were worth it.

At Olovo the promises are more modest, less rooted in conflict and more connected with what it means to live a 'normal life' in the aftermath of violence. The orebody promises the workers that they can live in their own town and go home every night, afford the daily necessities, and provide jobs that will last until they retire so they don't have to start again. For Berlant there is optimism inherent in attachment such as this. Maintaining an attachment to the world means asking the world to promise you things so that you can look forward to being *in* that world (Berlant, 2011: 24). The promises embedded in the orebodies by the mineworkers at Stan Terg and Olovo are at Figure 1, at the end of this chapter.

What this chapter unearths, therefore, is a relationship of optimistic attachment to the orebody and in so doing it offers a different perspective from the public imaginary in which mining landscapes are not considered 'scenes of optimism' (Berlant, 2011: 24) but are rather scenes of environmental and social degradation, dispiritedness and hardship that represent a 'fall from grace' from the naturalness and harmony of the pre-industrial past (see for example, Bridge, 2004: 243; Bebbington et al, 2008). Contemporary studies of miners have focused on the human cost of labouring in the 'dark, inhuman hell of tunnels' in terms of its negative impact on physical and mental health (see for example Vermeulen et al, 2010; Hnizdo & Sluis-Cremer, 1993; Corbett et al, 2000; Rericha et al, 2006; Kreuzer et al, 2010), raised incidence of occupational injury and death (Kucuker, 2006; Atalay, 2015), and the social degradation associated with mining. Mining, particularly small-scale and artisanal, is framed as necessary means of poverty reduction and economic survival with a high environmental, social and human cost. As Rosi Braidotti argues, the geology in our laptops connects us to the brutality, the dirt and the degradation of the labour that produced it (Braidotti, 2018). But, as will be argued here, there is optimism in this relationship too.

This is not to imply, however, that the miners at the elderly Stan Terg mine in Kosovo do not suffer. On the contrary they continue to endure poisonous working conditions, compromised safety, poor food, and pay they feel does not reflect the inherent riskiness of the work they do. In addition, their experiences of ethnic and religious discrimination, of strike action and

imprisonment, of unemployment and of conflict are tightly woven in with their workplace and their identities as miners. And yet, they still consider the mine, and the orebody that subtends it to be integral to their financial, psychological and emotional wellbeing. At Stan Terg there is therefore something curious in the optimistic attachment to the orebody. In some ways it is an attachment that emerges as effortful, incongruous, and contradictory. What seems to exist here is the cruel optimism of a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility that are impossible to abandon. At Olovo, in contrast there is nothing conflictual or toxic in the cautious optimism that is expressed. The orebody just promises a 'normal life' for people whose normal lives have been knocked off track by war. The first section of this chapter looks at the relationship of attachment that exists at Stan Terg. The second section looks at Olovo.

5.1. STAN TERG.

Over eighty years after Rebecca West and her husband visited Stan Terg I stand with an Albanian miner in the ruined English Colony. Those windowed walls are now pockmarked with bullet holes. The glass in the windows is broken, not reflecting the westering sun but the darkness of the empty rooms behind them. This miner is a tall man, quiet and elegant. He used to come here when he was a boy and sell milk and eggs to the Serb families. Now, part of his job is to check the old mining shafts to make sure they are safe.

'The Serbs used to tell us to come inside and get warm when it was cold' he says. 'And there was a Serb doctor who came by horse from here to look after the Albanian people in the villages. I don't know what the hell happened'

We climb inside the shell of the movie theatre where he used to come as a teenager. The roof has long since collapsed and we scramble over overgrown masonry avoiding the piles of human excrement. He points out where the screen used to be, the seats. He reminisces about watching a Yugoslav war movie 'Battle on the Neretva' with his friends. He is animated as he describes how it used to be, but as we clamber out it becomes clear something is on his mind. Something that is making him feel uncomfortable. It turns out he is worried about how I might be understanding what he has been saying.

'This could be interpreted the wrong way' he says to my assistant, Behar.

'No, I'm translating just as you say it' answers Behar.

'But she could say 'if it was better then, why didn't you keep it like that?'
(Excerpted from research diary, 15th March 2018).

5.1.1. Introduction.

Everywhere in this landscape there is evidence that life related to natural-resource extraction has been 'better' than it is now. As we leave the movie theatre, I notice an old plaque on the outside wall commemorating the establishment of the first union of Trepca miners in the building in 1966. '*They have been the guide to the new age, they have carved out the future and will therefore always be present with their humanity and honesty*' is inscribed on it, but only in Albanian. There is an empty square beside it from where the Serb half, and most of the plaster behind it has been removed. The days in which one trade union represented miners of all ethnicities are long gone. From the cinema we walk up the hill on a narrow, elegantly cobbled lane that winds past more Cornish-style stone mine houses and stop at the ruin of what was once a magnificent hotel. It looks like it has been hit by a mortar shell, but it maintains a trace of the grandeur of its 1950s stone and plaster façade. We stand where the terrace would have been and look across the valley. A man appears, smoking a cigarette, curious about who we are and what we're doing. He is Albanian, but we chat in Serbian. He used to live here but moved to Vyshterri, on the main road to Pristina during the war. He hasn't been able to move back because his house was destroyed, and it will take more money than he has to rebuild it. 'I dream about this place' he says. 'There is nowhere on earth better'. Further up the hill, we come across the remains of the open-air swimming pool, a crumbling concrete diving board looming over one end, a terrace where people used to sunbathe, the woods where they picnicked. 'We used to run around and around the court' says the mineworker. 'We were from the village and we didn't know how to play very well' (P.11).

These ruins are the remnants of the material 'wish images' (Andreassen et al, 2010) of all the people that have lived and worked at Stan Terg, a palimpsest of the promises embedded in the natural resources here over time. They are, (following Walter Benjamin) "dialectical images" (Benjamin, 1999; 475 quoted in Olsen, 2010: 169) of the "other" pasts that have been discarded but unlike other industrial ruins they have not just been left behind by the processes of deindustrialization, disinvestment and economic decline (Olsen, 2010: 69. See also Vaccaro et al, 2016) but are also the material residue of a war that seemed to knock

history sideways onto a different track. The decaying remains of the good-life-now-gone at the English Colony are therefore partly the result of events running out of control, of something aberrational unleashed, of a force that still has people who used to swim and picnic here together wondering *what the hell happened?* They are not ruins of the 'outdated and nonuseful' therefore, but the ruins of the once enjoyed and the deliberately destroyed (Olsen, 2010: 69). What they actualize now is not necessarily forgotten or unwanted, but something that seems more complicated, a past at once rejected, and yet yearned for, to some degree at least. But perhaps what these ruins actualize the most is the fragility of the optimism embedded in this orebody since the 1920s; that Serbs and Albanians can work well together here, that it can ground socialist-era flourishing, that it can support a war effort, that it can underpin the prosperity of independent Kosovo. The people that work at Stan Terg seem trapped in a project of making sense of their lives amid the material evidence that their lives (in relationship with the orebody) do not easily make sense.

5.1.2 Making the Past Make Sense.

Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers has written that the nostalgia for Yugoslavia ("Tito-nostalgia") and for Yugoslav socialism that is common across its former republics is notably absent in Kosovo (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012. See also Burić, 2012). She argues that it has been eclipsed by 'an Albanian messianic master narrative of militant resistance and sacrifice for the nation' centered around the figure of Adem Jasheri, a commander of the KLA, and his family, who were killed by Serb shells in their home in March 1998 (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012: kindle location 2068). This narrative serves a psychosocial function for Albanians in postwar Kosovo by shifting the focus from the "shame" of victimization to the bravery and honour of resistance and, in so doing, makes speakable the "unspeakable" experience of war-related victimization (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012: kindle location 2079. See also Bar-Tal, 2000). In contrast, the Tito period has been 'transformed into "blocked" or "hurt" memory' (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012: kindle location 2151) and while nostalgia for this time *is* expressed, it is done so cautiously and privately, for fear of 'political exploitation' (Schwandner-Sievers, 2012; kindle location 2162).

It is possible to discern a similar master narrative at Stan Terg. The mineworkers fold their stories into a narrative of resistance, sacrifice and solidarity for the nation that perhaps makes

the stories of the strike, imprisonment, exile and eventual return "speakable", to a degree. The story in which they *emplot* themselves is the story of Kosovo's struggle for independence in which they play a heroic role. They talk of their determination to oppose the 'system', of refusing opportunities to compromise their principles and of gaining the support of Kosovo in the process. It is clear they perceive themselves as central to the events that unfolded.

From the beginning (and I have to say this on my behalf and my friends' behalf) when we started working here, we were always determined to be against the system, before the war. Because we were all the time censored and we were being controlled by state security and state police. And this of course erupted in 1989 when we locked ourselves in the mine with our friends during the miners' strikes. And of course, after the strikes they put us in prison then after that, in 1990 when we tried to come to our work, the whole area was full of state security and state police who wouldn't let us come to our work, so we were jobless for a few years. We didn't work for ten years […] It's a heavy load to carry to always be on the front line of rejecting, or being opposed to injustice like Serbia did, because we were always afraid we were being watched 24/7, and we were always afraid that every day they would imprison us or pick us up to question us, which in most of the cases they did, and I have proof that I was imprisoned many times and was questioned many times, but we were determined and we had decided to stand our ground and say that we would never give our resources to Serbia. (P.6)

Politics happened and destroyed everything. We wanted things to stay the same, but at that time, the first time Milosević came to Fushï Kosovo, at that meeting he started saying (to the Serbs) 'I will arrest all of them (the Albanians) and this place will be ours, so you Serbs will live in Kosovo. Trepca will be ours and I will arrest the rest of the Albanians that live here [weeps]. There was nothing left for us to do, because nobody wanted to get back to work after that at Trepca mine. The Serbs had all the budget for themselves and also they took all the gold, that was Trepca gold […] I saw people in white helmets and white clothes taking out all the golden bricks that were produced in Trepca and taking them away. They were armed with short automatic weapons […] they had two cars in which they were carrying gold, as much as they could load into those cars, and they took all those bricks and sent them to Belgrade. So, in a sense it was like us working for them. I realized there was nothing to work for, in the mine. (P.13)

What also felt good for us was, for example was that two employees from the factory came inside the mine and told us 'you have our support' and the next day people from Suva Reka came and said 'you have our support' as well and the next day somebody else would come and give us their support, so it felt very right for us to be holding these strikes. And also, I have to mention that all the restaurants and small shops near the mine and other shops outside the mine, far from the mine, were

completely closed to show support for the miners' strikes, so they didn't work at all. Basically […] people just really wanted to show their support and the way to show their support was to close down the shops, and don't do anything, to paralyze everything going on in Kosovo and that was the way of showing support for the miners' strike […] it was the support from the population that kept us alive down there. (P.13)

[in prison] an Albanian police officer took the handcuffs of my leg. He was giving me a chance to escape. I also remember that I asked him for a cigarette, and he went out quickly and came back with two packets. I remember that very well. And as soon as he got back with the cigarettes he gave me one and I lit it, and saw that he was crying […] and he asked me one more time 'are you sure you want to go through with what you have started?' and I turned to him and said 'listen my friend. I am very certain that I will never escape from hospital or anywhere else, because we are one hundred per cent in on what we started, and very honest about what we are trying to achieve with this, and we are certain that we will not escape from our country. Even if they want to kill us, we will stay here, because this is our country. (P.13)

Woven into this master narrative of heroic resistance are personal stories of the physical and emotional stress and discomfort of surviving for eight days in the dark, deep in the orebody during the strike in 1989, the beatings they endured in prison, the difficulty of making a living after they had been fired and of fleeing the area with their families after the war broke out.

I stayed inside the mine for seven days and seven nights and just before the eighth day started, just before three am they got me out, because I was unconscious. I fainted. And as soon as they got me out from the mine, they put me in a small room that we used like a hospital […] So for seven days and seven nights I was inside the mine, on strike. But let me just clear up that the strike went on for eight days and eight nights, but I simply fainted, and they got me out […] We rested in shifts, actually. We were on a shift for two hours then we had some time to rest, but we didn't have anywhere to sleep so we just rested on pieces of wood that were there inside the mine, so we were just lying on the ground […] when people came down, we did not let them record either audio or video. It was forbidden from our side. We didn't want anybody to record anything. (P.13)

[After I lost my job] I kept animals and things like that. At the time, we worked just to feed ourselves and nothing more. I felt very bad (to not be working at Trepca). We wasted our golden age not working. And it was difficult for the schooling of our children, and everything else. I don't know that anything was good about that time. When we went to sleep, we didn't know if we would make it to the morning or not. Every moment, the police could come to your home. They came to control you and

to ask you what you are doing, how are you surviving, what work are you doing? It was daily. How do you live? […] and we were always in danger, yes. If you went to the road you would be in danger. Even in your home you weren't safe. Even on your land, while you were working, you weren't safe. (P.11)

The worst thing actually was the war. Everything was destroyed […] Believe it or not, I had 46 people on a tractor, all women and children. Not a single man, only me, driving. I was the only male, and I had a flat tire and I was taking all these people to Albania. That was the most difficult part of my life. We travelled for three days and we had only a small quantity of salt and water. That's all we had all that time […] I didn't fix the tyre on that tractor, I drove it like that, with the flat tyre. It was horrible. On the way we saw many dead people and many dead animals just left beside the road. It was horrible. I can't even describe it […] My wife, my kids and also half my neighbourhood were in that tractor and my wife was pregnant at the time, in her ninth month. The tractor was bouncing all the time and it was very hard for her. But I have to say that man is stronger than rock. Or [smiles] can I say, stronger than ore? (P.14)

The mineworkers speak of hurrying back to Stan Terg to re-open it once the war ended and the Serbs left. Getting Stan Terg operational again was believed to be central for Kosovo's post-conflict recovery and emergence as an independent country. According to the mineworkers, in the same way that the origin of the war is buried deep within this mine, so too is the economic potential for peace.

All those ten years I stayed without a job. I was 27 years old then and I could have gone abroad somewhere, but I didn't because we were all waiting to go back to our workplaces (at the mine). And when we came back, we worked for one or two years without money, just to bring the orebody to a condition that we could work. (P.18)

There was no happiness like it. Not just that I would get paid but also that the state was going to be stronger. We came in at seven o'clock in the morning, and we didn't even have water to wash our hands, or even to drink. We went into the mine in our own clothes that we brought from home and we didn't leave the shift at two or three o'clock but stayed there until nine or ten o'clock. And it was a pleasure to do that because we were trying to prepare the mine after it had been destroyed by the Serbs. There was water everywhere. Two levels were full of water. We worked without a salary for two months […] because the country was getting stronger. (P.9)

The trajectory of this narrative moves from persecution and resistance, to war, exile and victorious return. It is a transition from repression to independence. Logically, the final stage in this story should be redemptive; a triumph of 'good' over 'evil', of a once

oppressed nation flourishing now the oppressors have been vanquished. But the present time in which these mineworkers must make sense of *who* and *where* they are seems not to be turning out how they hoped. Mineworkers who claim life is better now, do so in a way that seems equivocal. It is better because the mining equipment is more advanced than their grandfathers used, because they have a bus to get them to their shifts which means they don't have to walk, because they are free to do and say what they like, or because they have hope, but not because it is simply *better.*

> My grandfather wouldn't believe that Trepca could be so developed, technically speaking, the development of all the equipment. He didn't have any idea. He never knew that equipment or technology could advance so much. (P.1)

> It wasn't better working for Trepca at that time (before the war) than now, but the opportunity to get a job was better than today. I can't even discuss it because the job is so much easier now. Now there are many tools. In that time, everything was physical. (P.11)

> Personally, for me life is better now because we have freedom of speech and work and freedom to go out without fear, because before when you went out somebody would always stop you and ask, 'where are you going?' three or four times and now we are free to move and go to work. We don't have that feeling that somebody will stop us and prevent us from going to work or school […] it's not the best that we want, but there have been some good changes, some good moves in that direction. From the six workers that we started with (after the war) we now have over 1000 workers and it's quite a good job. Because […] it's a pleasure to work in the place that gives us hope that someday the economy of Kosovo will be better. (P.8)

> As for my life, I can freely say that it was moderate before the war, but now, after the war, it is better because before the war I had to travel on foot, 12 kilometres in each direction, to work my shift. And now it is different because we have the bus, and it brings us to the mine and then it takes us home after the shift, so we don't have to walk all those kilometres. (P.3)

These don't sound like accounts of hopes fulfilled, but more a grasping at small successes against a background of concern. More resonant is the sense of disappointment, confusion and sadness that emerged during the interviews about how things have turned out. One participant, who inherited his father's job at the mine, and is now close to retirement, began the interview by showing me the curvature of his spine, the result, he said, of the beatings he endured in prison. He talked of his recent heart attack, the impossibility of paying his medical

bills, his shame at now not being able to work underground with his former colleagues and his deep worry for his sons. He went to Germany after the war but came back because he felt homesick.

> I really thought it would be a good life, like it was before, that's why I came back […] as soon as I saw KFOR coming into Kosovo I immediately told my family to pack up because we were going back'

I ask him how he feels about that decision now and he becomes tearful.

> I made a big mistake.

Another, younger participant who has worked for Trepca for seven years studied economics in high school but got a job as a miner because it was the best chance of getting a salary at the time. We sit and drink espresso in a café in Mitrovica and he talks of the stress of living in a divided town where he expects problems 'any second' from the Serbs, of the inefficient Russian equipment in the mine that wastes '70 per cent' of the ore, and of the need for investment if Trepca is to prosper. He acknowledges that he is breaking ranks with the official narrative by saying so.

> It's good when you don't have any better! We have to say it's good, but actually, it's not that good and also the work of the miner as it is, is in a bad situation, actually, but at the end of the day we have to say it's good. But we have […] so many problems. We have old equipment. We also have poor meals – the food isn't good. Added to this, we have the problem of Mitrovica, which is divided. We have too many problems about that. And to top it off, we even have problems between each other – between Albanians […] knowing that we have all these problems, we still get no help from the government. (P.3)

Other mineworkers talk of feeling let down by their own government, and by their fellow Albanians. Their own perceived faithfulness to their principles and their steadfastness in the face of hardship has not been matched by those who once supported them.

> I have to say that even during the war we Albanians who were brothers, we just said that we hope to live through this war and to see peace, because this brotherhood will continue always, but after the war it didn't happen like we thought. Because, you

see during the war we were so connected from Drinica to Sholja, that we called one another 'brother' and nothing else. But after the war, that wasn't the case. We weren't so connected. We made some promises that we couldn't keep. (P.5).

I feel very bad. We waited for ten years, without jobs and we hoped that afterwards the factories would start working and the people would come back to their workplaces. But it didn't happen. (P.18).

We didn't want to betray the population, so that's the force that kept us strong […] but I have to say that we kept our word […] but the Albanian population didn't keep their word (P13)

5.1.3. The Promise it was Worth It.

It isn't the past that seems 'unspeakable', or at least difficult to speak of here, but the present. It unsettles the narrative of resistance, sacrifice and solidarity. It forces the question 'for what?' And it seems to make Sarbin's '*who am I?*' and '*where am I?*' questions hard to answer (1983). What does it mean to 'keep on living on' here? (Berlant, 2011: 24). Perhaps it is unsurprising that entangled in the dominant narrative of resistance, sacrifice and solidarity, is a *dangerous* (following Schwandner-Sievers's analysis) nostalgia for the days long before the war when Serbs and Albanians worked together, when salaries were enviably high, the miners' uniforms commanded respect, and the *korzo* in Mitrovica, the long run of coffee bars, restaurants and ice-cream shops that ran south from the river, was full of young people with jobs and money to spend.

Life was good then, I cannot say it was bad. You actually had everything, especially for us who worked in Trepca, we had everything. I can simply say that our salaries were so high compared to our time, like say 1000DM which in short I can say that you could buy everything you need with 500DM so that leaves you with the other half of the salary that you cannot spend because you buy everything with half of your salary […] There was live music and we could walk and have a good time and it was all freedom. You could do anything, and you were free. And that's why we never thought it would come to this, how it is nowadays […] you cannot imagine how good it was before. Everything is different now […] Politics happened and destroyed everything. (P.13).

Back then it was better, not just because I was young, but because Mitrovica was much better than it is now. And the political situation was better back then than it is right

now. Why was it better back then? Because then, the general idea was that when you finished school, the government would help you find a job. Actually, the job was there for you, but the government would help you find an apartment but now you need to get all sorts of loans on your own to buy an apartment, so in a way you don't have any benefits at all from the government. Socialism was a different system […] you had a sense of security. My father worked in the mine and all the benefits they had at that time…for example they had benefits for their children and for some miners that had seven, eight or even ten children it was like receiving a second salary which was almost the same as the primary salary. So, in short, if you had one person working as a miner you could keep a family of twenty […] In addition to these benefits, when people went on their summer vacation the company gave them extra money. In Montenegro there was a building only for the miners, so when they went on their summer vacation there were apartments there dedicated for them (P12)

In a quiet corner of a café on the Korzo another miner who has worked for Trepca since the early eighties says

The joy was greater back then, because the city felt more alive, the salaries were higher and everything in life seemed better compared to now. Now all the youngsters sitting around us are unemployed and they have nothing to do apart from sit in chairs in coffee bars (P14)

Earlier, this man has shown me the shell of the café in the English Colony where he and his Serb colleagues used to drink tea together at the end of their shift, before the war. He tells me he feels emotional when he remembers what it was like; 'my whole body trembles […] because of how life was before and how it is now' (P14).

For these mine workers, *dwelling* in this post-conflict place is not just, as Ingold writes 'the experience of having to weave a path through a medley of structures built by others for you to live in' (Ingold, 2005: 502) but also the experience of weaving a path through a medley of structures – material, political and social - that have been destroyed, in an unfolding of events in which the mineworkers themselves played a pivotal role and that has not turned out the way they expected.   Of all the promises embedded in this orebody, then, there is one that is *not* articulated but seems to subtend all the others – that the struggle, the strike, the imprisonment, the loss, the exile, and the return will all turn out to have been *worthwhile.*

The Endurance in the Object.

But this promise is a precarious one. As the landscape here shows, the historic promises related to the orebody – for economic prosperity, for houses that don't need to hide behind high walls, for a country 'getting over its past nicely' (West, 2006: 933) have already been broken. So, too, have the more recent promises embedded in the orebody during the eight-day strike, not just that it would underpin the security and prosperity of the majority ethnic group that lived above it and worked within it, but that it would grant them agency. And yet, the orebody is still regarded by the people who work for Trepca and who participated in this research as central for personal, regional and national prosperity. A female administrative assistant, for example, recounts how she began working for the new Trepca board in the industrial park in Mitrovica shortly after the war ended. The combine had been all but destroyed, the buildings and the factory demolished, the equipment stolen. Surrounded by the material evidence of the cruelty of the optimism embedded in that place, she still viewed the orebody as uniquely valuable. 'We are blessed that God gave us this treasure' she says. I ask a different mineworker how he reconciles his optimistic attachment to the orebody with the ruination around us.

> We see it the same as you do but we think about it differently. Firstly, we are the newest independent country and secondly, we have hope. Knowing that we are a post-conflict country and bearing in mind that we are not so developed it is hope that drives us and keeps us going. (P.4)

A third suggested the ruination was symbolic of the miners' emotional and psychological state. On the one hand buildings and miners are collapsing together. On the other, the orebody still makes him feel hopeful about how things will turn out.

> Just like the buildings are being destroyed and collapsing, we are being destroyed and collapsing on the inside as well […] there's a chance that the buildings will be restored, but we can't be restored [but] I feel hope when I go down to the orebody and see the orebody, and there I find hope that the future will be better. When I see that huge amount of ore.' (P.10)

Berlant writes of *'our endurance in the object'* to which we are attached (Berlant, 2011: 23, emphasis original). This endurance is the willingness and the need to maintain an attachment that seems illogical and when the evidence of the 'instability, fragility and dear cost' of this

attachment abounds (Berlant, 2011; 3). It is the willingness to expect that *'this* time, nearness to *this* thing will help you or a world to become different in just the right way' even though there is little reason to believe it will (Berlant, 2011: 2).

There is an 'endurance in the object' in the attachment to the orebody. The evidence of the cost of this attachment is in the ongoing intransigence between Kosovo and Serbia and the 'demanding, stressful, painful, exhausting, and costly experience of living in the context of intractable conflict' (Bar Tal, 2000: 353). It is in the polluted tailings, the sour-looking ponds behind the industrial park, the lead pollution in the blood of the Roma refugees, re-housed here after the war. It is in the sight of the miner who stands in the Stan Terg car park hawking up whatever it is in his lungs that is causing him discomfort before he gets in his car. It is in the elderly mineworker who struggles to breathe as he shows me around the destroyed cafes and the canteen in the English Colony. 'The mine produces cripples,' he tells me. It is in the stories of what it is like to work deep underground. One participant speaks of his concern for his colleagues on the 10th horizon. 'For them it's a very risky job, because they get poisoned more easily and you have many cases of my colleagues even vomiting blood, or they have lung diseases, all sorts of diseases in their lungs because of the fumes (P3). But the real 'dear cost' seems to be the effort of maintaining the attachment itself. The miners who worry they are being misinterpreted, or who are anxious about what their colleagues might think about what they are saying, or who weep as they tell their stories, or who struggle to hold two seemingly conflicting truths within them; that a mine produces 'cripples' on one hand and hope for the future on the other.

Berlant argues that understanding the concept of attachment as the processes of embedding promises into an object that we want it to make possible for us allows us to encounter 'what is incoherent or enigmatic in our attachments' not as confirmation of our irrationality but as an explanation for why we continue to maintain an attachment that seems toxic (Berlant, 2012: 23). While an enduring attachment to a polluting, crippling orebody might seem enigmatic or incoherent, there is nothing enigmatic, incoherent or irrational about being attached to the 'good life' promises embedded within it; that pensions will be paid, that children will find jobs, that people won't have to go abroad to flourish, that a region and a country will prosper, that a political project for independence will prove itself successful, that

a war will turn out to have been 'worth it'. And that people can have a sense of dignity again. Perhaps it isn't the loss of the object that is threatening but the loss of what it promises. The heart of this research project is to ask what these good life promises are? What sort of incongruities exist within them? What sort of peace might they engender? And how *else* can they be attained?

The Endurance in What Object?

Every day that I work at the Stan Terg mine I park by the entrance gate and walk past the vast Albanian flag painted on the wall; a striking black double-headed eagle on a red background. On the ventilation chimney there is another one, alongside the green and black Trepca flag. There is an official flag of Kosovo, blue with six gold stars representing six different ethnic groups, but it is not much in evidence here. We greet the security guard and walk past the brick and concrete main building, with the cold-looking stray dogs huddled in their customary spot on the sparse grass outside. Many of the windows are cracked or taped up. In others, snagged venetian office blinds hang haphazardly, like open fans. My first stop is the office of the head of the mine workers' union where I drink small cups of sweet 'domestic' coffee and watch the miners come and go. There is a big table in the middle of the room that the senior miners sit at while they are given their instructions for the day. At one end of the table is a desk with a computer terminal and behind the desk, a window, covered in an Albanian flag and a banner with black and white photos of Albanian freedom fighters on it. Propped against the wall there is another red and black Albanian flag and the Trepca flag. On one of the side walls there are three more Albanian flags, the Trepca flag, the American stars and stripes and, tucked away, the official blue flag of Kosovo. Traces of pre-war history are hard to detect in this office. Instead, it is vibrant with the promise now embedded in the orebody that it will benefit not the whole of Kosovo, but the particular majority ethnic group that now controls it. (Excerpted from research journal, 9th November 2017)

Berlant argues that people embed promises into objects that they want those objects to make to them, and at Stan Terg (and Olovo) these promises are *dialectical.* In other words, in the same way that the materiality related to the mine in this landscape creates 'dialectical images' that bring the past and the present together as an 'unreconciled constellation' (Olsen, 2010: 169), the promises embedded in the orebody are dialectical promises, that are unreconciled with other promises that have been embedded here over time and continue to be embedded here over space. The promise in the flags that this orebody will benefit Kosovan Albanians, for example, is speaking to older promises; that it would 'civilize' a frontier, reconcile Serbs

and Albanians, build a united Yugoslavia and demonstrate the success of socialist-era industrialization. It is also speaking to the contemporary promise embedded by the Serbs across the river Ibar, that it will *ground* that strange enclave and bring it stability. Similarly, the promise of work that is *halal*, the opportunity to be the 'man of the house' (mbajtës I familjes), to work with 'clean hands' (pare e ndjerses), to raise a family with hard-earned money (see P.2, P.4, P.5) has a whisper of a dialogic partner – the Serb miners in the north who are paid by the Serbian government, although they don't actually work. One miner tells me he is proud that the salary he receives 'is from my hard work, so no one can say I'm getting the money simply by staying here and doing nothing' (P5).

Each promise thus conjures a counterpart; the optimism that the natural resources will benefit Kosovo as opposed to Serbia (P1), that Albanians will gain the most (now) as opposed to the least (then), that Albanians won't discriminate against Serbs (now), in the way that Serbs did against Albanians (then)

> I have to say that the Albanians were discriminated against even back then in the sense that Albanians were given difficult jobs to do, whereas Serbs that worked in the same position as Albanians were given easier jobs to do. So, in the places where the production was going on and the places where the risk was higher you would always have Albanians working there. And in the places where the tasks were easier and where you had more privileges you would have Serbs […] I think in the very near future we will have to start cooperating again and to work together again because it's in our mutual interest to start building peace, and again, I'm not saying this is impossible […] but I can say that if we start cooperating and working together again with Serb miners we will not discriminate against them in the way they did to us before the war. We will offer them cooperation and if they want to do that then they will have all the rights, the same as we do' (P.1)

> Now, the biggest change there is, is that all the minerals we take out are dedicated for this country and not for someone else. And this also gives us a great push to work even more, because from now onwards, we work for our own country and compared to the system of the country which occupied us, we had work in that system, but the difference is that all the work that we did was used by somebody else. We used it as well, but we gained the least because actually, everything we did was taken from us. (P.2)

> My concern working with them [the Serb miners] would be that they would discriminate against us the whole time because we as a nation are different. We are more tolerant. But Serbs are different. They are always thinking in the back of their

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minds how to discriminate against us and throw us in the dirt, or how to say, that you Albanians for us don't exist. You are nobody. In short, they don't have any good opinions about Albanians. (P.4)

The endurance in the object of the orebody is not just an endurance in what it promises in a material sense but is also an endurance in the way it holds and shapes relationships. Indirectly, the promises embedded in this orebody are a conversation not with the orebody, but with the other people who embed promises in it too; in particular the Serbs across the Ibar who are not physically present but are present psychologically. As Berlant writes, they are 'physically displaced' interlocutors that are still 'close enough to be imaginable by the speaker in whose head the entire scene is happening' (Berlant 2011: 25). Berlant writes that to understand the endurance in an object one must understand projection and indirection; in other words the way in which attachment creates a psychic space within which people conjure the (conveniently absent) 'object of desire', in a way that reflects back on themselves (Berlant, 2011: 25) The mental representations we have of our lovers, our children, our significant 'others', the way we think about them, the promises we embed in them, the imaginary conversations we hold with them, can say more about us than they do about them. As Berlant writes this is a 'reaching out'

> from place *x* to place *y,* but is actually a turning back, an animating of the receiver on behalf of the desire to make something happen *now* that realizes something *in the speaker,* makes the speaker more or differently possible, because she has admitted, in a sense, the importance of speaking for, as, and to, two – but only under the condition, and illusion, that the two are really (in) one (Berlant 2011: 26)

But something different is going on with the miners. In this post-conflict context, this shared psychic space is not crowded with the orebody, the 'object of desire', but with all the other people who may desire it too. Our lives enfold not just those with whom we dwell, but those with whom we used to dwell, or who are perceived to threaten our dwelling, and who must be warned off, or welcomed in but only under certain conditions. The orebody therefore seems to be not *y* in relation to *x,* in this relation of cruel optimism, but perhaps *z* in relation to both of them. As I argue in Chapter Six, this has implications for building peace. The orebody therefore affords a shared psychic space that holds adversaries in relationship. It functions as an 'infrastructure for proximity' in the aftermath of conflict that binds us to the world 'in which we find each other' and in such binding 'makes a world' (Berlant, 2011a: 684).

This creation of a shared psychic space is partly what maintains intractable conflict. Narratives of victimhood, official versions of events, and stories of how things have got to be where they are from one side have dialectical partners from the other, that are contradictory, competitive and irreconcilable. Together, they create a whole that is resistant to change. This is the 'conflictive ethos' that Bar Tal has identified that is (according to Bar Tal) an inevitable psychosocial group mechanism and an essential means to 'adapt to the conflict situation, survive the stressful period, and struggle successfully with the adversary' (Bar Tal, 2000; 351) Likewise Helena Zdravković-Zonta argues that 'through constant reproduction of historical victimage in vernacular discourse, participants reaffirm their respective identities, realities, claims, and righteousness' (2009: 665). See also Strapacova, 2016). This conflictive ethos they suggest, seems to be hard-wired in people living in conflict-affected contexts. In this particular context it seems the attachment to the orebody and the promises embedded within it are part of a conflictive ethos that has become intractable. The endurance in the object is not endurance in the orebody per se but endurance in what it means for people and the idea of who stands to gain and who stands to lose by its extraction in the aftermath of violent conflict. The orebody therefore appears to lend its geological heft to the construction of a conflictive narrative. Grounded in geology, this narrative seems to sediment, solidify and becomes intractable.

And yet something else happens too. While Bar Tal and Zdravković-Zonta argue for the inevitability and impermeability of this conflictive ethos another quieter 'reaching out' emerged during the interviews with mineworkers that destabilized it. The psychic space created in their stories is not just shared with the obvious conflict adversaries but with other people too; fondly remembered Serb colleagues, fellow soldiers from other Yugoslav republics who shared military service, the Kosovan politicians that have let them down, and fellow-Albanians who are not well-liked. Underneath the conflictive narrative that is dominant, there are quieter alternatives. One participant, for example, a vivacious and talkative mine worker who is close to retirement told me that while Serbs and Albanians went on strike together in 1981 over pay and working conditions in the mine, in the 1989 political strike no Serbs supported an Albanian action protesting the erosion of their autonomy. 'After 1989, the Serbs wanted to have their regime installed here in Kosovo and of course we

wanted to defend our rights. Therefore, after the strikes they kicked us out of work, and they brought other miners in to work at the mine' (P3). But later, as we explored this further, that narrative became unstable.

> Let me be quite honest and realistic. Yes, there were some Serbs that supported us, but they supported us unofficially, because officially they were too afraid to support us. I have to speak the truth. I have to say that yes, there were many Serbs that supported us, but they were too afraid to support us publicly. I had many Serb colleagues that came up to me and said 'listen, I am very sorry and you have to know that I do support you, I do support your 1974 constitution, but I cannot go public with this because then I am afraid for myself and my family [turning to my interpreter] yes please, tell the lady that this was the truth'. (P.3)

I meet this same man for coffee in a café in Mitrovica at a later date and he talks again of his Serb colleagues, and the fact that he hasn't seen them since the war. He tells me he would be happy to meet with them again, and to socialize with them, but doesn't know how to contact them. 'But let me tell you' he says, 'I'm sure it will happen' (P.3).

Another participant, spoke with affection of his former colleagues, who he hasn't seen since the war.

> It was good, because we went to Zagreb on excursions, we went to Belgrade for example, to Tito's grave, and his birthplace. Serbs and Albanians; we were all together there. We stayed in hotels, we ate together. It was good […] politics destroyed everything. We were afraid to talk to them in the war because they could be punished. Because everything was different then. And then they were afraid they could be punished (P.11).

I ask him he if ever thinks about contacting his Serb colleagues now.

> I would like to know where they are, what they're doing. Even now they are in a bad position, because it didn't go how they thought it would be. (But) if I want to cooperate with them, my friends would say, why are you doing this? Do you know what they did to us? And you are looking for them? […] The others would say 'look at him, he is looking to cooperate with them. That's why everything is broken now. It's been a long time now and our generation cannot cooperate with them […] Sometimes we can't say we had a good relationship with the Serbs because of the people that were hurt in the war. (P.11).

Another expressed a transgressive nostalgia not just for Yugoslavia, but specifically, for his time in the Yugoslav National Army (JNA). At the end of a long interview in a private space where we could not be overheard, he talked about his time in the army, and sang a snatch of an old army song in Serbian

> All my friends, are you sorry about me?
> Separate it's not good, we are sorry we are separating
> Let this friendship last forever…

'I can't speak of this in front of everyone' he says. I assure him the interview is confidential and he continues.

> Every soldier that has been in the army knows this song. It was the time we were nearly finished in the army and that's why we started to sing those songs. I was ready to die for my friends in the army. They were Albanian and Serbian and Bosnian and Croatian. We were ready to die for each other if it came to war with other countries.

I ask him if this is similar to the friendship between miners. 'I would rather die for my friends in the army than for some Albanians today. We were just like brothers.' The orebody at Stan Terg is therefore a site where the conflictive ethos between Serbs and Albanians is both stabilized and destabilized. It is a place where well-rehearsed narratives of persecution, resistance, sacrifice and redemption sit alongside stories of disillusion and disappointment with the current state of impasse, and quiet but dangerous nostalgia for old times and former colleagues. It affords an 'infrastructure for proximity' that is not just proximity to the orebody, but proximity to all the people that are in relationship with it also. (Berlant, 2011a: 684). It binds people together who now live apart.

5.2. OLOVO.

> *The mine offices at Olovo are in a modern house on the main road that runs from Tuzla to Sarajevo. Unlike at the Stan Terg mine at Trepca, there are no flags here. Instead on the white-painted rear wall there are two calendars, one from the Würth company with a topless blonde woman eyeing the camera over one shoulder, her arms concealing her breasts and the other from Stihl, showing a dark-haired woman sitting in a forest in her underwear. There is a kettle on the floor. A yucca plant. A white shelving unit with some rocks on it, a helmet, some*

rolled up maps and a glass sugar shaker. A white board on the wall, a bundle of plastic bags on the floor, and some orange mining jackets hanging up. It looks recent, temporary, a space that has not yet been moved into entirely. The mine itself is a short drive away, at the end of a soft gravel track with raw recently dug edges. It winds steeply up past a collection of cottages, some small pastures, and through a thick, mostly coniferous forest until an anodyne red rectangular sign announces 'Rudnik Olovo' (Olovo Mine). So far, the project has taken only a modest bite out of the forest here. A fresh-looking flattened gravel surface dotted with dark green portacabins, and barn-like metal buildings. Trees crowd the edges of the mine portal and there is a rustic-looking cabin in which the miners take their breaks. The ground shakes as a steam roller rumbles past, preparing the track that runs up to the mine entrance for the official opening later that week. Although we are not going underground, we are given helmets and high visibility jackets and told to wear them. While Berlant has argued that the project of cruel optimism is understanding what it feels like to be a 'bad investment' at Olovo, the question here is more how people feel to be a good one. (Excerpted from research journal, 8th May 2018).

5.2.1. Introduction.

Unlike at Stan Terg, at Olovo the 'terrible past' (P.20) of the war is now muted. The signs of the devastation wrought by the Serb bombardment of the town have been mostly plastered over. There is no war-related graffiti on the walls of the buildings, no shouted insults spray-painted on the bridge. In a country dotted with half-finished raw-looking brick buildings the houses here seem hefty, pretty and permanent. On the back of one of them somebody has turned a spray of bullet holes into painted sunflowers. Visually, at least the conflict has been painted out and transformed into something else. But in the same way that the past has been quieted, the geological future seems muted too, and the optimism embedded in this orebody is modest. It is not for the flourishing of a particular ethnic group at the expense of another, or even a particular country, or for the resolution of a conflict, or for a deep reassurance that pain has not been pointless. Instead, this orebody seems to be a place where people can construct a 'sense of possibility' for the future (Jansen, 2007: 16). It is a place where they can potentially renegotiate what it means to live a 'normal life' in the long aftermath of war (Maček, 2007). The anthropologist Stef Jansen uses the concept of 'cool ground' in Bosnia Herzegovina as a means of describing places characterized by 'relative security' from which it is possible to start a project 'toward a better future' (Jasen, 2007: 16). He argues that Bosnians displaced by war are more preoccupied with finding 'cool ground' than with return home,

unless home is also 'cool ground'. I argue that the orebody at Olovo offers cool ground for visioning a future for people at Olovo. It contrasts with the orebody at Stan Terg, which is contested, heated and difficult.

Unlike at Trepca, the optimism embedded in this orebody seem congruent with its surroundings. There is certainly nothing in this landscape that makes it strange; no mine-related ruins, no bullet-holed mining houses, no off-limits memorials, no remnants of the material 'wish images' of the past. It is congruent too with the signs of the apparent carefulness with which this project has been developed. As a result, the *effort* of the optimism discernible at Stan Terg – the *endurance* in the orebody - is absent here. Instead, the near future of mine-related prosperity, 'the reach and thought of imagination, of planning and hoping' (Guyer, 2007; 409) seems to be a real one, made tangible by the official opening of the mine in 2018 and the promise that salaries will rise as production increases. But this is a small-scale operation with a limited life and therefore it has limited scope to provide the long-term jobs, and the opportunities for children that some mineworkers here envisage. While there are promises embedded in the orebody at Stan Terg that have been broken, the orebody at Olovo is being asked to make ones that it cannot necessarily keep.

5.2.2. Negotiating a Normal Life.

At the Stan Terg mine in Kosovo the mineworkers root their life stories in the orebody, talking of long family histories associated with the mine, of jobs that were inherited from fathers, and of their personal experiences as miners. The 'tangled bank' (Sarbin, 1983, 338) of their lives is one that is grounded by the gravitational pull of the geology that subtends it. At Olovo, in contrast, the force exerted by the orebody is weak. Mineworkers don't frame their lives-so-far in terms of what is under the ground but what is on the surface. Their stories start in the forests and rivers where they spent their childhoods, on the farms where they helped look after animals, and in the villages where they played ball games together and dreamed of becoming policemen, football players, and doctors.

> Before the war, it was great! I remember everything. It was a usual childhood, like every other kid. We went to school and played with the ball…children's games […] we were swimming and going into the woods. I didn't like jumping around the woods,

but I was always in the river, catching fish and stuff like that, because we didn't have a chance to go to the seaside. (P.20)

I remember kids being really joyful because we didn't have mobile phones at the time, so we played outside […] We were just playing with balls, that was our favourite thing in the world, and we were always going to the river. The first person that goes for a swim in the year – we considered him the hero! (P.21)

When I was a child, I thought I would be a football player because we didn't have cellphones and the only thing that was fun for us was to play ball. And sports in general. And exploring the woods and playing games. And picking mushrooms. (P.21)

My childhood was good. We played football. There was freedom. No war. There was everything (P22)

Everything was normal. We had everything normally; shops, transportation, school was close by. Joy, winter games, summer games […] we played football all the time, worked with animals. We took care of the animals, helped our parents with things that needed to be done…(P27)

It was the relationship with the forests, rivers and homes that was disrupted by war, not the relationship with geology. Mineworkers talk of having to leave village houses that were on the front line of the conflict, of spending the war as refugees in Olovo and of how they survived by gathering berries and mushrooms in the woods. The conflict-related stories mineworkers tell are not centered in the orebody then, as they are at Stan Terg but in their changing relationship with the materiality of the surface.

It was partially hard, and partially kind of interesting. Because we were more often hungry than…more often hungry than not. And then, as time went on, you get used to fighting for survival, for…how do I say this? We were all in one part of the town centre, everyone was there. And we couldn't go anywhere, or get out…we tried, but it was very hard. Very hard […] Five or six days could go by without anything to eat. And then during the winter … it was really tough in the winters. We fought in every way possible. From forest berries, I don't know, fruit, vegetables that we grew. But we couldn't do much of that either, because there wasn't much […] For the first few years it was tough, but later you get used to it. So, I learned, for example, how far it was safe to go, where the front lines were. I still use that knowledge…nature, mushrooms. I don't know. Forest berries. P.26)

'We were seeing up to 100 grenades a day with our own eyes, falling on the town. As soon as they stopped you go back to the higher floors of the apartment […] and after fifteen minutes you have to go back to the basement and do that all over again. So, we were always waiting for the grenades to stop and after that we would go to the river, because we needed water for drinking and washing our clothes and that was my every day. If you succeed in going in front of your building while the grenades are not dropping on us […] if you succeed in playing with your friends for fifteen or twenty minutes, that was considered a good day. Every day was terrible. We were asking ourselves every day will they shoot us or not? Will I survive or not? (P.20)

Older mineworkers who joined the army during the war tell different stories. Unlike at the Stan Terg mine, there is no heroic narrative of resistance, sacrifice and solidarity associated with the war, and centered on the orebody. Instead, men distance themselves from their military experience by emphasizing that it was compulsory, that they were young and naïve, or that they had simply been in the wrong place at the wrong time. Their war stories are understated, and the men sound resigned and often regretful that they didn't do more to avoid fighting.

I got mobilized into the army. The army of BiH. It wasn't my choice. I just got called up into the army. As soon as they formed the army, I had to be part of it […] I was on the front line of the battle and I was going home as many times as I could. Sometimes every seven days, sometimes fifteen days would pass. I was only four kilometres away from my house at that time. (P.19)

I was in the war for two years. When I turned eighteen, they sent me to a training camp, and after that I went to war […] I was young. And I didn't think too much. I didn't have the choice, of thinking. They made us go into the war. The situation was simple. Everybody had to go. I was young at the time, eighteen or nineteen and I thought I was invincible […] Nobody needed it, the killing. Nobody asked us. (P.21)

My first reaction when war broke out? Nothing. My colleague suggested we run, but I didn't want to. I regret it. I wish I had run, but I didn't [laughs]. War is the most stupid thing. [I would have run to] any country, as long as there was no war [coughs and looks tearful]. It's OK, we can continue. It's just that…war. I don't like it. People got killed […] I lost many friends, and I don't like […] It's stupid. Politics. It shouldn't have happened. Their children weren't the ones getting killed, it was the poor children. Those who were never asked were getting killed…now profiteers…we had a life before, everyone in Yugoslavia, normal. Now it's not like that. Now ten per cent live well, and ninety per cent are suffering. (P.23)

I was in Split at the beginning of the war. When the war started, I came back here and spent the entire war in Bosnia. Why? I don't know. Something made me come back, to defend my country [laughs]. There were many people that were drawn to come back to their country, to defend, to defend their country. There were a lot of people who were abroad, but came back here to defend [...] I was young and ... green, as they say [laughs] (P.25)

You had to serve, when you turned eighteen. Everyone who is healthy and physically capable had to serve in the army for a year [...] The war caught me in the army. The war had already started in Croatia in 1991. I had just finished when the war started. I was supposed to go home in 1991 [...] but they wouldn't let me go home [...] there is a war. You have to fight. (P.27)

For all the participants the end of the war brought more difficulty, as they worked out how to return to homes that had been destroyed by conflict and settled down to living lives that had been shunted sideways onto trajectories they couldn't have imagined when they were children.

The quality of our life today would be 100 times better if it weren't for the war. I wouldn't have lost the ten years I spent on renovation. I lost ten years of my life. I would do anything else for those ten years, rather than that. You just went to war like you were going to the grocery store [...] I lost everything materially. I couldn't get the education I wanted. Before the war when I was going to school and I was one of the best students. But after the five years of the war, I just couldn't imagine myself holding a book in my hands and studying again.' (P.21)

The war had a huge effect. Before the war, I got married [...] I built my house. Believe me, I had two floors and it took me years to prepare them for living in, after the war. If the war hadn't happened it would have taken me maybe a year to finish everything. So, it set me back. And after the war, salaries were nothing. You had to work. It was survival. You had to work for a salary. You didn't have time to invest those funds to improve your life. So, you were fighting for survival. (P.24)

I wanted to succeed in life, but it was interrupted because of the war. After the war, I lost a couple of years and couldn't finish the school I wanted to. So, I couldn't go to university since my father was the only one in our family who was employed. My sisters got married and I was alone and didn't have a proper chance to get the education that I wanted. I wanted to finish some better school so I could do something better than this, what I'm doing now. My biggest wish was to become a doctor of medicine. But what can I do? It was like it was [...] you just realize what you could do with your life and what you have missed, but at the end of the day, you are happy that you survived [...] Everything that I expected, I just got the opposite. (P.20)

For most of the workers at Olovo their pathway to the mine has therefore been peripatetic. While the miners at the Stan Terg mine rushed back to jobs they had before the war in order to take part in reconstructing a mine they believed to be essential for the flourishing of their newly emerging country, at Olovo the orebody was prodded back to life by a foreign mining company and the jobs were acquired by chance, rather than design.

> I came back from Slovenia in 2005 and then I was working in Bosnia in forestry, cutting trees, and then Geomet came and they were doing exploration works and then there was this guy who is dead now, and I was friends with his son, and he asked me, "would you be willing to work in the mine?" and I answered, "what kind of connection do I have with the mine?" He said that they will need new workers and asked me if I would be willing to work for them and I said "yes" and I signed up for the job […] And so I am working the same thing now. (P.20)

> When I finished high school, I was moving to Sarajevo to work for another company. I had an offer for that, and then by accident I went through Olovo on my way to Sarajevo and I stopped there because my parents' house is in Olovo and so I decided to spend a couple of days there before going to Sarajevo. And I met a guy and spoke to him and he said he was looking for miners because they were planning on opening the mine and so I started working immediately after finishing high school. (P.19)

> I was looking for any type of job here. To be with my family. Because I was away all the time. The kids were growing, and I wasn't here. So, I saw a job advertisement and I applied […] I do everything, but my official position is dump truck driver in the mine. But I do other jobs, as needed. (P.22)

People talk of the benefits of working for a foreign investor and their appreciation of the fact that the recruitment process was transparent.

> The only good thing about this mine is the owner of the company is a foreign guy so our politicians can't be meddling in their work […] If you have a Bosnian boss, it's just a complete disaster. He would give you one boilersuit and that's the only thing he will give you. He doesn't care if you rip it or destroy it, you just have to wear it.' (P.20).

> Companies were more stable before the war. So, they were more secure when it came to salaries and insurance and healthcare. It was more secure in terms of

materials and equipment. But this is a serious company as well. I feel secure. That's how I feel. My salary is on time, everything is right, safety as well, workers' protection. Mostly everything is OK. There aren't any problems. People as well, management and everything. I have no complaints. (P.24).

Like I said, it's a foreign company. There was a job advertisement, we had two interviews, and we were hired […] When I got this job, I was so happy because I was hired without any connections and I was happy I had the opportunity to show what I can do. Which I think I did well, because they sent us to England. (P.29).

In our country it's simple. You have to have some sort of connection to get a job. That's sad, but it's how it is. But here, in this company we came … how do I say this … "regularly" […] probably because the investor is not from Bosnia. (P29).

For these people jobs at Olovo offer the opportunity not to re-emplot themselves into a life story already 'tangled' with the orebody, but a chance to establish a new geosocial reality based not on the flourishing of one ethnic group relative to another, or on the psychological need to prop up an intractable conflict, but on the need to 'survive' (preživjeti) the post-war period. There is no need for this orebody to promise that past suffering has been *worthwhile* as there is at Stan Terg. It just needs to promise that life in the future will be better than it is now.

Indeed, the word *preživjeti* emerged as a central concern during the interviews at Olovo. The prefix *pre-* implies some sort of movement from one state to another, a crossing over that must be survived. As Soudakoff argues *pre-* 'signals that the addressee must be aware of two situations, an old (pre-existing) situation and a new one, but that in viewing the action of the verb he should focus his attention exclusively on the new situation' (Soudakoff, 1975: 230). In the word *pre-živjeti,* 'pre-' is attached to the verb 'to live' to suggest a living across or *through* something in a way that reinforces the significance of what is to come. The promises embedded in the orebody at Olovo are not 'then' promises as many of them are at the Stan Terg mine - for respect that has been lost, for past suffering to add up to something, for a quality of life similar to how it was under Tito – but 'now' promises; to be able to pay their mobile phone bills, to have a car, to support their children through school, to have what they call a 'normal life' that is one step better than survival.

I don't know if you can call this a normal life. I call it survival, a fight for life (borba za život) We don't have a normal life here yet. We still don't have a situation where you can earn enough money for your needs. I am employed, my wife is employed, and we still can't live normally with our two kids. A good life is a normal life. And this life, you cannot make anything out of it. You can't save for your future […] We are paying a lot for electricity, for water, and the bills for the cellphones and the regular phones. But we are still not at the level where we can live normally. You cannot even save 100 euros from your salary. I don't have any special wishes […] I always liked to drive things. I love the forest. I love nature. I don't have any wishes like travelling. I'm not interested in that kind of stuff. It's simple. I just hope that soon it will get better. (P.21)

Financially I'm not very demanding. To have decent earnings, a secure job…normal. Health insurance. To be healthy. That's the most important thing in life. It's a nice community where I live. There is a school, stores, post office, communications, asphalt, a medical facility, everything […] I couldn't live in the city, close myself in an apartment. My wife loves flowers and there are so many flowers around the house, like a park. We sit there, drink coffee and rest our eyes and our souls. (P.24)

I want to own a house, to own a car, to get my children through school […] to have a regular salary. To have a normal salary. To live a normal life. To survive. (P.25)

A good life? Ha, a good life … it means to live normally. I don't know. To have a family, wife, children, a normal life, normal communication. Nothing extra. I don't have any big demands. I'm not one of those people who wants so much more, just simply a normal life. (P.26)

After the war I went to junior high school for another two grades, then I started college. It was a college for tourism and catering. I studied to be a chef. But the place where we lived, I couldn't get a job [as a chef] so I worked … I've been working since I was fifteen. Always fighting for survival […] I did all sorts of things, construction, forestry, I also worked as a waiter for a while but none of that was too special […] it was basically for survival. And let's just say, I'm attached to Olovo and I didn't want to go elsewhere. I could have gone abroad, but I didn't. Something wouldn't let me leave here. I stayed, and now a good thing has come, with this mine. I met friends who worked and based on their … it was foreign to me. At the beginning, just thinking about working here was not very pleasant. But when the first job advertisement came out, I applied, they invited me for an interview, and I started working. (P.26)

The orebody seems to lend heft to hopes for a normal life. It brings a certain future into view for the mineworkers and their families and this is significant in the aftermath of war. The anthropologist Stef Jansen argues that this 'future-oriented yearning for a 'normal life' is an often-overlooked strand to the way people understand the concept of 'home' in post-conflict

Bosnia, and 'the centrality of this desire for a 'normal life' represents perhaps one of the greatest gaps between the policies of the Foreign Intervention Agencies and Bosnian everyday experiences' (Jansen, 2006: 10). Jansen is writing about the experience of displaced persons and the significance of this yearning for a 'normal life' is that it is has been drowned out by policies for people returning to pre-war houses that have focused on providing security rather than a means of making a living and therefore missed the importance for many Bosnians of being able to secure wellbeing 'including, crucially, opportunities for the next generation' (Jansen 2006: 185).

Ivana Maček writes that the concept of 'normality' was often referred to during her fieldwork in Sarajevo in 1994 and 1995. She writes that the experience of living under siege in Sarajevo gave people a new 'normal' in which they had no control over their lives and was permeated with shame that they could not cook, or keep their homes clean and tidy as they were used to (2007: kindle location 1157) Instead, during the war, professional people became recipients of charity and dependent on the good will of international organisations (2007: kindle location 1166). In addition, the experience of being shelled and shot at is an acute and traumatic experience of one's own worthlessness in the eyes of another (2007: kindle location 1363). Living in a city under siege such as Sarajevo and Olovo therefore demands a constant re-negotiating of what 'normality' is and how to survive it. The concept of a normal life is therefore charged with a sense of what is good, right and desirable (2007, kindle location 1061). It is the feeling that this is how life 'should' be amid the evidence that it is not.

The concept of a 'normal life' is therefore tied up with ideas of home and displacement and with living in a city under siege. But it is also tied up with geology. What emerged in the interviews is a similar yearning for a normal life among people who are not struggling with displacement, whose security is not threatened and who are not living under siege. And yet, over twenty years after the end of the war people tell me that they are only surviving and that their lives are a 'fight for life' (borba za život). They also tell me that their needs are small. They don't want much, 'just a normal life'. There seems to be a precarity here that does not just arise from a lack of socio-economic security, decent health care and education, but also from a sense that the world has changed, so have their aspirations and so have they themselves. Amidst this precarity the orebody the seems to offer a time and a place for

renegotiating what it means to live a normal life that offers not just economic security but psychological and emotional security too. It is a normal life that is connected to family, to the ability to enjoy the forest, to drink coffee outside, to smell flowers, to 'rest your soul' and to be confident that children will flourish. There isn't 'greed and grievance' attached to this orebody (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004), just the aspiration for what other people take for granted, and a wish to close the gap between what exists and what is wished for in the aftermath of violence. Following Berlant, the orebody seems to afford a sense of 'reciprocity' with the world as it now appears and with it a sense of what a person should do and expect (Berlant, 2011: 52).

The promises embedded in this orebody don't seem to create a psychic space that conjures up other people, as they do at Stan Terg then, but the other lives of the mineworkers themselves. There is a 'reaching out' here to the children they were before the war and to the *normalan život* (normal life) they would be living now if the war hadn't knocked their lives off track. The promises conjure counter promises from their own lives, in other words, rather than from the lives of others; that I can thrive as a miner (although I wanted to be a doctor), that I can stay in Olovo (rather than move to Italy, Slovenia, Croatia), that I can work underground (rather than in the forest), that I can work for a private company (rather than a state one) that I can retire from this job (rather than start again in another one). In this place, where there are hardly any Bosnian Serbs, and where the mine is not contested, the orebody doesn't seem to hold and shape the relationship between *x* and *y* as it does at Trepca, but between *x* and another version of *x* that is now impossible.

Unlike at Stan Terg, the orebody at Olovo does not swirl with the stories of people who feel connected to it by a sense of destiny but with the stories of those who never expected to find themselves working within it but who recognize it as a means of making life normal. It is not an orebody that has been given by God like the one at Stan Terg, but something more prosaic; a means of making life better for the bakers, waiters and foresters who find themselves working within it.

> I am expecting the situation to only become better from now on. And I am saying to the young kids to be patient, because they are not really satisfied with the salaries as

they are now. But it's only a start and they should be patient, because the salary will only increase. Before the war we had smaller salaries than now. The salary here is not near the salaries in other countries. But this is only for now, because the production still hasn't started […] To be completely honest, based on the things that I see and know we have underground, I don't have any anxieties because I am only hoping for better times to come. And I'm not scared at all. The only anxiety I have is that the investor will pack his things and go […] Every day is better than the last one. (P.19)

I am hoping for the best. They promised us bigger salaries, so I am expecting things to get better from now on […] I don't see any other meaning. If somebody offered me a better job with a higher salary, I wouldn't think twice.' (P.20)

At this point no, the mine doesn't give me enough. But if they fulfill their promises in terms of salary – if they give us the same salary as the other mines in Bosnia. They get 1,500 marks per month and I am working for 600 marks. We are doing the same work, but you can see the difference in salary. They promised us to have the same salary as the other miners when production starts. I'll wait until July and if they don't fulfill that, I'll quit. My father has a pension of 400 marks. And my salary is 600 marks. (P.20)

Money is the most important thing. Work and money. (P.22)

We're here for the money. If someone says they're here out of love, I doubt it. (P.26)

There is an optimistic attachment to the orebody at Olovo, therefore. It is a means of bringing a certain future into view. It permits a person to 'look forward to being in the world' (Berlant, 2011:24). The orebody protects the enduring desire to have a normal life in the aftermath of war, in the context of precarity. It lends its durability and 'in-placeness' (Olsen, 2010: 160) to a project of making a difficult world intelligible.

What exists at Stan Terg and at Olovo seems to be different ways of managing precarity in personal and collective lives, that are centered on the orebody. The orebody is a means of making life make sense in the 'stretched-out present' (Berlant, 2011: 5) that is the current state of political and economic impasse in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo in the long post-conflict, post-socialist transition that has no certain destination. The orebodies at Stan Terg and Olovo offer a geological time and place when life could become otherwise, 'in the good sense' for the people that work there (Berlant, 2011: 48). Listening to the 'voices from below' (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015: 825) therefore tells us that the human geologic relationship is

one of attachment in which the orebody grounds a normative project of creating a world and sustaining an attachment to it in the aftermath of war. An orebody affords continuity to people's ideas about what they can expect from the world and (at Stan Terg) about what other people can expect from it also. These voices also tell us that their ties to the orebody are ties to what is *difficult* about the world and the relationships they must navigate within it (Berlant 2011, p 51). And they tell us that what exists 'on the ground', and in this case *under* it, is more complex and more nuanced than previously imagined. Most significantly, therefore, listening to the voices from below should give us pause. As Lederach writes it is only when the complexity of a situation is understood that you can choose how to respond (Lederach 2005: kindle location 746).

Promises embedded in Stan Terg	Promises embedded in Olovo
• That life is going to get better. 'That our state is going to get better and that people will start working.' (P.9) 'If we didn't have natural resources, I don't know what we would do or how we would live.' (P.7) 'It's a pleasure to work in the place that gives us hope that someday the economy of Kosovo will be better…' (P.8) 'I really hope Trepca will be back again. I believe it is the future of the economy, of the children, of the old people…I am optimistic until the end of my life.' (P.8) **• National prosperity** 'The minerals now are dedicated to this country and not for someone else.' (P.1) 'From now onwards we work for our own country.' (P.1) 'Every country that owns this kind of wealth should feel proud.' (P.1) 'We are producing for our own country and that gives me joy.' (P. 14) **• Regional Prosperity**	**• That life is going to get better** 'I'm expecting the situation to only become better and better from now on.' (P.19) 'They promised us bigger salaries so I'm expecting things to get better from now on.' (P.20) 'People live well, where there are mines. Miners have always lived well. They retire early, and everything.' (P.23) 'I was glad to hear this mine was opening and there was a future.' (P.24) **• That life will be normal** 'For the first time in my life I can work close to home. Now I'm home every night. I do my job and go home […] it means a lot to me' (P.23) 'In order to live a normal life you have to do what you are offered.' (P.20) 'I don't know if you can call this a normal life. I call it survival.' (P.21) 'We still can't live normally with our two kids.' (P.23) 'To have decent earnings, a secure job…normal…health insurance, to be healthy. That's the most important thing in life.' (P.24)

Few people come to this region, so the mine is more important for us, because it is the main resource for the Shola region.' (P.4).

- **Independence.**

'From now onwards we work for our own country […] rather than the system of the country that occupied us.' (P.1)

'That our work will benefit us and not somebody else.'

- **Dignity.**

'Work that is "halal" - this means you take care of the wellbeing of your family.' (P.2).

'Wherever miners go, people respect them. Not only respect, but we have some kind of authority. It makes you feel proud.' (P.2)

'It's not about money, it's about knowing about the orebody.' (P.3).

'You have to understand that miners developed the country and keep development going and they keep their families as well, but we lack respect.' (P.3).

'The respect should be there for miners.' (P.11)

'The mine shaped my character and made me the man I am now.' (P.13)

'We are always somehow attached to this mine, the connection is there from an early age.' (P.6)

'This mine for me is bread and butter. It's the place through which I supported my family. It's the place connected with my life and my wellbeing…in short, physically and spiritually I am connected to this mine.' (P. 13).

- **Flourishing Families**

'All our family existence, our wellbeing is connected with the mine.' (P.1).

'Underground is the place where we earn money to keep our families.' (P.5).

- **Continuity.**

'I really thought it would be a good life, like it was before.' (P.13)

'We just want to lead our kids on the right path and secure pensions for ourselves.' (P.21)

'The mine contributes positively [because] everyone cares about their job. Nobody is interested in the war. War is the biggest stupidity that can happen. People who never went through war are lucky' (P.23)

A good life? To live normally […], family, wife, children, a normal life. Nothing extra. I don't have any big demands.' (P.26).

- **Stability**

'I hope that I will retire from here, God willing.' (P.28).

'I would just like to stay and work here. And for the situation to just get better for future generations.' (P.21)

'I feel secure. That's how I feel. Secure.' (P.24)

'It's significant for local development and everything. Because people won't move away…I hope it will continue to develop' (P.22)

It gives me security. Job security (P.31)

'The more ore there is, the better it is for us. The longer it lasts the better it is for both us and the company.' (P.25)

- **Opportunities for young people**

'I want to teach the younger kids to do this job properly so I can retire – because this mine means so much to this city.' (P.19)

'It means a lot because a lot of these kids now are not married, and they see this opportunity as life-long security. (P.19)

'I hope this lasts at least 30 years so that those who work here, my colleagues, can stay until they retire; they're all young men.' (23)

'I want for the young men to be employed. When you have 100 salaries in the city the whole city lives better.' (P.21)

'I would be sad if it stops for the young guys – those who are just starting working.' (P.23)

'The mine will officially open in a few days, so there's a future…if you're creating new jobs and hiring young people, they're not going elsewhere. They'll stay. If a

'[the mine] has huge meaning because my grandfather, my father and my uncle used to work here.' (P.1)

'For our whole lives we were orientated to this life and this kind of profession.' (P.6)

- **Transformation.**

'If we go further to process the concentrate and separate the zinc and the lead and every mineral on its own, we would sell them for a better price and very soon we would be a different country, comparable to Switzerland.' (P.6)

- **Escape.**

'As soon as you come down the mine you leave your problems outside. Above the ground.' (P.2)

- **That a war was 'worth it.'**

'We fought to have a peaceful country. We fought to have an economically strong country and a country with a strong military. That's what we fought for.' (P.6)

'Let me be very honest with you because I dream about this when I am asleep. Of all the bad things we went through I really thought by the end of this we could sit down with our government and discuss with them all the problems and work out solutions, but I have to be honest, I don't see it.' (P.13)

'We're not very happy because of how we thought it would be after all the contribution we made.' (P.6).

- **Emotional/Spiritual Connection to Place.**

'When a country was trying to steal all your country's natural resources, that created an even stronger spiritual connection.' (P.6).

'I will not leave this place until I die. I even dream about this place in my dreams.' (P.6).

'Every stone waits in its place. I am from Shala region and my heart sleeps here.' (P.10).

'I feel happy when I see miners working.' (P. 6).

'I felt there was no such happiness as that.' (P.9).

'It's very normal that you connect spiritually with new things.' (P.2).

20-year-old man starts working here, for example, he'll stay here, plan a family, since he has a secure job. He feels more secure.' (P.24)

'With this job I can think about what to do with my life, whether I will, I don't know…in this country a lot of people don't get married because they have financial problems. Now that's not a problem for us, because we are independent, because we work' (P.29).

'It's good for the kids, for schools…' (P.31)

- **Reconciliation**

'I feel people are getting closer, we are…I can work with everyone here. We've gotten so close that we can all work together.' (P.24)

'Here in this company, we have managers of different ethnicities and we all get along, no problem.' (P.24)

'I don't care. We have Serbian geologists now, we have Catholics…(P.19)

'This is a chance for all of us to work together. For example, we now have drillers who are Serbian…I would just say to the new person, come here, work and live with us.' (P.20)

'100% possible. We were living together. I was raised like that. Before the war I didn't care about anyone's nationality.' (P.21)

'There is trade and work that brings people together.' (P.24)

'We have a manager from Serbia, from Belgrade, in our department. She was just here visiting, nice relations, no problem.' (P.24)

'When people have a job and money, they are more calm. They don't hate other people.' (P.29)

'In this mine we have colleagues of different ethnicities. We..I don't look at them differently, and I don't feel that they look at me differently. After work, we have coffee together.' (P.29)

- **Reconciliation.**

'We can offer them [the Serb miners] cooperation any day they want, and we can freely tell them that we will not talk any politics and be sure that we will form that friendship again, and I am pretty sure they want to come back, but they don't dare to, they are afraid to do that.' (P.3)

'Any Serb miner that doesn't have dirty hands from the war can easily come and start working here.' (P.5)

We could work together because we are both tired of politics in the north and the south as well.' (P.8)

'Soon you will see the integration of the Serb minority in the mines where Albanians work and also the Albanians will work in the mines where Serbs work.' (P.1)

'I think we could make it work together at Trepca. I think now there is cooperation between the two sides.' (P.8)

'If they are ready to work with us, we are ready to work with them.' (P. 18)

'There is a will. There was always a will.' (P18)

- **Separation**

For the time being nothing would change my mind about working with Serbs miners. Maybe time will heal these tendencies but for the time being I wouldn't work with them.' (P.4)

'As things are in the current situation, I don't think Albanians and Serbs can get back to work together.' (P.14).

'I would want to go to the northern part to work but I don't know if I can. I would be afraid.' (P.3)

'My concern working with them would be that they would discriminate against us the whole time because we as a nation are different, we are more tolerant, but Serbs are different.' (P.4)

'I would just feel myself that they would provoke me all that time.' (P.5)

Figure 1 Promises embedded in the orebodies and sample quotes

The shaft at the Stan Terg mine. Photo by the author, 2018

6

SEEING MORE DEEPLY.

Yes, for many reasons we tend to turn away from what lies beneath. But now more than ever we need to understand the underland. 'Force yourself to see more flatly,' orders Georges Perec in Species of Spaces. 'Force yourself to see more deeply,' I would counter. (MacFarlane 2019, p 13)

INTRODUCTION.

Every day on the drive from Pristina to the Stan Terg mine, as we approach Kosovska Mitrovica, I look across the valley to the miners' monument on the hill beyond the town, north of the river Ibar. With its foreshortened pillars it is designed to appear massive, and even from this distance – perhaps three or four kilometres – it does. It also looks incongruous, an erratic rock abandoned not by a glacier receding, but by the world turning and the time in which it was created changing, leaving behind this mess of mining infrastructure, a divided town and my philosophical friend in the car beside me, constrained as he is by the realities of living in a country that doesn't absolutely exist.

Later that week Behar and I stand on the bridge across the River Ibar in the centre of the divided town of Mitrovica and look north, into the part of Mitrovica that is now majority Serb. The end of the bridge is blocked with red and white striped concrete blocks and a fence of sheet metal that gleams in the sunlight. It is there to stop Albanian cars driving up the high street. On the south-facing wall by the bridge someone has spray-painted a huge black penis with an arrow pointing to it and the world ALBANIJA written beside it. Someone else has used a green spray can to cross the word ALBANIJA out and write 'serbia' instead. Meanwhile, people

cross the bridge from north to south, and from south to north on foot. Behar points to the area of shops and stalls to the right of us, on the north bank of the Ibar, where the population is more mixed, and where he goes to visit his sister. There are cheap handbags, a limbless grey mannequin wearing a leopard print swimsuit, piles of plastic boxes and a mob of upturned brooms and floor mops, corralled behind a metal bar. The signs in the shop windows are in both Serbian and Albanian.

'Would you feel comfortable walking to the miners' monument?' I ask him. It is seven hundred meters away from where we are standing, as the crow flies, high on its hill behind the apartment blocks off to our left, in the opposite direction from the market. To reach it we would have to travel further north, away from the river, along the main street festooned with Serb flags, past the huge statue of Serb Prince Lazar pointing towards Kosovo, the mural of Serb fighters with the slogan 'everyone is prepared to die for their country' and the ubiquitous, 'Ratko Mladic' sprayed in black on the apartment buildings. Behar thinks for a minute.

'No, not really' he answers. But he is unwilling to disappoint me. He has a friend, he says, who has a car and they could change the number plates and we could all go together. That would be safer. (Excerpted from research journal, 4th March 2018)

The previous chapter explored the relationship between perceptions of wellbeing and natural resources through Berlant's theory of cruel optimism as a means of illuminating how people establish a sense of *who* they are and *where* they are partly through their relationship with the orebody. I found that this mechanism is a project of optimistic *attachment.* People attach promises to an orebody that they want it to make to them about what it means to live well, and these promises are dialectical. They conjure other promises, embedded by other people over time and across space. But thinking of the relationship between wellbeing and natural resources as a project of attachment risks writing the orebody out of this study, other than something onto which promises are embedded and hopes are placed. Indeed, for Berlant, it is not what a thing is, but the relationship we have with it and how we invest it with the prospect of the world's continuity that is significant (2011: 51). This danger of this is that it opens the thesis up to the same criticism that was levelled at the literature in Chapter Two, namely that it treats humans as exceptional and separate from the rest of the world and an orebody as something inert that exists to be instrumentalized by humans. As Levi Bryant argues using 'signifiers, meanings, signs, discourses, norms, and narratives' to do all the heavy lifting in terms of explaining particular social organisations is an ethically untenable position to take particularly in the face of climate change (2011: 24).

In Chapter Three it was argued that the dwelling perspective adopted for this research allows for a more post-intentional, post-phenomenological approach that understands intentionality as something that emerges in relationship with and *through* the world rather than being *of* it (Vagle, 2014: 35) and that dwelling is not a life lived 'in the open' (Ingold, 2008:1796) but a life lived in a zone of entanglement that includes aerial media, earthly substances on the surface and the geological bodies that subtend them. The concern of this chapter is to 'see more deeply' into the human geologic relationship in order to understand something more about how human bodies and orebodies are entangled in a way that focuses on the agency of the orebody and its ability to make a difference to the human lives with which it is entwined.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to answer the second research question this thesis poses. What *difference* does the orebody make to the human geologic relationship? It is a question inspired in part by Olsen who writes

> How do things and objects "mix" with human beings to form those configurations we call *society* and *history?* What role do things play in enabling and securing social life? Moreover, if things make a difference, which they obviously do, are these differences grounded in qualities that go beyond their relational significance? (Olsen, 2010: 2).

To an extent this question has been addressed in Chapter Four, in which I draw on Olsen to argue that an orebody seems to both create a sense of security and togetherness and also unsettle it. Its 'durability' and 'in-placeness' (Olsen, 2010: 173) pulls people together and holds them in relationship but not necessarily for long. An orebody after all, is neither durable, nor in-place indefinitely and unsettling the geological realm seems to unsettle the social realm that exists with and through it. I unearth three 'geosocial formations' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017) that are unique in the historic and contemporary context in which they exist. In Chapter Five I argued that the orebody lends its geological heft for a normative project of defining what a good life is and who it is for that seems enduring. In this chapter I turn my attention to the underground orebody itself and what it can *do* in relationship with the humans whose lifeworlds cross and come together within it.

There is therefore a switch here from the more human-centered focus of the previous chapter to a more object-centered one. For precedent, I draw on the work of Yael Navaro-Yashin (2012). In her book *The Make-Believe Space. Affective Geography in a Postwar Polity* (2012) she is concerned with the transmission of affect in the postwar environment in Cyprus. She argues that the social-constructionist imagination of space as having meaning 'only insofar as it is embroiled in the interpretations projected onto it through human subjectivities' misses the excess, leftover or remains in the human relationship to place that might exceed this human centered framework and the possibility that 'the environment exerts a force on human beings in its own right, or that there is something in space, in material objects, or in the environment that exceeds, or goes further and beyond the human imagination, but that produces an affect that may be experienced by human beings, all the same' (2012: kindle location 907). She argues for a "both-and" approach in which the human centered perspective is 'not eradicated but complemented' with an object-centered one in the same study (2012: kindle location 900). I take a "both-and" perspective for this chapter for similar reasons. The intention is not to argue for the significance of one autonomous entity at the expense of the other but rather to introduce what Olsen describes as a more 'symmetrical' approach (Olsen, 2010: 9) founded on the possibility that an orebody exerts a force in its own right in relationship with humans

For this chapter I draw on the vibrant materialism of Jane Bennet to argue for a more '*distributive* agency' between humans and geology (2010: 21). In her book *Vibrant Matter,* Bennett's concern is to unsettle what she describes as the 'parsing of the world' into dull matter on one hand and vibrant life on the other (2010, vii). It is a dualism that puts the orebody into the first category and the mineworkers into the second. It is also a dualism that positions the mineworkers as agentic and the mine as passive and inert. It invites us (as Bennett argues) to ignore the 'vitality *of* matter and the lively powers *of* material formations' that may exist (ibid, emphasis original).

Bennett draws on Latour's concept of the *actant* (Latour, 2004) to argue (with Latour) that objects can *do* things in relationship with others. They can 'make a difference, produce effects, alter the course of events' (Bennett, 2010: vii). Bennett therefore urges us to follow

the scent of 'a nonhuman, thingly power, the material agency of natural bodies and technological artifacts' (2010: xiii) and the concern of this chapter is to follow the scent of the power of the orebody in relationship with human bodies through a 'sensory attentiveness' (Bennett, 2010: xiv) to place, perception, knowing, memory and imagination (Pink, 2015: 25) and to what these tell us about the ways in which geological lives and human lives are entangled in post-war contexts. In the end, the point of this chapter is to argue, with Bennett that 'everything is, in a sense, alive' (2010: 117). Navigating our relationship with geology is akin to navigating our relationship with 'unruly relatives to whom you are inextricably bound and with whom you will engage over a lifetime, like it or not' (Bennett, 2010: 116).

For Bennett this concept of '*thing-power*' is also problematic, however, because it risks overstating the 'thinginess or fixed stability of materiality' (2010: 20) when the goal is to focus on materiality that is 'as much force as entity' (ibid). What is important is not so much what an orebody objectively *is,* according to this logic, as what it *does*. But unlike the assemblage of dead rat, stick and floating cloud of pollen that is one focus for Bennett's exploration of vital materiality, geology has a vast heft and a durability that far exceeds the human and there is therefore an asymmetry and a lack of mutuality in the human geologic relationship that should not be ignored. As Clark and Yusoff write

> whereas the political traction of the more-than-human in new materialist ontologies has tended to be bound up with relations of interconnectedness, reciprocity and mutual affectivity between human and nonhuman actors, taking stratified orders of existence seriously *implies a before, a beneath, a beyond to the human presence that draws our attention to other modes of relating* (Clark and Yusoff 2017, 16, emphasis added)

As was argued in Chapter Three this research is placed uncomfortably between a post-phenomenological enquiry into the human geologic relationship on one hand and the awareness that there is far more to geological formations than this on the other. An orebody has a before, a beneath and a beyond to the human presence (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 16) and to the way it emerges in this chapter. This 'in-between space' (Vagle, 2014: 111) should not be reconciled, however. Indeed, the peacebuilding approach advocated in the next chapter (Chapter Six) is grounded in the recognition that while an orebody may be vibrant in relationship with human bodies it also is what it objectively *is;* an autonomous geological

entity telling its own geological story that we must acknowledge even if we are unable to understand it (see for example Olsen, 2010: 152).

This chapter has been divided up into two sections, the first concerned with methods and the second with analysis. The first part of this chapter therefore asks what 'following the scent of a nonhuman, thingly power' means methodologically (Bennett, 2010: xiii). I argue, with Bennett, that an attitude of 'sensory attentiveness' is required (Bennet, 2010: xiv. See also Pink, 2015). I develop the concept of expanded listening as a method for 'seeing more deeply' (MacFarlane 2019) into our relationship with the geological strata that subtend our lives. In the second section I analyze what the method of expanded listening adds to our understanding of the human geologic relationship. I revisit Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase in turn and weave together sound, sight, the stories of the mineworkers, my own embodied experiences, my memories and my imagination in an attempt to capture a sense of the orebody as *actant.* It emerges as an entity with an ability to make a difference to the ways in which people feel, think and act not just individually but together. This ability to make a difference is not uniform, however but specific to the time and space in which it exists. While this section considers what an orebody can *do,* it concludes with a more playful attempt to capture what it might *say,* filtered through the imaginations of the mineworkers. I conclude this chapter by arguing, with Bennett, that the point of recognizing the vitality of an orebody is to encourage a more ethical approach to the intractable-seeming extraction-related problems that confront us today.

6.1. FOLLOWING THE SCENT OF 'THINGLY POWER'.

> Even if, as I believe, the vitality of matter is real, it will be hard to discern it, and, once discerned, hard to keep focused on. It is too close and too fugitive, as much wind as thing, impetus as entity, a movement always on the way to becoming otherwise, an effluence that is vital and engaged in trajectories but not necessarily intentions. What is more, my attention will regularly be drawn away from it by deep cultural attachments to the ideas that matter is inanimate and that real agency belongs only to humans or to God, and by the need for an action-oriented perception that must overlook much of the swirling vitality of the world (Bennett 2010: 119)

Capturing the vibrancy of the nonhuman relationship poses a methodological challenge. As Bennett asks 'what method could possibly be appropriate for the task of speaking a word for vibrant matter? How to describe without thereby erasing the independence of things? How to acknowledge the obscure but ubiquitous intensity of impersonal affect?' (2010: xiii). Bennett argues for a 'cultivated, patient, sensory attentiveness to nonhuman forces operating outside and inside the human body' and she applies this attentiveness to events such as an electricity blackout, a meal and an encounter with an assemblage of objects in a storm drain in an attempt to perceive things differently. Sensory attentiveness seems a willingness to see things in a way that is naïve and to bring an attitude of curiosity to the ordinary and the everyday (Bennett, 2010: xv). It is akin to saying a common word so many times that it becomes strange. It should not be claimed as an attempt to step out of the human imagination – that is impossible – but is rather a temporary willingness to catch a glimpse of the 'energetic vitality' of objects and to be surprised by it (Bennett, 2010: 5)

An attitude of sensory attentiveness can be taken at Stan Terg. The green penises spray-painted on the bridge that divides (and unites) Mitrovica, the bits of ore for sale on the streets, the vast miners' monument that Behar cannot walk to, the Serb flag on the ruined smelter, the broken windows in the mine buildings at Stan Terg, the bullet holes in the English Colony up the hill, the crumbling diving board over the carcass of the swimming pool create a geosocial assemblage that can become strange if you perceive it in a certain way. To an extent it discharges a similar 'irritability' that Navaro-Yashin discerned in the abandoned houses in Cyprus, which is the 'dis-resonating feeling produced by environments that harbor phantoms' (2012: kindle location 949). But it is not just irritability that is discharged here. This mine-related materiality seems to have become complicit in a project of territorialisation, shoring up ideas about who is welcome where and who may not be, at least not without changing the number plates on the car and getting somebody else to do the talking. Considering the mine-related materiality on the surface is only part of the story, however. The human and nonhuman entanglements at Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase are not just earthly and aerial lines of growth and movement in the zone where the surface and the sky come together as Ingold suggests (Ingold, 2008: 1796) but also include the telluric bodies that exist beneath us. But how do we cultivate an attitude of sensory attentiveness to what is buried?

6.1.1. A 'New Way of Seeing'

> We know so little of the worlds beneath our feet. Look up on a cloudless night and you might see the light from a star thousands of trillions of miles away, or pick out the craters left by asteroid strikes on the moon's face. Look down and your sight stops at topsoil, tarmac, toe' (MacFarlane 2019: 11)

In his 2019 BBC Radio 4 series '*A New Way of Seeing*' (Bridle, 2019) artist James Bridle writes that we need to look downwards and upwards in order to make visible the *invisible* things with which are lives are entangled; the internet, climate change, trees that nurture each other through their subterranean root systems. The point, he says, is to have a 'relationship of care' with that which we cannot see. Bridle engages with the invisible networks of power that flow under our feet and over our heads. He notes that spray paint on the streets of New York mark the fibreoptic cables of the internet that lie beneath. While the internet is increasingly mediating our behaviour, it is invisible unless we learn to look for it. In Kosovska Mitrovica, paint on streets usually marks something different; not fibreoptic cables, but the buried rage, defiance, frustration, irritation, that comes out in the hands of a person with a spray can. But amid the penises and 'RATKO MLADIC' there is also the word 'TREPCA' painted intermittently on walls and buildings and bridges. Like the fiberoptic cables in New York there is something buried, invisible and important here.

In this section I explore how two methods of 'expanded listening' emerged as a means of 'opening up' the human geologic relationship (Vagle, 2014: 72). They are an attempt to pay attention to the orebody as a telluric entity with an independent existence and the ability to exert some kind of force on human beings and they are intended to capture something of the geologic 'excess' or 'leftover' (Navaro-Yashin, 2012: kindle location 901) I sensed when I visited Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase. Both methods emerged spontaneously. They are the result of me being in a certain place at a certain time, seeing, hearing and *remembering* certain things and being struck by something incongruous in the relationship between them. They are moments in which perception, place, knowing, memory, imagination, improvisation and intervention came together and created a new way of seeing what exists (Pink, 2015: 110).

Expanded Listening. Method I

The first method emerged during a trip to the same miners' monument I had gazed at with Behar. This time I had driven down from Belgrade in my car from the north, with a friend, because one of the Professors of Mining at the University at Belgrade was concerned for my safety. 'It's not that you will be attacked' he told me 'but you might drive into a situation that is dangerous'. I was therefore in my own car, driving through Serb-majority northern Kosovo and my Serbian number plates made this part of Kosovo 'mine', or at least, my car's. I could drive across the border, into the Serb majority municipalities in northern Kosovo and down to the monument from the north without my vehicle being out of place. I stood on the high hill, in the carpark below the steps up to the monument, and looked south across the river, across the ruin of the industrial park to the road I had driven along with Behar. Crossing the four kilometres from there to here (as the crow flies) had not been easy.

As I was standing there, looking across the landscape I heard the Muslim call to prayer sounding faintly from the mosque in the southern part of the city and was struck by how easily the voice of the imam carried through the air to a place he might find hard to visit. I took my phone out and started recording. My intention wasn't to capture anything specific but to record what we called NAT SOF (natural sound-on-film) or *aural actuality*, when I worked with ITN, that is 'the totality of sounds occurring in a given environment' (Gallagher & Prior, 2014: 273). What I wanted to include were the voices of everything that dwelt there together, human, nonhuman, organic, inorganic, as much as the microphone on my phone could pick up. As I recorded, I moved around in a slow circle to capture the totality of what could be seen, too, at least from my perspective.

What I was doing was collapsing my epistemological privileging of sight in that moment and also unsettling my experience of arriving at the monument myself, with all the difficulties that had entailed - the barricades, the bridges, the no-go areas. What I could see, coupled with what I had experienced, told one story. What I could hear told another. While I had intended this recording to be a mnemonic, it turned into something different. In relationship with other recordings I had made, with other unusual sight/sound interactions I had noticed and noted down, and in relationship with the mineworkers' interviews and my own experiences and perspective it revealed something significant. It brought surface and depth, sound and sight,

the horizontal and the vertical into dialogue in a way that created meaning. It seemed to have something to say about the ways in which human and geological lives are entangled.

The following day I went down to the 10th 'horizon' at the Stan Terg mine and recorded my descent. Three-quarters of a kilometre underground the 10th horizon is the deepest point at which the miners work. In the course of less than twenty-four hours I had therefore travelled vertically from the top of the hill where the miners' monument stands and where I could look out over the landscape arrayed in front of me, to the bottom of the mine that the monument was built to represent. There I could see nothing apart from what was caught in the light of my head torch and in the light of the head torches of those around me. Unlike at the monument the depth that counts here isn't horizontal, but vertical. Our medium is not the earthly and the aerial, but the geologic. As Pink notes that the transmission of knowledge is 'a social, participatory and embodied process' (Pink, 2015: 216). It is created in the relationship between minds, bodies and the environment (Pink, 2015: 39) and the ways in which we thread our ways along particular paths together (Ingold, 2008: 1796). While the mineworkers have recounted what this vertical movement down into the orebody means to them and how it changes them it is only by experiencing it myself that I fully understand.

Gallagher and Prior argue that audio methods can tell different kinds of stories to other media and are useful for highlighting the 'hidden or marginal aspects of places and their inhabitants that cannot easily be seen (2014: 268). They are a means of deepening understandings of geography and 'generating insights into the interrelations and flows between humans, animals, objects, technologies, materials, infrastructures and environments' (Gallagher et al, 2017: 620). Similarly, Ingold argues that while looking at a landscape reveals what it *is*, listening to it reveals what it *does* (2002: 199)*.* While a looked-over landscape privileges a spectator, a listened-to landscape contains a cacophony of equally agentic beings, human and nonhuman (ibid). The expanded listening methodology employed here is not just a means of paying closer attention to what can be heard, therefore, but also to how that intersects with what can be seen and felt and what is known, on a vertical as well as a horizontal geographical axis. There are two other expanded listening encounters described in the second part of this chapter; one at Olovo and one at Sase.

Expanded Listening Method II: What Would the Rock Say?

The second method used specifically for this chapter was also initially applied experimentally. During one of the early interviews, I asked a mineworker what the orebody would say to him if it could talk. It was a 'serious, yet playful' experimental question, asked for a strategic reason within the context of this research (Vagle, 2014: 148; see also Bennett 2010: 15). It is also a mediator's question in that it is an invitation to stand "in the shoes" of another not as a means of engendering empathy, necessarily, but to see how a particular position or situation looks from a different perspective (see for example Moore, 2014: 211). Without hesitating, the mineworker told me that the orebody would say 'leave me alone!' The orebody, it appeared, could answer back. Moreover, it had an opinion that didn't reinforce what this mineworker did, who he was and where he was located but unsettled it. It was a moment of interest and incongruity and I included the same question at the end of every interview.

This method is included under the heading of expanded listening although it uses this concept in a different way from the expanded listening encounters outlined in the previous section. It is not concerned with the human and nonhuman sounds of landscape and the relationship between them but with the specific voice of geology. It is a means of expanding listening by decentering the human subject and the inevitable anthropocentrism of the interview. Its concern is not what people have to say about their lives but how they think their lives might be perceived by another entity that is not human. What emerges is not the voice of geology, of course. It is not the 'moment of independence (from subjectivity) possessed by things' that Bennett tries to name (2010: 3). Rather it is the voice of a human in a close relationship with geology. Perhaps it is the voice of the geosocial formation, or part of it, at least.

In the next section I revisit the three research sites in an attempt to take the voice of the orebody into account. I weave expanded listening encounters together with the mineworkers' interviews and my own sensory attentiveness to where I am. At Stan Terg I unearth a geosocial formation that is a 'zone of entanglement' in which people-in-formation make their way through a geological world-in-formation' and both are changed as they do so (Ingold, 2008: 1802). In this place, where humans and geology have been in relationship for over one hundred years some unexpected things emerge at depth that are not obvious on

the surface; an orebody that pulls people together, engenders peace and has the capacity to enchant in a way that appears significant. At Olovo where the human geologic relationship is new this is less marked. At Sase expanded listening adds another layer of meaning to the concept of silence.

6.2 STAN TERG. FINDING 'UNEXPECTED THINGS'.

Expanded Listening Encounter 1. The Miners' Monument. Kosovska Mitrovica. November 8th, 2018.

I wind my way up the hill and park at the bottom of the Miners' Monument in late autumn sunshine. There is a concrete skeleton of a half-built stadium here, its stairs hanging in the air, an apartment block and a children's playground. At my feet there are discarded condoms and wet wipes. There is a cluster of houses and beyond them a higher hill than this one with an orthodox cross perched on top. From where I am standing, I can see south Mitrovica, stretching away below me, and in the distance, the carcass of the Trepca industrial park. The industrial park and this high monument are two nodes in the surface network of materiality connected to the orebody. But if you can visit one easily now, you are likely to feel less comfortable about visiting the other.

As I stand, I hear a disembodied call to prayer drifting up from across the River Ibar, to the south. It blends with the murmur of some women chatting in Serbian in one of the gardens below me, a dog barking, some birds chirping nearby, the squeak of a man pushing the end of a see saw in the park, lifting a young child up and down, up and down. There are gunshots and shortly afterwards a trumpet band starts playing. Later I see people celebrating a wedding in the orthodox church below the monument. I hear my feet on the concrete as I turn around.

Expanded Listening Encounter II. The Stan Terg Mine. November 9th, 2018.

Early the next morning I go down into the orebody at the Stan Terg mine. The sounds of our voices, our boots, and our clothing change as we walk out of the sunlight and into the tunnel, proscribed by the rock that surrounds us. As we descend, the lift machinery creaks, the metal gates clatter as they open and close, and we hear the buzz of the signaling system that connects us with the lift operator on the surface. There is a rushing sound as the wet rock walls of the mineshaft slip past, the drip of water on my helmet (should I be worried?) and a deep bass hum that I can't place. Two of the miners in the lift start joking with each other. One pretends to slap the other's face, and everyone laughs. At the bottom of the mine they say 'me fat' (good luck) to each other as they walk out of the lift, and stride off into the darkness to start their shift, their rubber boots splashing in the water, the light of their lamps pooling on the floor in front of them. Away from the electric lights by the lift we are in deep darkness, apart from the lights on our helmets. There is a persistent hissing sound, but I don't know where it comes from. I can hear water rushing somewhere. A warm wind blows unexpectedly as we reach an intersection with another tunnel. 'Don't worry' says one of the miners. 'Yes' I say and laugh.

Up in the air above the Miners' Monument, lives mingle freely. Chatting neighbours, Serbian wedding guests, imams, birds, dogs, cars, feet, trumpets, handguns, rusty hinges and the weather freewheel together over barricades, bridges, and metal fences. At the place where people will fight 'for sure' on the surface there is an invisible, but noisy aerial mixing, unimpeded by the materiality on the surface, and the geology that subtends it. If, as Roshanak Kheshti argues, soundscapes 'are critical to the constitution of spaces and places' then what is being constituted in the air is very different from the way people move around each other on the ground (Kheshti, 2009: 15). But three quarters of a kilometre below the surface, it is a different story. The only human voices here, apart from mine, are Albanian. The only *non-*

human voices are the voice of the orebody, the voice of the lift that has taken us down there, and the voice of the infrastructure that is keeping us safe; the ventilation pipes, the electric cables, and the harsh noise of signaling system. Sound and place here are congruent, kept *in* place by geology, and the human and geological stories that have unfolded, and continue to unfold here.

The further you travel vertically downward into this orebody it seems, the more it divides people and keeps them separate, channeled into tunnels created by man and rock - Albanians in this southern part of the orebody, Serbs in the north. While on the surface people are separated by anxiety, fear and the conviction that people will attack you 'with guns and knives for sure' here they are literally held apart by rock. But different data tells a different story. In the interviews with the miners a persistent theme emerged of a deep, telluric brotherliness that existed underground before the war. The further the miners travelled underground, in fact, the *closer* they become.

> When you are inside the mine ethnic groups don't exist. All of us that go down there inside the mine, we all call each other 'brother' because there is no one else closer to you than a fellow miner. If something bad happens it will be that miner close to you that will be the first one to give you help because at that time, if you think about it, even your parents can't help you. There is no one else apart from that miner. And this is why we are connected more when we are underground, and this is why this brotherhood exists underground […] You cannot do the same on the surface. You simply can't because as soon as we go to the surface, we are somehow further from that brotherhood that exists underground. Therefore, you cannot implement this brotherhood on the surface. (P.5)

> 'As soon as you go down the mine, you leave your problems outside, above the ground. Before the war I worked with Serbs, Bosniaks, Roma, Egyptians, and when we started the shift that didn't mean a Serb was not helping an Albanian or an Albanian was not helping an Egyptian. As such […] we all finished our job and we didn't have any problems underground. When we got above the ground […] everybody went their separate ways.' (P.2)

> Everything that happens underground is more important than the things we say or do on the surface. Down there, we feel closer to one another and we have more respect for each other when we are in our working place, underground. Cooperation between colleagues is better when we are down, compared to what we say and do on the surface. To be quite honest, why there is greater respect and why we feel

closer to one another when we are underground, it is because initially, let me say that when we are down there we are in the hands of God, but apart from that, the closest person that you've got if something happens is the one next to you, who is the most important person and the first one who gives you help […] therefore you cannot think badly of him, or have bad thoughts about the colleague who sits next to you. So, this is the difference between people sitting next to you on the surface and people sitting next to you underground. And this is the main reason why you have a different relationship with people on the surface and the people who sit next to you underground […] Such a respect, such a friendship you cannot implement on the surface. (P.4)

As soon as the miners go above ground everything that was said, every conversation, every joke actually stays there [underground] and doesn't come above the ground. Simply, we have different conversations underground compared to above the ground […] As soon as you go above ground there are bad viruses, or people that talk to different ethnic groups and those bad viruses mean that politics gets involved and it's not the same conversation as it is inside the mine. Simply said, politics cannot intervene in the faithfulness of miners when they are underground. (P.6)

There is a relationship between them just like two metals welded together. Because down there they count [each other] as father, mother, brother, sister, friend, everything. And they are closer than they are with their own family, because they are eight hours every time with each other. (P.10)

One other thing. Apart from everything I have said we have great humour. We have many jokes between miners. If you hear the conversation between the miners and all the jokes, you have to hold your stomach from laughter and that is one of the things that makes this connection even stronger. I have to mention the British comedian Benny Hill - we make jokes like him. (P.6)

According to these mineworkers the 'becomings of earth and society together' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 6) in this mine over the years has been a radical *pulling together* of disparate people as they descend into the orebody, away from the 'bad viruses' that swirl in the air above the surface, and then a *pushing apart* as they ascend at the end of their shift, leaving their jokes, their special conversations, and their unlikely friendships embedded in the orebody, deep underground. While the orebody may appear to be part of a project of territorialisation on the surface, at depth it is a different matter. The orebody changes relationships for the better, makes certain things matter, allows certain moods, attitudes and concerns inside and forces others to be left on the surface.

Indeed, unlike on the surface, 800 metres underground there is no nationalist graffiti, just the generic pipes and cables that carry electricity and air, the matrix of dots painted on the wall that illustrate the universal signaling system for the life, and the tracks on which the ore is transported. Apart from the *Kosova me fat Trepca Minatort* ('good luck Trepca miners of Kosova') painted on the wall, we could be under Cornwall. Likewise, the office on the eighth horizon where the miners meet to discuss their work at the beginning of their shift underground is not hung with Albanian flags and photos of freedom fighters like their office on the surface. Instead, it is papered over with a huge advertisement for Rausch 'BRAVO' juice, with its images of orange trees, a field, and wooded hills. On another wall there are pages from a 2017 calendar, all of them showing landscapes: rocky coastlines, beaches, stone bridges, people hiking across a snow field. Far from being 'loaded with concepts of identity and ethnicity' (Brown & Keating. 2015: 11) deep down this orebody is loaded with something different; memories of interethnic trust, unlikely friendships, Benny Hill-like humour, and perhaps the collective need for the people that work here to be reminded that 800 metres above their heads, the sun is shining.

But what about that laugh I give at the end of the soundscape? It is a fearful laugh. This is a dark and strange-sounding place. The drip of the water, the unexpected gust of warm wind, the sense of the heft of geology all alarm me. I am out of my depth, literally and metaphorically. At first, I find myself trying to work out what I need to do to keep myself safe, but I can't read this place. Is the dripping water on my helmet a sign of danger? I see a miner looking up anxiously but perhaps he is not anxious? I catch my intepreter's eye. I don't know how to be safe down here because I don't know what the dangers are or how to look out for them or what to do if I could recognize them. After a few minutes it occurs to me that this is what the miners have been talking about. The only thing I can do in this strange place is trust the mineworker who has brought me down here and has worked here since he was eighteen. If he can stride easily into the darkness, then so can I.

If the task of this chapter is to ask 'who and what participates in the action' of peacebuilding (Latour, 2004: 226) then the orebody at Stan Terg clearly does. It pulls people together and changes the relationship between them as it does so. It makes a difference to how people think and act together relative to where they are located vertically within it. And it upends

the relationship between researcher and participant and transforms the power dynamic between them. To an extent, the mediating effect of the orebody on people underground is a result of the 'geosocial' reality that has been created down here (Clark & Yusoff, 2017). Humans disturb geology by tunneling into its vast heft. Geology answers back by becoming potentially mobile, unstable, dangerous and demanding and people need to cooperate if they are to stay safe.

But it is not just the collective relationship that is mediated by the orebody. While Graham describes miners 'plummeting' in cages to hellish depths in super-deep mines in South Africa (2016: kindle location 5974), for the miners at Stan Terg the journey downwards is to a place where they feel at home with or without their colleagues. As one mineworker explained to me, going underground for him is like 'mental yoga'.

> When I am alone and I want to feel better, I go to the orebody and I work all day long, and I try to visit all the horizons in just 8 hours, although sometimes it's not possible […] It gives me perspective. I feel relaxed. I feel good. Physically tired, but psychologically relaxed' (P.10.)

> 'I feel hope when I go down to the orebody and see the orebody and there I find hope that the future will be better. When I see that huge amount of ore' (P.10.)

Contrary to Graham, it is not going down the mine that causes these workers pain but staying on the surface. One mineworker who is no longer allowed underground for his health, and who now works in the changing room, finds it hard when he meets his former colleagues at the end of their shift.

> I'm simply telling you I hide. When they come out, they come above ground at half past one and I hide so they can't see me. This is how I feel, because maybe they think it's good for me that I'm above the ground, that it's easier for me working above the ground, but I feel like I should be with them, below the ground. I would rather be with them. (P13)

If there is a 'pull' of the world here it is one that pulls the mineworkers downwards (Lea, 2009: 374).

But more than this emerged in the interviews with the mineworkers. For one mineworker in particular, who has worked underground all his life and is now on the point of retirement the orebody took on life in the story he told. It was given arteries, blood, a pulse and the ability to breath. It had things to teach him and he changed in relationship with it.

> The minerals within the mine are like veins in the human body, you see the blood flowing in human veins and how some veins have more blood flowing that others. It's the same thing within the mine. In some places you have more minerals and in some places you have less minerals, the same as in human veins.
>
> As soon as I enter the mine, I know how the mine breathes. So, what I do, as an old miner, for the first ten minutes that I enter the mine I stop and listen to the mine. I listen to the cracks and small explosions or the shaking of the earth within the mine. That is how an experienced miner knows where to dig. For example, a small explosion isn't dangerous – it's the same as cracking joints. You feel like you have gases stuck inside the joint and when you move your arm it cracks. It's the same with the mine. You hear the sound but it's not risky.
>
> There are 27 different materials in the mine and if our guest the lady wants me to explain every single material I will, if you need that information […] For me, it's not about money. I don't see minerals as an amount of money. What I am interested in is if someone comes by it is important for me to give them a correct answer and not just to stand there and look like I don't know anything. So, if you are experienced and you work in the mine you should at least know some of the answers and not just speak about value – about currency.
>
> Every time I go inside the mine, I don't just study the mine, I study myself as well. So, it's not my intention only to study the mine but from time to time I turn to myself to see if I am learning something about the mine. So, I know I am not educated like a doctor, but with my experience now I can answer questions in the same way that doctors do, about the mine of course. And in some cases, it might be that doctors can't answer questions, but I can […] me as an old guy and in all my foolishness, I came to know that all these resources, all this wealth is very important only if you know how to use it. (P.3)

For Bennett, the challenge in her book *Vibrant Matter* is to argue for the 'vitality of (nonhuman) bodies that runs alongside and inside humans' but is not dependent on them (Bennett 2010: 62). What emerges in the story this elderly participant told is a vital orebody that has both been changed by him and that has changed him in their mutual coming together over the years. In his story he is not an *a priori* subject attaching hopes, anxieties, aspirations

to neutral geology but an 'educated man' who has emerged as such through his intimate relationship with a geological entity that warns him of danger, teaches him things, affords him a sense of dignity, and helps him keep his colleagues safe. For this man, his relationship with the orebody is not one of 'mastery' but one in which he and the orebody have become otherwise together. There are unexpected things buried in this orebody, therefore. It is a place where there is flooding, where it is hot, where the air is laden with diesel fumes. But it is also a place where geology speaks to humans and humans understand what it is saying, where humans feel safe despite the geological heft that encloses them, and where relationships that are sour on the surface are transformed as they move underground. But perhaps the most unexpected thing buried in this orebody are the unique rock crystals that exist there and the response of the miners when they find them.

6.2.1 The Power to Enchant

After a few days working at the Stan Terg mine, I had accumulated a collection of crystals that mineworkers had given me, usually at the end of an interview. Some of them ask me to choose, wanting me to pick the one I think the prettiest. They are all breathtakingly beautiful, palm-sized and cold, sparkling spines of quartz, pyrite, and a host of other metals and minerals, silver, grey and white. They are unlike anything I have seen before. They are tiny, somewhat fragile and exquisite, and usually entirely hidden hundreds of metres underground. They are unique to this mine, formed at the contact point between the orebody and the host rock. The miners working the shift after a blast collect them. They speak of finding them embedded in the freshly exposed wall, gleaming in the light of their head torches. At the bottom of the Stan Terg mine, with its problems of pollution, disease and danger nature is not defeated and exhausted but capable of producing (with humans) moments of enchantment that delight and disturb.

> Here in Trepca you can always see new things; you can always find unexpected things […] and what's more interesting is that you will see thousands, maybe millions of crystals and none of them are the same […] What I'm interested in is how they got formed […] how many years it took for these crystals to get formed in such a way. (P.2)

> It is very normal that you connect spiritually with new things because just imagine, when you go down and find new things, it is always interesting. (P.2.)

Also, the crystals, finding the crystals and minerals, something that nature created in the ground is interesting for me – it's something you can't see, it's underground. It's very simple 'you don't see good things,' you have to dig. You have to make an effort to see them. (P.12)

I can add something that you didn't ask about. What is interesting to me in this mine are the rocks, like the one I gave you. How they got formed and when they got formed. This is very interesting for me […] this crystal was taken from working space 148 and it is made up of quartz and pyrite. One part of this is also iron. And you have some traces of lead […] We find them in the walls. If you dig in the walls you have some natural holes […] and as soon as we reach into those holes the crystals are inside. Around the crystals you have pieces of clay which you can remove by hand. We have flashlights in our headlamps, and they shine very brightly because it is dark in the mine. (P.5)

Whenever I go down, I see something new. And I like it. I like the beauty that God gave us, and the wealth. But it is interesting that everyday you see something else. (P.10)

Sometimes you can feel it's alive, especially when you see those crystals hanging there after mining. Sometimes those crystals feel very alive to you, and you wonder how nature created them. That's why it looks like something that is alive. You wonder and you think in your head that only God knew how to create this beauty (P12)

In her earlier book, *The Enchantment of Modern Life. Attachments, Crossings and Ethics* (2001), Jane Bennett argues for a contemporary world 'sprinkled with natural and cultural sites that have the power to "enchant"' (Bennet, 2001: 3). For Bennett, to be enchanted is to experience the 'delight and disturbance' of encountering the extraordinary and unexpected among the familiar, the everyday and the mundane (Bennett, 2010: xi). In *Vibrant Matter* Bennett expands her argument to focus on the object that is enchanting rather than the human that is enchanted. As she writes, enchantment is a figure that points in 'two directions' (2010: xii) The point is that 'we know nothing about a body until we know what it can do' in relationship with other bodies (ibid). The crystals are not just vibrant in how they look, therefore, but vibrant in their ability to 'call' humans, to engender a response in them and to change them. In return, the crystals are changed too. They are brought to the surface, wrapped in newspaper, sold from small tables on the streets of Mitrovica, perched on shop tills, and in the windows of jewelry stores. I have a collection on a window ledge in my home in Yellowknife, in northern Canada, where they sparkle against the snow outside.

These moments of enchantment should give a mediator pause. Those cold, bright, sparkling, spiny crystals point to the potential for surprise, disturbance, and delight in the human geologic relationship. They literally vibrant matter, tiny actants disrupting what we think we know about mining, or what we might expect to find in the bottom of a lead mine in a context of intractable conflict, or how we assume people might think, feel and act when they are down there. They remind us that whatever it is we *think* we know about a particular conflict there is inevitably something buried that is worth unearthing. As one participant said 'you don't see good things. You have to dig' (P.12).

Throughout this thesis I have argued, following Vagle (2014) that a phenomenon is not a stable, bounded, grounded thing and that knowledge takes off in different directions. Likewise, I have argued that an orebody is not a grounded thing either, but a shapeshifter and a nomad. It is both in the walls of the mine around me and in aircraft wings, house paint and the protective aprons for x-rays. My encounter with the vibrancy of the crystals and their power to enchant provided a moment of surprise that opened up the phenomenon of the human geologic relationship in an unexpected way through the work of two posthuman thinkers, Rosi Braidotti (2018) and Jussi Parikka (2015) who both argue that the geology in our media technologies creates a human and non-human relational community for all of us in which the convergence is the dirt, degradation, and brutality inherent in its extraction. As Braidotti says 'it's dirty, it's toxic, it's mines, it's child labour, it's geopolitics, it's war, it's all of that. Let's call it 'our laptops' but they contain *a* real geology, and geopolitics of labour relations' (Braidotti, 2018)*.* This idea of a relational community is a call for a more ethical engagement with what we consume and with those who suffer as a result. As Parikka writes, if cognitive capitalism exhausts those that consume it, it exhausts those engaged in the 'goalless, helpless physical labour of mining the minerals and metals that make it up more' (Parikka, 2015: kindle location 1827). He asks how we should understand our 'mobile-consumer selves' in relation to this?

But how about the *enchantment* that exists at the bottom of a mine? How do we understand our 'mobile-consumer selves' in relation to that? One answer emerges when we consider the feeling we get when we unwrap a new mobile phone or perhaps (for Braidotti) a laptop.

Bennett refers to it as the 'charged-up feeling often generated by the presence or promise of commodity consumption' (Bennett, 2001: 113) and for her it is a moment of enchantment that has the potential to fuel an ethical will. Perhaps this opens up another way of understanding the human geologic relationship and the convergence that pulls us all together in our phones and laptops. It is not just grounded in the *idea* of the violence and brutality inherent in our media technologies but in the *feelings* that we experience when we encounter them. The point of this, as Bennett argues is that enchantment encourages us to feel attached to the world and in so doing it encourages us to care about it.

Or following Bennett's later reasoning in *Vibrant Matter* we can take one step closer to the vitality of the orebody. She argues that human beings are themselves geological beings. (Bennet, 2010: 10-11). In which case, if drunkenness is the 'triumphant irruption of the plant in us', as Deleuze and Guattari write (2013: 11), perhaps this 'charged-up feeling' is the 'triumphant irruption of geology'? It is a reminder, as the Russian scientist Ivanovich Vernadsky argues, that while human beings 'have an amazing propensity to wander across, dig into and in countless other ways alter Earth's surface, '[w]*e are walking, talking minerals'* (Margulis and Sagan, *What Is Life,* 49, quoted in Bennett 2010: 11, emphasis added by Bennett.). What the materiality of the orebody at Stan Terg seems to offer is another way of thinking about the human geologic relationship in which geology has the power to change human behaviour, to disrupt our thinking, to erupt within us and perhaps to engender a more ethical engagement with how we respond to the Earth's resources.

6.3. OLOVO MINE. 'IT'S ALL THE SAME TO ME.'

Expanded Listening Encounter III. Olovo Mine, 10th May 2018.

It is a warm day in May 2018. For the past few days, the staff of the Olovo mine have been busy getting it ready for the official opening, flattening the gravel roads, planting flowers outside the green metal portacabins, and erecting new white flagpoles by the mine entrance. Local and regional dignitaries and journalists have been invited and we stand in a white marquee and chat between speeches by the

British Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Swedish Ambassador to the EU, the mayor of Olovo, and the British COO of Mineco. Most of the Olovo workers are in their orange overalls and helmets, including a group of young women. The voices that mingle here are male and female, young and old, Bosnian and Serbian, British and Swedish. In his speech Ambassador Ferguson says;

> 'Today marks the opening of the first new mine in Bosnia Herzegovina for thirty years […] It's been a long journey to reach this point, and more work is needed quickly so that this mine can become fully operational and provide long-term, sustainable employment to hundreds of people in Olovo and its neighbouring municipalities'

The British Ambassador and Dominic Roberts joke together as they lift the cloth covering the plaque at the entrance of the mine. Two English laughs hang in the air. A handshake. A long, wavering wail as the Ambassador winds the handle of the siren. A thump of an explosion from inside the mine – the symbolic 'first blast'. A long silence. Then the sound of a truck carrying the fresh ore out of the mine. And a little after that the symbolic strike of Dragana's hammer against a rock. She is a young geologist from Serbia working in Bosnia. The mine is officially open. The orebody has spoken.

Unlike at the miners' monument the voices that mingle in the air here come from the people who are mingling on the ground. The orebody has pulled people together from Belgrade, Sarajevo, London, the USA. And what is in the air is optimism - for jobs, for a safe working environment, for continued cooperation with the cantonal and regional authorities. Later as the guests are taken into the mine, the mixing continues, male, female, Bosnian, Serb, British. Apart from the sound quality, and the splash of boots in water there is no difference between what is heard underground and what is heard on the surface.

There is a peculiar relationship with the underground and the surface at Olovo. The orebody is underground in that it exists under the forested hillside, but it is accessed and worked on a horizontal plane. Miners enter it on foot, walking into the mountain as if they were walking

into a railway tunnel. Indeed, this mine *is* a tunnel, bored through one side of a wooded hill and out of the other. While at Stan Terg to go deeper into the orebody you must *descend* further into the darkness, at Olovo mineworkers walk further into the mountain. If they go far enough, they will emerge back into the light. There is no lift, no descent, no particular sense of geology thickening over your head as you go down and no feeling of otherworldliness when the lift doors open, that causes first time miners (and visitors) to sometimes panic and ask to go back to the surface. What does mediate behaviour are the landmines that are still buried in the woods. The rear access to the tunnel was heavily mined during the war and has only just been completely cleared. When I visit, I am given clear instructions about where I can and cannot go. It is the forest floor I am nervous about here, not geology.

This newly emergent orebody seems to have little power to mediate the way people live, think and act together. There is little sense of relationships changing as people go into this mine to work. People are not moving from surface to depth vertically, but horizontally, from outside to inside. It is a more natural thing to do, after all; most of us walk in and out of particular places, and cross from light to dark as we do so, without thinking about it in the course of our everyday lives. Certainly, the orebody only weakly mediates the relationship between people as they move in and out of it. They leave nothing of themselves on the surface as they do at Stan Terg, and they leave nothing of themselves underground. They take the camaraderie and the trust between them out of the mine at the end of the shift.

> (relationships) are the same outside and inside. I see them (the younger miners) spending their free time together in coffee places. (P.19)
>
> People in the mine, we are just practically one big family. We have a great relationship, we just watch each other's backs. We are ready at any moment to protect ourselves and the people we are working with and we behave the same when we meet in the city. (P.21)
>
> (How do you feel about working in the mine?)
> Nothing. It's all the same to me. I don't have any fear, or anything […]
> (Do you feel any different when you're underground to when you are on the surface?)
> Not really
> (Do relationships between people change underground compared to on the surface? What have you noticed?)
> No, we joke and everything down there as well […] it's all the same. It's OK. (P.22)

Well, it's the same, underground and on the surface. I mean, there is no difference, we all know each other. Relationships are good. (P.25)

The same, it's the same. But, regardless of any problems we might have, we have to take care of ourselves, because otherwise we couldn't function. (P.26)

Well, underground, I can say, the relationships are better. So, you know…if something…but there isn't…people are closer to each other […] people are always good. But you still have that feeling when you're underground, a closer feeling. (P.24)

I used to work in construction, and they built big tunnels and they're not much different. So, I am used to it. (P. 31)

We all depend on each other down there. And there aren't any fights or conflict or something. It's all good relationships […] because in case of danger, nobody else could help you except your colleague. We always have the same trust in our colleagues. Because you build trust and you don't lose it. When we come out and everything, we spend time together outside, as well. That's how it was, it still is. We spend time together. (P.27)

There's nothing special. They just have to know that they first have to take care of their colleagues, then themselves. (P.28)

The pull this orebody exerts then isn't vertical but horizontal. People who have had to take jobs overseas to survive since the war are grateful that they are now able to work close to their homes

I was always far away from my home and now I can be with my family and work in the same place. Now I am always with my family in my house and that means a lot to me. (P19)

In Slovenia I was there alone. My family wasn't with me, so I had to spend money on two households. If I had my family there it would have been much different […] this is my home town. Everything that I have is here, my family, my house. (P20)

I was looking for any type of job here. To be with my family. Because I was away all the time. The kids were growing, and I wasn't here. (P22)

I think it's easier. I'm not away. Before everything was fieldwork. And here I live in the Olovo municipality and I work here, I'm home every day, every night. That's a big difference. I'm with my family. (P24)

> The future is better because I can be at home with my family every day now (P.31)

Unlike at Stan Terg there is no sense of intimacy with the orebody among mineworkers who are new to mining. This isn't a place where people come to feel better but to earn a salary and to have a sense of long-term security. Mineworkers who have worked in construction and forestry don't experience any heightened emotional or psychological state when they are underground. The only notable thing the orebody affords them is shelter from the weather.

> I don't know, to me it's…because of the weather changes, for example, when you're working outside, you're exposed to the sun and the rain and the snow […] underground there's no rain, it's not cold […] it's always the same. The same temperature. (P24)

> In construction you're always exposed to bad weather and everything. And in the mine, it's not raining, or snowing. It's not cold. It's considered better to be a miner than to be in construction. (P.27)

> Forestry isn't relaxing because it's always raining, snowing, trees are falling […] it's a much harder job than mining. Much harder. (P.28)

> It's the same for me, because I can get used to anything. (P.20)

> I feel the same as when I'm outside. I could sleep in the mine. Anywhere. (P.21)

> I'm fine with everything. Everything is the same to me. (P.20)

> It's always the same. The same temperature. (P.22)

> Driving trucks and mining […] it's not a big difference. You have to work so you have to work. (P.23)

> What can I say? To me it's…I'm used to it, it's the same to me, whether I'm down there or here. It's the same to me. I mean there is no difference (P24)

> As long as I'm here, close to the mine it doesn't matter whether I work outside or underground (P27)

Significantly, it is the forest, not the mineshaft, that the mineworkers turn to now when they are in need of a break.

When I have problems and stuff, I don't know, at home or something, I take a break in nature. I enjoy the surroundings, so there are many things that make it easier for me. Walking […] all my problems, for example, that happen, I sort of solve them like that. (P.26)

I do it all the time. I go into nature and I walk. I go through the forest, pick mushrooms, take a break […] I work on my land. (P.27)

I don't want to leave Olovo because it's a clean city with fresh air, a lot of nature. It's a free city. You can go up to the hill and do whatever you want. Scream if you want. (P21)

6.3.1. An Unenchanted Place.

Unlike at Trepca there are no crystals at Olovo. I am handed no bits of ore before or after interviews. While one participant said his favourite part of the job was when he found something new underground, '*some glittery rock*' the orebody itself seems *un*lively, and not particularly vibrant. Or its vibrancy is associated with anxiety. Like Stan Terg, this is a lead mine. Unlike at Stan Terg, hovering in the background in this post-conflict context is an awareness that lead is not only poisonous but is used for killing people.

We wouldn't look for it if it wasn't necessary, first to us, but also to others…the world, maybe […] if it's for military purposes I wouldn't export it. But for other purposes that it's useful for, good, I'm glad that we're extracting it. Right now, we're all living off it. We won't give it for the military industry. (P.24)

Well, we are aware that the ore is lead, and that it's poisonous. And it's normal that there could be consequences if we don't protect ourselves adequately. That's a problem. And what the ore will be used for, we don't know that. We hope for good. (P.26)

None of us are aware of what lead does to the body. So, we really have to be careful and … I'm just worried that my colleagues and I don't get poisoned […] we work directly with lead dust […] our company sends everyone for a medical exam every year, but it still hasn't been our turn. We will get checked. But we always wear protective masks, we never work without them so…(P.29)

I don't…I don't know. I heard…it just so happened…I was doing some work for the Dean at the University in Sarajevo and he told me, we were talking about me working at the mine, that they were doing some sort of examinations with the water here in

> Olovo, down in Krivja as well, testing fish, and that there are some sort of cancerous…because lead…but, I don't know if it affects me. I'm going in a few days for my annual health check. I had a health check before, everything was fine. Now I'm going again. If there are any problems, what can I do? I have to work. Now, if there is any influence on my body. I don't know. (P.24)

What Olovo seems to illustrate is that there is nothing inevitable about what exists at Stan Terg. The deep intimacy between human bodies and the orebody that exists there has emerged over the course of over one hundred years in relationship with geology that both has its own inherent vibrancy and that has *become* vibrant within this relationship. At Olovo, there seems to be no such inherent vibrancy in the orebody nor yet within the human geologic relationship, but human lives and geological lives are becoming entangled, nonetheless. What sort of geosocial formation are they creating together? What will it 'say' one hundred years from now?

6.4 SASE MINE, SREBRENICA. SILENCE.

> Expanded Listening Encounter IV. At the Sase Mine, 7th July 2018
>
> We are in the large meeting room in the mine. It is a warm, sunny evening in July, but most of the blinds are closed, their slats still letting in bright horizontal lines of light. I am here with a group of academics and mining industry professionals and the local General Manager of the mine is hosting a party for us and for some mineworkers. There is a live band and the music is too loud for conversation. I have been to many similar parties in the Balkans. People eat, dance and (usually) smoke, although not here. If you want to chat, you have to shout, or go outside. And like those other parties, it has a slightly utilitarian feel. The lights are on, there are no candles; an abundance of food, alcohol, and music are all that are required to have a good time. The band plays a selection of hits we all recognize, and we dance, but it is only when they start playing pre-war, Yugoslav rock songs that the local crowd gets really animated. People know all the words and they get up and dance together and sing along.

The party goes on until past midnight. I go outside and sit out in the dark on an old bench, with my back against the building. From the open windows above me the Yugo-rock drifts out, saturating the wooded hills around us with sound. It is the music of Tito-era brotherhood, unity and love. The dark woods, where Muslim people tried to hide during the Srebrenica massacre, and from where many of them were flushed out and executed are silenced by it.

One of the British geologists who is connected with this mine comes out and joins me on the bench. He served in the British army and worked in Bosnia and Kosovo during the war. He has also worked in Afghanistan and Iraq. We watch as a group of middle-aged male Serb mineworkers walk past us, towards the bus that will take them home. We both know they are likely to have been involved in the acts of violence that were committed here, in some way. How would they talk about it now? What stories would they tell about what led to what here, and how things have turned out the way they have? As we watch them go, I ask the British man beside me about his own experience of violent conflict. How does he live with it now? In the context it turns into a dangerous question and I listen as he circles around it, speaking of the quality of his training, asking himself if he feels guilty, assuring himself that he does not, but asking himself again anyway. As he falls silent the bus pulls slowly out of the car park in front of us, and we see the faces of the men, dimly lit inside. They are not allowed to talk about their experience of violence, of what it feels like to be swept up in it, and of what it might mean for them now. The ghosts of the people that were killed here are not the only ones silenced. I raise a hand as the bus swings round in front of us and see a hand raised back.

6.5. WHAT DO THE ROCKS SAY?

In this section I present the answers that the mineworkers gave to the question '*What would the orebody say to you if it could talk?*' The answers are centered on the page because they

look like the geosocial formations they represent. Stan Terg is hefty, Olovo is slight and the geology at Sase is invisible. What is interesting about the answers is that the orebody says some things the mineworkers might not want to hear; that it wants to be left alone, that they are fools for touching it. At Stan Terg it also has a sense that it is not being used wisely, that it needs to be treated 'well' and, significantly, that it is undervalued. What I found in the interviews is that the mineworkers seemed to allow geology to say things they hadn't or couldn't. It was the geological voice in the interviews that talked about the foolishness of extracting it and that it might be better left where it is, not the human. The orebody, it seems, has particular ideas about how human lives and geological lives should intersect. It was also the orebody at Stan Terg that sounded the most unforgiving. While many of the mineworkers expressed their willingness to work with their Serb counterparts again (at least those with 'clean hands') or at the most expressed some anxiety about the idea, it is the orebody that accuses them of being wild, that wants to 'vomit them up' and is still crying about the way they used it in the past.

6.5.1. Stan Terg.

Why are you disturbing me?

Why don't you leave me alone in this place?

You have all the knowledge you need, so get out!

Go to jail! Because you are not using me.

Don't use me for bad.

Give me my rights, and treat me well, for the good of the whole nation.

I'm crying about the Serbs who have used me in such a wild way.

I'm trying to give all of myself to the workers and the population and those who like

me. I'm vomiting up the Serbs.

You are feeding your children from me but if you use me for bad, God will kill you.

Take all of me and don't leave anything behind because I'm for that purpose.

Please stay here with me.

You still don't understand my value because you are using me and selling me very

cheaply. If you used me more wisely, used less of me but sold me for more I would

last longer.

Don't misuse me.

Work, and use me in the best way.

6.5.2. Olovo

I'm not happy because you are disturbing me.

What kind of fool is punching me?

I'm here.

Why are you touching me?

Don't touch me.

Thank you for finding me.

Get me out!

Get me out and sell me!

Don't touch me.

Don't take me out.

Take me out.

Don't touch me.

Take me out, I don't have value down here.

I'm here.

6.5.3. Sase.

Silence

6.6. CONCLUSION.

In this chapter, three orebodies emerge with telluric personalities of their own in relationship with humans. At Stan Terg, where the orebody and human bodies have been entangled for over one hundred years the orebody manifests itself as a bossy, pleading, shouting, crying, vomiting, threatening, generous, cautious, cantankerous-sounding entity that moves and breathes, is embedded with special conversations, unusual friendships, jokes that are only funny underground and crystals with the power to enchant. It mediates human behaviour. It is a place where people go to feel better, to learn things, to change a political system, to change themselves, to make money to raise their families, and because they don't have other options. It is an orebody that, like a human body has blood vessels and a pulse. It will kill you but will warn you first as long as you know how to listen to it. It is a place encrusted with beautiful crystals and choked with diesel fumes. It an influence not just over the way in which people live, think and act (Olsen, 2010: 31) but over the way they live, think and act *together* that is different underground to how it is on the surface. It is an 'unruly relative' (Bennett, 2010: 115) indeed.

What emerges at Olovo is a nascent geosocial formation and an orebody that is far less opinionated about what this relationship should be. It is not unruly, but uncertain sounding about whether it wants to be left alone or taken out. At the Sase mine, situated as it is in a landscape that still reverberates with the massacre that took place here, the orebody has been silenced. The past has been landscaped out with flower beds, car parks and nature trails, drowned out with music and pushed away by people who can't, or won't, or are not allowed to tell their stories. It is a different quiet from the quietness at Olovo; it is not quiet because it is newly emerged and has little to say, but because it is not yet ready to speak. Following the scent of thingly power in this chapter therefore leads us to three geosocial formations with three different personalities in which geology and humans seem to have created something unique together.

There is anthropomorphism here but as Bennett argues '[m]aybe a bit of anthropomorphizing will prove valuable' (Bennett, 2010: 119) She proposes that the risks associated with anthropomorphizing a non-human entity; 'superstition, the divinization of nature, romanticism' (ibid) may be worth it, if anthropomorphism allows a chord to be struck between person and thing (ibid). Anthropomorphism may help dislodge anthropocentrism,

in other words. What this leads to is a different way of thinking about natural resource-related peacebuilding. As Bennett writes articulating the vibrancy of matter is intended to see how politics might change 'if we gave the force of things more due' (2010: 63). For Bennett, the ethical starting point for a new politics of engagement with problems such as climate change is recognizing 'human participation in a shared, vital materiality' (2010: 14. See also Roberts, 2019). Her intention is to 'encourage more intelligent and sustainable engagements with vibrant matter and lively things' (2010: 63). As she writes, the guiding question is

> How would political problems change were we to take seriously the vitality of (nonhuman) bodies? By "vitality" I mean the capacity of things – edibles, commodities, storms, metals – not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own' (2010: viii).

How would natural resource related peacebuilding change if we understood an orebody in the way Bennett suggests we understand electricity, 'not simply as a resource, commodity, or instrumentality but as an "actant", capable of making things happen, producing effects and changing the course of events?' (2010: 4).

Roadside bench on the hill above Olovo. Photo by the author, 2018.

PART THREE

RECONCILE

7

WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF THE FUTURE

INTRODUCTION.

I think about the other people who have been displaced by different wars related to natural resources and climate change, from Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria. From 2015 they arrived in Belgrade by bus, or on foot, escaping homes that had become 'the mouth of a shark.'[30] The city flexed as hundreds of thousands of people on the move camped on blankets in the park by the station and sheltered in the double-storey carparks. People, litter, discarded food, pigeons. Like Deleuze and Guattari's oil spill the flow of people ebbed and flowed and moved around obstacles and was dammed up behind them and escaped into smaller and smaller rivulets, always seeking the path of least resistance on its journey north and west. Now this rhizome has become stratified, sedimented into official buildings, camps, workshops and facilities. But what continues to ebb, and flow is the data from people's smart phones, the minute bits of mined ore they hold in their hands, transmitting the money transfers, the social media posts, the blogs, the exchange of advice, the facetime chats with family members who are elsewhere. If ore has travelled far from its geologic home so should the concept of peace associated with it. (Excerpted from research journal, July 17th 2018)

This chapter answers my third research question; *what does this mean for building peace?*

How does taking a bottom-up approach help us think differently about natural resource-

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[30] From graffiti on a warehouse used as temporary shelter by people fleeing war and economic hardship in Belgrade in the winter of 2016. The quote is 'no one leaves home unless/home is the mouth of a shark. It comes from the poem Home by the British Somali poet Warsan Shire. (Shire, 2015)

related peacebuilding? What other rhizomatic links and patterns does it unearth? There are two approaches to answering this question in this chapter. In the first, shorter section I take a problem-solving 'better-business-as-usual' approach that draws on narrative mediation theory to explore the peacebuilding potential that exists in the stories the mineworkers at Stan Terg told. By problem-solving I don't imply an interest-based mediation process (see for example, D'Estrée, 2008) but an approach that sits within the natural resource-related peacebuilding paradigm as it currently exists, without intending to unsettle it. I argue that this research has unearthed in situ seeds for positive social change in the stories the mineworkers construct in relationship with the orebody. As such, following Lederach, (2005: kindle location 1746) I argue that an orebody is a 'strategic where' for building peace at the Trepca mining complex. But an orebody is more than an inert container for human relations. It has emerged in this research as vibrant, vital and alive. As such we can ask *where is this vital relationship leading us? How well does that destination suit us?* And *what alternatives might exist?* In the second section I argue for a more transformational approach to natural resource-related peacebuilding in which the orebody is not just a 'strategic where' for local people but a 'strategic where' for all of us to consider what it means to live well *together* with our natural resources.

The tone of this chapter is conceptual. What it offers is not a roadmap or a 'how-to' guide, but a possible re-framing of the problem based on the empirical data, my training as a mediator, my 'insider' perspective of the mining industry as a consultant and observer over the past twenty-three years, my involvement with the IMPACT research consortium and the other myriad elements that 'frame my seeing' (Vagle, 2014: 30). It is also the most normative chapter in this thesis. Here I draw on Mark Swilling and Eve Annecke, who in their book *Just Transitions. Explorations of Sustainability in an Unfair World* write that critical analysis alone is insufficient and that 'new ways of thinking about the future' are required to build a more just and sustainable world (Swilling & Annecke, 2012: 249). They quote the ecological economist Robert Costanza who writes

> *Science, as an activity, requires a balance between two quite dissimilar activities. One is analysis – the ability to break down a problem into its component parts and understand how they function. The second is synthesis – the ability to put the pieces back together in a creative way in order to solve the problems. In most of*

our current university research and education, these capabilities are not developed in a balanced, integrated way. (Costanza 2009: 359 emphasis original quoted in Swilling & Annecke, 2012: kindle location 252).

Having taken apart the relationship between people and geology in conflict-affected contexts this chapter it is an attempt to put it back together in a creative way and to provide a new way of thinking about the future in conflict-affected contexts that are rich in natural resources.

7.1. SOLVING A PROBLEM. BETTER BUSINESS-AS-USUAL.

When this research began, its aim was to contribute to wellbeing in areas that have experienced violent conflict by improving the way mining companies operate. I took a problem-solving "better business-as-usual" approach (Ince, 2014: 12) that recognized the inevitability of resource extraction, without denying the need radically to re-think the rate and scale at which we extract and consume the earth's resources. My aim was to understand the relationship between local perceptions of wellbeing and natural resources as a first step in promoting more *context*-sensitive business practice in conflict-affected mining communities. As this research project progressed, however, the better-business-as-usual perspective I had adopted at the start was unsettled by a growing sense of urgency about climate change, by the idea of the orebody as 'vibrant matter' and by conversations with people working on new mining paradigms within the industry and it became clear that something more transformative was required. This first section looks at natural resource related peacebuilding within the 'better-business-as-usual' framing as initially conceived. I argue that there is peacebuilding potential buried in the Stan Terg orebody. The question is, how can it be surfaced?

In Chapter Five I argued (following Berlant, 2011, 2011a) that the mineworkers project ideas onto the orebody about what a good life is and who it is for. The orebody affords a means of making life make sense in the aftermath of war. It is a relationship of attachment that functions as an 'infrastructure for proximity' in that it delineates relationships, keeps certain people in certain categories, and shores up an idea of what led to what, who is to blame and what needs to be done about it (Berlant, 2011a: 684). It also brings a certain future into view,

even though that future might not be obtainable. The orebody is therefore part of a normative project. It helps construct a sense of how life 'ought' to be. It animates the moment 'when life could become otherwise' (Berlant, 2011: 48).

This relationship of attachment is honed within the stories people tell in relation to the orebody and from a mediation perspective these stories are significant. Through them mineworkers tell causal stories and 'emplot' themselves within them as a means of engendering a sense not just of *where* they are, and consequently *who* they are relative to the orebody but of *where* and *who* they are relative to all the other people whose lives are entwined with it also. The narratives associated with conflict, that can make a conflict intractable are not created in a vacuum therefore but in relationship with geology. Narrative mediation theory takes stories such as these seriously (Winslade & Monk, 2008: 1). It is an approach premised on the idea that people live their lives through stories, and that these stories are not innocent but do hard work for people in the context of conflict (ibid). The task of narrative mediation is to inquire into the work they are doing (ibid). In the context of this research, this means asking what 'fantasy of flourishing' are they propping up? What version of the 'good life' do they promise? To what extent are they standing in the way of achieving it? To an extent, narrative mediation views a conflict story as a restraint (ibid., 3). We can ask people how it holds them back, how it uses up their energy, how it persuades them to think about the other person, what it costs them, how much power it has over them, and the extent to which it interferes with their best intentions (ibid., 13).

Significantly, stories can also offer openings into alternative stories. A central premise of narrative mediation is that underneath the dominant conflict-saturated narrative in which people may be stuck there is usually another quieter, preferred story out of which they would like to relate to each other, if they could (ibid., 8). The art of narrative mediation is therefore the art of 'double listening' that pays attention to what is not said, or what appears incongruous or inconsistent in the conflict-related story people tell as a means of surfacing alternatives (ibid., 7). While the phenomenological approach assumes that meaning inheres in the causal stories people tell about how things have got to be the way they are (Paley, 2017: 115), narrative mediation is intended to be alert to the *surplus* meaning that may spill out around the 'encapsulated' conflict stories that people tell (Winslade & Monk, 2008: 9). As

Winslade and Monk write, the skill of the mediator lies in catching these moments and inquiring into them not in a spirit of revealing inconsistency, contradiction or hypocrisy but in the recognition that 'inconsistency and contradiction are to be expected and can be valuable resources for constructing narratives to fit the complexity of life' (ibid., 27).

Certainly, an alternative story exists underneath the dominant narrative at the Stan Terg mine. While the conflict-related story of persecution, resistance, loss, sacrifice, exile and eventual return is the one most readily offered, another quieter, more difficult, often transgressive story emerged during the interviews with the mineworkers of nostalgia for the pre-war Yugoslav past, of disillusion with fellow Albanians, of curiosity about former Serb colleagues who haven't been seen since the war, and of uncertainty that the struggle of achieving independence has actually been worth it. But double listening also revealed something else. Not just incongruity in *what* people said, but incongruity in *where* they said it. Expressions of optimism about the mine expressed by one miner contrasted strangely with the ruination around us as we talked. The professed willingness to work with Serbs again was contradicted by the flags and the banners and the photos of Albanian resistance fighters in the union office. The nostalgia for the past articulated by one miner as we stood outside the ruin of the café that he used to visit in the English Colony sat strangely with the laboured sound of his breathing and his repeated assertion that the mine harms people.

Although I was not able to access the working Serb miners in northern Kosovo informal conversations with retired miners there unearthed something similar.[31] They reveal an orebody that is perceived to be woven tightly together with the economic survival of this peculiar part of Kosovo where there are no meaningful economic alternatives to the mine. As one of the retired miners said, 'Trepca is one of the main factors for the survival of the Serbian people in northern Kosovo.' Like the Albanian miners, the Serbs are also concerned about the future for their children, the fact that they need jobs and that the crumbling mines are the only places to find them. The conversations also reveal a conflict-related narrative which is a

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[31] These informal conversations were not a formal part of the methodology for this research but were part of information gathering during the process of assessing how best to approach this research context. Snippets of the conversation are included here because of what they illustrate but they are not intended to serve as a direct comparison with the miners at Stan Terg.

reversal of the one the Albanian miners told. According to the Serbs the Albanian miners were not sacked but left their positions voluntarily, they were not victims of Serb persecution but on a mission to erode Serb rights and Serbs were only promoted into management positions before the war to subdue an attempt by the Albanians to take the mine over. North of the river Ibar geology therefore sediments a conflictive narrative in which persecutors are protectors, victims have agency, and someone else is to blame for what happened here.

But again, there is another story behind the dominant narrative, that can be heard in this exchange:

> Retired miner 2: Oh, OK. All of our former colleagues, the people we used to work with and live with. I don't think they would say anything bad about us and we wouldn't say anything bad about them.
>
> Retired miner 1: It's not that we don't want to say anything bad. We lived together and worked together, and it was all fine. We celebrated things together. We collaborated. What the Albanians did, somebody forced them. Of course, there were people who were extreme nationalists on both sides. On our side as well, but I can say that we had less. You know it yourselves, if there is nationalism on one side there is on the other side as well. But in general, I think someone is using them for their own agenda. That's what I think. Maybe I'm wrong […] nothing was preventing us from living together. But somebody wanted to divide us. Someone else. I think it's a pity what happened. We all lost. We lost industry, we lost jobs, we lost everything. Our industry is destroyed. The country is behind the rest of the world because the industry is destroyed.

What exists in these stories are openings to different ways of being than the one that has become entrenched. The Kosovan Albanian mineworkers in the south, and the Serbian mineworkers in the north I spoke with, are not inevitably nor irretrievably divided but share a perspective that neither they nor their former colleagues were to blame, that they have a history of getting on together, that what happened at Kosovo has been a loss for everyone, that the real concern is the future their children and grandchildren will inherit and the risk that families will be split up by the need to seek work elsewhere. The orebody is common ground for some commonly held concerns.

I propose that the orebody is a 'strategic where' for peace (Ledearch, 2005: kindle location 1546). It is a place where the not-like-minded and the not like-situated cross and come together. It holds stories together that are conflicting and contradictory. It keeps different people attached to the world in a way that seems effortful. It is a place where contesting hopes converge, and conflict becomes intractable. The peacebuilding question is what sort of better 'good life' can people negotiate here together? Following on from this, I propose that the mineworkers are akin to Lederach's 'critical yeast' in peacebuilding (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1763). In other words, they are the essential small element that could catalyze large-scale change. Lederach argues that creating social change is not about trying to achieve critical mass for an idea at the outset but strategically seeding change (ibid: kindle location 1795). What is important in the first place, he argues, is the "who" rather than the "how many" question (ibid: kindle location 1852). The issue, in other words, is not quantity, but quality in terms of working out who has the capacity to create and maintain the exponential growth of an idea, and with whom. As Lederach writes, the question is

> [w]ho, though not like-minded or like-situated in this context of conflict, would have a capacity, if they were mixed and held together, to make other things grow exponentially, beyond their numbers? (ibid.).

Following Lederach, it seems possible that the mineworkers have the capacity to seed social change. They are the ones most affected by the current uncertainty and intractability concerning the Trepca combine's future and they were most affected by the events that unfolded here before, during and after the war. And while their attachment to the orebody seems enduring and their conflict-related narratives powerful and contradictory, their attachment to the orebody is also precarious. Whatever 'complex and difficult' (Galtung, 1969: 167) social change needs to happen to shift the current conflict associated with Trepca, it may be that the miners are well placed to instigate it. Indeed, the mineworkers at Stan Terg have a sense of how strategically placed they are for engendering peace in Kosovo.

> The whole problem started here in Trepca and I strongly believe the solution will also be in Trepca […] if we learn to develop Kosovo together peace will happen' (P.1).

> Let me tell you that if we miners want to cooperate then everyone in Kosovo will support us because I am pretty sure that all the country has their eyes on us […] there is only one bad thing with the miners which is that we started losing hope (P.3).

> It all depends on the miners. It all depends on the miners and how they want to cooperate (P.3).

But the orebody at Stan Terg is also a strategic where for peace because it engenders peace. It pulls people together and changes the relationship between them. It makes them cooperate, trust each other, and joke together. It 'participates in the action' (Latour, 2004) of peacebuilding. If, as Leonardsson and Rudd (2015) argue, peacebuilding needs to involve the 'voices from below' this research demonstrates that the voices from below in Kosovo, human and geologic, have something to say about how they can live well together.

Lederach writes that the two 'greatest tragedies that negatively affect peacebuilding' are

> (1) the inability to recognize and see what exists in a place that could have potential or is already building the web infrastructure of constructive change; and (2) stepping quickly toward action to provide short-term answers to predetermined problems driven by a sense of urgency. In both cases the in situ web of change – people, processes, and relational spaces – are overlooked, ignored, and diminished, or, worse, replaced or destroyed (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 2169).

This research has unearthed something of the *in situ* web of change at Stan Terg, that is not just buried within the orebody but also engendered by it. What exists around Stan Terg now is not (just) a surfacing of the violence of extraction (Braun et al, 2015) or the release of the underground power of the 'netherworld' into the social world (Bridge, 2013, 56), but is also an *inability* to release what else is buried here; friendship, trust, humour, respect, dignity, enchantment, and a sense that the orebody might have its own ideas about how it should be treated. It is this peacebuilding potential that is likely to be overlooked, ignored, replaced or destroyed (ibid) by top-down peace prescriptions that are applied too quickly. Any natural resource-related peacebuilding endeavour should therefore ask what *in situ* seeds for positive geosocial change exist? And how can they be surfaced?

This is a problem-solving, short-term approach to natural resource-related peacebuilding based on a somewhat utilitarian orientation to the real-world problems of the present. But there is a problem with leaving natural resource-related peacebuilding here. While we have to address immediate problems, the future this approach ushers in may be a weak one, in which the extractive-led growth paradigm as it currently exits remains untroubled. The next section is therefore intended to add a layer of abstraction to the peacebuilding approach proposed so far, as a means of thinking more deeply about what it means to live well with our natural resources.

7.2. THINKING PAST THE PARADIGM.

7.2.1. The Orebody as a Significantly Problematic Object

Berlant's theory of cruel optimism was introduced in the introduction to this thesis as an 'analytical lever' for understanding the human geologic relationship. Berlant writes that whatever it is that people are attached to, an object, an idea, a political project, can be recast as a 'cluster of promises' that people want it to make to them about what a good life is and who it is for. It is these promises that bind us to certain modes of life, even ones that threaten our wellbeing (Berlant, 2011: 16). The idea of the orebody as a cluster of promises is central to the conceptualization of peacebuilding offered here. I argue that an orebody can be understand as a rhizomatic tangle of conflicting and converging promises about what it means to live a good life and who that good life is for that do not exist *a priori* but are context-specific and have evolved over time in relation to the orebody. It is these promises that animate an orebody and make it vibrant. While this research has been concerned with the promises embedded by the mineworkers, there are other promises embedded in an orebody by other people; shopkeepers, taxi drivers and university students who live nearby, members of environmental NGOs, mining executives, local and national politicians, company shareholders, sustainable development experts, anti-mining activists and climate change protestors, near and far from the site of its extraction, who all have an idea of what a good life is, and who it is for, in relation to natural resources. An orebody is animated by the UNEP and the World Bank who argue for the better management of resource revenues for peace. It is embedded with promises by anyone who wants to paint their house, take an antidepressant, install a new washing machine, buy a handgun.

The result is an orebody that promises jobs for children and a 'normal life' in the aftermath of war. It promises to sediment a project of political independence and to be the economic 'backbone' of a disputed political entity. It promises people that suffering has been worthwhile. It promises a 'wished-for' life of ethnic separation and division and the chance to work with old colleagues again. It promises prosperity and also to produce 'cripples.' It solidifies a nostalgic attachment to a mining life that has passed, and a new sort of future. It promises cheap flights, new kitchens, and upgraded smartphones. It promises one prosperous future through the 'business-as-usual' of being extracted for some and another prosperous future through leaving it in the ground for others. It promises "the change that's gonna come" on one hand and the change 'that is *not* going to come on the other' (Berlant, 2011: 345). As Berlant writes 'one of optimism's ordinary pleasures is to induce conventionality, that place where appetites find a shape in the predictable comforts of the good-life genres that a person or a world has seen fit to formulate (Berlant, 2011: 345).

What we are left with is a lively orebody that is a tangle of conflicting and converging promises about the future. Berlant argues that cruel optimism is the condition of maintaining an attachment to a 'significantly problematic object' (Berlant 2011: 717) and I argue that an orebody can be understood as a 'problematic object' not because it is problematic per se but because of the conflicting, contradictory, difficult, dangerous, transformative, rational and deeply *irrational* things we want an orebody to do for us, how these animate an orebody, and how an orebody mediates our behaviour in response. But an orebody is also a problematic object because it is what it objectively *is* withdrawn from its relationship with humans; a slow sedimentation of geological time that is telling its own geological story, but not necessarily to us. Whatever vision of the 'good life' we want an orebody to achieve for us it cannot do so indefinitely.

I draw on narrative mediation theory to argue that this lively, problematic orebody can be *externalized*. The point of externalizing is to create a 'third space' that is the problem requiring attention. It is a means of depersonalizing conflict. As Winslade and Monk write externalizing is

a mode of language use that shifts the relational ground between a person and a conflict. It invites people to see the conflict as a third party (one that has a life of its own) and as leading them along a path (willingly or unwillingly) that may or may not suit them (2008: 13).

Rather than just thinking about how to more fairly divide an orebody up and sharing it out as the UNEP Guide for Mediators (2015) suggests, we can ask *what has our attachment to natural resources created? Where is this attachment to natural resources leading us? How well does that destination suit us? And what alternatives exist?*

7.2.2. Dealing with the Future.

> What I took with me into peace studies from future studies is to ask the parties to a conflict "what is the future you would like to have?" (Galtung, 2013)

Natural resource-related peacebuilding conceptualized this way becomes a 'futures problem' (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 606). In this section I propose that the problematic orebody may create a locus and a focus for thinking about peacebuilding and reconciliation as a futures-focused endeavour in which a preferred future is not conjured in the abstract but grounded in the orebody itself. As the futurist Ziauddin Sardar writes

> On the whole, what we actually study when we study the future is the ideas – yours, mine, theirs – about what society, world, humanity and planet will be like in decades to come. As your ideas about the future are as important and valid as mine, and those of others, the future, and its exploration, becomes an area that is constantly and continuously negotiated and contested. *Moreover, we cannot really study 'the future' in the abstract; we have to be explicit and talk about the future of something specific – an object, subject, or situation – then examine how it will change, develop and look in the decades to come.* So, we may, for example, look at the future of the internet, education, pensions, genetic technology, farming, water, climate and the Middle East (Sardar 2014: kindle location 108, emphasis added).

In making this move I bring together two disciplines - peacebuilding and futures studies – that share a common heritage that has been lost in mainstream conflict resolution practice (Finlev, 2012: 50) amidst a now predominant understanding of reconciliation as a process of 'dealing with the past' and healing past violence (Fischer & Petrović-Ziemer, 2015; Franović, Vukosavljević & Šmidling, 2012; Moon, 2009). However, two of the people recognized as the founders of peace studies, Johan Galtung and Elise Boulding, both understood the

connectivity of peace studies and future studies. Galtung was a futurist before he was a peacebuilder and was the first President of the World Futures Studies Federation when it was established with the support of UNESCO in 1973 (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 454). Galtung argues that the first question to ask people emerging from conflict isn't about the past, but the future and the 'sort of future people wish to have' (Galtung, 2013). For Galtung, the task of peacebuilding is to draw attention to what is complex and difficult on the 'political, intellectual, and scientific agenda' not just of today but of tomorrow (Galtung 1969: 168). Hutchinson and Milojević point out that the feminist peace theorist, educator and futurist Elise Boulding believed that people need to be able to imagine non-violent futures and the 'practical, peace-building steps' that would be required to achieve them (Hutchinson & Milojević 2012: 153). More recently, Ivana Milojević (2002), Sohail Inayatullah (2008) and Tessa Finlev (2012) have argued for the contribution of futures studies for peacebuilding as a means of breaking cycles of violence by addressing what Finlev describes as the inability of people living in violence to 'think about a peaceful future, or any future for that matter' (Finlev, 2012: 47). Finally, Umar Sheraz (2014) has proposed foresight as a tool for development in natural resource extraction in Afghanistan as a means of evaluating the role of minerals in the Afghan economy and avoiding the resource curse.

Futures studies is the complex process of thinking creatively about the future; 'what might happen, what we would like to happen, what we would have to do to ensure that certain things happen' (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 77) as a means of making 'rational decisions on the kind of future we desire' and how we might achieve it (ibid). Conceptualizing the orebody as a cluster of promises is a way of understanding it as a cluster of alternative futures, some of which are objectively 'better' than others (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 581). Taking a futures-focused approach therefore means considering all the potential futures embedded in an orebody by a multitude of not like-minded and not like-situated people near and far to the site of its extraction. This means considering not just the conflictive 'other' but also the geochemists working on life cycle efficiency (Harrison et al 2019), the artists wondering how to 'change the meaning of a mine' (Glogowski, 2020),[32] the climate change experts (Allwood

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[32] Glogowski writes 'I argue for a new understanding of the mining industry. Apart from closed-off, seemingly alienated corporate structures, I reconceptualize the mine's (architectural) opening towards the environment. I thus challenge the incorporation of the arts into the early stages of a mine design as a

et al., 2019), those working in the field of sustainable development and the circular economy (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017; Schmidt et al, 2019), mining industry professionals and consultants engaging with the need to 'reimagine' mine closure in a way that ensures the long-term future of local communities and the environment (Keith and van Rensburg, 2017) and anyone who consumes the minerals and metals the earth affords, which means *everyone*. An orebody is a 'strategic where' for all of us (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 3613). This opens natural resource-related peacebuilding up to potentially more transformative, agonistic conversations about what it means for human bodies and geological bodies to live well together beyond the formula that mining-equals-prosperity-equals-peace. What does it mean to resource a future in which resources are limited? How will the demands of the green transition for metals and minerals be met? And what might this mean for people that live in conflict-affected places that are rich in natural resources? Futures thinking opens up natural resource-related peacebuilding to other possible ways of being for humans and orebodies beyond the 'used future' that may have been inherited and that no longer, necessarily, serves a purpose (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 669). It is perhaps a means of unblocking a rhizome, and the sedimented links and patterns that exist within it in order to envision and create alternatives.

By way of one example Professor Sue Harrison is the Director of the Centre of Bioprocess Engineering Research at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The focus of her work is on the biochemical mechanisms of making mining more efficient. Harrison and her team have been working with the Future Water Research Institute at UCT to explore the potential of fibre-rich plants for remediating degraded mine land and adding to a multi-product value chain (see Harrison et al, 2019). Their research has found that fibre-producing plants have an affinity for polluted mine sites in terms of their ability to absorb heavy metals from the ground and can produce a crop of commercial value. Professor Harrison argues that old mining sites

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creative tool for embracing wicked complexities between animate and inanimate stakeholders, inducing economic independency and foresight, empowerment and emotional wellbeing. Reflected beyond questions on transparency, empathy and meaning as new corporate pathways, site-specific spaces for connectedness and participation could induce important steps towards new forms of dialogue, imagination and creation. In times of pandemics like Covid-19 such common, local and planetary future scenarios seem more than pressing.'

can therefore be transformed to produce flax, bamboo or whatever fibre-producing plant is locally appropriate, and old mining infrastructure can (hypothetically) be turned over to the manufacture of the downstream products. Professor Harrison's work is not in the field of natural resource related peacebuilding, but what is the potential of this, or something like this, for transforming the Trepca complex north and south of the River Ibar in the future? What potential would this hold for cross-border collaboration, as a way of quieting geology here, and reinventing the industrial base of the region? And what would this mean for the mineworkers?

For a second example I turn to a conversation I had with the head of the settlement nearest to the Olovo mine. We talked about his support for the mine. 'We count on it for the future' he said 'and we fully support the mine in terms of employment which means people will stay here rather than leave the country.' But we also talked about his other concerns. He was the fiercest opponent of the expansion of raspberry production in the area because of the herbicides and pesticides they use and because of the catastrophic affects these have on bees' navigational systems and the impact of this for local beekeepers. While there used to be 120 beekeepers, now there are only ten. He talked of the 11 water springs they have locally. But most of all he talked about his own vision about how he would change his community. Not through mining but through tourism. There would be homemade bread made of locally grown wheat, horses to ride, a traditional lunch offered and places to sleep. 'We know how it should function' he said, 'but I only have five euros in my pocket.' While mining jobs may be important, people who live near the Olovo mine have other concerns, and other ideas about what it means to live well in a particular place that may be in danger of getting swamped by the promise of resource extraction. But they also offer ways in which resource revenues might be used to seed alternative futures to the one associated with mining.

Natural resource related peacebuilding conceptualized this way seems akin to the practice of 'visioning' in futures studies. As Sardar writes, visioning is a process of the 'heart giving us a voice to articulate our most deeply felt values and goals' (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 1040) and prompting the generation of bold, hopeful ideas about what a community will look like in 20, 30, 50 or one hundred years from now. As Berlant has said 'we can't presume the

present and hope for a future' (Barnard Centre for Research on Woman, 2011). The question is

> what do we want the good life to be, collectively? Can we imagine something we would be willing to have? The reorganization of space means being willing to lose your object. You lose the archaic good life that you grew up with. We need an imaginary that we can move towards' (ibid).

But while visions are intended to 'inspire and encourage people to act' not everyone will want to go in the same direction. Even in places that are not recovering from a recent history of conflict 'there will be men and women, people with different ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds. They will all have different hopes and aspirations for the future and therefore different visions' (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 1050.) How can these different futures be reconciled in the context of conflict?

The Two-Hundred Year Present

For Sardar, one solution is to move 'beyond individual concerns' and to think about the consequences of what we do now on future generations (2014: kindle location 286). He argues that we have a moral commitment to future people not to harm them, destroy their environment, or undermine their potential. The question is how much our desirable future will cost our children, our grandchildren and our greatgrandchildren? This means thinking about the future not in terms of the next five or ten years but in terms of the next 100. Sardar draws on Elise Boulding to suggest that the horizon of social change should be placed within a 200-year present that projects 100 years in front of us and 100 years behind us. It connects the wisdom of our great grandparents with our concern for our great grandchildren, or the great grandchildren of others. As Sardar writes, 'this is the temporal space that we actually inhabit, move around in, and in which we touch and are touched by people around us, young and old' (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 294). The 200-year present multiplies the number of potential futures and makes them more profound.

This is the same 200-year present that Lederach refers to as a means of placing peacebuilding in more transformative territory (2005: kindle location 573). The 200-year present reminds us what actually matters and what does not. It orientates us toward 'a new and more humane

horizon' in which we discover a deeper sense of 'who we are, where we are situated, and where we are going' together (ibid). The geologist Marcia Bjornerud also refers to the 200-year present as the appropriate timeframe for economic decision-making because it forces a confrontation with the magical thinking that we can live beyond our geological means indefinitely (Bjornerud, 2016: 164). As she writes

> An attitude of timefulness could transform our relationship with nature, our fellow humans, and ourselves. Recognizing that our personal and cultural stories have always been embedded in larger, longer - and still elapsing – Earth stories might save us from environmental hubris. We might learn to place less value on novelty and disruption, and develop respect for durability and resilience. Understanding how historical happenstance is written into each of our personal lives might cause us to treat each other with more empathy (2018: kindle location 2845)

I propose that conceptualizing natural resource-related peacebuilding in the 200-year present unshackles the idea of peace from the act of resource extraction and places it instead in the challenging terrain of mine closure and the post-mining future. As Bond has argued closure is the 'bridge to transfer capital extracted from mining to generations to come (Bond, 2002: v). The question is less about the peace dividends from mining accrued now and more about the geosocial legacy that will be left for future generations.

Reimagining Closure

Every mine has a projected 'mine life' after which an orebody will no longer be economically viable to extract and the life of a mine is often framed within the autobiographical tempo of human lives – perhaps fifty, seventy or even one hundred years. It is a temporal scale that has allowed the issue of mine closure and the environmental and social legacies a mine leaves behind to have been neglected. As a result, an estimated 75 per cent of mines are closed prematurely and without proper planning. In an article entitled *Reimagining Closure* on the ausIMM website Andrew Keith and Frank van Rensburg argue that 'mine closure and rehabilitation present one of the most difficult challenges in the sector' (Keith & van Rensburg, 2017). They identify an urgent need for industry collaboration and innovation in order to reimagine mine closure to ensure the sustainability of local communities and environments' (Keith & van Rensburg, 2017). What is at issue is mine dependence and the

fact that communities and local businesses will have 'grown up' with a mine and cannot necessarily survive without it. Ceasing operations therefore can imply economic and social loss through unemployment, population out-migration and business downtown.

If mine closure is an urgent issue in non-conflict affected contexts, I argue it must be significantly more pressing where people may still be re-negotiating a new normal in the aftermath of violence and where the infrastructures of division may still exist and where closing a mine down might present a significant hazard. I propose that the role of a mining company in peacebuilding and reconciliation should be as part of an externally mediated, agonistic, *heteroglossic,* futures-focused negotiation that asks where a community wants to be after a mine has closed down and how a mining company can help them get there. What long-term peacebuilding initiatives can it invest in now that will be enduring? What legacy can it leave for future generations, human and geologic?

7.2.3. Dealing with the Future. A Quietist Surrender?

So far natural resource-related peacebuilding has been reframed as a futures-focused endeavour that involves reimagining the geosocial future. The distinct contribution of futures studies to peacebuilding, however, is that it offers a means of lifting a peacebuilding endeavour out of the difficult territory of truth, forgiveness, mercy and justice and placing it somewhere that may (at least temporarily) offer firmer ground for working out how people and geology can live together again in the aftermath of violence. It is an endeavour that, as Milojević states moves away from 'the problem' of 'detrimental historical stories, unmet expectations, violence that happened in the past' towards the envisioning of future alternatives that are 'positive, imaginative, creative and doable' (Milojević, 2008: 8). Placing natural resource-related peacebuilding into the future of the orebody and the geosocial relationship that animates it and makes it lively is a means of grounding peacebuilding not in the difficult relationship between people but in the difficult relationship between people on one hand and geology on the other.

There is a potential danger in taking a futures-focused approach, however. It can imply what Alexander Hirsch refers to in *Theorizing Post-Conflict Reconciliation. Agonism, restitution and repair* as a 'quietist surrender' of victim to perpetrator, the need to be reconciled to a version

of history that is not your own, or a deliberate muting of the past so that it does not disrupt the present and the future (Hirsch, 2012: kindle location 236). As he writes, '[i]n some cases, an injunction to 'move on', to leave the painful past behind in the name of a conciliatory future, is too quickly prescribed, resulting in the repression rather than release of the traumatic event' (Hirsch, 2012: kindle location 244).

For Johan Galtung taking a futures focus does not mean ignoring what has happened or the psychological trauma that still exists. Rather it means placing it (as he puts it) 'a little bit second' although he recognizes this is controversial (Galtung, 2013). Galtung's argument is that it is easier for people to imagine the future than it is to revisit the past in the aftermath of conflict. The first, however, is intended to pave the way for the second (Bloomfield, 2006: 14). Lederach agrees. As he writes 'envisioning a common future creates new lenses for dealing with the past' (Lederach, 1997: 31). Grounding natural resource-related peacebuilding in the future is not intended to downplay, neglect or ignore the serious psychological and emotional harm that has been suffered in the past and that continues to shape the present. Nor is it to suggest, as Boege and Franks do, that divided communities in areas rich in natural resource must reconcile with each other as a precursor to negotiating better mining-related outcomes. Rather it is to suggest (as Galtung implies) that perhaps people need to know how they can get on with life before working out how they can get on with each other.

7.2.4. Just Transition. 'Addressing the Fundamental Needs of Everyone.

So far, this chapter has reframed an orebody as a vibrant 'cluster of promises' (Berlant, 2011: 23) and peacebuilding as a futures-focused process of working out where this vibrant orebody is taking us, how well that destination suits us and what alternative futures might exist. I have conceptualized the orebody as a 'problematic object' (Berlant, 2011: 24) that is problematic not just because of the conflicting promises that animate it and make it lively but also because it is what it objectively *is*, withdrawn from its relationship with humans; a resource that is non-renewable in a human lifespan at least. I have placed natural resource related peacebuilding specifically into the difficult domain of mine closure. Thinking about natural resource-related peace should not (just) be an endeavour of thinking about the prosperity that may come while a mine is operating but the geosocial prosperity that should remain long

after it has shut down. But I have also argued elsewhere in this thesis that an orebody is both grounded and boundless in a way that collapses problematic distinctions between local and global, top-down and bottom-up, intervener and intervened-upon. We all embed promises into geology – in our laptops, our smartphones, our anti-depressants – that we want it to make to us about what a good life is and who it is for. We all have a difficult, irrational relationship with what is under our feet. Is there a way of understanding natural resource-related peacebuilding that pulls all these ideas together?

I argue that the concept of *just transition* might prove useful. The *just transition* concept initially emerged as a means of working out how to protect coal miners and prevent 'stranded communities' as mines are shut down as part of the green transition (Smith, 2017). The concept has been broadened and deepened by Swilling and Annecke (2012) who understand it as a radical reimagining of the future in the context of climate change and in the face of contemporary development paradigms that have ignored the 'incontrovertible partnership' between the human and the non-human by exploiting natural resources at a rate that is greater than their capacity to regenerate (2012: kindle location 833). For Swilling and Annecke, a just transition means a commitment to sustainability from the billion 'over-consumers' of the world's resources in order to avoid widening inequalities and exacerbating conflict. What is required are not the small changes we may already be making but something more profound. As they write

> A world with many countries destroyed by resource wars is a distinct possibility if the billion over-consumers that live out urbane, sophisticated lives continue to assume that everything will be all right if minor adjustments are made, such as fitting solar panels and eating organic food. These are important for individuals, but insignificant in the greater scheme of things. A just transition will have to be more fundamental and globally relevant, especially as we hit global resource limits' (2012: kindle location 407)

Swilling and Annecke warn against the danger of greening existing modes of consumption and production without addressing the social inequalities that underlie them. They point to the concept of the *unjust* transition in which private sector investments build low-carbon, resource-efficient economies with reduced environmental impacts in a way that produces 'a divided, poverty-stricken, conflictual and socially unsustainable *low carbon* world (2012:

kindle location 355). A just transition for Swilling and Annecke is therefore a transition to a world in which there are more sustainable, equitable societies that respect the fact that human survival depends on the natural systems with which our lives have evolved. What is particularly relevant for this research is their argument that just transition offers an opportunity to ask how the innovations, investments and interventions required to address resource depletion will impact everyone.

> Economic recovery can no longer depend on cheap resources extracted from some outlying region, nor will prices be lowered by applying new technologies that will somehow magically deliver ways of transcending geophysical and biological limits. Something fundamental must change in the way in which economies relate to their environment […] *A just transition […] will regard the innovations, investments and interventions required to address resource depletion and impacts as unique opportunities to simultaneously address the wide range of fundamental needs of everyone'* (2012, p 450, emphasis added)

Indeed, the orebody at Olovo alerts us to this danger. The Swich-On/Switch-Off containerized mining technology that is being developed there is a means of greening our current metals production in terms of its environmental impact. But there is a potential cost to the community stuck in the current post-socialist, post-conflict morass. What long-term 'normal life' can be negotiated around resource extraction as short-term and small-scale as this? What is environmentally responsible for some might justifiably appear like a resource 'smash and grab' for others. Natural resource-related peacebuilding should therefore be understood as part of a broad, deep and difficult just transition away from our current relationship with natural resources to a new one in a way that takes care of the needs of everyone, particularly those living in conflict-affected contexts. The concern of natural resource-related peacebuilding is not just avoiding exacerbating conflict but considering how both human and geologic lives can flourish.

7.2.4. Making Cruel Optimism Crueler?

There is optimism implied in this conceptualization of peacebuilding. Is it a cruel one? Will it keep people attached to an idea of peacebuilding and a project of social change amid the evidence that such projects do not deliver what they promise? As Lederach writes 'by all accounts our track record of strategic engagement of the public sphere in peace processes is weak, if it exists at all' (2005: kindle location 1239). I argue (with Sardar and Lederach) that

what is required is not an attitude of optimism towards what is offered here but scepticism and even pessimism as a means of keepings things 'close to the hard reality that must be changed' (Lederach, 2005: kindle location 1288; Sardar, 2014: kindle location 623). The point of this is constantly to ask what else is possible; 'what other perspectives are there? What impact will this or that future have on others? And ultimately: *cui bono?'* (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 628). In the end I place my own constructive scepticism towards what is offered here in the orebody itself. Whatever else may come and go in conflict-affected contexts our troubled relationship with geological strata is not going to disappear. As Bjornerud writes 'the great irony of the Anthropocene is that our outsized effects on the planet have in fact put Nature firmly back in charge, with a still-unpublished set of rules we will simply have to guess at' (Bjornerud, 2018: 158). As Latour (2018), Bennett (2010, Bjornerud (2018) and Olsen (2010) all intimate, in the context of climate change we have no choice but to re-think our relationship with the objects, places and landscapes with which we dwell. The vibrant, chatty, silenced, uncertain orebodies that are the focus of this research demand our attention however much we might prefer to ignore them amid the noise of violent conflict, and however much easier it might be to do so.

8

'GEOLOGY SAYS: IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT.'

INTRODUCTION.

I drive past the smelter in Zvečan, in northern Kosovo. The 306 meter-tall red and white striped smokestack is striking in the sunlight. The ore used to come here from the Stan Terg mine, high in the hills to the left, but the cable car that transported it has long gone. In the same way that certain people can no longer travel here easily, their rocks can't either. I want to stop at the smelter, but there are police parked by the gate. Instead, I drive up to the Zvečan fortress, perched on a hilltop high above the smelter, winding my way up the hill where the Scottish General Manager and his wife and daughter used to live, past small houses with neat gardens, a tangle of bushes strewn with plastic bags, small shops with low benches outside for people to sit on, and discarded coffee mugs, 'ubi hrvata da shiptarnema brata' (kill Croats and their Muslim Brothers) spray painted in red on a wall. I park the car and walk up to the fortress. The vast smelter is now spread out below me, its rusting guts showing through the roofless buildings, that tower incongruously tall even from here. Behind it, the main road to Belgrade slices its way across the foot of a high hill. I follow the long shadow of the tower up the sunlit hillside and spot distant outcrops of rock and the old stanchions that used to support the cable car that transported ore here from Stan Terg in the days when both people and geology could mix more easily together. Beside the smelter, the flat valley floor has disappeared under a thick, bilious-looking smear of yellow tailings. I meet a family with two teenage children who are visiting from Germany. The parents were born here, and the father worked at Trepca just before the war. The mother tells me they had their blood tested for lead when they arrived in

Germany. We gaze down at the smelter, together. 'They should just sweep it all away' she says. (Excerpted from research journal, November 9, 2018)

Over eighty years ago, Rebecca West and Gospodin Mac stood on the bridge I had just driven over and looked down the valley at the same discarded material. From ground level it was 'a square-cut hill of waste' writes West, 'which in the sunshine was the colour of something deader than death or death without the hope of wholesome putrefaction and dissolution' (West, 2016: 939). Throughout this thesis I have argued that geology can mediate human behaviour. But a mediator also an interpreter. She reflects what people do and what they say back to them. She *reframes* and clarifies things. Is the orebody, like Povinelli's figure of the desert, also an interpretant? (Povinelli, 2013). Is this yellow smear of tailings, the extracted, surfaced, processed and discarded orebody, radically 'giving its backbone' to the way in which it has been treated by people since West was here? (ibid). Is it saying, (like Povinelli's desert) 'I don't want your form of life?' (ibid). According to Povinelli, the point of this is that something different happens ethically, when you read places this way (2013). Like Bakker and Bridge's 'landfill leachate, acid mine wastes, or groundwater flow' this smear of tailings is entangled with human lives and the lives of other beings in a way that seems to give it a say in political life (Bakker & Bridge, 2006: 11).

In the last chapter I argued for a futures-focused approach to natural resource-related peacebuilding grounded in the orebody and the conflicting, difficult and irrational promises people embed within it as a means of surfacing alternative geosocial futures. But grounding peacebuilding and reconciliation in a geological body reminds us that while we can usefully focus on the distant future, we are also dealing with the distant past. What I see below me on the valley floor is the geological past stripped of what humans consider useful and discarded. The human past and the geological past come together here in a scene of ruination, degradation, and death. In the first part of this chapter, I argue for a more 'deep-time awareness' (MacFarlane, 2019: 15) to natural resource-related peacebuilding as a means of slowing down our gaze on the problem of natural resource extraction and peace. In the second section of this chapter, I conclude this thesis.

8.1 DEALING WITH THE PAST.

In the course of this thesis, I have drawn on Bjørnar Olsen's argument that it is the durability and 'in-placeness' of things that are their 'most important culturally constitutive and socially constructive qualities' because it is these qualities that afford people a sense of existential security by providing a world that is solid and predictable (Olsen, 2010: 160). I have argued (following Olsen) that there is little more durable and 'in-place' than an orebody and therefore little as capable of affording humans a sense of a world that is unchanging. People can embed promises into an orebody that they cannot embed into a boat, a reindeer fence, or a gas station (Olsen, 2010: 159). But there is also little *less* durable and in-place than an orebody. An orebody is a space traveler, a shape shifter and a nomad. It is both geological heft and a teaspoon. As such it is a place where a sense of security seems to be both engendered and disrupted through the process of its extraction.

But there is more to Olsen's idea of durability and in-placeness than this. As Olsen writes durability and in-placeness are related to the ways in which things, objects and landscapes solidify and sediment the past and hold it in place so that each generation is receiving 'an increasingly greater share of it' in the materiality they inherit and the ways in which they must negotiate their way around it (Olsen, 2010: 161). The past is layered into the roads, buildings bridges, tunnels, monuments, graveyards, power stations and industrial parks that make up our 'taken-for-granted' lifeworlds (ibid). And certain pasts seem to weigh more heavily in certain places than in others. The yellow tailings at Stan Terg, and the battery factory and the Potočari cemetery at Srebrenica seem proof of that.

An orebody is a sedimentation of time, too. The layers of strata of which it is composed are different pasts that have accumulated and solidified over millennia. The metals and minerals that tie societies together, that are in our cables, our pipes, our pylons, our railway tracks, and our trains and that we negotiate unthinkingly in our everyday lives are made out of the surfaced past. While Benjamin Bratton has written that we have small pieces of Africa in our pockets, referring to the coltan in our smartphones (Parikka, 2016: 986) we carry small pieces of the past in our pockets too.

Reconciliation is predominantly framed as a process of 'dealing with the past' (see for example Fischer & Petrović-Ziemer, 2009; Franović, Vukosavljević, & Šmidling, 2012). It is a concept that is contested, but there is consensus that reconciliation is concerned with doing *something* with what has been, for the sake of something temporal 'to come' (Hirsch, 2012: kindle location 311). Mining deals with the past, too. It excavates and surfaces the geological past and crushes it, floats it with chemicals, separates it into its constituent parts and discards what isn't wanted. Mining brings the geological past into the present, as part of a project of enabling the future.

In the end, thinking about natural resource extraction, peacebuilding and reconciliation can be reframed as a *re*thinking of what it is that we are doing with the deep past for the sake of the future in which peace is not (just) concerned with human security, but also with a more profound kind of flourishing in which human bodies and geological bodies are living well together. It requires taking a deep time sensibility to natural resource related peacebuilding and slowing down our hasty assumptions about what geology can help us to achieve. As Robert MacFarlane writes

> to think in deep time can be a means not of escaping our troubled present, but rather of re-imagining it; countermanding its quick greeds and furies with older, slower stories of making and unmaking. At its best, a deep time awareness might help us see ourselves as part of a web of gift, inheritance and legacy stretching over millions of years past and millions to come, bringing us to consider what we are leaving behind for the epochs and beings that will follow us (MacFarlane 2019: 15).

What I see below me on the valley floor in that yellow smear of tailings is a reminder that the early optimism embedded in this orebody in the 1920s that it would bring different people together, heal the rifts between them and make them prosperous has not turned out in the way that was expected. What would these toxic-looking tailings say to us now, if they could talk?

8.2. SUMMING IT UP.

This thesis has been shaped by the theoretical perspective of the peacebuilder John Paul Lederach (2004), combined with the post-intentional phenomenological approach of Mark Vagle (2014). What it offers is a slowing-down of our gaze on the problem of natural resource-related peacebuilding as it manifests itself in the literature produced in particular by the UNEP (Lujala & Aas Rustad 2012, UNEP 2015). While this literature makes a problem out of how to more fairly, more transparently and more responsibly share out the dividends of mining for peace this thesis makes a problem of something else; the human geologic relationship itself and where that relationship is leading us. The objective of this research has been to *complexify* this relationship, following Lederach's peacebuilding mantra "complexify before you simplify" (Lederach, 2004: kindle location 746). What is presented here is therefore a complex picture of a relationship of optimistic attachment to geology at the bottom of which is the human need to have a reciprocal relationship with a world that is difficult in order to understand one's place in it and to have a reason to look forward to being in it. An orebody affords both an 'infrastructure for proximity' (Berlant, 2011a: 684) that holds people who are different together, literally and figuratively, and an infrastructure for *continuity* (Berlant, 2011: 13) that helps make sense of what it means to be in a world that has been knocked off track by conflict . And yet in some ways this optimistic attachment appears to be a cruel one. At Stan Terg, Olovo and Sase, in different ways and to different degrees the orebody seems to stand in the way of the good life rather than engender it.

This thesis could have gone this far only but unearthing a relationship of optimistic attachment *to* an orebody meant ignoring the '"pull" of the world' (Lea, 2009: 374) that I sensed while I was working in Kosovo and Bosnia and neglecting what sounded like the voices of the orebodies themselves and the 'say' (Olsen 2010: 31) they seemed to have in what was going on there. And it meant putting aside the calls from Clark and Yusoff (2017), Latour (2018), Povinelli (2016) and Olsen (2010) in particular to make the 'geo' do some work as a means of opening up social thinking, particularly in the context of climate change (Yusoff & Clark, 2017). In responding to these calls, human and geologic, this thesis has further complicated what exists between human bodies and geological ones. It has unearthed three orebodies that seem to have three telluric personalities of their own in relationship with people. The point of this is that it may encourage a different way of thinking about natural resource-related peacebuilding that is not about *managing* an orebody for peace, as the

literature suggests, but wondering if and how it might also be managing us. What other more imaginative responses might this encourage? As Bennet writes

> Why advocate the vitality of matter? Because my hunch is that the image of dead or thoroughly instrumentalized matter feeds human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption. It does so by preventing us from detecting (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling) a fuller range of the nonhuman powers circulating around and within human bodies. These material powers, which can aid or destroy, enrich or disable, ennoble or degrade us, in any case call for our attentiveness, or even "respect" (2010: 87)

This thesis therefore inhabits an uncomfortable place in that the concepts of *cruel optimism* and *vibrant matter* represent two different ideas of intentionality. In cruel optimism the object is no more than the 'psychoanalytical halo' of promises that surround it and that have been directed towards it by humans (ACCUTE (2016). For Bennett, on the other hand, our relationship with objects gives them vibrancy that has agency and turns them into actants. Maintaining this 'both-and' approach in this research has not been straightforward. But I don't think the binary is as clear cut as this. Indeed, it was Berlant herself, rather than Bennett that prompted me to think about the orebody as vibrant. In her chapter in *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010) she writes of the 'surrender' to the scene of optimism where an object '*hovers in its potentialities*' (Berlant, 2010: kindle location 1289, emphasis added). For this thesis, this conjured an image of geology vibrating and humming with the potential of what people want it to do for them. In the end I use both theories to understand something more what it means to live a precarious life in the aftermath of conflict in places that are rich in natural resources.

In Chapter Seven the intention is to simplify complexity. A new way of thinking about natural resource-related peacebuilding is introduced that attempts to take account of what has been unearthed in this research. It understands an orebody not as inert or inevitable but as a rhizomatic entity that is animated by the cluster of conflicting and converging promises people embed in it near and far to the site of its extraction and that draws us all into a relational community in which the convergence can be understood not just as brutality, dirt and degradation, as Rosi Braidotti (2018) and Parikka (2015) suggest, but also *optimism*. As such, an orebody is a 'grounded' and a 'boundless' place (Relph, 2008: preface) that provides a locus for thinking about the contemporary challenges that face us all today related to

resource extraction and consumption and rooted in our optimistic attachment to the idea of the 'good life' we want geological bodies to promise us. Like Latour's 'dwelling place' in the new climatic regime an orebody is *'that on which a terrestrial depends for its survival,* while asking *what other terrestrials also depend on it?'* (Latour, 2018: 95, emphasis original). Latour's call is for us to generate new descriptions of our dwelling places in the context of climate change and our growing, uncomfortable realization that neither the global nor the local can provide us what we want them to. To an extent, the task of this research has been to redescribe the dwelling place of an orebody as a 'strategic where' for working out how humans and geology can live well together. While the mineworkers at Stan Terg and Olovo offer one specific entry point into this rhizome, there are multiple, countless others.

What has emerged alongside the rhizomatic orebody is a rhizomatic methodology that draws on the post-intentional phenomenological approach of Mark Vagle (2014). Vagle understands knowledge as partial, multiple and mobile and refers to Deleuze and Guattari to argue that we must embrace the rhizomatic lines-of-flight a phenomenon might take (2014: 135). From a methodological perspective this research eschews the usual tools of peacebuilding such as conflict trees, actor analyses, the identification of 'dividers and connectors', and windows of 'opportunity' and 'vulnerability' (see for example Levinger, 2013, Ramsbotham et al, 2011: 7-30) on the grounds that these offer an overly technical, overly binary approach to peacebuilding that does not capture the messiness, confusion and connectivities that exist and may stifle more imaginative approaches (Lederach, 2005: 67). For natural resource-related peacebuilding, what these approaches miss are the ways in which human lives and geological lives intersect and the stories people tell about that. While these tools have a role to play in peacebuilding, I argue (following Deleuze and Guattari's logic) that they risk producing a *tracing* of what exists rather than a map (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013: 12). In other words, while conflict analysis can reproduce what exists, it might not unearth new ways of understanding it.

What is offered here is therefore not grounded in conflict resolution models but focuses on the stories people tell about their lives in relation to the orebody, and also on the orebody itself as an actant. This thesis travels in some unexpected directions, unearths some unusual connections and discovers some other ways of engaging, thinking, and understanding the

relationship between people and natural resources in the context of conflict. The point of this more rhizomatic approach is that it shows us that the specific links, patterns and logics that exist in the natural resource-related peacebuilding literature are not the only ways of thinking about a particular problem. While the symbolic power of the agencies that have created this logic gives it a certain heft, there are other ways of thinking about the human geologic relationship in the aftermath of violence.

8.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

In the course of this research, I have sought to answer three questions:

> What is the relationship between humans and geology in the aftermath of violent conflict?
> What difference does the orebody make this relationship?
> What does this mean for building peace?

The answer to the first question is that the relationship between people and geology can be understood as a project of optimistic *attachment* that functions as a means of shoring up a sense of existential security. In the aftermath of conflict this attachment seems to provide an infrastructure for proximity in places where proximity is still problematic. In other words, an orebody provides a psychic space that holds people who are still in conflict (to some degree) together. It also functions as an infrastructure for continuity by bringing a certain future into view that is connected to the past. It is an attachment that seems akin to the way in which Berlant conceptualizes this relationship, as 'the affective dimension of being propped on and relying on an object onto which fantasies of flourishing are projected, such as those of what a good life is, who one's people are, what kinds of politics, ethics and value make things make satisfying sense' (Berlant, 2011a: 686-687). An orebody lends its geological heft, therefore, to a normative project of making life make sense in places where making life make sense has become effortful in the long transition from socialism and from war and in the political and economic impasse that currently exists.

Following Berlant, I argue that an orebody can be understood as a 'cluster of promises' that people want it to make to them connected with what a good life is, and who it is for (Berlant, 2011: 23). At Stan Terg, for example, the orebody promises the Kosovan Albanian miners prosperity for Kosovo, a unified Trepca, work that is 'halal', and an opportunity to work with Serbs again once Serbs accept their minority status within Kosovo. It promises that things will be different, that a region will flourish, that a national project of achieving political (and economic) independence will be successful. It promises that a war has been worthwhile. At Sase, it seems the project of ethnic separation that was pursued through an act of genocide during the war is being continued by other means, underground. At Olovo, the orebody promises the mineworkers a 'normal life' that is still eluding them over twenty years after the war ended. The attachment to the orebody is not just a means of working out who and where we are relative to the people around us therefore, as Sarbin's theory of 'emplotment' suggests. Rather it is a means of bringing a certain wished-for future into view and having a sense of who that future is for and how other people might fit into it, particularly the conflictive 'other'.

But there are other, conflicting promises embedded in the same orebody. For some mineworkers at Stan Terg, the orebody promises that life will go back to how it was before the war. For others it promises renewal and that Kosovo will become 'a different country, comparable to Switzerland' (P.6). It promises ethnic *integration* for those willing to work with Serbs again, and *separation* for those who are not. Taking a wider perspective, it promises one thing to one set of politicians and policy makers and something different to another. It both shores up Kosovan independence and also undermines it. At Olovo the promises embedded by the mineworkers are not necessarily compatible with the ones embedded by the team of researchers who have been using this orebody to prove a new short-term, 'switch-on, switch-off' mining technology.

The answer to the second question - *what difference does the orebody make to this relationship*? - is that an orebody is not just an object of attachment but becomes vibrant through the promises embedded in it, that animate it and make it lively. When humans and geology are in contact with each other they create something together and change each other over time. They become 'otherwise' together. At Stan Terg, where human bodies and the

orebody have been in an industrial-scale relationship for over one hundred years the orebody moves, breathes, and speaks. It is both toxic, polluting and enchanting and it has the power to mediate the ways in which people think, feel and act that is different depending on where they are situated vertically in relation to it. At both Olovo and Stan Terg the orebodies seem to have opinions of their own about what humans are doing to it and their voices emerge differently through the voices of the mineworkers. But an orebody also is what it objectively *is* withdrawn from its relationship with humans; a slow-moving geological entity that is telling its own life story in its own way. Whatever humans want it to do for them, it cannot do it indefinitely. The answer to the third question – *what does this mean for building peace?* - is that these promises make an orebody a 'problematic object' (Berlant 2011: 24). Natural resource-related peacebuilding should be less about dividing an orebody up and sharing it out, as the literature suggests and more about asking where this vibrant *geosocial* relationship is taking us? And what alternatives exist?

8.2. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE.

The first contribution to knowledge is the conceptualization of mining contexts as unique *geosocial formations* (Clark & Yusoff 2017) that have depth and volume and in which the human and the geologic emerge in relationship together over time and contribute to creating what exists both on the surface and underground. The point of this, is that it invites us to think about the geosocial *future* differently. What trajectory is this formation on? In what other ways can humans and geology engage? While the three research sites explored in this thesis are situated on the same geological trend, geology and humans have created something different together in each place over time. Significantly for this research each orebody seems to have been entangled in different ways with the violent conflict that erupted in and around them in the 1990s and the geosocial formations that present themselves now are on different trajectories as a result. In each case, however, there are 'overlooked, marginalized or as yet unactualized geosocial possibilities murmuring within them' (Clark & Yusoff, 2017: 6. See also Lederach, 2005: kindle location 2169).

Conceptualizing the research sites as geosocial formations is therefore partly a means of paying attention to what Lederach describes as the preexisting 'in situ web of change' that is at risk of being ignored, replaced or destroyed when peacebuilders move too quickly to impose externally generated solutions to problems that might have been predetermined (2005: kindle location 2169). At Stan Terg, for example the orebody has a history of pulling people together as they descend into it, changing the relationship between them as it does so. Three quarters of a kilometre underground this orebody is not loaded with concepts of ethnicity and identity, as the authors of a Chatham House report on natural resources and conflict argue, but with memories of inter-ethnic cooperation, laughter and friendship (Brown & Keating, 2015: 26). In all three there are deeper, pre-conflict, geosocial histories of inter-ethnic cooperation, shared prosperity, and of civic identities that unite people becoming more significant than the ethnic identities that divide them, over time.

The second contribution to knowledge is the conceptualization of the human geologic relationship within the geosocial formation as a project of optimistic attachment. This relation of attachment is entangled in the ways in which human lives and geological lives have emerged in different places over time (and are still emerging), and deeply informed by the experience of violent conflict and the current state of precarity that exists. This research has therefore unearthed not just degradation, dirt, brutality and violence in the human geologic relationship but also optimism and (at Stan Terg) even enchantment. An orebody is therefore central to a collective project of making a world that makes the world makes sense and working out how to stay attached to it in the aftermath of conflict that is specific to the context in which it is emerging.

The third contribution to knowledge is the use of Berlant's theory of *cruel optimism* as an 'analytical lever' (Berlant, 2011: 27) for understanding this relationship of attachment. Berlant describes cruel optimism as a relation that exists when something you are attached to is an obstacle to your flourishing. I do not propose, however, that this is *all* that exists in the human geologic relationship. The mineworkers earn salaries that raise their living standards in significant, meaningful ways, for example, and their relationship with the orebody exceeds any particular social theory. And yet, cruel optimism persisted as a useful lens for understanding what seemed to be emerging as the research progressed. In each of

the three research sites, in different ways and to different degrees, this relationship of attachment to the orebody also seemed incongruous, effortful, or difficult. At Stan Terg, for example, where human bodies and the orebody have been in relationship for over one hundred years the orebody shores up ideas of what has led to what, who is to blame and what should be done about it. And yet, the optimism the mineworkers expressed that the orebody will bring prosperity to this part of Kosovo, sat uneasily amid the mining-related ruination around us, their own sense that their lives are not as good as they hoped they would be and the political impasse that currently exists over the future of the Trepca complex. At Sase, the continuation of war ends by other means is perhaps the achievement of a good life that is '*too* possible' and toxic (Berlant, 2011: 24). What sort of long-term peace will this engender? At Olovo the promise of long-term mining-related prosperity is embedded in a small-scale orebody that might not be able to keep it, at least for long.

But cruel optimism offers more than this for natural resource-related peacebuilding. Berlant describes cruel optimism as the 'condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object *in advance of its loss'* (Berlant, 2010: kindle location 1298, emphasis original). What sort of long-term peace can be achieved by extracting, transforming, exporting and discarding the very thing upon which hopes for peace are placed? While cruel optimism is not intended to sum up the human geologic relationship, as an analytical lever it invites a reconsideration of natural resource-related peacebuilding that looks two ways. On one hand it focuses on the conflicting, difficult, and perhaps irrational-seeming things humans want an orebody to do for them, and on the other it draws attention to the orebody itself, as a geological entity that is non-renewable, in human lifescales, at least.

Following from this, the fourth contribution to knowledge is a reframing of natural resource-related peacebuilding. While top-down peace prescriptions such as revenue sharing, increased transparency, and resource certification are all important as a means of avoiding exacerbating conflict they fail to take into account the ways in which human lives and geological lives may be entangled. In this thesis, natural resource-related peacebuilding focuses on the relationship of optimistic attachment that exists and asks where this human-geologic relationship is leading us? What cruel optimisms does it contain? And how can they be made more sustainable? I locate natural resource-related peacebuilding into a 200-year

present that connects what has gone before with what is desired for the future. Specifically, this locates natural resource-related peace into the terrain of mine closure and post-mining futures. The question becomes less what a mining operation may (or may not) produce now in terms of peace but what legacy it will leave for generations to come.

The fifth contribution to knowledge is conceptualizing the orebody as a rhizomatic relational community that is both grounded and boundless. As such, to a degree, it collapses the problematic binaries that exist in peacebuilding between local and global, top-down and bottom-up, centre and periphery, 'international-liberal' and 'local-illiberal' (Landau, 2020: 2) and (for this research) production and consumption. While there are risks involved in moving too rapidly from the 'concrete to the universal' in terms of understanding the human relationship with natural resources (Bakker & Bridge, 2009: 11) I propose here that if the mineworkers embed promises into an orebody about what a good life is and who that good life is for, then so too do people who live far from the site of its extraction who might also have a relationship of optimistic attachment to the geological strata beneath their own and other people's feet and to the good life it seems to promise them. An orebody can therefore be understood as a cluster of countless conflicting and converging promises that animate it and make it lively in ways that are difficult.

Methodologically, this research makes two contributions to knowledge. The first demonstrates empirically the effectiveness of taking a phenomenological approach to peacebuilding as an ethical means of exploring 'what exists' and how we are in relationship to it (Lederach 2005: kindle location 2303) in a conflict-affected context and specifically as an investigation of difference (Behr, 2018: 336). What it offers is another way of understanding conflict-affected contexts, in which difference is not inevitable, but embedded in specific circumstances that are neither fixed nor constant (ibid: 337). While people appear in the literature in natural resource extraction and peacebuilding with identities that are to some extent pre-formed, such as peace 'spoilers' for example (Lujala & Aas Rustad, 2012; Le Billon, 2012), this research shows that the ways in which people understand themselves relative to an orebody and to the other people that are in relationship with it also, have emerged under particular circumstances. Taking a phenomenological methodology therefore seems to be a

means of counteracting the essentializing tendency towards difference that manifests in the literature.

The second contribution is the post-phenomenological emphasis on the orebody as an actant. If, as Latour argues, the first task of social science is to ask, 'who *or what* participates in the action' (Latour, 2004: 226, emphasis added) the answer unearthed in this research is that a geological orebody does. While an understanding of the importance of place is emerging in the peacebuilding literature, the significance of geographical places is still understood to be their capacity to hold certain human relationships together and to be changed by them (see for example Lederach, 2005; Björkdahl and Kappler, 2017). What emerged in this research, particularly through the methods of 'extended listening' (Chapter Six) are orebodies that mediate human relationships and have something to say about what humans and geology are creating together.

8.3. VALIDITY AND USEFULNESS.

The post-intentional phenomenological approach of this research was not intended to surface a universal, transcendental 'truth' about the human geologic relationship. I do not argue that the essence of the meaning of what this relationship is and how it functions objectively exists. Rather it emerged in the relationship between me, the preexisting theories that 'frame my seeing' and my own 'empathic looking' (Seamon, 1982: 121) with the stories of the mineworkers, the places in which they told them, and all the other elements that informed this research. The aim of this thesis is not to produce a *how-actually* but a '*how-possibly* model' (Paley, 2017: 159) that acknowledges that another researcher in another context might interpret the phenomenon in another way. This does not, however make this research invalid. What is offered here is one perspective on the phenomenon in the awareness that there are multiple others (Seamon, 1982: 122) and that for a peacebuilding endeavour, this is a positive thing. As Lederach writes 'no one person, no one process or project is capable of delivering and sustaining peace on its own' (Lederach 2005: kindle location 2214).

For the phenomenologist David Seamon, validity is a question of *intersubjective corroboration.* In other words, the researcher understands more about her own life through coming to see 'more thoroughly and respectfully the essential nature of the thing and the context in which it finds itself' (Seamon, 1982: 122). The research journal that I kept during this research process tracks my own sometimes painful process of intersubjective corroboration as I recognized my own disordered relationship with natural resources and the inherent conflict in the promises I want them to make to me and my family about what it means to flourish as we put down roots in different geosocial formations around the world, my own deep sense of attachment to the places we have lived and what they have meant for us as a family and my growing awareness that we are asking too much of the geological strata that subtend our lives. I realize I also have a 'who am I?' and 'where am I?' story attached to different geological bodies that attaches me to a collective world and affords me a sense that I have a place *in* that world that I can both inhabit now and look forward to. Significantly I have recently found that this 'who am I?' and 'where am I?' story can be harder or easier to tell and that geology is complicit in this. It was easier to tell a story grounded in the lithium in Serbia, for example, than it was to tell a story grounded in uranium in Namibia or gem-quality diamonds in Canada. Lithium made me chatty. Uranium and diamonds silenced me. I too, find that ways in which I live, think and act are mediated by geology.

But the real validity of this research rests in its potential usefulness. What is offered here is intended to be of use not just as a way of approaching natural resource-related peacebuilding in places emerging from violent conflict but perhaps as a means of re-imagining the resource-related future in any mining context to ensure that the long-term legacy of mining is a positive one. Indeed as I write this, I am in Yellowknife in the Canadian Northwest Territories (NWT) where diamond mines are operating in a different context of peacebuilding and reconciliation connected to indigenous sovereignty and where imminent mine closure is an issue for indigenous communities that have been eviscerated by the racism inherent in the residential school system and where the historic injustices of this system have proved to be enduring and where mining plays a role in constructing and maintaining the power imbalances, the inequalities and the natural resource-related issues that exist here. What conflicting and converging promises have been embedded in the diamond-rich kimberlite pipes that extend vertically beneath the Arctic tundra over the years? What cruel optimisms, if any, might exist

here? And how much easier would the transition into closure be if there had been an externally mediated process of envisioning the long-term future here as the mines were opening as a means of negotiating better geosocial legacies for the people that have lived in this area for generations? This is a central issue for the Federal government, for the government of the NWT, and for regional and community-based indigenous governments who are renegotiating mining license laws.

8.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

This research has explored the human geologic relationship through the stories of the mineworkers because their lives are most immediately connected with it. But this is only one entry point for thinking about what this relationship is and how it manifests itself. One suggestion for future research is to expand the focus of this study and to take it out of the orebody and into the wider community. What promises (if any) do local schoolteachers, shopkeepers, university students, beekeepers, school children, taxi drivers, and restaurant owners embed in an orebody? What sort of natural resource-related future can they envisage? And what might this mean for building peace? One son of a mineworker, for instance, who is a university student and not intending to follow his father's footsteps was impatient with his father's idea that mining should only benefit Kosovo and had his own ideas about natural-resource related peace, pointing out that the orebody does not follow surface borders but extends under Serbia too. 'If there was a smelter in Serbia, we could send our ore there' he said, 'and that would be good for both countries.'

A second suggestion for future research is to explore more closely the potential of futures thinking as a means of envisioning a better natural resource-related future. I am not a futures expert, but there is a similarity between peacebuilding, mediation, and the four laws of futures studies laid out by Sardar, that point to futures problems as (1) complex, interconnected, contradictory, (2) open to diversity, (3) sceptical and (4) 'futureless' in that they can only be 'meaningfully assessed in the present' (Sardar 2014: 625). What sort of synergy can be created by bringing futures practices and approaches for shaping community futures and reimagining fairer and more just futures into conversation with peacebuilding in post-violence contexts that are rich in natural resources? (Sardar, 2014: kindle location 1364).

A third suggestion is to apply the methodology used here to other mining contexts particularly in areas where mining is contested or in the context of conflict. What promises are embedded into the huge copper deposit under the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, or into the oilsands in Alberta, or the lithium in Serbia? What other geosocial formations are emerging? What do they say to each other about what it means for humans and geology to live well together?

In conclusion, I have called this chapter "*Geology says*: it will be all right' after a line in Albert Goldbarth's poem 'The Sciences Sing a Lullabye' (Goldbarth, 2007). Goldbarth is referring to the science, not to the rock formations themselves but I use it here to acknowledge what geological bodies seem to say to people in the aftermath of conflict. The idea of an orebody making things all right for people is central to what has emerged here. And yet, as Goldbarth implies, inch-by-inch, geology is doing its own thing, anyway. One consistent theme that emerges in the literature on natural resource related peacebuilding is that resource extraction may be useful in post-conflict contexts because it brings people together and encourages *dialogue* between them (Bailey et al, 2015: 5; Nelson, 2000; UNEP 2013; 22). The contribution of this research is that it helps answer the question this proposition invites: 'A*bout what?*'

THE END.

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APPENDIX.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS.

P.1. Male mineworker. Born 1963. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union Office, Stan Terg Mine, Kosovo. 7th November, 2017.

P.2. Male mineworker. Born 1968. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union Office, Stan Terg Mine, Kosovo. 7th November, 2017.

P.3. Male mineworkers. Born 1955. Interviewed in a café in Mitrovica. 7th November, 2017.

P.4. Male mineworker. Born 1987. Interviewed in a café in Mitrovica. 9th November, 2017.

P.5. Male mineworker. Born 1960. Walking interview at Stan Terg mine. 8th November, 2017.

P.6. Male mineworker. Born 1955. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union office, Stan Terg mine, Kosovo. 2nd March, 2018.

P.8. Female technical assistant at the Stan Terg mine. Born in 1973. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union Office, Stan Terg mine. 5th March, 2018.

P.9. Male mineworker. Born 1953. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union Office, Stan Terg mine, Kosovo. 6th March, 2018.

P.10. Male mineworker. Born 1980. Interviewed in the Office of the Mineworkers' Union office. 6th March, 2018.

P. 11. Male mineworker. Born 1961. Interviewed in mine office, Stan Terg mine. 7th March, 2018. Interviewed a second time on 15th March (a walking interview in the English Colony).

P. 12. Male mineworker. Born 1968. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union office. 8th March, 2018.

P. 13. Male mineworker. Born 1960. Interviewed in the Mineworkers' Union office, Stan Terg mine. 12th March, 2018.

P. 14. Male mineworker. Born in 1961. Walking interview in the English Colony above the Stan Terg mine and afterwards in a coffee shop in Mitrovica. 13th March, 2018.

P.18. Male mineworker. Born in 1961. Interviewed in a café in Mitrovica. 15th March, 2018.

OLOVO MINE.

P. 19. Male mineworker. Born 1959. Interviewed in the GM's office at the Olovo mine. 18th April, 2018.

P. 20. Male mineworker. Born 1978. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 18th April, 2018.

P. 21. Male mineworker. Born 1975. Interviewed in the Olovo office. 19th April, 2018.

P. 22. Male mineworker. Born 1972. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 7TH May, 2018.

P. 23. Male mineworker. Born 1967. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 7th May, 2018.

P. 24. Male mineworker. Born 1963. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 8th May, 2018.

P. 25. Male mineworker. Born 1971. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 8th May, 2018.

P. 26. Female geochemist. Born 1982. Interviewed in her office. Olovo mine. 8th May, 2018.

P. 27. Male mineworker. Born 1970. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 9th May, 2018.

P. 28. Male mineworker. Born 1985. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 9th May, 2018.

P. 29. Female chemical engineer. Born 1990. Interviewed in the GM's office. Olovo mine. 9th May, 2018.

P. 30. Male mineworker. Born 1977. Interviewed in GM's office. Olovo mine. 11th May, 2018.

P. 31. Male mineworker. Born 1987. Interviewed in GM's office. Olovo mine. 11th May, 2018.