

NON-METROPOLITAN RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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ABSTRACT

In the postwar period, immigration to Canada has predominantly been an urban phenomenon. In the 1990s, three-quarters of all newcomers to Canada settled within three Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs): Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Current government interest in the regionalization of immigration, or the dispersal of immigrants to smaller centres, necessitates that research be undertaken on the experiences of both immigrants and refugees settled in small and medium-sized centres. To date, however, research has predominantly focused on economic immigrants in urban areas. In May 1999, nine hundred and five Kosovar refugees were settled in British Columbia as part of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) humanitarian evacuation from Macedonia. The settlement of the Kosovars is an exceptional case in the context of British Columbia, as it was the first time a large group of refugees has been dispersed to small and medium-sized centres. Drawing on forty-two individual interviews and seven focus groups, conducted between May 2002 and March 2003, this research examines if location matters in the settlement of refugees in large and smaller B.C. cities. This research extends the existing immigration and transnationalism literatures, as well as the wider geographic literature, by advancing new knowledge about refugee settlement, particularly in smaller centres. In so doing, it illustrates that employment and the presence of family are major factors influencing settlement. Findings also suggest that the transnational linkages Kosovars in BC maintain with the place they come from do not necessarily detract from their integration in Canada.

DEDICATION

For all of the people
who have participated in this project.

Thank you for answering my questions and
trusting me with your answers. This research
could not have been done without you:
I hope I have done it justice.

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In the beginning, I imagined this thesis as something I would produce. In the end, I recognize many people have contributed a great deal of time and energy to this endeavour. It is to these people that I owe a debt of gratitude.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Citizenship and Immigration Canada	CIC
English Language Services for Adults	ELSA
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	FRY
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	FYR of Macedonia
Government Assisted Refugees	GAR
Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia	ISSBC
Independent International Commission on Kosovo	IICoK
Interim Federal Health Plan	IFHP
Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program	JAS
Kosovo Family Reunion Program	KOF
Kosovar Refugees Emergency Evacuation	KOS
Kosovo Liberation Army	KLA
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada	LINC
Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada	LSIC
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	NATO
Resettlement Assistance Program	RAP
Serbia-Montenegro	SM
United Nations	UN
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
US Committee for Refugees	USCR

Refugees: they are construction workers, miners, students, technicians and intellectuals; from the working class and the elite. Many have ended up in Canada. The majority did not choose to leave their country. Nevertheless, they must adapt ... [T]he refugee learns to understand the people, the culture, the physical environment, the history and the problems of Canada. The refugee wonders, appreciates, criticizes, laughs, cries; every day is a discovery.

~~Llambias-Wolff 1994, 8

PROLOGUE: FROM KOSOVO/A TO CANADA

History is a contested terrain

~ *Schnaebel and Thakur 2000, 5*

The origins of ethnic conflict are often claimed to date back hundreds of years. Protagonists refer to great migrations, epic battles, and holy sites. The conflict over Kosovo is no exception... Nevertheless, the latest round of violence cannot be explained merely by reference to this history

~ *Independent International Commission on Kosovo 2000, 33*

Between March 24, 1999 and June 9, 1999 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces carried out an air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), under the leadership of Slobodan Milosevic. These bombings followed ten years of social, economic and political marginalization of Kosovars by the Serbian government, which culminated in ethnic cleansing and an attempt to cleanse the province of its Albanian

residents.¹ This thesis examines the settlement of Kosovar refugees in British Columbia.² To do so, it is necessary to understand the context in which the Kosovars arrived in Canada. A full analysis of the history of Kosovo/a is beyond the scope of this thesis: what is presented here is a brief and partial summary of the events leading up to the exodus of the Kosovars in 1999.³

Kosovo/a is a province in southwestern Serbia, in Serbia-Montenegro (SM) (see Figure 1, page xiv).⁴ In 1989, Belgrade's Serbian-controlled government abolished Kosovo/a's right to self-administration that was guaranteed under the 1974 constitution (Vickers 2000, Human Rights Watch 2000, Calic 2000). Kosovo became a de facto Serbian colony where 90 per cent of its population (Albanians) were ruled by less than 10 per cent (Serbs) (Demjaha 2000, 33).

The abrogation of Kosovo's autonomy and its replacement by absolute domination by the province's Serbian minority were followed by institutionalized discrimination against the Albanians. This was embodied in a series of legal acts, valid only on the territory of Kosovo, which deprived Kosovo Albanians of many basic human rights ... The administrative measures were enforced by a strong police presence (Anastasijevic 2000, 53).

¹ Kosovars refers to ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo/a as well as their families, who may or may not be ethnic Albanian.

² According to the 1951 Convention, the United Nations (UN) defines a refugee as "a person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to remain there for fear of persecution" (UNHCR 2001).

³ In Kosovo/a, "political identities and territorial claims are contested between two cultures with very different languages" (Buckley 2000, 469). Kosovars and Serbians have different names for some places, and different spellings for others. These differences speak to different representations and understandings of these places. While my research focuses on people's settlement in Canada, these differing representations of place have implications for my research here. When talking to people, the names and spellings you employ reinscribe particular histories, understandings and ways of knowing, and ultimately affect the information you obtain. During an interview one Kosovar asserted "I thought you were saying Kosovo. Kosovo is more Serbian and Kosova or Kosove is okay" [103 – Kosovar – Vancouver]. Others, however, felt my use of Kosova was unnecessary as the province is internationally recognized as Kosovo. During the interview process Kosovars were asked to use whichever name they preferred. In my writing I have elected to use Kosovo/a, so as not to privilege either representation or way of knowing these places.

⁴ On February 4, 2003 the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) was replaced by the looser union of Serbia-Montenegro (SM) ("Last rites" 2003). This research will use both names as appropriate.

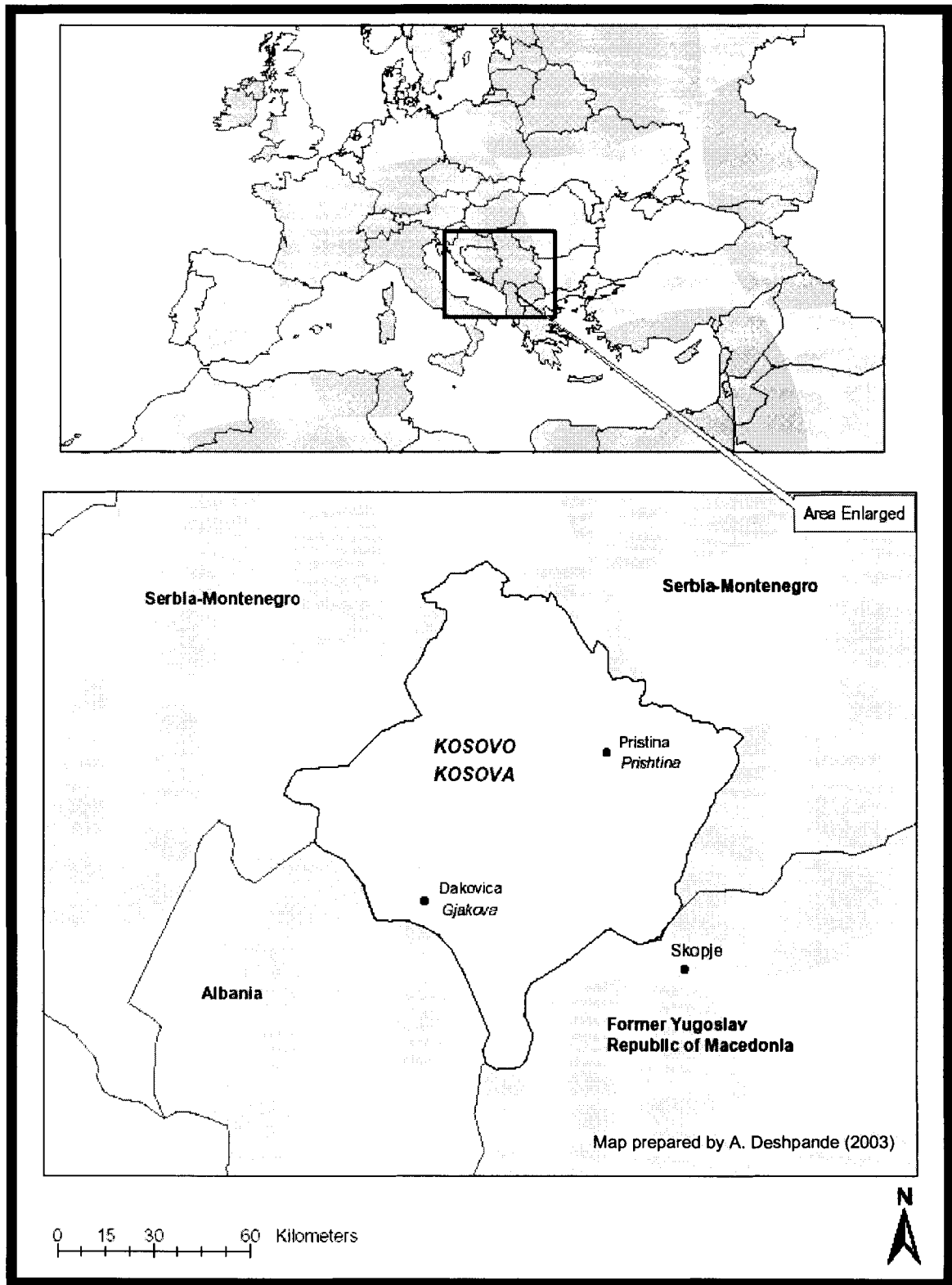


Figure 1: Map of Kosovo/a and surrounding areas (Adapted from ESRI data)

In instituting these acts, Milosevic's regime endeavoured to rectify the demographic imbalances between Albanians and Serbs that had arisen in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of high Albanian birth rates and an out-migration of Serbs and Montenegrins for economic reasons (Bellamy 2001). A law was enacted that prevented the "transfer of real property from a Serb to an Albanian" (O'Neill 2002, 21), while those Serbs who chose to return to Kosovo/a were granted special privileges such as free land or loans (IICoK 2000, Judah 2000). The Serbian government prohibited the official use of Albanian language, and introduced educational reforms that limited Albanians' access to education while imposing a Serbian curriculum on everyone (Demjaha 2000, O'Neill 2002, Bellamy 2001). At the same time, Kosovars were either dismissed from their jobs (Demjaha 2000, Anastasijevic 2000, O'Neill 2002), or "forced to resign by being presented with loyalty oaths which they were supposed to sign" (Judah 2000, 62). Finally, the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (2000) asserts "there were widespread human rights abuses – arbitrary arrest, torture, [and] detention without trial" (42).

In response, the Kosovars established a parallel 'shadow state' complete with its own governing structures, education and health care systems (Calic 2000, O'Neill 2002, Schnaebel and Thakur 2000). What emerged has been characterized as a "system of apartheid in which there was almost no communication between the two sides" (IICoK 2000, 49). "All areas of life in Kosovo subsequently remained divided into two parallel worlds, one belonging to the legal Serbian system of government, the other to an Albanian illegal system for organizing all other aspects of life" (Vickers 2000, 99).

The Serbian government's strategy to drive Kosovars from their homes and ethnically cleanse the area intensified during the NATO bombings of the FRY from March 24 to June 9, 1999 (Judah 2000, Schnaebel and Thakur 2000, Calic 2000).

During almost three months of bombing, Serb military and paramilitary forces terrorized the Albanian population in Kosovo, drove hundreds of thousands out of the country, committed atrocities against the local population, and fought a relentless war

against the [Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)] (Schnaebel and Thakur 2000, 4).⁵

In addition to the large number of Kosovars who were displaced within Kosovo/a, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates approximately 850,000 Kosovo Albanians fled the province to surrounding countries (Judah 2000, Calic 2000, Okada 2001). Approximately 250,000 Kosovars fled to the neighbouring Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYR of Macedonia) (see Figure 1, page xiv), with 45,000 Kosovars arriving in a single day on April 2, 1999 (Judah 2000).⁶

In refugee-producing situations, the UNHCR advocates three 'durable solutions': voluntary repatriation, local integration, and third country resettlement (UNHCR 1996).⁷ Local integration in Macedonia was not possible for Kosovar refugees as it was feared the presence of large numbers of ethnic Albanian refugees would "upset Macedonia's fragile ethnic balance and ... tip the country into war between its Slavic majority and Albanian minority" (Judah 2000, 252). Political and economic pressures in Macedonia prompted a large-scale United Nations (UN) sponsored humanitarian evacuation of Kosovar refugees from camps in Macedonia.⁸ On April 5, 1999 High Commissioner Sadako Ogata issued an appeal for an expansion of the evacuation, citing the "magnitude of the crisis and 'the absolute need to preserve the stability of the FYR of Macedonia'" (UNHCR 1999). Approximately 96,000 Kosovar refugees were evacuated from Macedonia and settled in 28 countries (UNCHR 2001).

The Government of Canada accepted 7271 Kosovar refugees for settlement in Canada: 5051 for immediate resettlement as part of Kosovar Refugees Emergency Evacuation (KOS) program, as well as 2200 Kosovars as

⁵ The KLA is a paramilitary force that is viewed as terrorist by the Serbian government.

⁶ Hereafter referred to as Macedonia

⁷ Voluntary repatriation is the return of refugees to their country of origin. Although voluntary repatriation is the 'preferable' choice, it is not always feasible due to, in some cases, the extended nature of the refugee-producing situation. Local integration, the second option, involves the integration of refugees into the country of first asylum. In situations where the refugees may not return home safely, or whose security cannot be assured in the country of asylum, third country resettlement may be a solution (UNHCR 1996).

⁸ Operation Parasol was the codename for the airlifts to Canadian military bases.

part of Canada's Kosovo Family Reunion (KOF) program (CERIS 2001, USCR 2000, and CRS & CERIS 2001).⁹ The settlement of the Kosovars was unique in the context of Canada's experience of refugees in that there was a small amount of time to plan for the resettlement of a large number of refugees.¹⁰ Furthermore, this was the first time that Canada had taken part in an emergency evacuation. In the absence of a temporary protection framework, the Kosovars were brought to Canada on Minister's permits (Abu-Laban et al. 2001).¹¹ Although the Kosovars were sponsored under the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program (JAS), the Federal Government elected to assume all financial responsibility for a period of two years (Abu-Laban et al. 2001, CIC 1999).¹² Provisions were made for up to two years of income support, as well as coverage under the Interim Federal Health Plan (IFHP) (CIC 1999, Abu-Laban et al. 2001). In addition to the chance for immediate repatriation or permanent settlement in Canada, Kosovars were given a two year time-frame during which the Federal Government would assume full costs if they chose to repatriate (Tetrault & Tessier 1999, USCR 2000).

Those Kosovars with family connections in Canada were sent immediately to the places where their family resided. For those without, temporary accommodations were established on military bases to process paperwork, conduct health examinations, and prepare the refugees for their immersion in Canadian society. Differences existed in funding for immigrant and refugee settlement services in the smaller towns and centres, as those refugees who

⁹ KOF or fast track "refugees either had relatives in Canada or were defined as 'special needs,' highly traumatized individuals who were judged to be in need of immediate resettlement ... [While the KOS or] parasol group was brought to Canada via emergency air lifts and housed at military bases in eastern Canada for several weeks prior to moving to resettlement communities. While they were on the bases sponsors willing to help the refugees were located ... The refugees then traveled from the base to the communities" (Kyte and West 2000, 2).

¹⁰ Abu-Laban et al (2001) provides an excellent documentation of Canada's initial response to the Kosovars, including their evacuation and time spent at military bases.

¹¹ Minister's permits enable recipients to "enter, work and study in Canada. Once settled, the evacuated refugees could apply for permanent residence, if they wished" (CRS & CERIS 2001, 10).

¹² Normally, living expenses, medical and dental expenses are a provincial responsibility for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and the responsibility of the sponsor for Privately Sponsored Refugees (Abu-Laban et al. 2001).

spent time in military bases were considered to have already received settlement services. Only the communities that received refugees directly from the refugee camps were eligible to receive additional funding to pay for these services (Welsh 2001).

When the Minister appealed to Canadian families to act as sponsors, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) was in the fortunate position of having too many, rather than too few sponsors (Abu-Laban et al. 2001).

[M]any of the people who offered to help lived in small centres and were disappointed when CIC decided to restrict settlement to larger cities in order to ensure that the Kosovars would have access to ESL and other settlement services (Abu-Laban et al. 2001, 52).

Communities were chosen in which large numbers of Kosovars could be settled together, as it was believed this would facilitate mutual support and aid in settlement (CRS & CERIS 2001). In May 1999, 905 Kosovars arrived in British Columbia: 509 who arrived as part of the Kosovar Refugees Emergency Evacuation (KOS or Parasol) program, and 396 Kosovars who arrived as part of Canada's Kosovo Family Reunion (KOF or fast-track) program (Kyte and West 2000).

CHAPTER 1

SITUATING THE RESEARCH: REGIONALIZATION AND REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

In October 2001, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) reaffirmed its intention to pursue a long-term objective of increasing annual immigration levels to approximately one percent of Canada's population (2002). In October 2002, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Denis Coderre met with provincial ministers for the first immigration conference to promote dispersed settlement, or regionalization. Interest in the regionalization of immigration is intended to encourage skilled immigrants to settle in small and medium-sized centres.

To date, efforts to encourage immigrants to settle in smaller urban centres have met with limited success. It will be important to further explore how to attract immigrants to smaller centres and persuade them to stay there in order to reduce the pressures on Canada's largest centres (CIC 2001, 10).¹³

The stated interest of the Canadian government to increase the numbers of immigrants, and settle newcomers in smaller centres and rural areas demands

¹³ In a recent conference presentation, Margaret Walton-Roberts noted that the argument that newcomers should be encouraged to settle and remain in smaller centres in order to reduce pressures on Canada's largest cities must be questioned as it rests on the assumption that concentration is 'bad' and dispersal is 'good'. This argument assumes the newcomers, rather than the settlement context is at fault, and in so doing fails to consider why Canadians are leaving smaller centres for larger cities. Despite these efforts, the risk of metropolitan concentration remains due to the possibility of secondary migration.

research on how best to integrate them into Canadian society (Hyndman 2001).¹⁴ In the context of British Columbia, little research has been undertaken to assess the settlement of immigrants and refugees settled outside Vancouver and the Lower Mainland.

The majority of Kosovars were settled in communities outside the Lower Mainland, which is unique in that all other government-assisted refugees settled in British Columbia are sent to Vancouver as this is where services specific to immigrants and refugees are concentrated (Welsh 2002; Friesen 2001; Refugee Resettlement Division 2000). The choice to examine the settlement of Kosovars in B.C. is appropriate given that Citizenship and Immigration Canada statistics indicate British Columbia had the highest retention rate for Kosovars in Canada (Skelton 2000). The purpose of this research is to identify characteristics of place that contribute to positive experiences of settlement. In so doing it aims to provide insights that will guide Canada's response should a similar humanitarian crisis arise in the future, as well as in determining what characteristics of a place should be considered when settling refugees outside large centres such as the Lower Mainland.

Through an examination of the settlement of Kosovars in British Columbia, this research seeks to ascertain **How does the location of settlement affect the experience of refugees in British Columbia?** The research question will be operationalized by considering: the availability of services, economic conditions, gender relations, and transnational linkages.¹⁵ In so doing, the intention is

- To assess integration in relation to obtaining employment, official language acquisition, and settlement strategies (both formal and informal);
- To assess the role of the provision of immigrant and refugee settlement services in the host city (i.e. the availability of services such as

¹⁴ With refugees, the government has a certain degree of control over where refugees settle that they do not possess with other residents and citizens. Refugees are dependent on the government for selection as well as for funding. Because these benefits are tied to a geographical location, refugees risk losing their benefits and funding unless they can convince government representatives that their reason for leaving a place is valid.

¹⁵ Transnationalism is the "process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994, 7).

translators; whether adequate settlement services existed in the community); and

- To trace linkages between Kosovo/a and Canada to assess the ways in which the development of multiple and complex linkages affect the settlement experiences of Kosovar refugees in British Columbia (i.e. economic, social, political linkages).

This project aims to contribute to the existing literature on refugee settlement and transnationalism, as well as the wider geographic literature, and advance knowledge about the prospects for refugee settlement in smaller centres and towns.

Secondary questions that I hope to address include: Is settlement consistent across B.C., or do significant differences exist between the centres?; and Do the settlement experiences and integration of those refugees settled directly into B.C. differ from those who spent time in Canadian military bases before their arrival?

Current government interest in the regionalization of immigration, makes this research both timely and policy relevant. The absence of literature on the settlement of refugees in B.C. in both the RIIM and Metropolis portfolio and wider literatures underscores the importance of research on refugees in B.C.¹⁶ Although the settlement of the Kosovars was unique in a number of ways (i.e. length of funding, window of repatriation, option of having sponsors despite receiving government funding), their experiences offer important insights for future policy.

Finding the Gap(s): A review of relevant research

The theoretical framework for this project will be drawn primarily from four bodies of literature: Canadian immigration, transnationalism, gender and migration, and refugee resettlement. In the post-war period, migration has predominantly been an urban phenomenon. Increasingly, migrants from both within and outside Canada have opted to settle in larger centres, rather than

¹⁶ Metropolis is a government funded project that funds “four centres of excellence devoted to policy-related research on immigration” (Hiebert 2000, 26). RIIM is the Vancouver Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis.

smaller towns and rural areas (Bourne and Rose 2001). Despite accounting for over fifty percent of Canada's population growth, immigrants are increasingly settling in a few gateway cities. Ninety-six percent of newcomers settle within a metropolitan centre (Canadian Press 2003, online). In the 1990s, for example, approximately three-quarters of newcomers to Canada settled in three Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas: Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal (Statistics Canada 2003b). The concentration of immigrants in these cities has meant that the social geographies of these cities are changing at an accelerated rate, while the remainder of Canada remains virtually untouched by immigration (Hiebert 1999). Hiebert (1999) provides a comprehensive overview of the impacts of changes to Canadian immigration policy since World War II on the social geography of Vancouver.¹⁷ The tendency of newcomers to settle in these large centres is reflected in the proclivity of researchers to focus on immigration to Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. Research on small and medium centres needs to be done in the context of the proposed policies of increasing immigration levels to one percent of the population and immigrant dispersal because we know so little: the majority of the research to date has focused on Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

More and more immigrants are entering Canada as economic migrants, which is reflected in the current tendency for immigration literature to focus on economic, and to some extent family class migrants (Hiebert et al. 1998, Hiebert 1999, 2000; Ley and Hiebert 2001, Ley 1999; Waters 2001). Since 1996, Canadian researchers have produced a wealth of research on immigrants, particularly through the Metropolis Project, including, but not limited to, research on settlement experiences of children and youth (Waters 2001; Dyck and

¹⁷ Detailed discussions of the history of Canadian immigration and Immigration Policy (especially in the post-World War II period) are provided by Aiken 2001a, Hiebert 1999, 2000. Within Canadian immigration literature there is a burgeoning literature that analyzes the gender, class, and race biases underlying Canadian Immigration policies (Boyd 1999; Creese and Dowling 2000; Abu-Laban 1998; Giles 2002; Hyndman 1999; Macklin 1996, 1999; Lee 2000; Pittaway & Bartolomei 2001; Thobani 1999), while Bai (1991) forwards a more comprehensive portrait of Canadian immigration policy by exploring settlement and policy together, rather than in isolation. In so doing, he argues that as the government continues to encourage immigration, for economic

McLaren 2002; Fantino and Colak 2001; Moussa 1994a), intergenerational relations and difficulties during resettlement (e.g. around language acquisition) (Dyck & McLaren 2002; Creese, Dyck and McLaren 1999; Barrenechea 1995), and health of refugees during settlement (Kopinak 1999a, 1999b). Recent work by Walton-Roberts (forthcoming) on immigrants in Squamish and Kelowna, and Henin and Bennett (2002) on Latin American and African Immigrants in Victoria, B.C. provide important insights in the context of non-metropolitan settlement in B.C. However, despite the increased attention afforded immigration by Canadian researchers, the experiences of refugees remains understudied (Hiebert 2000; Joly 2000).¹⁸ The involuntary nature of their migration will have significant effects on the process of resettlement, yet refugees have been studied far less than other groups (Joly 2000). Even when mention is made of refugees, the discussion often subsumes them into the wider conversation regarding immigrants without adequately considering the ways in which the refugee experience affects settlement outcomes (George and Fuller-Thomson n.d.). One notable exception is the “The Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Alberta” by Abu-Laban, Derwing, Krahn, Mulder and Wilkinson (1999), which documented the settlement experiences of refugees in seven Alberta cities of varying sizes. Subsequent research by Abu-Laban et al. (2001) and CRS & CERIS (2001) on the settlement of Kosovars in Alberta and Ontario provide insights and possibilities for comparison. In the context of British Columbia, however, little is known about the experiences of refugees.

Given the trend towards research on economic migrants in the three largest centres to the relative exclusion of refugees and small and medium-sized centres, this research examines the settlement of refugees in small, medium and large centres. Incorporating a transnational analysis recognizes that refugees

and demographic reasons, the “provision of effective settlement services will increase in importance” (13).

¹⁸ A discussion the 1951 and 1967 Convention definition of Refugees appears earlier in the thesis. For further discussion, refer to Zetter (1999) and Black (1993). A number of researchers have discussed gendered aspects in definition and interpretation of the 1951 Convention (Valji 2001; Crawley 1999); as well as the failure of the international definition to include gender persecution (McSpadden and Moussa 1993).

retain and develop multiple relationships both within and between the sending and receiving countries.

Living lives across time and space

Immigration is conceived of as a unidirectional process in which a person forsakes all ties to their country of origin and assimilates into the country of resettlement. “The word ‘immigrant’ evokes images of permanent rupture, of the abandonment of old patterns of life and the painful learning of a new culture and often a new language” (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994, 3-4). This model, which emerged out of the Chicago School in the 1920s, envisions migrants as moving between one bounded nation and another. Over the past decade, many contemporary theorists have abandoned the push-pull model advanced by the Chicago School, in favour of an “approach to migration that accents the attachments migrants maintain to families, communities, traditions and causes outside the boundaries of the nation-state to which they have moved” (Vertovec 2001, 574). Immigrants retain ethnic and cultural identities and form networks of economic, political, and cultural relations that cross national borders and boundaries. Settlement occurs within the context of a labyrinth of relations that simultaneously connect immigrants and refugees to multiple nation-states (Al-Ali and Koser 2002, Dona and Berry 1999, Dwyer 1999, Vertovec 1999, Portes 1997, Basch et al. 1994). Transportation and communications advances, facilitated by the rise of globalization, enable migrants to develop relations and identities that are no longer anchored in one country, but rather span both their country of origin and resettlement (Vertovec 2001).

Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994), who are widely credited with inventing the concept, define transnationalism as “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (7). Portes (1999, 1997) extends the definition forwarded by Basch et al. (1994) by suggesting that for activities to be considered transnational, they must be recurring activities that cross national

borders and involve a significant number of people.¹⁹ It is, Portes asserts, this scale and intensity of relations that differentiates transnational activities from those of earlier migrants (Portes 1997, Portes et al. 1999). Others, including Al-Ali and Koser (2002), characterize Portes' strict insistence that "transnational migration needs to include a significant number of people engaged in sustained relations over time" (Al-Ali and Koser 2002, 2) as being too rigid.

The work of Al-Ali, Black and Koser (2001a, 2001b), Al-Ali and Koser (2002), and Koser (2002) speak to the need for transnational approaches to fully consider the ways in which refugee transnationalism may differ from that of immigrant transnationalism. Al-Ali (2002) foregrounds the need to consider forced as opposed to voluntary migration in the development of transnational relations.

[The] immediate concern of recent arrivals has been to try to secure their positions in their new host countries. Few have yet had time even to re-establish contacts with relatives and friends left behind ... far less become involved in transnational activities, even those as basic as sending remittances (Al-Ali et al. 2001a, 587).

Al-Ali et al. (2001a) expand upon Portes (1997, 1999) and Portes et al. (1999) by distinguishing '*transnational activities*,' which may include political, economic, social and cultural activities at multiple scales from the individual to institutional, from '*transnational capabilities*,' which recognizes that the ability to engage in transnational activities is dependent upon the resources available to migrants. The ability to engage in transnational activities in the 'home' country may be negatively affected by unemployment, financial instability and language barriers in the receiving country. This is a useful extension to the ideas forwarded by Portes and Portes et al. as it begins to take into consideration the *actual* ability of people to engage in transnational activities. Recently arrived refugees and immigrants may not be in a position to engage in transnational activities. The sporadic gifts of money and presents rejected by Portes may represent the beginnings of transnational activities and relations for recent refugees who are

¹⁹ For the purposes of this research, I have chosen to adopt "transnationalism from below" [which] examines relationships that emanate from yet span two or more nation-states, and

struggling to establish themselves in the host society. The emergence of transnational activities will be affected by variables both within the host and the sending country, and can vary over time and space depending on the attitudes of home states, differences in current status, and differences in conditions in home society (Al-Ali et al. 2001a).

Transnational Social Practices and the (re)negotiation of gender

Although much of the transnational literature focuses on economic activities, such as remittances (Portes 1997, Van Hear 2002, Vertovec 2001), and political activities (Basch et al. 1994), some researchers have foregrounded social relations. Mountz and Wright (1996), for example, explore the ways in which transnational migration between San Augustan, Oaxaca, and Poughkeepsie, New York have altered the social practices of migrants in Poughkeepsie and their families in San Augustan. Transnational migration transforms social practices both in the sending and receiving countries. "In transnational communities, multiple and regular local and international linkages enmesh the daily economic, social, and biological lives of transmigrants" (Mountz and Wright 1996, 405). Although it is difficult to examine social relations without considering economic linkages, more attention must be given to the establishment and implications of transnational social practices.

Matsuoka and Sorenson (1999a) assert forced migration and subsequent resettlement requires

refugees to come to terms with unfamiliar circumstances and demands, often by assuming new roles and renegotiating expectations, behaviors, and relationships that have operated in the past. Many of these new circumstances are lived most intensely within the context of the household and are frequently enacted along the lines of gender (218).

Consideration must be given to the ways in which refugees and exiles renegotiate household and gender relations. After an initial research bias towards men, and then women, it has only been recently that the gendered relations

crucially where 'everyday' people are the principal agents" (Al-Ali and Koser 2002, 2).

between women and men have been considered as a central axis of analysis (Krulfeld 1994, Pessar and Mahler 2001). Indra (1989) asserts "*gender is absolutely central to the refugee experience*" (original italics, 63). Men and women differentially experience the refugee experience, and the meanings ascribed to experiences will be affected by the society in which they were socialized (McSpadden and Moussa 1993, Indra 1989). Gender should not simply be equated with women (Indra 1999b). Instead, it is a relational process

[i]nformed by culturally and historically specific notions of masculinity and femininity, it has far-ranging consequences for the overall positioning of women, men and children in all social domains, and it determines to a great extent the way in which people experience their lives (Schrijvers 1999, 308).

Power relations are deeply implicated in gender relations, and serve to position people in privileged positions. "Gender matters greatly even in empirical situations where there are only men or only women, and where nothing is ever spoken of women or men, maleness or femaleness" (Indra 1999b, 6). It is impossible to consider the process of resettlement without considering the ways in which gendered relations shape it.

Research on refugees from the same country often entails a gender-blind analysis of refugees as a homogenous group, without consideration for the differing experiences and realities of women and men (McSpadden & Moussa 1993). Malkki's (1995), otherwise excellent analysis of the importance of place in the negotiation of identity during resettlement, for example, fails to consider gender. The book, "New Approaches to Migration?", edited by Al-Ali and Koser (2002), engages with what they identify as a gender-blind bias in transnational literature, and in so doing present a compilation which foregrounds gender as a central focus of analysis. Settlement entails the negotiation of identities, roles and relations between women and men, some of which may be in conflict with gender ideology in the country of origin. "The process of adjustment must include the men to whom women relate" (Moussa, Allmen and Ptolemy 1989, 17). To fully understand the negotiation of identity it becomes necessary to examine gender ideologies in both the country of origin and that of resettlement

(McSpadden and Moussa 1993). As McSpadden (1999) asserts, “[s]ince refugees are by definition forced migrants who have been physically, socially, and culturally displaced, the foci of the analysis must also be transnational *and* gendered” (244). The process of resettlement may produce conflict along gender and generational lines owing to the differential degrees of adaptation experienced by the refugees. Consequently, relations and identities in both the countries of origin and resettlement influence identities formed during resettlement.

Matsuoka and Sorenson (1999a) problematize essentialist notions of man and woman, masculinity and femininity, by examining the ways in which the process of resettlement is complicated by culturally specific ideas of appropriate gender relations. Socio-cultural understandings of maleness and femaleness, masculinity and femininity are constructed within particular cultural and socio-spatial contexts that may vary between the host and the receiving country (McSpadden and Moussa 1996; Matsuoka and Sorenson 1999a).

Women and men refugees attempt to shape realities in accordance with previous socialization, the refugee experience and expectations for the future – all of which are gendered. Refugees are in constant tension, moving back and forth within complex realities and responses, acting and responding to the consequences of their actions. This view challenges the linear and non-gendered portrayal of adaptation, integration and assimilation experiences of refugees (McSpadden & Moussa 1996, 219).

The process of resettlement and the concomitant renegotiation of identity occur within the context of the host society, but also within the context of the society in which the person was socialized.²⁰ Matsuoka and Sorenson show the effect of class, as well as ongoing relations with ‘home’ in resettlement, and in so doing reveal the complexity of resettlement. In her work on the gendered negotiation of masculine identity of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees in Sweden and the United States, McSpadden (1999) suggests there is a “struggle to build meaningful identities and relationships within the new society – relationships that work in

their land of resettlement and yet are congruent with their extant values and beliefs” (McSpadden 1999, 245). The need to construct identities that ‘work’ in both societies further complicates the process of resettlement. The process of negotiating identity that occurs during resettlement is not simply a one-way process of acculturation. Instead it must be mediated within the context of the host society, other members of the diaspora, as well as in the context of the sending country from which the person was socialized.

Gender relations are somewhat fluid and dynamic, and as such are “subject to temporal and spatial variation” (Preston and Man 1999, 116). Even within a particular group of refugees, significant differences may occur. Thus, it is important to avoid essentializing groups, as experiences will differ across space and time depending on distinct intersections of age, gender, class (Mohamed 1999, Creese and Dowling 2001; Al-Ali et al. 2001a, 2001b; Koser 2002). Kutz-Harder’s (1989) intimate stories of six refugee women illuminates the ways in which experiences during and before flight and migration continue to affect the women during resettlement, and allude to barriers within Canadian society as they begin to establish themselves anew. “While the differences between refugee and immigrant are acknowledged by many scholars, few pay sufficient attention to the unique features of refugee resettlement experiences in the host country” (Mohamed 1999, 52). The experiences of migration and resettlement are significantly different for refugees than for immigrants. Unlike migrants, who have prepared themselves to begin their lives in a new country, refugees have been forced to flee their homes and their country (Barrenechea 1995, Ryan and Woodill 2000; Mohamed 1999). As such, they may lack the financial resources and social networks that would assist during resettlement.

Integration, or the way in which “migrants become part of the social, cultural, economic, and political spheres of the country of resettlement” (Israelite et al. 1999a, 3), has often been viewed as the most positive form of settlement.

²⁰ A number of studies have discussed the importance of class in the process of resettlement including Al-Ali-2002; Matsuoka and Sorenson 1999a; Moussa 1994a; Moussa, Allmen and Ptolemy 1989; McSpadden and Moussa 1993; Creese, Dyck and McLaren 1999.

Often, integration has been viewed in a unidirectional process of assimilation in which the refugee or newcomer adapts to the expectations of the host society. Ali (2001) suggests this way of looking at integration ignores the ways in which the host society adapts to the norms and expectations of the refugees or newcomers. Breslow et al. (1997) suggest there is a need to “move beyond the refugee communities themselves to the entire process of resettlement and integration, which affects long-time residents of the city as well as newcomers” (13). Consideration must be given to the reconstitution of place that occurs during resettlement, rather than simply focusing on the impact of settlement of refugees themselves. How refugees and other newcomers are received by the host society affects their ability to adjust to the new society (Waxman 2001; Ferris 2001; Ali 2001; Fantino and Colak 2001). Consequently, the host society plays an integral part of successful settlement, as the “way in which communities respond to newcomers largely determines whether refugees and other migrants will become full participating members of their host societies or whether they will remain on the margins” (Ferris 2001, 13). Where a refugee is settled will have significant implications for their ability to integrate into the community.

Settlement

Successful resettlement requires that refugees find housing, attain some degree of language proficiency and obtain stable employment. Although the difficulties of finding adequate and affordable housing have been explored by a number of researchers, many of these studies focus on immigrants in general rather than refugees (Murdie 1999; Ryan and Woodill 2000; CRS and CERIS 2001). Novac (1999), for example, documents the experiences and difficulties facing immigrant and refugee women of colour in finding housing, while Kazemipur and Halli (2000) explore the tendency for immigrants to be over represented in poor neighbourhoods, especially in larger cities. The preponderance for immigrants and refugees to live in poorer areas has significant implications for their eventual integration into Canadian society, as it affects their degree of access to services including education and healthcare.

The development of some degree of language proficiency is an integral part of the settlement process, and may be instrumental in the ability, or lack thereof, of refugees to obtain paid employment. While acknowledging the varied causes for rising poverty rates, Friesen (2001) argues that:

among immigrant and refugee families the inability to speak English is one of the main reasons for increased poverty among newcomers ... Unless an immigrant is able to function in English, they face increased risks of exclusion from full economic participation (6).

Although the government provides funding for English language training for refugees, English language classes are funded to ELSA 3, which is basic English (Waxman 2001; AMSSA n.d.). Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (1998) suggest that in Canada the government provides funding for approximately 500-750 hours of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) training, which basically represents “survival English or French since language training for labour market readiness is estimated to be 1000-1500 hours” (14). Even with language ability, however, some immigrants believe their accent is a significant barrier to obtaining employment (Moussa et al. 1989, Creese and Kambere 2002). Further, structural barriers may prevent people from attending language classes. Long waiting lists and high costs of daycares, for example, may prohibit immigrant women with small children from attending language classes, thus prolonging the process of integration (Barrenechea 1995, Ryan and Woodill 2000).

Finding employment is a fundamental aspect of successful settlement, yet it is often one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish (Ferris 2001). Research on barriers to the attainment of employment has identified a number of factors including: language difficulties, non-recognition of credentials, lack of familiarity with Canadian job-finding ways, and finally lack of “Canadian experience” (Ryan and Woodill 2000, Ferris 2001, Waxman 2001, Lo *et al.* 2001; Abu-Laban *et al.* 1999; Bai 1991; Preston and Man 1999). One way in which people have sought to obtain Canadian experience is through increased volunteerism (Israelite 1999b) Furthermore, Hiebert et al. (1998) suggest a lack of familiarity with the

“unwritten rules’ of the Canadian labour market” (Hiebert et al. 1998, online), as well as the lack of an established network may place newcomers at a disadvantage in obtaining work.

In the article “Educated and Underemployed: Refugee Integration into the Canadian Labour Market” Krahn, Derwing, Mulder and Wilkinson (2000) document the extent to which refugees, and especially professionals, are un(der) employed in the Canadian labour market. Language barriers, non-recognition of credentials by professional licensing bodies, and lack of Canadian experience all combine to facilitate the downward occupational mobility of refugees (Krahn et al. 2000; Preston and Man 1999).²¹ The non-recognition of credentials and educational training faced by immigrants and refugees “results in longer job search times and employment in lower-level jobs (underemployment) that have lower wages” (Lo, Preston, Wang, Riel, Harvey and Siu 2001, online). This is particularly apparent for credentials and training received outside of North America and the United Kingdom (Lo et al. 2001; Bai 1999; Thompson 2000). Further, Barrenechea (1995), suggests the ability of refugees to obtain employment is also gendered, in that there is a tendency for non-skilled jobs to ‘fit’ women better than men.

Preston and Man (1999), for example, argue the inability to work in the field for which they have trained has a negative effect on identity formation, and as such has negative consequences for resettlement. Further, the inability to obtain employment, as well as their over-representation in low-paying and low-skilled jobs, affects the way in which refugees are viewed by members of the host society, and may result in the creation and reinforcement of stereotypes of immigrants and refugees as being lazy and uneducated (Ferris 2001; Hardy and Philips 1999). The lack of success in the job market affects the ability of people to send remittances, which may increase the stresses of resettlement.

National policies toward provision of services to refugees and migrants are often crucial, not only to the integration of refugees, but also to the public’s perceptions of refugees. Policies which

²¹ Downward occupational mobility is the failure of a person to obtain work appropriate to their educational attainment, skills, experience or training.

support language training, affordable housing, job placement, vocational training, education, and access to health care and to other social benefits all make a difference to the way in which refugees integrate into society and to the way in which they are perceived by the public (Ferris 2001, 16).

The type of services, and the extent to which they are offered may have significant impacts on the eventual integration of refugees and immigrants in the host society. McLellan's (1996) research on the settlement experiences of Cambodian women in Ontario documents the ways in which the availability of services, or lack thereof, affected the long-term integration of these women into Canadian society.

Encouraging retention in settlement cities

The Government of Canada's interest in the dispersion, and subsequent retention, of newcomers to areas outside the three gateway cities requires consideration be given to the places in which refugees are settled to encourage retention in these communities.²² In their study "Paved with Good Intentions", Simich, Beiser, Mawani, and O'Hare (2001), identified reasons why government-assisted refugees move after being destined to a particular place in Canada: their stated preferences were not accommodated at the time of destining, an inability to make informed decisions about resettlement in destination due to lack of meaningful orientation information about the place; perceived lack of social support in the original destination, and finally the desire to move to a place which provides a sense of comfort and familiarity.²³ Ferris (2001) suggests that while refugees destined to smaller centres may engage in secondary migration to assuage feelings of loneliness, there are many examples of "small, ethnically homogenous communities which have been far more welcoming of refugees than large ethnically diverse cities" (16). Abu-Laban et al. (1999), suggest "the

²² The current disposition of the Government to destine immigrants and refugees outside the three gateway cities was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. For a discussion of implication of retention rates in relation to Alberta's policy of dispersion, as well as recommendations about future destining policy, see Abu-Laban et al. (1999). Secondary migration is the movement of people from the community to which they were destined, to another, usually larger city.

integration of refugees into the social and economic fabric of Canadian society is a complex phenomenon, influenced by community structure and demographics as well as by refugees human capital and other personal characteristics” (iv). Consideration must therefore be given to the geographic specificity of the place (including economic, social and cultural aspects), as well as the personal and professional characteristics of the refugees.

In some situations structural barriers exist that prevent the integration of refugees into Canadian society. In British Columbia, for example, refugees who receive Resettlement Assistance Funding (RAP), rather than Employment Insurance or Income Assistance, are ineligible to participate in employment or job search programs (AMSSA n.d.).²⁴ Consideration of the effects of restructuring and cutbacks in settlement service agencies has been widespread (Hyndman and Friesen 2001, Ryan and Woodill 2000; Creese 1998; Richmond 1996).

A case study of Kosovar refugees in British Columbia

The settlement of the Kosovars is an exceptional case in the context of B.C. as it was the first time a large group of refugees has been dispersed to small and medium sized centres. Over the last two years, three studies have been produced which document the settlement experiences of Kosovar refugees in Canada: “Kosovar Settlement in British Columbia” (Kyte and West 2000), “Lessons Learned: An Evaluation of Northern Alberta’s Experience with Kosovar Refugees” (Abu-Laban, Derwing, Mulder and Northcott 2001), and “A report on the settlement experiences of Kosovar Refugees in Ontario” (CRS and CERIS 2001).

In their report, “Kosovar Settlement in British Columbia” Kyte and West (2000) interviewed 195 of the 220 adult Kosovar refugees remaining in British Columbia approximately six months after their arrival, as well as 55 sponsors and 42 key informants. The purpose of this study was to assess how well the

²³ Destining is the process by which refugees are settled in particular places.

²⁴ “Citizenship and Immigration Canada’s Resettlement Assistance Program supplements ongoing financial support to the refugees while other settlement services (e.g. language training)

Kosovars were establishing themselves, to assess whether funding needed to continue for the full 24 month period, to assess whether the Kosovars required additional services, and to reflect on the British Columbia's response to the Kosovar refugees, in order to assess how to respond to a similar crisis in the future. The report identified seven problem areas: furniture, Interim Federal Health Program, interpretation, Family Bonus/Child Tax Credit, Family Situations, Employment and other. Of these, three are of particular relevance for this study: interpretation, family situations and employment.

In regards to interpretation, Kyte and West (2000) found that a number of communities were either unable to find an interpreter or the ones who were available spoke another language (e.g. Croatian as opposed to Albanian). Out of the seven places identified by Kyte and West as having significant problems finding Albanian interpreters, all of them were small and medium-sized centres outside the Lower Mainland or on Vancouver Island. In Vernon and Chilliwack, for example, the interpreters were Croatian-speaking. Kyte and West (2000) noted a number of serious health problems of family concern that are difficult to deal with, as well as mentioning the issue of gender roles including women not being allowed to go out of the house, and the difficulties of some single men learning to cook. At the time of Kyte and West's study, 82% (159/195) of the Kosovars surveyed had not found work of any kind, 9% (18/195) had found part-time or temporary work, and 3% (5/195) had found full-time work. Beyond the difficulties in obtaining work, problems were identified in relation to government funding (e.g. fear of having benefits cut as a result of earnings) as well as the types of jobs that were available. In regards to settlement outside the Lower Mainland, Kyte and West (2000) found "most of the refugees are generally satisfied with the resettlement community chosen for them" (20), although they did note there was some secondary migration within the Lower Mainland. In so doing, however, the Kosovars were looked at as a group irrespective of location,

are provided by various agencies funded by the Province of British Columbia" (Kyte and West 2000, 2). Usually this funding is provided in the first year of settlement.

with cursory attention given to how settlement differed according to the place where people were settled.

In “A report on the settlement experiences of Kosovar Refugees in Ontario”, which was produced by CRS and CERIS (2001), the researchers analyzed data from 706 questionnaires from Kosovars living in Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Windsor, London, Kitchener, St. Catherines, and Thunder Bay (CRS & CERIS 2001).²⁵ The findings, which were collected over a 2-year period, compared the experiences of KOS and KOF refugees, and then differentiated between the settlement cities, which provided a clearer picture of settlement within each community. The analysis could have been expanded, however, through the inclusion of information about the settlement cities themselves (e.g. economic, demographic).

In their findings, the researchers identified a number of difficulties encountered by the refugees, such as language acquisition, lack of appropriate housing, and insufficient income. Two major findings were the overwhelming desire of the Kosovars to remain in Canada, and that there was “no significant differences between the type of refugee (KOS/KOF) and between the city of settlement” (CRS & CERIS 2001, 4), in regards to income, budget and accommodation, relationship with sponsors, language issues, employment issues, health and health concerns, situation of children, availability of settlement and community resources, and future plans (CRS & CERIS 2001). Similar to the report by Kyte and West, employment opportunities and availability of resources (e.g. job search strategies) were important factors. At the time of the research few of the Kosovars had obtained meaningful employment, and many were experiencing difficulties with the English language (CRS & CERIS 2001). But generally, the authors believe the resilience and determination displayed by the Kosovars “demonstrates that most of the Kosovar refugees will become successfully settled in Canada” (CRS & CERIS 2001, 109). Although the analysis included some consideration of transnational relations, the Kosovars were

²⁵ A total of 2583 Kosovars were settled in Ontario in the summer of 1999. Of these, 1263 were KOS (or Parasol) refugees, and 1320 were KOF (or fast-track) refugees (CRS & CERIS 2001).

discussed as a homogenous group with no consideration given to the effects of gender, class or age on the resettlement experiences of refugees.

“Lessons Learned: An Evaluation of Northern Alberta’s Experience with Kosovar Refugees” (Abu-Laban et al. 2001) is a comprehensive and large-scale project that documents the settlement experiences of Kosovar refugees in a number of Albertan communities. The researchers interviewed 186 privately sponsored refugees settled in northern Alberta, 27 representatives from both governmental and non-governmental decision-makers, 119 sponsors, 15 service-providing organizations (and their 60 representatives), and a sample of Kosovars who had repatriated (Abu-Laban et al. 2001).²⁶ The three-volume report has a heavy focus on policy implications of Canada’s response. Although the chapters on settlement examine the experiences of Kosovars in both the refugee camps and in Northern Alberta, the Kosovars are only differentiated according to KOS and KOF, as well as in relation to the host city (e.g. as Edmonton and Other) with no recognition of the effects of gender or class on settlement. These large-scale, long term projects provide a comparative framework for the current research. The inclusion of questions that are similar to those of Abu-Laban et al. (2001) and Abu-Laban et al. (1999) enables comparison of the experiences of refugees in Alberta and in British Columbia.

Immigration research in Canada predominantly focuses on economic migrants to the three largest centres, with little attention to refugees or migration to small and medium sized centres. Although the settlement of refugees in smaller centres has received some attention (Abu-Laban et al. 1999), little remains known in the context of British Columbia. Current debates surrounding the destining of immigrants to smaller centres necessitate research be undertaken specifically examining the experiences of those refugees and migrants who have settled in smaller centres and rural areas. Abu-Laban et al. (1999) make an important contribution to the Canadian literature on refugee settlement especially in the “absence of reliable information on the

²⁶ One hundred and sixty-four of the privately sponsored refugees were Kosovar refugees and twenty-two were non-Kosovar refugees.

consequences of the practice of destining refugees to smaller urban centres” (1). This study seeks to contribute to the existing literature, by documenting the experiences of Kosovar refugees settled in British Columbia. In so doing, the intention is to begin to fill the gap that exists in relation to settlement experiences in small and medium sized centres in British Columbia, specifically in regards to the resettlement of refugees. Research that presents refugees and newcomers in a unitary and gender-blind manner cannot adequately portray the complexity of resettlement, and the subsequent negotiation of identity. By adopting a transnational and gendered approach to migration, the intention is also to reveal the ways in which resettlement is influenced by gender ideologies in both the country of origin and the country of resettlement.

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY: THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUSTED INFORMANTS

This research will focus on Kosovar settlement in three pairs of cities in British Columbia: Chilliwack and Abbotsford, Kelowna and Vernon, and Vancouver and Surrey (see Figure 2, page 22). These cities were selected as sites of study on the basis of the presence of Kosovar refugees, and subsequently on the ability to establish rapport with one of the contacts who aided in setting up focus groups and interviews.²⁷ They also represent small, medium and large cities. These interviews were conducted between May 2002 and March 2003. Vancouver and Surrey have been included to allow me to identify both similarities and differences between major urban centres and smaller urban centres in the settlement of Kosovars. Further, it has been suggested that many of the Kosovar refugees who settled in the Lower Mainland, whether originally or through secondary migration, settled in Surrey, a finding that has not necessarily been borne out in my research (Welsh 2002). Although further research is necessary on other aspects of settlement, including the experiences of children and youth, as well as intergenerational experiences of settlement, these questions are beyond the scope of this research.

²⁷ It should be noted that there is no Kosovar association in B.C. to which Kosovars from the 1999 exodus might belong.

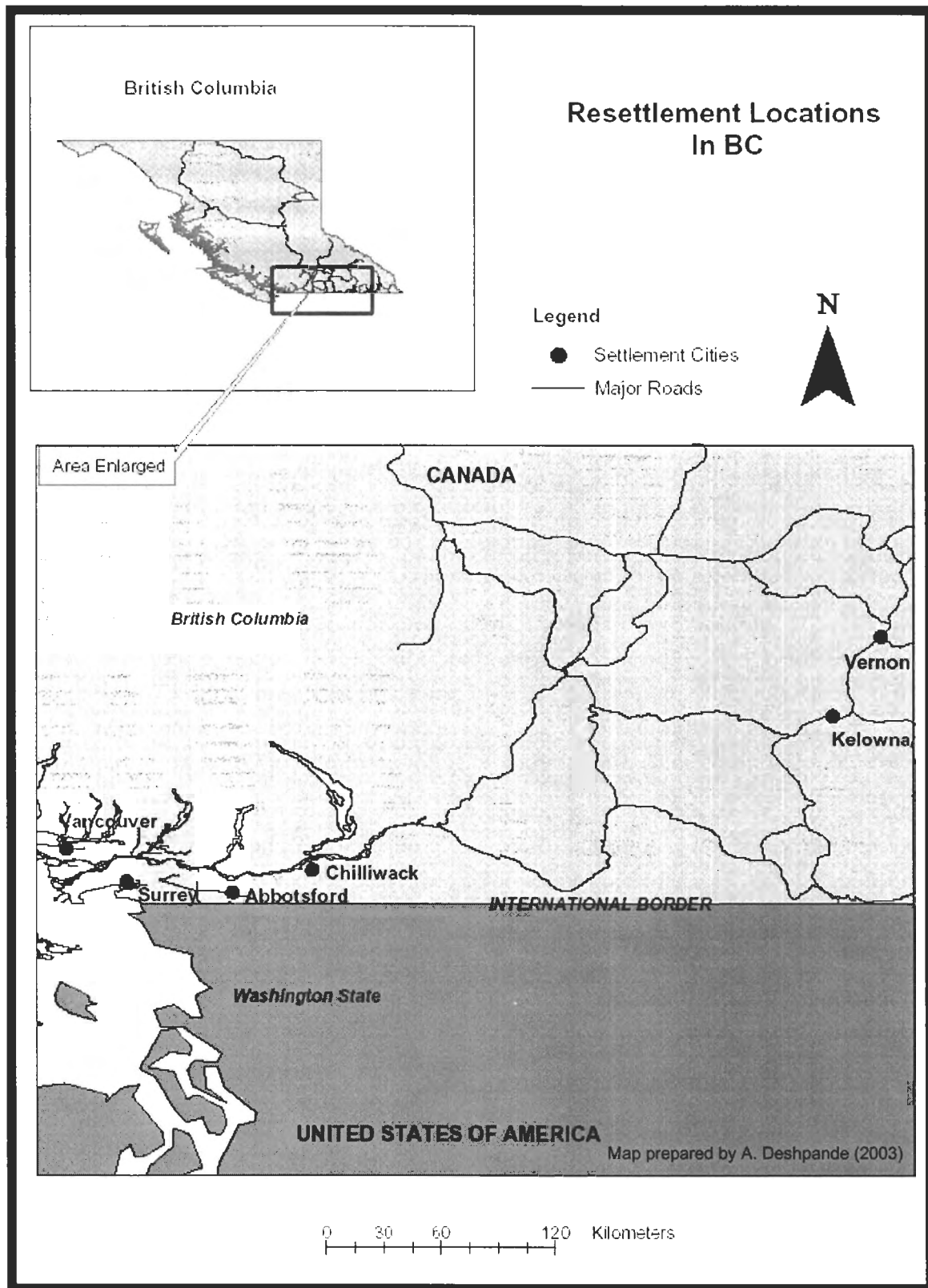


Figure 2: Map of research sites in B.C. (Adapted from ESRI data)

Collaborative Relationship with ISSBC & the role of trust

The research conducted for this thesis was identified as a priority for the immigrant and refugee-serving sector in the final report, "Developing a Sector-Based Agenda for Immigrant and Refugee Research" (Hyndman and Friesen 2002). This project stemmed from the recommendation on the need for rural resettlement, examining "what conditions enhance the retention of newcomers in smaller centres" (Hyndman & Friesen 2002, 3). In a later meeting, Chris Friesen, Director of Immigrant Services Society of B.C. (ISSBC) suggested that the Kosovars would be a good group to study, as their experiences were unique in the B.C. context (December 2001).

Given that my position as an outsider could limit the ability to conduct research with the Kosovars, issues of, and concerns about the establishment of trust and rapport were central in the design of my methods. Before undertaking primary research a collaborative partnership was established with the Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISSBC).²⁸ During the Kosovar arrival in 1999, ISSBC in Vancouver was the main settlement agency contracted to assist the refugees. It was responsible for establishing contracts with service organizations in smaller B.C. communities to provide settlement services. Fisnik Preniqi, the co-researcher on this project, is the Kosovar Settlement Counsellor at ISSBC. As the primary Kosovar settlement counsellor in B.C., and a Kosovar himself, Fisnik's position as an 'insider' facilitated access to various Kosovar communities and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies.

Collecting data: Going out into 'the field'

After an initial meeting with the ISS settlement counsellor, a focus group was organized with a small group of Kosovars from Vancouver and Surrey. This focus group was structured to enable us to introduce both ourselves and the project, and to obtain input on the feasibility and future direction of the project

²⁸ At a recent RIIM retreat, representatives from various immigrant and refugee-serving agencies voiced their frustration at the problem with one way research relationships in which researchers do not provide copies of the research to participants or the sector (RIIM Retreat 2003).

(see Appendix A).²⁹ Subsequently, four other focus groups were conducted with Kosovars: one in Kelowna, one in Surrey, and two in Abbotsford (see Table 1).

These focus groups were intended to gather preliminary information while

establishing rapport and foregrounding the knowledge and experiences of the Kosovars. In focus groups the participants, rather than the researcher is given

City	Focus Group	Number of Participants	Male	Female
Vancouver	301	7	5	2
Kelowna	302	6	2	0
Abbotsford	303	11	7	4
Surrey	304	11	0	11
Abbotsford	305	7	0	7

Table 1: Focus Group Interviews

the role of expert.³⁰ Unlike the first

focus group, subsequent focus groups used a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix B). The semi-structured format provides overall structure regarding what is to be discussed, but enables respondents to answer in their own terms and allows the moderator/interviewer to follow up on issues that had not previously been anticipated (May 1997, Stewart and Shamdasani 1990). Although the ability to participants to respond in their own words makes the results more difficult to analyze, they get at different kinds of information than surveys and closed-ended questionnaires.

Initial contact with Kosovars was made through the local immigrant and refugee-serving agency in all but one of the focus groups.³¹

Interviewing among the refugee population necessitates special approaches, such as introductions through trusted counselors and conducting interviews in environments known to the refugees to be

²⁹ The intent of a focus group is to elicit differing perspectives and experiences by generating discussion around a particular topic (Montell 1999; Marshall & Rossman 1999). For many of the Kosovars, participation in a research project was a new experience. Focus groups were chosen as they provide a less intimidating environment that reduces the need to reply solely because the question requires a response, instead enabling participants to respond only when they have a definite opinion (Stewart & Shamdasani 1990).

³⁰ Feminist researchers have criticized methods of data collection that create an unequal power relationship between the researcher and the participant in which the researcher is assigned the role of expert (Domosh 2003; Hyndman and Walton-Roberts 2000). Focus groups have the potential to “disrupt the rigid dichotomy between interviewer and subject, providing the possibility of an equal exchange” (Montell 1999, 51). It is important to note, however, that although focus groups have the potential to minimize the hierarchical relationship, unequal power relations still exist between participants (Pratt 2000; Montell 1999).

³¹ In the exception, the ISS settlement counselor contacted a Kosovar living in that city to arrange the focus group. Problems that arose because of our failure to work with the local immigrant and refugee-serving agency in arranging this focus group will be discussed later in this chapter.

safe and supportive with competent translators (Simich et al. 2001, 10).

Service providers are 'key players' who can facilitate access to refugee groups. Although our reliance on immigrant and refugee-serving agencies facilitated access to Kosovars, it is important to note that it sometimes limited our access only to those Kosovars they believed would be appropriate (e.g. good English language proficiency). Efforts were made to encourage the recruitment of participants of varying ages and levels of English language proficiency.

Participants balance multiple roles and responsibilities, thus it sometimes necessitated (re)scheduling meetings at the last minute. Attempts were made to minimize the time and distance necessary to attend the meeting, and focus groups were no longer than two hours in length. Four of the focus groups were conducted in meeting rooms at local immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and one was conducted in a participant's living room.³² At the end of each focus group and interview, a small honorarium was provided in appreciation of their time and recognition of the costs associated with participation (e.g. transportation) (see Appendix C). This is similar to other studies with immigrants and refugees including Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (2000) and Hiebert et al. (1998). Each participant was asked to participate further by being interviewed at a later date. To minimize pressure on the participants each person was asked to indicate on their form whether or not they were willing to participate in an individual interview at a later time. The voluntary nature of their participation was emphasized at all times.

Although focus groups allow the researcher to gather a wide variety of information, it is not possible to gain the same depth in the interviews as in individual interviews (Kaplowitz and Hoehn 2001). The decision to conduct both individual interviews and focus groups was meant to enable me to complement the breadth of information possible from focus groups with deeper information

³² Childcare was provided during the focus group in the participants' home as a large number of the participants were women with small children.

about individual experiences and knowledge that may be gained from individual interviews.

Thirty-six semi-structured interviews (see Table 2) were conducted with Kosovars (see Appendix D). The times and venues of the interviews were chosen according to the needs of each participant, and included a settlement agency office, a park, and participants' homes. The interviews were conducted either by myself or a research assistant, and each was approximately one hour in length.

City	Number of Interviews	Men	Women
Vernon	3	3	0
Kelowna	5	3	2
Chilliwack	3	2	1
Abbotsford	6	3	3
Surrey	14	6	8
Vancouver	5	3	2

Table 2: Semi-structured Interviews

Although interviews were intended to be with individuals, the fact that they were conducted in people's homes meant other family members and/or friends were often present. Some people listened quietly, while others provided answers and comments of their own. In some cases, multiple interviews were scheduled for one location. When this occurred the Kosovars would socialize in one room while the interview(s) were being conducted in other room(s). The size and layout of the homes, however, frequently limited the ability of the interviewers to escape the sounds of the socializing. Although conducting multiple interviews in the same place was efficient, it sometimes resulted in the quality of the recordings being compromised. Further, when analyzing the data it is necessary to consider which people were in attendance and recognize it may influence people's answers.

In his study 'Bosnian, Afghan and Iraqi Refugees in Sydney, Australia,' Peter Waxman (2001) found that "invaluable information/material was gained by conducting extensive personal interviews with key service providers" (481). Five semi-structured individual interviews and two focus groups were conducted with immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors (see Table 3).³³ The interviews lasted for approximately forty-five minutes to one hour, and the focus

³³ Three of the Kosovars who were interviewed in this project have worked, or are currently working, as settlement counselors for immigrant and refugee-serving agencies. Although they did

groups for two hours each (see Appendix E).

As one of the main contacts, service providers were believed to offer insight into

Number	Participant	Location	Interview or Focus Group	Number of Participants
201	I&RSA ³⁴	Vancouver	Interview	1
202	I&RSA	Vancouver	Interview	1
203	I&RSA	Vancouver	Interview	1
204	I&RSA	Vernon	Focus Group	4
205	I&RSA	Kamloops	Focus Group	2
206	I&RSA	Kelowna	Interview	1
207	Sponsor	Surrey	Interview	1

the settlement experiences of Kosovars and the degree to which they have integrated into the community. The insight of immigrant and refugee-serving agencies is also valuable in the context of future policy directions, as they are well placed to reflect on current policy and the degree to which it may or may not be adequate. Working with local immigrant and refugee-serving agencies allowed us to begin establishing trust and rapport with Kosovars, by building on relations previously established by the service providers.

Table 3: Immigrant and Refugee-Serving Agencies and Sponsors

Interpreters and the Politics of Interpretation

Settlement counsellors played an important role as interpreters in all of the focus groups, as well as about one-third of the interviews. Because Albanian is the primary language of ethnic-Albanian Kosovars, four Albanian-speaking interpreters who speak English as a second or third language were employed to ensure people could answer in whichever language they were most comfortable in. Three of the four interpreters were, or are still, employed as settlement counsellors at immigrant and refugee-serving agencies. Because of the small population interviewed, the use of Albanian Kosovars meant that people often interpreted for either friends or family. This complicated the interview process, however, because interpreters would sometimes answer questions for people or correct answers they believed to be incorrect. The impact of using familiar people

not participate in an interview as a service provider, all of them provided insights on the settlement of Kosovars from the perspective of settlement counselors.

as interpreters is hard to determine, but it is important to recognize that settlement counsellors are viewed as being in a position of authority. In some of the interviews it became apparent that immigrant and refugee-serving agencies were confused as being 'Immigration' (i.e. state officials). The use of settlement counsellors as interpreters may have prompted some people to change their responses for fear of reprisals. Although the ability of these agencies to impose reprisals remains questionable, the fear is real. As such, it is necessary to consider who is interpreting for the interviews as people may be less likely to criticize immigrant and refugee-serving agencies when the settlement counsellor is involved in the interview process.

Despite the complications introduced by the use of interpreters, there are many advantages. Although some Kosovars were able to conduct the interviews without the assistance of an interpreter, the presence of an interpreter enabled us to interview Kosovars whose English language skills were not as fully developed. Given the importance of English language proficiency to settlement, those people with limited English language will have different experiences and needs than those whose language skills are more advanced. Our findings would have differed significantly if we had not employed interpreters as we would have been limited to Kosovars who are fluent in English. Even for those Kosovars who had fairly good English skills the presence of an interpreter allowed them to switch into Albanian when they were unsure of themselves. Thus more complete, and possibly more detailed answers were possible given the presence of interpreters.

When using interpreters, however, the interpretation was rarely exact. Instead I was given the gist of the response, or what the interpreter believed the person was trying to say. Throughout the thesis I have shown when the quotes are directly from the respondent and when quotes are from the interpreter on behalf of the respondent. Recognition should be given to ensure translated portions are recognized as being exactly that – one person's interpretation of

³⁴ I&RSA is being used to denote Immigrant and Refugee-Serving Agency

another person's thoughts into a second language. As Hyndman (2000) noted "translation is heavily invested with unequal power relations and a site for questions of representation, power and historicity" (91). Relations between participant and translator must not be treated as unproblematic, nor should relations between interviewer, interpreter and participant.

Ethics and Confidentiality

In accordance with SFU policy, I submitted and received ethics approval before conducting fieldwork (See Appendix F). At the beginning of each interview or focus group, participants were asked to sign a consent form (See Appendix G). During this stage I would stress the voluntary nature of their participation, and inform them that they could refuse to answer questions(s) or discontinue the interview at any time. While conducting interviews, participants were periodically reminded of the voluntary nature of their participation (and the ability not to answer a given question), particularly if the person appeared uncomfortable with the question. Confidentiality emerged as a significant concern for many of my participants. As such, each interview was assigned a number that did not appear on anything with their name on it. A list of names was stored separately, as were the consent forms, and no identifying information was left on the transcripts. Participants were told about the steps being taken to ensure confidentiality. In some cases, participants expressed a high level of fear that responses would get back to the government. It was necessary to ensure participants understood that although the results of the project might be of interest to the government, I was not working for the government and steps were being taken to maintain confidentiality. As per my agreement, the list of names of participants will be destroyed upon completion of the M.A. degree.

Interpreting the data: issues arising in the collection, transcription and coding of data

Each participant was asked for permission to tape the interview or focus group for transcription at a later time, a request that was not refused by anyone. Both a research assistant and myself undertook transcribing. Selected transcripts

were reviewed more than once in order to check accuracy and ensure errors in transcription did not substantially alter the intended meanings.

Although taping interviews and focus groups allowed me to transcribe and analyze the exchange at a later time, it posed a number of problems including poor tape quality and difficulties in deciphering and attributing comments to the appropriate person. In the chapter "Transcription Quality" Poland (2002) suggests the translation of audiotape conversation into textual form produces problems that are both interpretive and logistical in nature. Transcriber fatigue, poor quality recordings, and mistaking phrases or words for others are all factors that combine to increase the number of mistakes in the transcript (Poland 2002).

Because people often talk in run-on sentences (actually, the concept of 'sentence' does not translate well into oral tradition, or vice versa), transcribers must make judgment calls during the course of their work about where and when to begin and end sentences. The insertion of a period or a comma can sometimes alter the interpretation of the text (Poland 2002, 632).

The "clarity, speed, and accent of speech used by interviewees" (Poland 2002, 633) may also affect the ease with which the interview can be transcribed. Tape quality varied significantly between different interviews and focus groups, and parts of interviews were rendered inaudible by extraneous noises, household noise, or people speaking too softly. Extensive written notes about what was said and by whom, enabled me to fill in blanks that resulted from poor tape quality, as well as to ensure comments were attributed to the correct person during focus groups.

Following transcription, the transcripts were reviewed and common themes were identified and used to code the information. Due to the quantity of information obtained, a decision was made to code the findings using NUD*IST (Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing) software. NUD*IST is a qualitative research package distributed by QSR International that allows researchers to manage, explore and search texts.

Issues that arose: Language and the meaning of words

Simich et al. (2001) caution, “the terms used in the study must be meaningful to all informants in order to ensure validity and to examine patterns of convergence for analysis and interpretation” (11). For example, not everyone knows that ‘destine’ is a verb invented by government to describe the process by which refugees are assigned to particular places. When engaging in cross-cultural research

[I]ssues arise related to the ways in which individuals use language, the connotative meanings of words, pronunciation problems or problems with specific sounds, and challenges associated with linguistic styles in different contexts. The problem may not necessarily be a matter of posing the right questions, but one of the researcher’s communicating questions to the interpreter in culturally appropriate ways that invite further communication (Ryen 2002, 344).

This brings into question not only the interpretation of the answers, but also the extent to which questions on the interview schedule could easily be translated into Albanian. This was partially controlled for by having the ISSBC settlement counsellor, read over the questions, as well as by periodically reviewing and reworking the questions for clarity.

In conducting focus groups and interviews, I had to ensure the language used was understood by all participants and did not become too technical. In my attempts to avoid the use of technical language such as ‘destining’, I reverted to everyday or casual English. This created difficulties in some situations, however, given that many of the Kosovars still have limited proficiency in English and did not necessarily understand my use of everyday or slang sayings. Warren (2002) asserts “even the most seemingly commonplace terms may vary surprisingly in meaning in the context of particular life worlds” (98). During this research differences emerged around understandings of the word ‘experience’. Although I was interested in hearing about people’s settlement experiences (i.e. what they had done or been through), many of the Kosovars associated the word experience strictly with job or work experience, effectively limiting the range of information I could obtain. The presence of an Albanian-speaking interpreter was

important in this regard as he or she could correct the miscommunication without further difficulties.

(Mis)representation and situated knowledges

Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (2000) assert that working with refugees is complicated by their prior experience with 'officials' and the state itself. Concerns about differences in power as a researcher working with new Canadians who had fled state violence in Kosovo/a prompted me to create an approach that drew on feminist research practices aimed at disrupting hierarchies in research methods, including the use of focus groups and the use of first person in my writing. "Feminists suggest that the power relations within an interview must be renegotiated and that the interviewer must recognize that they cannot be neutral and objective" (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 219). In choosing to reject an approach that viewed the researcher as unbiased and neutral, I elected to share information about myself with the participants.

[P]articipants – both researchers and respondents – speak to each other not from stable and coherent standpoints, but from varied *perspectives*. These include the structured and historically grounded roles and hierarchies of their society, particularly those of gender, race, and class (Campbell 1998). Extending this to more local considerations, it also suggests that the perspectives relevant to the qualitative interview encompass the social positions that emerge in the interview itself, apparent in talk and interaction between interviewer and respondent ... Although situational, these perspectives shape the flow of the interview and, in its qualitative version, are taken into account by the interviewer in understanding the meaning-making process (Warren 2002, 84).

In choosing to reject the use of third person in my writing, I heed the words of Razack (1996) who cautions that: "our different subject positions, borne out in how we know, tell and hear stories, are ignored at our peril" (169). The constitution of our subjectivities is more than who we are as individuals.

Concerns about voice and appropriation have been present since I began the research. Primarily these concerns have related to the writing up of the thesis and an overall concern with what Moore (1994) refers to as the "inevitable problem in the social sciences of having to speak about people whilst trying not

to speak for them” (9). Questions arise as to “*whose* story will be told, and *which* story will be recognized as true and given legitimacy” (Jackson 2002, 133). It is important to recognize my role in interpreting people’s stories, life experiences and responses. “Researchers are implicated in the process of speaking for others, potentially silencing them. And in this silence, representation can become misrepresentation” (Kirsch 1999, 46). What is being presented is not necessarily *the* story, but rather my understanding of what has been told. In presenting the information it is necessary to exercise caution as I risk silencing people and marginalizing them anew.

Trust and mistrust: Reflecting on critical moments

Sometimes it is not what is said, but rather what is not said that can be revealing. Reflecting on silences that occurred during the research taught me a great deal about the methods I was employing. I would like to talk about ‘critical moments’ by focusing on two of the silences that have occurred and considering the ways in which these silences problematized my understandings of trust.

During a focus group early in my fieldwork, I had the unexpected, but certainly welcome, inclusion of Kosovars from a nearby city. Although my research plans did not include talking to Kosovars in this second city, I took advantage of the opportunity and made arrangements to conduct interviews a few weeks later. Believing I had begun to establish rapport with the participants, my intention was to use snowball sampling to identify other interested people. After conducting the individual interviews, I made arrangements with the wife of one of the participants to arrange a focus group and individual interviews with some of the women in that city. But when the ISS settlement counsellor phoned to confirm the arrangements her husband apologized and said that neither he, nor his wife was interested in participating any further in our research project. He suggested we contact his wife’s cousin (who we had already interviewed), and who appeared to be the ‘head’ of the extended family, to see if his wife would assist us. Despite our repeated attempts, we were unable to contact the cousin. In the face of this total silence we were left to reflect on what had happened and

consider where to go from there. Should we start over by talking to the service provider in that city and try to gain access that way? Should we continue trying to reach the other participants? Or should we respect what we perceived to be the wishes of the participants in this community and walk away? Answering these questions required me to consider both what had happened and what had gone wrong. In the end, I chose not to seek further interviews in that community.

Approximately six weeks later I had the opportunity to speak with the person who had withdrawn and apologize for any problems that had arisen as a result of his family's participation in the project. What I learned from this participant, as well as from a focus group with the local immigrant and refugee-serving agency, was that concerns with 'who we were working for' and 'how they had been identified as participants' had prompted speculation and gossip from other Kosovars who lived in the city but had not been contacted to participate in the original focus group. By virtue of being in the community we had altered the social relations even when we were not physically present.

Our lack of initial contact with the local immigrant and refugee-serving agency helped fuel the distrust and gossip because the local settlement director lacked the information that was necessary to answer questions people had for her about who we were and what we were doing. Although we had not intentionally left the immigrant and refugee-serving agency out of the loop, it significantly affected our experiences in that city. In my haste to take advantage of this unforeseen opportunity to expand 'the field', I made a number of incorrect assumptions and had failed to assuage people fears with my answers. In all of the other cities I had gained contact to participants through a service provider who **had already** established trust and rapport with the Kosovars. In this city, however, participants had been contacted by an acquaintance in a nearby city to participate in a focus group. In retrospect it remains unclear how well the Kosovars knew the organizer. Further, participants in the second city were the only Kosovars I have interviewed who did not know the ISS settlement counsellor personally or had not heard of him. Our attempts to establish trust and rapport with participants from this city lacked a basis upon which to build. Although these

people participated in both a focus group and semi-structured interviews, we had not necessarily established trust. Just because they were talking and sharing information with me did not mean that they trusted me. Our experiences brought into question the extent to which we had obtained truthful representations of their lives and experiences in previous interviews and focus group. Furthermore, our attempt to employ snowball sampling by building on the original contacts instigated change and disrupted existing social relations. In so doing, I had failed to adequately address power structures that already existed within the Kosovar 'community' in this city.

Hyndman (2001) suggests the field is more usefully conceptualised as a network of relations in which the researcher is embedded. Contrary to my initial notion of the field as 'there and then', I continued to be immersed in 'the field' even after I had 'returned home'. By virtue of being in the field, I altered the relations of the participants with other Kosovars in the city. Our experience in this city forced me to reconsider the ways I was approaching the research, and highlighted that the field is not time and place specific, but rather is a network of relations that extend beyond the initial contact. This experience underscored the need to work with trusted informants as a part of entry into the group as well as an important part of maintaining trust once the 'fieldwork' is underway.

The process of negotiating trust extends beyond having people agree to participate in fieldwork. Although there is an implicit assumption that, by agreeing to participate in an interview, the interviewer and the participant have established some degree of trust, the process of negotiating trust continues. Participating in research project was a novel experience for many of the participants. Consequently there were a lot of questions and some suspicions about the project. Who are we? Are we Kosovar? Why are we doing this project? Why Kosovars? Who I am influences the research both in how I understand things and what I am trying to do, as well as what information I receive. In part, establishing rapport and building trust is about making connections and finding similarities across a multitude of differences including cultural, linguistic, class,

gender and sex.³⁵ These connections vary between interviews and at different points during the same interview.

For some participants establishing trust is based partially on the basis of who I am and why I am doing the project, while for others it appears to be on my ability to separate myself from the state. **What** is the information being used for? **Who** will have access to their answers, **Where** did I obtain their contact information? While for others the important question was **How** was I ensuring confidentiality, and **What** steps would be taken to make sure they were not identified by their answers. Once these questions have been answered the interviews continue with the assumption that you have established some degree of trust, which is not necessarily the case.

One woman agreed to host a focus group in her home, and participated in the discussion, yet it was not until a break halfway through the focus group that she sat down next to me and said “now I will tell you my story...” Until that point she had not been willing to trust me with the details of her life. In another interview, the participant told me, “earlier, when I said this, this is what I meant...” and then went on to talk in intimate detail about the experiences which had earlier been glossed over. Statements such as this speak to the ongoing establishment of trust beyond the beginning of the interview. In the latter situation I had been aware in the interview that I was not getting the full story, but in the former I had no indication how much information was being withheld. It is through the process of feeling out who I am as a researcher, and how trustworthy I will be with the information that is shared that rapport is built and trust is established. In these cases, the silences were in the form of partial responses. Establishing trust enabled me to obtain rich and detailed information that was not immediately apparent. In this research I initially recognized importance of trust but imagined it as static: once trust was established research would flow.

Reflecting on my experiences and the silences that occurred revealed the importance of establishing trust with participants, especially when working with

³⁵ In some situations the similarities were in our positions as academics, or as women, or as parents, or as wives.

refugees. Further, it is a complex process that is ongoing. When working with refugees it is important to involve trusted informants, such as service providers, as establishing trust is critical to succeeding. Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies can play an important role in both the design and implementation of the research.

CHAPTER 3

SETTLING IN CANADA: THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK AND FAMILY

The intention of this thesis is to consider whether location matters in the settlement of refugees in larger and smaller centres in British Columbia. This chapter will examine the settlement of Kosovars as well as the degree to which the host communities were prepared to receive refugees. In so doing, I will attempt to answer four questions:

- How well have Kosovars fared in obtaining housing, employment, and official language proficiency?
- What is the role of sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in making integration happen?
- What factors influence the decision of refugees to stay or leave particular centres?
- And, for those who have moved, or are contemplating the decision for the near future, where will they settle?

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings as well as offering some policy implications. Transnational aspects of settlement and integration are discussed in Chapter 4.

How well have they fared?

Three years after their arrival, 86% (29/34) of the Kosovars interviewed intend to settle permanently in Canada, with most people remaining in their

original host city.^{36,37} This finding is consistent with research on Kosovars in both Alberta and Ontario (Abu-Laban et al. 2001; CRS & CERIS 2001). The intention to remain is highest in larger centres like Vancouver and Abbotsford, and lowest in smaller centres like Vernon.³⁸ Although there is some evidence of secondary migration both to and from B.C., the majority of Kosovars I spoke with (24/34 or 71%) are living in their original host city three years after their arrival. With the exception of one person who was originally settled in the US, all the Kosovars who have moved, have done so within the Lower Mainland, a finding supported by Kyte and West (2000).³⁹

The degree to which Kosovars have obtained employment and acquired English language has not been consistent either within or between the centres. One sponsor has suggested that integration differed according to the level of education as well as the place of origin.⁴⁰

*Those that were educated, were from the big cities like Prishtina ...
have done much better. Those that come with little education ...*

³⁶ While I recognize our numbers are not statistically significant, percentages have been included to provide a portrait of what is happening and should be used as such.

³⁷ Only one Kosovar has expressed a definite desire to repatriate to Kosovo/a. These results are consistent with those of the "Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada" that found 91% of newcomers to Canada intend to settle here permanently and obtain Canadian citizenship (Statistics Canada 2003a). The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada surveyed approximately 12,000 of the 164,000 newcomers to Canada (age 15 and over) who arrived in the period between October 2000 and September 2001 within a six-month period of their arrival (Statistics Canada 2003a).

³⁸ Despite the increased tendency to think of moving, however, all of the Kosovars interviewed in Kelowna and Vernon are living in the original host city, three years after resettlement from Kosovo/a. Retention in these cities may relate to a lack of resources as well as cultural norms of staying in place. Early in the research process one of the participants explained that: *It's not in our nature to move* [Kosovar – Vancouver – 301]. While this statement is by no means unanimously supported, there appear to be long-standing attachments to the land. *People in Gjakova have been there for 200-300 years. I met farmers that were on the farm and they trace their ownership of that farm for 10-12 generations. And 305 years one man was telling me, and he was very proud of it* [service provider – Vancouver - 301]. Retention in these centres may relate to cultural norms of staying in place despite hardships.

³⁹ Three of the families moved to Surrey and one family moved to Vancouver. One other family left B.C. and subsequently returned to the original host city.

⁴⁰ For the purposes of this chapter, integration is being used to denote official language acquisition and obtaining employment. Although other factors of integration are important, such as political participation, many of the Kosovars interviewed are still focused on these two factors.

from the village have a much tougher time [207 – Sponsor – Surrey].⁴¹

Kosovars in Kelowna and Vernon, many of whom are from smaller villages in Kosovo/a, have experienced significant difficulties obtaining employment, while those in Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Vancouver and Surrey have, on average, experienced more success.⁴²

Anecdotal evidence from sponsors, immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and Kosovars suggests older people were more likely to have repatriated as they were unable or unwilling to adjust to new circumstances.

They'd rather go back to a land that ... wasn't in harmony at that point rather than go through with the new culture ... In [their] wildest dreams [they] never thought [they'd] be coming to another land, and then suddenly [they're] here. There's a real culture shock ... The older people really had a hard time with it ... they just couldn't adjust to the changes [206 - Service Provider – Kelowna].

The reasons cited for repatriation involved a desire or need to return home, rather than a dislike of Canada. The primary reasons for leaving that were cited related to factors in Kosovo/a (i.e. family obligations; the search for loved ones; homesickness; and the need to rebuild) as opposed to factors in the host city.⁴³

[Older people] had houses they had built with their own hands, farms they had tended and had been in the family for a long time and so they just felt like they couldn't live apart from their land. So if it was possible they went back [207 - Sponsor – Surrey].

The reasons for repatriation, then, did not necessarily involve a 'choice'.

[My cousin] didn't want to go [back to Kosovo/a]. But ... he had to go back to take care of [his parents] ... He had five children ... [and they were] doing a really [well in] school ... but he had to go back. I know they're missing here" [132 - Kosovar – Chilliwack].

For those who have left Canada, the desire to return is strong.

⁴¹ Interviews are listed in the works cited according to their interview number (e.g. this is listed under Interview 207).

⁴² Significant variations exist between Kosovars interviewed in terms of education and profession. Over fifty percent of the participants in Vancouver, Surrey, Chilliwack and Abbotsford were university students in Kosovo/a or hold University degrees or professional diplomas, compared to twenty-five percent in Kelowna and Vernon.

⁴³ These findings are consistent with those of Abu-Laban et al. (2001).

Every one of them would want to return to Canada. Every one of the ones who I know anyhow [201 - Service provider – Vancouver].

Anecdotal evidence suggests all of the people who repatriated did so within the two-year window in which the Government of Canada would finance the costs of repatriation. Many, it appears, regret this decision.

Enhancing Settlement by Settling Families Together

When the Kosovars settled in Canada, they benefited from an expanded definition of family that included parents, adult children and siblings, as compared to other Government Assisted Refugees. A decision was made to settle entire family groups in the same city in an effort to enhance settlement and reduce secondary migration. Eight of the ten families that settled in Vernon, for example, are related. This settlement strategy has been beneficial as it has enabled family members to support one another during the transition. In Kelowna, one couple spoke of their reliance on their grown children as well as a granddaughter to interpret for them and to accompany them on errands. The presence of other family members reduces feelings of isolation and begins to rebuild networks that have been disrupted during flight. Findings of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada corroborate that family and friends may significantly affect the choice of destination (Statistics Canada 2003a).⁴⁴ In light of these findings the strategy of settling extended families in one centre should continue. This would provide newcomers with the basis for a network, as well as a system of support to assist with problems that arise during settlement. The presence of family as well as other Kosovars may facilitate the establishment of these networks and encourage retention in the host city, and may forge a new kind of relationship to 'home'.

⁴⁴ In their report 'Paved with Good Intentions: Paths of Secondary Migration of Government-Assisted Refugees in Ontario' Simich, Beiser et al. (2001) caution "many people ... are not accustomed to using formal support systems such as social service agencies and may seek out informal support from familiar contacts more readily. Social networks are assumed to be beneficial, but their strength may depend upon structural opportunities in the larger society (Menjivar 2000). That is, if people who comprise the existing network experience significant obstacles, they may not be in a position to help newcomers. For refugees, this means that social

The desire to have parents and siblings live together, as well as the size of some nuclear families has created a multitude of housing arrangements. Not all of these are adequate, as Canadian housing norms do not correspond to average Kosovar family size. For one family the decision to have multiple generations live together has meant that ten people live in a four-bedroom townhouse. In another family nine members are split between two units in one apartment building. In the first case, the family is content with the arrangements, while a respondent in the second household dreams of the day when they can buy a house and reunite the family.

Differences in housing arrangements in B.C. and Kosovo/a, have created difficulties for Kosovars, especially from rural communities.

We felt really bad for them because they were from rural communities ... and then [they were] stuck in apartments ... I know they wanted to keep them together ... however you have to put people in conditions I believe that are similar to where they come from. Because huge issues can arise from noise levels, where their children play, women sitting out in the dirt field next to the apartment sitting there with their blanket and just socializing [204 – Service provider – Vernon].

A lack of familiarity with Canadian housing norms may increase the stresses of settlement, as people must ascertain culturally specific acceptable behaviours through the process of trial and error. Conversely, it is important for other residents in the apartment buildings to tolerate behaviours that are outside their 'norm'.

I would like to have my own house because in an apartment the smallest problem is a big deal [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

Settling refugees by shelter allowance, as is often the case, may not necessarily provide adequate housing. When possible, recognition should be given to both the size and makeup of the family that is being settled. Although the provision of housing is not a government responsibility, the government and the immigrant and refugee-serving agencies may want to seek partnership with voluntary

support of friends and relatives may be necessary but insufficient for successful resettlement if

groups, such as Habitat for Humanity, to find or build appropriate housing. Shelter allowances must be reconsidered to rectify the widening gap between shelter allowance and market rents. These problems are particularly apparent for those families living in larger centres such as Vancouver, as well as for large families.⁴⁵ In their final report, CRS & CERIS (2001) proposed the conversion of non-used buildings into rental units. "The refugees can participate in the renovation process (i.e. Habitat for Humanity project). In this way the cost of rent can be contained and spaces can be designated based on family size" (CRS & CERIS 2001, 111). Attention to family size and makeup, as well as more appropriate shelter allowance levels may reduce stresses of settlement that arise from housing.

Obtaining (Meaningful) Employment

Three years after settlement 43% (15/35) of the Kosovars interviewed were employed on either a full-time or a part time basis, 11% (4/35) were full-time post-secondary students (none of whom are employed), and 46% (16/35) were unemployed.⁴⁶ Significant geographic variations exist between centres in relation to both unemployment and the degree to which Kosovars have obtained Canadian work experience.⁴⁷ In Chilliwack and Abbotsford, for example, one of the nine Kosovars interviewed are unemployed, compared with eight of the eighteen participants in Vancouver and Surrey, and seven of the eight participants in Kelowna and Vernon. Some Kosovars, particularly in the Lower Mainland spoke of fairly constant attachment to the labour force, albeit in a variety of jobs, while those in Kelowna and Vernon spoke of a more transient or fleeting attachment.

the means to become self-sufficient, such as employment, are not also present" (5).

⁴⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the gap between shelter allowances and market rents see the Friends of Women and Children in B.C. Report Card (2002).

⁴⁶ A larger proportion of Kosovars had obtained employment than in the study done much earlier by CERIS & CRS (2001), a finding that is not surprising given the different time periods when the studies are conducted.

⁴⁷ One sponsor has suggested that many Kosovars find employment that pays cash to enable them to continue receiving social assistance. This is consistent with findings from Kyte and West (2000) who suggested people feared having benefits cut as a result of earnings. Consequently, unemployment numbers may be inflated.

In Vancouver, Surrey, Chilliwack and Abbotsford the majority of Kosovars interviewed had at least some Canadian work experience. Many of these jobs, however, are part-time or temporary, particularly in service industries, such as tourism. A number of the women and one of the men in Surrey and Abbotsford reported having been employed either as interpreters for CIC or as Kosovar settlement counsellors at various settlement service organizations. While these jobs provide much-needed Canadian experience, they were tied to the immediate settlement of the Kosovars and the two-year funding window. As such, many of these jobs no longer exist.

Gender differences in employment have emerged in Surrey, where all but one of the women are unemployed, while the majority of men are employed. It is important to note, however, that many of these women reported having worked in a number of jobs (e.g. packer in a bakery warehouse, interpreters for CIC, settlement counsellor) that were characterized as part-time or temporary. Other reasons given for quitting work were childcare responsibilities or the desire to return to school.⁴⁸

In Kelowna and Vernon, the majority of participants reported having worked for as little as one or two months since coming to Canada, with many of them reporting no Canadian work experience. Anecdotal evidence of six women (five in Vernon and one in Kelowna) and one other man in Kelowna indicates that only one is working.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Cindi Katz and Janice Monk (1993) interrogate how a person's age and their stage in the life cycle affect the geographies of everyday life. People have different opportunities available to them and constraints acting upon them depending on how old they are, and where they fits in the life cycle. Throughout the life cycle "individuals may change, in their personal values and aspirations, in the constraints placed upon them or opportunities available to them" (Pratt and Hanson 1993, 30). Although the edited book by Katz and Monk focuses specifically on the geographies of women, their analysis can be extended to issues involving the settlement and integration of refugees. Just as attention to age and stage is beneficial in unpacking gender relations and identities, the concept can be applied to issues surrounding refugee settlement to enable a more thorough appreciation of the ways in which people's needs in settlement may differ depending on age and stage. 'Age and stage' have certainly emerged as important in this project in regards to language acquisition and ability to resettle.

⁴⁹ It is important to note, however, that immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Vernon indicated some of the Kosovars have obtained stable, and in at least one case full-time, employment. One person is upgrading their credentials.

[It is] very difficult to work ... I asked a lot of people ... but there is no work. Even the ... the local people have lost their jobs here [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon]

The high unemployment levels among Kosovars in Kelowna and Vernon reflects wider unemployment trends in the region. During the period in which the Kosovars were settled in the Okanagan, the jobless rate in the Thompson-Okanagan was two percent above the provincial average, a statistic that remains largely unchanged (Okanagan 1999). According to the 2001 Census both Kelowna and Vernon had unemployment rates significantly above the provincial average, while all of the other areas studied had unemployment rates that were slightly below the provincial average.⁵⁰ The unemployment of Kosovars in these centres may well reflect wider economic issues in the region. Although the unemployment rate in Vernon declined from 12.1% to 10.2% between 1996 and 2001, the labour force growth and employment growth rate declined by 6.16% and 4.21% respectively.⁵¹ These findings are contrasted with Abbotsford, which experienced labour force growth rates and employment growth rates of 11.51% and 13.66% respectively.

The majority of Kosovars who have obtained jobs are employed are in lower-paying jobs that do not necessarily reflect their educational background, credentials, experience or skills, a finding consistent with those of Kosovars in Northern Alberta (Abu-Laban et al. 2001).⁵² Like other immigrants and refugees, the Kosovars who participated, spoke about a number of barriers to obtaining meaningful employment which include: English language difficulties; unfamiliarity with Canadian job-finding skills; the absence of networks in obtaining employment; a lack of Canadian experience; and in some cases the non-

⁵⁰ According to the 2001 Census, the unemployment rates for the total population 15 years and over were: Canada 7.4%, B.C. 8.5%, Chilliwack 8.3%, Abbotsford 8.2%, Surrey 7.4%, Vancouver 8.3%, Burnaby 8.3%, Kelowna 9.1% and Vernon 10.7% (Statistics Canada 2003c).

⁵¹ Labor force growth refers to the number of people who have become employed, while the employment growth rate refers to the number of jobs that have been created.

⁵² Sixty percent of the newcomers surveyed in the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada are working in an occupational field that is different from before coming to Canada (Statistics Canada 2003a).

recognition of credentials.⁵³ These factors all contribute to un(der) employment and downward occupational mobility.

No one is accepting experience from back home ... I know it is not the case only with us it's with all immigrants. Especially if you don't know [the] language [301e – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Job finding ways in Canada may differ significantly from those in Kosovo/a. One Kosovar, for example, talked about his unfamiliarity with resumes and the need to learn to 'sell' yourself in Canada.⁵⁴ For some, ageism was also believed to be a factor in their failure to obtain employment.

When it comes time to hire someone to work it's not only language, but also age. They hire someone younger [117 – Kosovar – Surrey].

For people with professional or technical skills the difficulties of obtaining employment are amplified by the non-recognition of credentials by professional licensing bodies (Abu-Laban et al. 1999).⁵⁵ There is ample evidence in both interviews and anecdotally, of downward occupational mobility among the Kosovars, which is consistent with the findings of Abu-Laban et al. (1999). The majority of professionals in this sample have not obtained employment in their previous field: of the eleven professionals interviewed, two are employed in his/her previous field but at a much lower level, three are employed in an occupation at a lower level, two are upgrading their qualifications, and four are unemployed.⁵⁶ Professionals in Kelowna have expressed the greatest difficulties in obtaining employment, and were more likely to speak of moving to a larger centre where they believed meaningful employment could be obtained.

⁵³ These findings were consistent with those of Abu-Laban et al. (2001), Abu-Laban et al. (1999), CRS & CERIS (2001).

⁵⁴ Similar findings were reported by Bauder and Cameron (2002) who noted immigrants from the Former Yugoslavia (although not necessarily from Kosovo/a) had differing assumptions about hiring practices that were acquired in the country of origin but did not necessarily work in Canada.

⁵⁵ For the purpose of this research, professionals is used to denote those occupations that require post-secondary education and includes teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, architects, and people involved in information technology and high tech sectors.

⁵⁶ Since the interviews two people have obtained employment in their field at a level that is comparable to their previous employment.

Despite their inability to obtain employment in their own fields, two professionals talked about the reluctance on the part of employers to hire them because they are overqualified.

Some of them say that you are over qualified, some of them don't like me because they know that if I find better job I will leave [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Another Kosovar talked about the difficulties of obtaining recognition for her medical credentials, despite having passed the evaluation exams that recognize her medical knowledge and training as being equivalent to that of Canadian graduates. When applying for residency, which is the next step in becoming a Canadian doctor, foreign-trained doctors have the lowest priority. Further, the requirements state that

advantage is given to ... physicians who are practicing or [have] recently [practiced]. But [the] longer it takes to get into a residency, [we] are losing these advantages. Over four years I have been out of practice now [150 – Kosovar – Burnaby].

Thus, multiple barriers exist to credential recognition.

Canada is seen by some as having systemic barriers that limit the opportunities for immigrants and newcomers to obtain meaningful employment.

Like you need to do like elementary jobs. They don't give you chance to do ... business or to have good job in government position... You need to ... really develop your stuff or ... have [good] luck. [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver]

For one Kosovar, the 'luck factor', or recognition of his 'foreign' work experience was important in gaining meaningful employment in his previous field.

I went to apply ... as a production labour ... and I was just lucky enough to hand off my resume to a factory manager ... When he saw my resume ... he said why don't you apply for IT manager position? They called my counter-part from US to interview me ... and I got the job. [120 – Kosovar – Abbotsford]

Without such recognition, or being in the right place at the right time, these Kosovars felt it was difficult to obtain 'good jobs'. Language barriers, the lack of credential recognition and age compound the difficulties of finding employment.

The inability to obtain employment may have ramifications that extend beyond the economic impacts.

I was disappointed with finding jobs ... sometimes I blame myself [because] I don't know how to find them ... It is kind of frustrating for us ... I thought I would do better ... I'm not satisfied with part-time jobs and [jobs that last for] two months ... [At] first I [thought I would be] working in my field, but since I am here it is not possible without training [115 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Another Kosovar, who has been unsuccessful in obtaining any employment in Canada, indicated unemployment has affected her mental health.

For me it's not just lack of income but it's lack of self-respect [108 – Kosovar – Kelowna]

The emotional distress that results from prolonged unemployment may have repercussions for the entire family.

Right now we are in a big problem about [work] ... My [partner] is in stress, and it affects the family [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna]

Recent provincial cuts that limit welfare to two out of five years and reduced monthly support may make settlement and integration more tenuous for those who are still unable to obtain stable employment. In one city, the immigrant and refugee-serving agency related the difficulties of settling two different people who are unable to obtain employment due to medical problems, yet do not qualify for disability under government regulations.

One theme that has emerged in the interviews is a spatial mismatch between the jobs available in a city, and the job experience and skills of the refugees. A lack of factory jobs was mentioned in a number of interviews, suggesting a mismatch between the job skills of some of the refugees (e.g. in manufacturing) and the types of jobs available (e.g. in service industries such as tourism).

[In] Gjakova we had ... seven or eight [factories]. It was a very industrial town... there were big factories: 5000 people in one [factory] [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

These factories were an important source of employment. This mismatch has been most evident in Kelowna and Vernon, where the economies are predominantly based in forestry and agriculture, with a strong service sector, including tourism (Economic Development Commission 2002). In Vernon, one Kosovar reported

[I]t's hard to find jobs. There are not a lot of jobs and the town is small. There are no factories. People just come here for tourism [107 – Kosovar – Vernon].

In Kelowna another lamented that

Kelowna is tourist place, it is not for engineers [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

While this mismatch certainly exists in many cities as a result of the rise of the service economy, the predominant economic base as well as the size of the city may exacerbate the effect.

This spatial mismatch was also evident in relation to high tech and information technology sectors.

The promotion of Kelowna like 'Silicon Vineyard' (sic) is highly exaggerated. High tech companies usually are small. Very small. And they are able to employ up to ten people. And no industry, no big manufacturing companies ... Here, generally, I believe it's mainly hospitality industry ... [The] highly promoted bridges.com ... does do very well, but still not big enough to be big employer. Only manufacturer is Sunrype, food processing kind of company. But I'm afraid they don't need any high tech personnel so far. [108 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Similar concerns arose in Abbotsford:

[Information technology] is considered more of a service industry and those industries in Abbotsford are rather small, therefore they don't hire a lot of people in IT. In Vancouver for example, on the other hand is bigger market for those type of jobs. [120 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

Employment has emerged as a major concern for Kosovars during settlement. Of those who have obtained employment, many of these jobs are in occupations that aren't as good as previously enjoyed; while others report little, if any, work experience. One Kosovar suggested that people with

higher education ... lack opportunities, but others with low education may ... find better opportunities in Canada in comparison to Kosovo/a. [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

The ability to obtain employment is influenced by age (with older people citing more difficulty), *educational background* (professionals have little success in obtaining employment based on previous credentials), and *location* (people

settled in Kelowna and Vernon have had the least success in obtaining employment, which may relate to wider economic trends in the region).

Language Acquisition

The majority of Kosovars interviewed (29/34 or 85%) have received English language training since their arrival.⁵⁷ Of the Kosovars who have taken language classes, two have completed English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) level one, one has completed up to level two, nine have completed level three, nine have received language training but are not sure to which level, and eight have taken advanced English training through adult learning centres and local colleges.⁵⁸ Many of the Kosovars seeking advanced language training are professionals who believe better language skills will facilitate access to employment in their previous occupations. Of the five Kosovars who did not receive English language training, three claimed fluency in English, and two cited age as the reason for not participating. One person, for example, said she hadn't attended English language classes

because I'm old, I can't [134 – Kosovar – Kelowna];

while another person, who did attend some classes stated

I just stopped going. I realized I wasn't able to achieve [Kosovar – Vernon].

For some Kosovars, mature students are considered outside the norm.

In [a] certain age [group we] went to university, but not much later ... If someone would come back from work we were kind of judgmental ... We were not ... open-minded. [150 – Kosovar – Burnaby].

The educational experience in Canada is contrasted with those in Kosovo/a.

Here you can go to school until you are very old ... Back home if you go to school you would have to go to school with the children. And people would [ask] 'what are you doing?' But here I've seen

⁵⁷ Abu-Laban et al. (2001) suggest the longer period of funding provided to Kosovars may have enabled them to work less and attend language training on a full-time basis.

⁵⁸ ELSA 3 is the highest level funded by the Government of B.C. Manitoba provides funding to level 8, which is university-ready, and Ontario provides funding to level 6 (Hyndman & Friesen 2002).

people sixty years old going to school [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

Age was also cited as a self-imposed barrier to participation in English language classes for Kosovars in Ontario (CRS & CERIS 2000). One B.C. informant, who believed he was too old to go to school, talked about watching videos and TV as a way of learning the language. Age and health-related concerns as well as familial responsibilities are important factors in accessing language services.

Throughout this research gender differences became apparent in relation to the ability to take English language training, with women more likely to cite childcare responsibilities as preventing them from undertaking further classes, while men were more likely to have foregone ELSA classes in order to obtain employment. Those with young children may be constrained in their ability to pursue English language training by the need to secure daycares. Although childcare is available for some ESLA classes, the availability is variable and the wait-lists are long. Anecdotal evidence suggests some women in outlying centres, such as Abbotsford, were unable to pursue further language classes because of the distance to classes, and due to demands placed on them for childcare. Barriers to participation in language classes need to be examined and addressed as English language ability is intimately related to the ability to obtain high quality employment opportunities (Creese and Kamberre 2002).

The ability of younger children and teens to learn English very quickly was something that both pleased and concerned their parents. Although the parents were happy to see them learning English, they voiced their concern that the children would forget their mother tongue. Even in Surrey, where people talked about the benefits of living among other Kosovars so children could maintain their Albanian language, one parent stated

[t]he children have forgotten their own language. For me, I like to speak as much English as I can, but the children are losing their ability to speak Albanian. I was listening to children talking and they were combining both languages and mispronouncing Albanian [118 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Unlike children, who are immersed in English at school, those who do not work lack the opportunity to practice English on a regular basis. With the exception of

one family, Albanian is the language primarily used at home. The desire to integrate into Canadian society is complicated by the simultaneous fear of losing their culture.

In one way I can say I am happy here but in another way I know I am going to lose my kids and stuff. [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Practicing English with their children comes at the expense of speaking Albanian and helping preserve their children's 'original' language. While people want to integrate and learn Canadian culture they fear losing their Kosovar culture and the Albanian language.⁵⁹

Some people believe the constant practice received in the workplace, or other English speaking environments, rather than attending further language classes would improve their English.

I would improve my English just being in English speaking environment ... I need more practice ... I don't [really] need more classes [108 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

The inability to speak English presents a significant barrier to obtaining employment. Consequently, immigrant and refugee-serving agencies voiced a need for increased access to English language classes.

They must let us provide language training to a higher level ... Level 3 ... doesn't give anyone enough English to even get a job ... I think they should go to level 6 and that still isn't fluent, but [it] is [enough] ... to be able to get ... an entry level job [204 – Service provider – Kamloops].

Results from the "Inter-Provincial Report Card on Immigrant Settlement and Labour Market Integration Services" (BC Coalition for Immigrant Integration 2002) indicate that British Columbia lags behind all of Canada (including the Yukon) in relation to the provision of English Language Services for Adults (ELSA). Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies note that BC has long waiting lists, a lack of childcare spaces for parents seeking language training, and has recently been subjected to sector-wide cuts and increased emphasis on accountability. As such, some suggest there is a need for increased capacity for

⁵⁹ Similarly Kyte and West (2000) identified the fear of losing Kosovar culture as a concern for parents.

English language instruction. In the Lower Mainland, for example, it can take upwards of a year to get an assessment, and then the person must wait for a spot to become available [203 – Service Provider – Vancouver]. Waiting lists for daycares (so that parents may attend school) are even longer. Further, reducing barriers to language acquisition may facilitate access to employment. Increased provision and capacity would ensure more timely completion of English language training to a level that would enable newcomers to enter the competitive job market.

Sponsors and settlement services: making integration happen

All of the Kosovars interviewed overwhelmingly expressed their gratitude to the Government of Canada and to Canadians for the funding and services they have received.

Back home in Kosova and as a refugee in Albania [we had] a very hard time ... When we came here we were very surprised with the people and the government. We won't forget at all, never ever [Kosovar – Surrey].

Both immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and private sponsors have played an important part in the settlement of the Kosovars. Most of the Kosovars understood that the government was responsible for funding, while the immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors were responsible for daily assistance. For some Kosovars the local immigrant and refugee-serving agencies provided the key role in settlement. The Immigrant Services Society of B.C. (ISSBC)

helped us to adjust, to find school, or give information to help us find jobs ... and gives you information about what kind of opportunities you have about schooling and education [111 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Furthermore, immigrant and refugee-serving agencies were flexible in meeting the needs of Kosovars. In Vernon, ESL language classes for women were relocated to an apartment after their families prohibited the women from attending language classes at the service agency. Adapting services to meet culturally-specific gender norms enabled the women to continue classes in a

venue deemed appropriate by the women's families. When funding ended, Vernon District Immigrant Services Society (VDISS) arranged sewing classes with basic ESL instruction so the women could continue to receive 'basic' English instruction while also learning a job skill.⁶⁰

The settlement experiences of the Kosovars were distinct from other Government Assisted Refugees in that all Kosovars have been given the option of having a local sponsor or host.⁶¹ Further, they had more active participation and contact with local sponsors than other refugee groups. In addition to assisting with the day-to-day issues of settlement, hosts provided ongoing contact with Canadian citizens from the host society.

We contact the people or they contact me after they arrive in Canada and we just help them with practical details of life: ... providing food clothes and furniture, helping solve issues of ... how to get medical coverage, how to get kids in school, what if there are problems in school. Just kind of how to access the various public entities that, that are out there. Pointing people the direction of job help, ESL help and all that kind of stuff. [207 – Sponsor – Surrey].

While still acknowledging the role of immigrant and refugee-serving agencies, some Kosovars felt that sponsors had been integral to helping settle people into their new lives, by familiarizing them with the area and enrolling children in schools.

ISS partially [helped], but it was everything through our friends actually who help us settle and they showed us for example city, shopping malls, emergency, then ambulance, and whatever, hospitals and schools. [103 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

The relationships formed with the sponsors vary significantly among the three centres. For some, the assistance of sponsors in their day-to-day lives continues,

⁶⁰ While the intention behind offering sewing classes as a means of providing English language classes is admirable, one must question the relevance of these skills to the marketplace and the value of perpetuating these gender stereotypes.

⁶¹ Sponsors include churches, social justice groups and organizations. As sponsors these groups or individuals agree to provide settlement assistance for a period of one year from the date of arrival for the refugee. Unlike the arrangements for privately sponsored refugees, in which sponsors are financially responsible for the refugees, the Government of Canada assumed all financial responsibility while those who sponsored the Kosovars assumed no financial responsibilities. As such, they acted more as hosts than as sponsors.

while for others it has matured into a social relationship. In Vernon, one Kosovar stated:

We had the sponsors here. There is one who still visits us ... they still help us because we still have problems with the language. We need help... When we came here everything had been prepared for us. Our house was full of furniture ... and plates and spoons and everything had been prepared by the sponsors ...One of the sponsors always comes and takes my wife to the doctor ... She takes care of her like ... if she was her sister [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

One family in Abbotsford who didn't really feel they needed daily intervention preferred a more distant relationship with sponsors in which they would ask for help when needed, an arrangement that was not necessarily satisfactory to the sponsors.

[Our sponsors] wanted to help us lots. There was no need for their help ... because both of us speak English ... They were very good people on suggesting what to do ... But we were doing fine [303 – Kosovars – Abbotsford].

Two Kosovars talked about never having developed a relationship at all. One Kosovar characterized the relationship with his sponsors as being sporadic despite his desire for a closer, more helpful relationship.

I think I was unlucky ... I think every family that came should have sponsors, ... but only one came to visit me sometimes and I never knew anyone else ... Actually in the beginning it was hard ... but I [had] to [settle] on my own [303 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

One family in Abbotsford lives and works on the farm owned by its sponsors. While this arrangement is working well according to these Kosovars, similar arrangements could prove problematic in other situations. The relationships developed between Kosovars and sponsors differed significantly in ways that did not always meet the needs or desires of either group.

For some Kosovars, random acts of kindness from members of the host society were important during the initial settlement period. One Canadian woman negotiated a good group rental rate with the manager of an apartment complex in Surrey, and obtained a reduced rate on rents in exchange for a large number of families moving in. Fifteen families now live in a five building complex in Surrey.

For another family, a chance encounter with a stranger precipitated an outpouring of assistance.

We ... told him what we experienced during the war ... He told his friends and they all decided to help us. So we got that house in East-Vancouver for rent and they came and they brought us so many things that were donated by all their friends, like tables for living room, chairs, and so many clothes for me and they were really good because we didn't have any clothes when we came [141 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Surrey].

Accounts from immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors generally echo the positive reception of the Kosovars from members of the host societies who offered an abundance of assistance.

With the Kosovar refugees I think Kelowna was very welcoming and willing to take on what they needed to do. And the community forum that we had [with representatives from] the school board, the health authority, and you know many people were willing to help and work with the refugees [206 – Service provider – Kelowna].

Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies expressed a number of difficulties that emerged in relation to the training of new sponsors and the lack of clearly defined roles between immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors. The speed with which the Kosovars were removed from Macedonia and brought to Canada, left little time for educating new sponsors about the needs of the Kosovars and what they could expect, in terms of support and resources, as sponsors.

These well-meaning people ... didn't have a clue what they were getting into ... [The] few groups who had already sponsored before and were going in eyes wide open ... also had big challenges with this group ... [The Kosovars were] coming straight out of a ... war ... whereas most sponsored refugees have been in refugee camps in a safe third country for a number of years before coming and have normalized [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies noted there had been breakdowns on both sides of the sponsorship arrangements.⁶² The lack of clearly defined roles

⁶² Although a few of the immigrant and refugee-serving agencies we interviewed spoke of a breakdown in relations with the sponsor groups, research is needed on the experiences of sponsors similar to that undertaken by CRS & CERIS in another report entitled "A Report on the Experiences of Sponsors of Kosovar Refugees in Ontario", to determine what information sponsor groups can tell us about resettlement in smaller centres.

for sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies was a major concern for immigrant and refugee-serving agencies.

The intention of having community sponsors ... was really good. But I don't think there was any savings in that. Because you still require settlement services. If you haven't had any training, or if you don't know how to do that, it ended up falling on settlement services [206 – Service provider – Kelowna].

Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies do not want to see their professional services taken over by volunteers, of course, so patrolling the boundaries between sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies is somewhat political. Although sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies generally worked well together, others expressed frustration with the overlap and confusion that existed in the arrangements. Anecdotal evidence exists of sponsor groups who actively sought to keep immigrant and refugee-serving agencies from contacting refugees for fear they were trying to take over. Further, people questioned the orientation of the government towards an either/or scenario in which settlement services are provided by *either* immigrant and refugee-serving agencies *or* sponsors. One service provider suggested the relationship between sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies should be formalized into

partnerships between the immigrant serving agency and the sponsorship [group], because they're not replacing one another. They're playing very different roles. ISS can't be an intimate community support and network, but immigrants, sponsor groups don't know about the full terms, about medical issues, about PTSD and cultural adaptation and all of those things. Most of them don't know that. So it could be a very, a very mutually supportive relationship [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

A sponsor in Surrey echoes this sentiment of a mutually supportive relationship:

The Canadian government was good at bringing them in and giving them funds. ISS was good at kind of helping them get located in an appropriate area, but then both of those organizations would back [out] and there was a need for ... people who could walk with these guys on a more daily basis, with the issues of ... how to live in this society and culture. So that's where we came in ... we weren't so much involved in the settlement as we were in the integration into Canadian culture [207 - Sponsor – Surrey].

Given the importance placed on the efforts of both sponsors and service providing organizations in facilitating settlement by the Kosovars, more work must be done in relation to

developing systems and also getting the right partnerships and other community services in place [202 - Service provider – Vancouver].

Although none of the Kosovars noted any conflicts between immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors, it was clearly a concern for immigrant and refugee-serving agencies. Clarifying roles and responsibilities would aid in the delivery of these services.

Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in smaller centres expressed a need for trauma counselling to be available on a permanent basis.⁶³ In Kelowna, for example, a service provider at the immigrant and refugee-serving agency indicated that within the Lower Mainland people who have survived political violence and torture have access to the Vancouver Association for the Survivors of Torture” (VAST), Kelowna lacks these services. This may become increasingly relevant as some Kosovars are beginning to display signs of post traumatic stress disorder.⁶⁴

When [they] start to experience post-traumatic stress it's really complicated for the refugees to go to the doctor, and even with the doctor there's no, what can they do besides give them some medication. Like they don't have access to specialized counselling [206 – Service provider – Kelowna].

More research is needed on the availability of counselling, which varies between centres, as mental health is an important part of settlement. Despite the requirement that Kosovars were only to be settled in communities that had

⁶³ Similar concerns were forwarded in Hyndman and Friesen (2002), who noted that in “one region of the B.C. Interior, a Vancouver psychiatrist is consulted long-distance, but the arrangement is less than ideal” (12)

⁶⁴ Although the American Psychiatric Association (1999) indicates PTSD symptoms generally appear within the first three months following the trauma, symptoms may emerge much later. The National Centre for PTSD suggests that approximately thirty percent of people who have “spent time in war zones experience PTSD. An additional 20-25% have had partial PTSD at some point in their lives” (National Centre for PTSD 2003).

existing settlement and language services, the availability of interpreters and employment services varied between the centres.

Interpretation

Despite the requirement that settlement services must be in place, the availability of interpreters continues to vary geographically. At the time of the interviews, interpreters were available in all centres through either informal or formal means. The availability of formal interpretation varies across the centres, with Kosovars and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Kelowna and Vernon expressing the most difficulties in accessing first language interpretation. Sixty-eight percent of Kyte and West's (2000) respondents reported difficulties in locating interpreters when needed. One notable difference emerged between this study and Kyte and West is that 67% of their respondents from Chilliwack reported difficulties in obtaining interpreters.⁶⁵ In some cases, informants spoke about the difficulties of communicating with interpreters who did not necessarily speak the same language.

Sometimes there is an interpreter from Kamloops ... who comes to interpret when there are some major things, but she is from Albania so we have problems communicating with her. Even [though] the language is the same, there are some differences. It's not that very easy to communicate with her [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

In a focus group with employees at an immigrant and refugee-serving agency in Vernon, participants echoed the need for first language interpretation.

*What we **DO** really need is ... funding to have accredited translators and interpreters [204a – Service provider – Vernon]*

because now ... we have to have someone accredited [from] MOSAIC and you're paying, like we can't afford that [204b – Service provider – Vernon].

⁶⁵ This could relate to differences in the stage of resettlement in which the interviews were conducted, with this research being much later in the settlement process when people are more established, as well as from my reliance on a Kosovar settlement worker who also acts as an interpreter.

The need to rely on outside interpreters and translators has placed a financial burden on service-providing organizations and sponsor groups by requiring they contract local staff on a casual basis.

One way in which Kosovars have adapted is through the development of an informal interpretation network that relies on the children (both young and old) of the elderly, as well as of friends and neighbours. Kosovars in Surrey appear to have a very well developed informal network of interpreters whereby those with better language skills interpret for family and neighbours. In Chilliwack one Kosovar said

Now I'm the one that [does the interpreting] ... I'm not that good myself, but I try, I struggle ... [130 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

As people obtain employment or return to school it is not always possible for them to assist other Kosovars with interpretation. For one woman, who is currently volunteering to assist a family of privately-sponsored refugees who have recently arrived from Kosovo/a, it is sometimes necessary to interpret over the telephone. The lack of interpreters, as well as the reliance on informal networks for interpretation is significant in that information may not necessarily be accurate. This could, in turn, have important implications and consequences for medical and legal interactions.

Although Kosovars, immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors indicated that the overall need for interpreters has decreased, informants spoke of a continuing need for interpreters in certain situations such as medical appointments, and for particular groups including the elderly and women with small children.

[In] the beginning [translators] ... were very needed, but now I think people are getting better and now maybe only for moms who have been raising little kids at home [because] they haven't had the opportunity to go to school or perhaps some illiterate, for them it is harder for them to learn English. Otherwise, the younger generations, no ... And also older people who probably don't read and write in their own language, for them how are they going to go to ESL classes and read ABC, when they don't even know it in their own language [119 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

This sentiment was echoed by Kosovars in all centres, and supported by the increased tendency for women with small children and the elderly to rely on translators during focus groups and interviews for this project.

A need for job placement

While Kosovars appreciated the assistance that was provided by the Government of Canada, some expressed their frustration with the method of assistance.

[The] government of Canada didn't need to support us with money, they [should have] support[ed] us to find some kind of ... jobs [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

The biggest demand was for more appropriate employment services. Sponsors, key informants and Kosovars all identified a need for employment and job services.⁶⁶

One recurring theme was a desire for job placement programs similar to those operating in the U.S. and New Zealand that match the refugee with up to three different jobs. One respondent, who was originally settled in the U.S., said that Canada should follow the US practice of placing refugees in jobs.

When we came [to the U.S., the International Rescue Committee found] us a job, like for my family. If you don't like that job they find you another one [301d – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Another Kosovar talked about a similar program in New Zealand where the government finds three jobs for immigrants.

If you immigrate ... the government ... [will] find you three jobs ... [if you] love the first one ... you can stay in that. But if you not happy or you not good in that you can try a second one. After third one the government don't care [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Despite my inability to corroborate the existence of a job finding program in New Zealand, this informal 'knowledge' is important as it speaks to the perceived need

⁶⁶ Although Kyte and West (2000) identified a similar need for employment and job services, access to health care was a primary concern in that study. Unlike Abu-Laban et al. (1999), where respondents also requested more ESL instruction and basic information, and Abu-Laban et al. (2001) where respondents also expressed a need for psychological testing, respondents in this study were uniform in their desire for improved job finding and job training services. The

for job finding programs, as well as the existence of informal networks for information transfer. Often participants expressed a desire for jobs or job placement programs, as the practical, hands-on assistance of job placement programs was seen to be much more beneficial than courses related to resume-writing.

To date, immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Kamloops have experienced some success in working with employers.

We do a lot of work with employers too ... so, employers in [this community] are getting a little better ... They have hired some of our clients and now they actually call us when they have an opening [204 – Service provider – Kamloops].

Job finding services must be flexible and geared to meet the needs of individuals.

Those agencies that provide employment to immigrants [need to] make sure that they had specialized departments for different professions, people that have contacts in that industry, that know what is required ... somebody that really knows what they are talking about. Not some general person that doesn't know. [120 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

This may be more feasible in larger centres where there are more people on staff, as smaller centres with one or possibly two employees could find this more difficult. In smaller centres it may be necessary to establish employment networks whereby refugees can obtain information from people who are immersed in their particular field or occupation.

Beyond the desire for assistance in obtaining employment, a number of Kosovars spoke of a need for expanded job services geared to meeting the needs of refugees and professionals.

I believe that the critical point is WHO is your client for agency? ... People who looked for general labour are different from people who are professional employment ... Government funds they usually oriented towards, towards labour and not towards professional. Or they ... label you: [you] are [a] newcomer, you are an immigrant, ... you're English is second language - so let's put you with all [the other] immigrants ... It doesn't mean that if the only common thing we have is immigration, new country. It still can be ... the only

increased attention to the need for employment service may reflect the later stage in settlement, given that initial supports are already in place.

similarity between us. We are different ...Canadian newcomers can be considered with more specificity ... In term[s] of the background, education, circumstances under which this newcomer came to Canada. And motives, reasons why they came to Canada [108 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Employment and job-finding courses need to recognize the differing needs of professionals. A settlement service provider in Vancouver noted that in regards to determining what employment services are needed one has to recognize:

Different needs, different people. So more flexibility and looking into the individuals and what would work for them rather than fitting their individual needs into a box in terms of services [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Although settlement outcomes depend on the human capital the refugee brings to Canada, better language skills and higher levels of training are not always associated with more opportunity.⁶⁷ There has to be a willingness to obtain these 'survival' jobs. One service provider related a story about two engineers he had met at a job-search meeting.

One ... would shovel coal ... He liked working with his buddies in the yard. And the other fellow, he was an executive and he had this persona that he must be a professional and there was no way that he could change to go take another job that had menial work involved in it. Yet these fellows worked side by side, in the same job. They were both professional engineers, but you couldn't find the same jobs for them. One of them was prepared to take any job. [201 – Service provider – Vancouver].

While some people are willing to take any job in order to obtain Canadian experience, others retain their identity as professionals. One Kosovar related how becoming a refugee meant losing her home and country. In being offered a job at Tim Hortons or McDonalds, she was asked to give up the only thing she had left – her identity as a professional.

⁶⁷ Faist (2000) defines human capital as "educational credentials, skills and know-how" (191).

What factors influence the decision of refugees to stay or leave particular places?

The ability to obtain meaningful employment is central to the decision to stay or leave particular centres. For the most part, people were happy with their host city in regards to amenities such as schools, parks and recreation centres. Reasons given for moving, or at least considering moving, focused on the attraction of a destination city, rather than a dislike for the host city. The most frequent reason cited for moving was the search for employment, which could outweigh even the most favourable impressions of the host city. One person in Abbotsford, for example, suggested that in ten years time they would

ideally [like to live] here in Abbotsford, but [it] depends upon employment [107 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

Despite the growing attachment to place a number of Kosovars expressed that without employment they would have to move. This sentiment arose in all of the centres, but was most evident in Kelowna and Vernon where respondents had the most tenuous attachment to the labour market. In Vernon, one informant stated

[Vernon] is a good place to live. Except for the jobs. If I had a job here I would never move. [107 – Kosovar – Vernon]

While in Kelowna, another said

It's [a] nice place to live. It's a very good place. It's nice to raise [a] family. Under one condition: you're employed [108 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Despite the difficulties they have experienced in obtaining employment, many of the informants remain positive about the places where they were settled.

Other characteristics of place that emerged as being important were the presence of other Albanians and social factors such as the size or pace of the city. Kosovars in Surrey and Vernon expressed that proximity to other Kosovars was a significant factor in issues of settlement. Proximity to large numbers of Albanian-speaking Kosovars is seen to be beneficial for older people and young children as it may help to establish some of the ties disrupted during migration, while enabling children to maintain their 'original' language.

I moved [to Surrey] because friends were here; Vancouver doesn't have any [friends] ... If you have some problem you can tell someone who understands [Interviewer - Do you have any friends here that are ... from your home town?] No, but they are Kosovars [113 – Kosovar – Surrey].

This locational strategy of Kosovar concentration appears to have some momentum in Surrey and Vernon, and was also used in Abbotsford on a short-term basis during the initial settlement period. In Abbotsford, a number of families lived together in an apartment building in part because of the affordable rents, but also to lend support to one another during the initial settlement period. Once they began establishing themselves in jobs, however, these families dispersed to other areas of Abbotsford. In Vernon six families live in one apartment building, while in Surrey, fifteen families live in one complex.⁶⁸ Living in such a concentrated fashion has enabled respondents in Surrey to develop a “small Kosovar community” [301 – Kosovar – Vancouver] that has assisted in reducing feelings of isolation for at least some of the respondents. For some, however, these newly formed connections do not necessarily replace the networks that had existed in Kosovo/a. One Kosovar, who moved to Surrey for the sake of his parents stated

They've lived with other [Kosovar families] in this complex but still you don't ... really get what you had. Especially the extent of the friends ... but it's better [301 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Nevertheless, concentration may increase the level of comfort and encourage people to depend on one another for social support. In Surrey, being known and knowing your neighbours has facilitated a sense of safety for at least one Kosovar.

I know where we live is not a good neighbourhood, but it feels like home. We have lived here three years and now I feel like I know everybody and I am more safe [114 – Kosovar – Surrey].

This sense of safety and security was enhanced by the presence of familiar people. The settlement of larger groups of Kosovars, particularly extended family

⁶⁸ Anecdotal evidence indicates some families have chosen to move out of these buildings already.

groupings, has been beneficial in that people have the support of each other during settlement. Despite the concentration of six families in one apartment building in Vernon, one Kosovar spoke of the need to move to a community with a larger Albanian-speaking community for the sake of marriage for his children.

Affordable housing, or 'cheap rent' was mentioned in a number of interviews, but particularly in relation to Surrey. Some people spoke of having moved to Surrey because of the cheaper rent, while others indicated that cheap rent was the only reason for remaining there.

I think people would move if they could afford it, but the reason they stay here is it's cheaper [112 – Kosovar – Surrey].

For others it was nearness to family that was important, despite the availability of more affordable housing elsewhere in the Lower Mainland.

I told them Vancouver is very expensive with your government assistance. At least in the first year, until you get jobs you should go to Surrey. But nope. They like to stay close ... They feel more secure [301h – Service provider – Vancouver].

The nearness of family or other Kosovars may be a significant factor in determining where people live.⁶⁹

Furthermore, the presence of other immigrants in Vancouver, is viewed as being beneficial.

There are so many immigrants already here... [T]hese new immigrants are accepting to other people. Canadian-born are not very [accepting]. They have their own friendships that they had since elementary school, they have their own friends. So immigrants are much more [accepting of] other people [111 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Abbotsford had the "third highest proportion of visible minorities among major urban areas in Canada" (Toth 2003, pA1), behind Vancouver and Toronto. During the 1990s Abbotsford had the fifth highest proportion of immigrants in Canada (Toth 2003). The difficulties of entering into relationships with Canadians was echoed by service providers at immigrant and refugee-serving agencies:

⁶⁹ According to the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, 63% of newcomers indicated "all or most of their new friends were from the same ethnic group" (Statistics Canada 2003a).

Canadian culture is really tough to penetrate. Immigrants, not just refugees, immigrants from all countries say we're hard to get to know, and we're hard to make friends with. We're friendly, but we don't make friends very easy. And that's a big barrier to a lot of immigrant groups. Immigrants tend to make friends with immigrants from their own country, from other countries way sooner than they make friends with 'a Canadian' [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

People spoke of the difficulties of getting to know Canadians, particularly given their increased propensity to move, a factor which will be developed more fully in the following chapter.

In talking about the different centres, some of the Kosovars believe social factors such as the pace of a city are important particularly for people of different ages or stages in the life cycle. The slower pace and smaller size of centres like Kelowna, Vernon, Chilliwack and Abbotsford were imagined as being better suited for older people and those with small children. Vancouver, conversely, was believed to be a place of opportunity for those without children. In Vernon, one informant suggested

is safe for children; it is [also safe] for retired people and the place is small [105 – Kosovar – Vernon];

while in Kelowna another stated

I like [Kelowna] ... It's nice ... and it's clean ... It's quiet. I [prefer] to live in smaller rather than a bigger town ... because I have small children ... The only problem is [finding] work. [302 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Differences emerged between the way in which Vancouver is imagined, compared to the small and medium sized centres. Frequently, these observations were linked to the size or pace of the city.

Vancouver is good when you don't have kids, when you are single ... There is more jobs, it is busier, it is more a working place than a living place ... and Abbotsford is more family friendly [119 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

Further, two Kosovars said that smaller centres like Abbotsford are better suited for the initial settlement period because they are less hectic.

While the process of deciding to stay or leave particular places is not easy, some people were more forthcoming about negotiating the multiple needs of different family members in deciding where to settle, a situation analogous to the economic process of 'locational rationalization' forwarded by Taylor and Thrift (1986). Locational rationalization describes the process by which multi-national corporations consider relevant factors and assess which is the optimal location, a factor that may involve compromise.

In my situation now I have to compromise between [the] wishes [of my parents and my own] ... My parents need a sense of community because they are old and they don't speak the language. So that is where they are now – with friends [102 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Although the issues contributing to staying or leaving particular centres can not necessarily be reduced to a single factor, many foregrounded the importance of employment opportunities in deciding whether to stay or leave particular centres.

Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies contend that the factors important to this decision can be summarized as

employment opportunities and support systems. Systems broadly defined as: other community members from the same community, interpretation, medical [and] schools [203 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Sponsors and immigrant and refugee-serving agencies, for example, may be talking about the needs of refugees overall, as opposed to specifically addressing the needs of Kosovars *at this stage of settlement*. When reflecting on the differing needs of refugees in comparison to Landed Immigrants one sponsor suggested that for refugees,

labour market stuff comes a little bit later [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Thus, emphasis on services may reflect overall, as opposed to the stage-specific needs of settlement.

Where will they settle?

Although the majority of Kosovars plan to stay in the host city, those who are intending to move have spoken of moving to larger centres in B.C., Alberta

and Ontario, findings which were similar to those of Abu-Laban et al. (1999) and Abu-Laban et al. (2001). Despite the current orientation to disperse immigrants to smaller centres, Kosovars in Kelowna and Vernon were more likely to talk about moving to larger centres across Canada, than were Kosovars settled in other centres. With the exception of a number of young single women from Surrey who spoke of moving to Toronto and Ottawa in pursuit of education and careers, the majority of people in the centres in and around the Lower Mainland were content to stay in B.C., whether in the initial host city or by moving to the Lower Mainland. For those who had moved, or were contemplating it in the future, the reasons primarily related to a lack of employment and education opportunities, as well as a desire to be closer to friends, family and other Albanians (Abu-Laban et al. 1999).

We would all like to stay here, but [it's] very difficult to find work, because of the [lack of] work we may all leave this place ... We would never leave Vernon, but here in B.C. there are very few things. [In] Toronto there are more... [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

Unlike Abu-Laban et al. (1999), however, none of the respondents spoke of moving because they were dissatisfied with the services being received in the host city.

It's all because of work. Like this we can not continue. We must have something. [We are] looking at ... [a] bigger city where we can find work, where there are factories or something [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

Bigger centres like Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto are imagined as offering higher paying jobs in industries, such as manufacturing, that are better suited to their labour experiences and skills. Toronto, in particular is identified as being very well-suited for Kosovars given the perception it has a more industrial economic base and larger Albanian-speaking community.

When we decided to come [to Vancouver] we should like to be in Toronto because it's a little bit more near our uh Kosovo. And another thing it's more keep like more industrial place, probably more easy for jobs. And it's more big community with Kosovars, where ... we can adjust more easy [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

During the initial resettlement of Kosovars from Macedonia to Canada, a decision was made not to settle Kosovars in Toronto due to the perception that settlement services were saturated by the demands placed on them by the increasing concentration of immigrants and refugees in that region (Ley and Hiebert 2000).⁷⁰ Thus, settlement outside this region resulted in secondary migration to that centre placing additional, and unfunded, demand on settlement services.

Proximity to other Kosovars and closer to Kosovo/a, for example, were important for some people.

Maybe Edmonton or Toronto ... It is a central location, it is closer to go back to Kosovo from Toronto and there is more work there ... And there is more of our people. They have Albanian clubs, they have Albanian activities, schools, music. Children can go 2 days a week to Albanian classes. [107 – Kosovar – Vernon].

For those Kosovars settled in smaller centres, Vancouver was also viewed as a good destination.

Conclusion: Ensuring systems are in place

In many ways, the settlement of Kosovars in British Columbia can be regarded as a success. This has been measured by the degree to which people have chosen to stay both in British Columbia and the particular centres, as well as the degree to which the people have obtained some type of employment and are beginning to establish themselves in Canada. Integration measured by language acquisition and employment has not been consistent, however, either within or between the centres. Geographic differences emerged, whereby Kosovars settled the farthest away from Vancouver and the Lower Mainland are experiencing the most difficulties in official language acquisition and obtaining employment. Professionals in all centres are least likely to stay put, particularly in Kelowna. The ability to obtain meaningful employment is central to the decision to stay or leave particular centres. For the most part, people are happy with their host city with regard to amenities such as schools, parks and recreation centres. Reasons given for moving, or at least considering moving, focused on

⁷⁰ The arguments used that settlement services are saturated are more fully dealt with by Walton-

characteristics of a destination city, rather than a dislike for the host city. Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies contend that the factors important to this decision can be summarized as

employment opportunities and support systems. Systems broadly defined as: other community members from the same community, interpretation, medical [and] schools [203 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Among immigrant and refugee-serving agencies, considerable debate has arisen as to whether smaller centres or larger centres are better environments for immigrants and refugees. Some argue larger centres offer a concentration of services and co-ethnic communities that facilitate settlement, while others argue the lack of false security offered by artificial concentration in larger centres forces immigrants and refugees to integrate faster in a 'sink or swim' environment. Despite the belief that smaller centres facilitate faster integration, I did not find this to be true. Kosovars interviewed in Vernon, for example, have experienced significant difficulties in both obtaining language and official language, while those in Abbotsford have met with far more success. With the exception of sponsors, the Kosovars in all centres talked mostly about friendships with other Kosovars or other immigrants.

Reflecting on the future of refugee settlement in B.C., one service provider noted

So much of the receptiveness has to do with factors related to our economy, or our job market, media, and the communities they are destined to ...I think that [given] the cuts in Provincial income support, welfare and so forth I think its going to be increasingly challenged to retain refugees in B.C. regardless of which community which they are initially are settled in ... Unless they are able to find work, unless the wait list for ESL classes drops, unless they have the best opportunity to and support to attach themselves to the labour market it is going to impact their success and retention [203 – Service provider – Vancouver].

These insights reflect the difficulties currently being experienced by some of the Kosovars in B.C., but particularly in Vernon. In communities where work can not

Roberts in a forthcoming working paper for RIIM.

be found, Kosovars are contemplating moving to larger centres that are seen to offer better employment opportunities.

Given the interest in settling refugees outside the Lower Mainland, research is needed to ensure adequate supports exist to facilitate settlement.

[Agencies in smaller centres] did make it through the Kosovar [settlement] ... but they're not ready for an ongoing system ... unless very low numbers [are sent] to those communities. [202 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Another service provider added:

There might be some communities that would be ready to receive refugees, but I think that there would have to be some more mapping and inventory of capacity within those communities ... to deal with some of the needs that arise, ... [such as] medical trauma, [and] issues in the school system ... that are ... currently handled in the various degrees within the Lower Mainland ... Also, the provincial government over the course of the last year and a bit has cut funding to the ... immigrant serving sector overall so I think that a number of communities have lost their capacity, and continue to lose their capacity to work with immigrants and refugees [203 – Service provider – Vancouver].

Prior to the destining of refugees to smaller centres adequate supports must be in place to assist in settlement. Capacity mapping and capacity building are needed to assess the degree to which services and supports exist to meet the needs of incoming immigrants and refugees. While the comments of service providers in Vancouver are appropriate, it must be recognized that Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies in Vancouver are funded to provide these services. The Immigrant Services Society of B.C., for example, does not want to lose its core funding for Resettlement Assistance Program so it has an interest in this line of argument.

All of the centres studied have a history of immigrant and refugee settlement, and as such basic settlement services are available. These communities, however, had participated in the settlement of privately sponsored refugees for whom immigrant and refugee-serving agencies do not necessarily have to provide services. The settlement of the Kosovars in B.C. is important in that it was outside the norm, and as such revealed the potential to settle large

numbers of refugees rapidly. Although obtaining employment was seen to be the most important factor in the decision to stay or leave particular centres, other factors emerged during settlement that spoke to the transnational aspects of settlement and immigration. Settlement is influenced by conditions and expectations both in the country of origin and the host country. Consequently, these transnational factors must also be accounted for when examining the settlement of Kosovars in B.C.

CHAPTER 4

FROM KOSOVO/A TO CANADA (AND BACK): LIVING LIVES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

Resettlement is often considered the end of the refugee experience, yet the migrant experience does not end once a refugee arrives in a host society. Integration into the community is a long-term process that is influenced by events and expectations in the country of origin as well as the host country.⁷¹ Far from abandoning all ties with Kosovo/a, the Kosovars interviewed have established a multitude of relationships and identities that exist across multiple nation-states. “Immigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states” (Basch et al. 1994, 7). Transnationalism recognizes ‘settlement’ takes place with reference to two or more locations and the social relations they imply. Settlement and integration occur within the context of current living conditions in Kosovo/a and Canada, and (new) identities are forged across this space. As such, it is impossible to examine settlement and integration without consideration for the ongoing social, political

⁷¹ Although the discourse of immigration uses words like ‘settlement’ and ‘integration’ unconsciously and unproblematically, these words imply certain assumptions that must be questioned when used in the context of transnational studies. Integration, for example, assumes a unidirectional process in which the language, culture and norms of the host society are seen to replace those of the country of origin. Transnationalism recognizes the relationships and identities are maintained and that settlement occurs within the context of both the country of origin and the host society.

and economic ties that are developed and maintained across the borders of the two states. This chapter will examine transnational social, economic and political relations between Kosovo/a and Canada. In so doing, the intention is to consider whether transnational relations enhance or prolong integration.

A Need for a Specifically 'Refugee' Transnationalism

Portes (1997, as cited in Vertovec 2001) characterizes transnationalism as the formation of

dense networks across political borders created by immigrants in their quest for economic advancement and social recognition. Through these networks, an increasing number of people are able to live dual lives. Participants are often bilingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two centres, and pursue economic, political and cultural interests that require their presence in both" (812).

This portrait of transnational relations refers more to economic migrants than to refugees. Unlike the immigrants discussed by Portes, who have chosen to migrate, refugees do not choose to leave their homes but rather are forced out of their country of origin.⁷² Few of the Kosovars interviewed, for example, would meet the conditions outlined by Portes: few spoke English upon arrival in Canada, and the majority of Kosovars interviewed continue to find it difficult to move between countries for both economic and political reasons. Unemployment and underemployment, the high cost of travel to Kosovo/a, and lack of visas curtails the potential for people to travel directly to Kosovo/a or to make frequent returns.⁷³ Unlike the experiences of Bosnian and Eritrean refugees in the UK and the Netherlands, however, the Kosovars could not rely on pre-existing networks established by earlier labour migrants as there were few Kosovars living in BC

⁷² As Eyob Naizghi, Executive Director of MOSAIC recently characterized it, becoming a refugee is the "choice of no choice" (2003). Refugees do not decide to move based on a romantic notion of a better life elsewhere, but rather they leave because there is no other choice available.

⁷³ Without a Canadian passport, Kosovars are prohibited from traveling to Serbia and Montenegro. Consequently, those Kosovars who have visited Kosovo/a spoke of having travelled through Germany and Austria.

prior to 1999.⁷⁴ Limited financial resources and established networks impair the ability of Kosovars to effortlessly negotiate between their country of origin and the host country, and raises the question of whether 'immigrant' transnationalism should be differentiated from that of 'refugee' transnationalism.⁷⁵

Both immigrants and refugees living in camps apply to come to Canada, and following acceptance may have upwards of a year to prepare for their journey to Canada and begin to learn the language. The Kosovars, however, had little time to prepare, as the average time between when Kosovars left their homes in Kosovo/a and their arrival in Canada was fifty-two days, compared to five years for non-Kosovars (Abu-Laban et al. 2001). 'Refugee' transnationalism differs from that of other migrants because they did not choose to leave their country of origin, but rather have been forced to do so.⁷⁶ Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (2000) assert

People whose sense of identity is defined by collective histories of nation and culture, as well as shared visceral geographies of displacement and violent loss, will not simply forget or abandon these connections upon arrival in a new country (257).

Unlike other migrants who may form transnational networks in a "quest for economic advancement and social recognition" (Portes 1997, 812), refugees may have different motivations and resources available to them. As such their reactions may differ significantly from those of migrants who are emotionally and financially prepared to leave.

Unlike many refugees, whose immediate concerns are to establish themselves in their host country, the Kosovars benefited from being granted

⁷⁴ Nadjie Al-Ali, Richard Black and Khalid Koser have conducted extensive work with Eritreans in the UK and Germany, as well as Bosnians in the UK and the Netherlands between 1998 and 1999.

⁷⁵ In Canada 'refugee' is one category of immigrant. The distinction being drawn here relates to differences between 'economic immigrants' and 'refugees'.

⁷⁶ In forwarding the use of the term 'refugee transnationalism' I recognize competing discourses are embedded within the term. 'Refugee' is a political and legal category framed by 'international' discourse focused on the nation-state. Refugees are outside the borders of their country, and are seen to occupy a liminal position in which they are between nations, belonging neither to their country of origin nor the host society. The idea of 'refugee' transnationalism, however, reframes the category refugee to consider the ways in which refugees develop identities and form ongoing

immediate recognition and status. In this respect, the experiences of Kosovars differed from those of the Bosnians and Eritreans who expressed “concern and insecurity with respect to their legal status” (Al-Ali et al. 2001b, 628). For the Kosovars, however, it is their position in the country of origin, rather than the host country, that is uncertain. The continued presence of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the uncertain political fate of Kosovo/a (i.e. as a province or an independent state) prolong the uncertainty and hasten settlement in Canada.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the two-year window for repatriation increased the difficulties of settlement and prolonged the uncertainty for some Kosovars who were unsure whether or not they would be staying in Canada. Currently, the Kosovars form a majority within the UN protectorate of Kosovo/a, temporarily changing political relations with Serbia. Without the status as a UN protectorate, Kosovars are a minority within Serbia-Montenegro (SM). Thus, the position of Kosovars in UN protectorate complicates the original theorization of a specifically refugee form of transnationalism as theorized by Al-Ali et al. (2001b). For the Kosovars, liminality arises not from their position in Canada, but rather from that of Kosovo/a itself. The war in Kosovo/a did not end in independence, as did those involving the Bosnians and the Eritreans, but rather in a “proto-independence” (Abu-Laban et al. 2001b, 628). ‘Home’ is marked with uncertainty about the political future.

Al-Ali et al (2001b) assert that transnational refugee literature can be differentiated from that of transnational immigrant literatures, by the focus on political activities, as opposed to economic relations. The focus on political transnational activities to the exclusion of social and economic activities, requires that research on refugees be extended to include a multitude of transnational activities engaged in by refugees. Mountz and Wright (1996), for example, extend the literature by focusing on the social fields of migrants in San Augustin, Oaxaca, and Poughkeepsie, New York.

relationships that simultaneously embed them within both the country of origin and the host society. In this way the state is decentred as the main scale of analysis.

⁷⁷ “KFOR is “a NATO-led international force responsible for establishing and maintaining security in Kosovo” (Kosovo Force, online).

People, place and the importance of networks

Three years after arrival, all of the Kosovars maintain ongoing contact with family and friends in Kosovo/a on a weekly, and in many cases a daily basis. Communication is mainly by phone and mail, although electronic means of exchange, such as email and internet messaging services have been important for Kosovars in some centres, particularly Vancouver.⁷⁸ Similarly, Bosnian and Eritrean refugees in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands engage in regular contact with family in their respective home countries, primarily by phone, although a small number of Bosnians reported using the internet to maintain contact (Al-Ali et al. 2001b). In addition to phone calls and letters, the internet has been an important news source that has enabled Kosovars to stay abreast of daily events in Kosovo/a. Kosovars interviewed in Vancouver, in particular, regularly use computers (others in Kelowna, Chilliwack, Abbotsford and Surrey as well).

Through internet is everything available. You can search anything you want – radio, TV, theatres, political situation, economy, everything. Also there is phone calls, through talking to people and messenger. They will tell us what's new, what's good, what's bad
[103 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Weekly internet newspapers and online news agencies that are published in Albanian have allowed the Kosovars to monitor current events. In Vernon, where the Kosovars I interviewed were not computer literate, the employment counsellor at the local immigrant and refugee-serving agency would print out the weekly online newspaper for them.⁷⁹ The locations of people with whom the Kosovars keep in contact span the globe, a result of both the 1999 exodus and Kosovar diaspora. When asked if he kept in contact with people in Kosovo/a, one Kosovar in Vancouver stated

Every day and every night. Homesick all the time ... Usually first we start with phones, but usually now with the internet. Every day. Like we have ... [a] specified time where we meet each other. We

⁷⁸ MSN messenger and Yahoo!Chat! are two examples of programs that allow real time chat.

⁷⁹ In addition, three of the Kosovars interviewed have indicated that First Albanian, which is published by ISSBC, provided information about settlement for Kosovars in B.C.

waiting each other to contact ... It's amazing some of the things that keep me here because I can feel it. I'm many times, I play some music and Albanian music, with all kind of actors and singers and stuff. That's keeping me really ... healthful. It keeps me all the time in life. Like ... I can make utmost for life. I am home [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Home then is not bounded by the borders of one country but simultaneously exists across the borders of both Kosovo/a and Canada. Even as they struggle to build a new life in Canada, many Kosovars maintain ongoing linkages with Kosovo/a. Over time, however, some Kosovars indicated they have begun to look at the news less frequently than they did when they first arrived.

[I] used to [keep up with the news], but not anymore ... [Unless someone mentions something ... I don't usually search for news [130 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

Settlement requires the renegotiation of the life course in a location that differs significantly from their country of origin.

Migration and settlement forces people to negotiate new identities within locations that differ from their country of origin.⁸⁰ “Identities are multiple, situational and fluid” (Tishkov 2002, 628), rather than being bounded by the borders of a single nation-state. Although refugees attempt to negotiate identities that work in both sending and receiving country, the result may be the formation of multiple, contradictory and overlapping identities. The identities developed by many of the Kosovars interviewed straddle two nations. Like the Bosnians studied by Al-Ali et al. (2001a), ‘being Kosovar’ “governs many people’s sense of identity and sense of belonging” (591). In spite of their commitment to obtaining Canadian citizenship, however, respondents conveyed having multiple identities.

In Canada I identify myself as an Albanian ... but I ... stopped in Austria on the way ... [to visit] Kosova, and I leaned more towards identifying myself as a Canadian there ... I'm not sure [why], maybe just the politics that's been going on there ... [interviewer – maybe it felt safer] ... safe ... not much safer, but I don't know, sometimes we're embarrassed too. Because not everyone understands. You know, they judge you by that thing [130 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

⁸⁰ Identity may be thought of as the way in which a person conceives of themselves (Vertovec 2001).

Identity is relational especially with regard to place. One woman who originally settled in the United States suggested

Actually I feel more American than Albanian cause I miss more New York than my country ... My family is there and I [have] lots of friends in New York ... and I haven't been to Kosova in three years ... Where the family is, the heart is [110 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Recognition is needed for these transnational relations and the ways in which people strive to integrate and become 'Canadian' while still maintaining their Kosovar identity. All but one of the families, for example, primarily speak Albanian within the home. One Kosovar suggested the passing of time in Canada could change this identity.

I have ... a lot of contact with people [from Kosovo/a that have been] here fifteen years ... [When] I say I am from Kosovo, they say, I was saying that but now I saying now Vancouver is my home, or Canada is my home ... Probably what is true if I am staying here 15 years, 20 years then its different, then lose all contacts with my people back home and probably then, after 10, 15 years I belong, I am from here, but its difficult to adjust right now [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

For another person, Canadian citizenship is imagined as being a new aspect of their identity as Kosovar. Longitudinal research is needed on the development and maintenance of transnational relations to ascertain the degree to which transnationalism may, or may not, reflect a temporary settlement strategy.

[I am a] Kosovar but [I have] landed immigrant in Canada. That is that. But when I think of myself I am Kosovar. And I'm going to be ... [as long as] I'm alive. Even if I get Canadian citizenship ... I am citizen of Canada ... and I really appreciate that. But I'm still Albanian ..., Kosovar from Kosova [131 – Kosovar – Chilliwack]

Integration into Canadian society, then, is imagined as 'becoming Canadian' while still maintaining Kosovar identity and culture, an approach which differs significantly from the one way process of integration originally proposed by the Chicago School. Becoming Canadian represents another facet of a continuously emerging identity. Another person talked about increasingly feeling like he had a home in both Kosovo/a and Canada.

If I was born here, maybe [it] would be different ... but I was born over there ... So it's hard for me to say ... I'm Canadian yet. But I

feel like ... I have home here too ... When I went [to Kosovo/a] for two months last year. It was kind of pushing me sometimes to go back there. Pulling me to come over here ... I see myself like 50-50 [132 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

The establishment and maintenance of transnational social relations reconceptualizes notions of 'home' (as stretching across space) and encourages the renegotiation of identity. In order to avoid the necessity of starting over, one family has elected to take advantage of a provision within the RAP program that enables students to travel

"back and forth to school without stopping their landing in Canada"
[201 – Service provider – Vancouver].

As such, this family lives in Kosovo/a during the school year and then in Canada during summer breaks. Despite feelings of indifference towards Kosovo/a, dividing time between the two countries has distinct personal advantages for this family: continued progress towards professional accreditation in Kosovo/a (after which the person intends to write qualifying exams in Canada), and continued progress towards obtaining Canadian citizenship. It is important to note, however, that the degree to which Kosovars have developed transnational social relations and identities varies significantly within the population interviewed. Transnationalism exists as a set of social and economic relations that may decline over time.⁸¹

Evidence exists of the operation of transnational information networks amongst the Kosovars interviewed. Although only one person talked about being in contact with Kosovars in other Canadian centres, there appears to be a rich network of information concerning living and employment conditions in other centres. Continued contact with other family and friends dispersed around the globe has given some Kosovars a different perspective on settlement in Canada. Participants spoke of conditions in other Canadian centres, as well as other countries based on informal knowledge related to them. Whether the information obtained related to the availability of Albanian classes in Toronto or job finding

⁸¹ Longitudinal research on transnational relations may illuminate the extent to which transnational relations may be a short or medium-term strategy for settlement.

programs in New Zealand, these transnational flows of information are significant in that people base life choices upon them.

Transnational capacities: unemployment and the high cost of living

As they negotiate settlement in Canada, many of the Kosovars interviewed expressed the desire to help family members still living in Kosovo/a by sending money. Unemployment and underemployment, as well as the high costs of living in B.C., however, has prevented many of the Kosovars from sending regular remittances because they have little extra money to send to family and friends in Kosovo/a. These findings differ significantly from those of Al-Ali et al. (2001b) who reported that the majority of Bosnians and Eritreans they interviewed were sending regular remittances to family and friends in Bosnia and Eritrea.⁸² The perceived obligation to send money to help with daily living expenses in Kosovo/a has required some Kosovars to make personal sacrifices here in Canada.

[W]e have like obligation to help them. Doesn't matter if I am suffering here, we have that respect and need to help them ... My family ... is suffering. We need to ... help them. We have that responsibility. [It] doesn't matter how. You working hard here or you don't have to go to spend, like join really life. You need to have money [to send home] [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Men, in particular, expressed a social obligation to help support parents in Kosovo/a.

Usually parents ... choose one of the children [and] he have responsibility to support them and to live with them to the end [101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

⁸² It is important to note that all adult Eritreans in the diaspora are obliged to remit 2% of their annual incomes to the Eritrean state (Koser 1999). For those Eritreans who are un(der)employed, or may lack official status, these demands may exacerbate the stresses of settlement. Although Kosovars in the diaspora have not been subjected to the institutionalized 'transnationalism from above', Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi, has begun to encourage members of the diaspora to utilize their business experience that has been obtained outside of Kosovo/a with their 'special knowledge' of Kosovo/a to help rebuild Kosovo/a's economy (Reimer and Howell 2002, online). Despite the prevalence of informal remittances, the government is encouraging economic ties that will help begin the process of rebuilding (thus moving from "transnationalism from below" (which is driven by the migrants) to "transnationalism from above" (which is government-driven).

The sacrifices made in order to help those at home curtail the ability of some Kosovars to engage in social activities that cost money here in Canada. In their work with Bosnian refugees, Nadjé Al-Ali et al. (2001b) found “[t]hose with additional income ... are often faced with a choice between saving money to return, supporting their family in Bosnia, or starting to build a new life in the host country” (628). Currently, only three families send semi-regular remittances of \$500-1000 every three to six months to family and friends living in Kosovo/a. Many of the Kosovars interviewed indicated they send sporadic gifts of money or presents because they are not in a position to send regular remittances.⁸³

I send [gifts to] ... my brother and sister ... Sometimes I wish I could send more, but now [there is] ... not enough for me here [130 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].

The inability to send remittances increases the stresses of settlement. As they struggle to make ends meet in Canada, they may be unable to fulfil these family responsibilities.

Like \$20 or \$50 dollars just to say hi, and that I don't forget you. It is not big money ... I have my uncle [and] my cousin ... their houses were burnt and for winter they don't have a house. They sleep in a tent and the winter it is -25 or -30 sometimes. These poor people have nothing. No roof, no house, no nothing: they sleep outside ... I cannot help them even if I want [to]. It is very hard and sad [144 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Those remittances that are sent to friends and family living in Kosovo/a are delivered through informal networks as opposed to through formal systems. As people return for visits, others will send money or gifts for friends and family in Kosovo/a.

In their work with Bosnian and Eritrean refugees, Nadjé Al-Ali et al. (2001a) differentiated between “[t]ransnational activities – which can be observed and measured – and transnational capabilities, which encompass the willingness or ability of the migrant groups to engage in activities that transcend national borders” (Al-Ali et al. 2001a, 581). Transnational activities may include economic,

⁸³ Although the sporadic gifts of money or clothes do not meet the strict guidelines for scale and intensity of relations forwarded by Portes (1999), I would argue they expose transnational social fields that continuously link Kosovars in Canada with those ‘at home’.

political, social and cultural activities at multiple scales (from individual to institutional), while capabilities are dependent on the ability and resources of people. Drawing on the distinction drawn between 'transnational activities' and 'transnational capabilities' by Al-Ali et al. (2001a), the economic activities engaged in by the Kosovars interviewed represent the beginnings of transnational (economic) activities by people who are still struggling to establish themselves financially in Canada.

Where an individual is unemployed or earns only a low salary, he or she will often have no surplus money to contribute. In this case, unemployment, or a low salary, are factors influencing the *capacity* of the individual to participate (Al-Ali et al. 2001b, 626).

Financial barriers, including the high cost of living (especially in the Lower Mainland) and un(der) employment, effectively constrain the capacity of the Kosovars interviewed to engage in transnational economic practices. For those who are struggling to support themselves in Canada, their ability to support family members in Kosovo/a is weak. There is, however, evidence of both transnational social and political relations.

Rebuilding Kosovo/a requires a lot of help, but some felt it was impossible until there was stability in the region. For one person, questions of citizenship are complicated by political uncertainty in Kosovo/a.

There is a real need in Kosovo for people who can help rebuild the economy, but the political status of Kosovo has not changed yet. So, you can't really rebuild an economy without an adequate solution to the political issues because you don't have the security for investment. Just recently there were elections for the parliament ... They say the president of Kosovo, but the president of what? President of the municipality or ... what is it? So without that the economy will never move forward. [303 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

For the past four years, "Kosovo has existed in a constitutional limbo ... At issue is whether the province will become independent or remain part of Serbia. The Kosovo Albanians want independence; the Serbs oppose it" (Glenny 2003, online). The initial talks between Kosovo's ethnic Albanian government and Belgrade were held on October 14, 2003 in Vienna (Reuters 2003). The continued political uncertainty has had economic consequences:

Nobody will put money in because they have no guarantee that the incoming government will not confiscate their investment. This has condemned the province to a commercial life that today consists of smuggling, subsistence farming and high unemployment' (Glenny 2003, online).

In July, for example, the unemployment rate in Kosovo/a was estimated at 57% (Helsingin Sanomat 2003). For one person who is going to school to upgrade previous qualifications, the job opportunities in Kosovo/a are not positive:

There is not too many opportunities over there, because the war happened and everything is destroyed and lots of houses were burnt and factories. We don't have one factory over there that is working right now [144 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Ongoing economic and political uncertainty in Kosovo/a precludes the likelihood of a rapid solution to the economic crisis in Kosovo/a. Reflecting on a return visit to Kosovo/a, one informant stated

it was good to see family again, but the country was devastated [303 – Kosovars – Abbotsford].

Talk about return is framed within the current devastation in Kosovo/a. It remains unclear whether some Kosovars are harbouring what Koser identifies as a 'dream to return' (Koser 1999) should conditions improve. Unemployment, a lack of social-welfare, and the absence of health care facilities make return less desirable. Given the current conditions in Kosovo/a, the majority of Kosovars interviewed don't foresee a future there, at least in the immediate few years. Until political stability in Kosovo/a is achieved, social and economic change will be difficult. For some, job opportunities in Kosovo/a appear in sharp contrast to the dearth of opportunities in Canada.

I am used to living with problems for last 10 years, but I have chance when Kosova get freedom I am sure I will find job then. Company called many times because you need to come we don't have like you, but I think when I came to Canada I would try to stay in Canada. I have no house now [in Kosovo/a]. I have nothing, and I know Kosova remain in bad situation for a long time. [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

Although this person is not ruling out an eventual return to Kosovo/a, the current conditions prohibit immediate return. Life in Canada, despite unemployment, offers more possibilities than in Kosovo/a.

Your home can be Canada, but you're still Kosovar

As people become eligible for Canadian citizenship, questions about their desire to obtain citizenship in Canada were appropriate. Although the Kosovars are at differing stages of their eligibility (some were not eligible to apply, while others had already applied at the time of their interview), they were unanimous in their intention to obtain Canadian citizenship. Houston and Wright (2003) assert citizenship in the host country “provides the opportunity to travel and secure a locatable identity” (22), and removes people from the “liminal status of ‘refugee’” (Houston and Wright 2003, 22). All of the Kosovars interviewed intend to obtain Canadian citizenship: it offers security and facilitates mobility. Speaking of a Canadian passport, one respondent noted,

[I] want it so I can visit Kosova, currently [I] can't without lots of visas, and [we are] prohibited from travel in Yugoslavia, [but I] want to travel to Kosova [107 – Kosovar – Vernon].

Despite the stated intention to remain in Canada, it appeared that some people were quietly monitoring the situation in Kosovo/a and contemplating return should the economic and political situation improve.⁸⁴ Anecdotal evidence indicates that upon receiving Canadian citizenship, one family repatriated to Kosovo/a to rebuild their lives. Canadian citizenship, in this example, acts as a form of insurance: if this family is not successful upon their return to Kosovo/a, they may choose to return to Canada. “Keep[ing] their options open” (Glick Schiller et al. 1992, 12) by maintaining access to multiple nation-states facilitates increased stability and security. This raises interesting questions whether other people will return to Kosovo/a after obtaining their Canadian citizenship.

Generational differences may be important in relation to the prospect of dual citizenship, which is deemed to be particularly appealing for older people.

Canadian citizenship offers access to a social safety net that is non-existent in Kosovo/a (Economist 2003). One elderly couple, for example, indicated their pension in Kosovo/a would not be enough to sustain their basic needs. In Canada they benefit from access to social assistance.

If government let keep two citizenships I be two: Canadian and Kosovar ...Kosova ... is under United Nations, so maybe it will be independent country it would like to be ... It would be good to keep both citizenships. Not so much for the young but for older it would be good [109 – Kosovar – Kelowna].

For others, the prospect of obtaining Canadian citizenship would facilitate a sense of belonging.

I would like to get my citizenship and not be like a European, which is like a stranger [140 – Kosovar – Surrey].

Although Canadian citizenship offers security and mobility, retaining Kosovar citizenship is one way of maintaining these links to 'home'. "While some migrants identify more with one society than the other, the majority seem to maintain several identities that link them simultaneously to more than one nation" (Glick Schiller et al. 1992, 11). Citizenship, then, is not imagined as being either/or, but rather as reflecting different parts of their identity, or stages in their life. The focus for Kosovars, then, is not necessarily integration, but rather the maintenance of multiple identities that "[transcend] the individual nation-state" (Koser 1999, 6).

Reflecting on the importance of age in transnationalism, one Kosovar stated

Your home can be Canada, but you're still Kosovar ... maybe our kids can say, that they are Canadians, like when they grow older or when they grow up. We are almost forty, so, it's very hard for us to change. We are not old, but, our childhood, adulthood was spent there, so we cannot change very easily [Partner of 101 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Formal political involvement in Kosovo/a, through voting, is highly variable within the Kosovars interviewed.⁸⁵ Although only five Kosovars indicated that they had voted in the recent elections in Kosovo/a, over fifty percent of the Kosovars

⁸⁴ Results from the Exit Survey (discussed in the conclusion) indicate only one person is considering returning to Kosovo/a.

⁸⁵ The International Organization Migration (IOM) organizes elections, and Kosovars are eligible to vote if they obtain cards from Austria.

interviewed intend to vote in future Kosovar elections.⁸⁶ Approximately thirty percent of the Kosovars interviewed, however, have no intention of voting in the future. Reflecting on his knowledge of local issues and candidates at home in Kosovo/a, one Kosovar reasoned

I don't know most of the people who are running ... my vote would be [an] uneducated one [120 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

Geography also played a role in the decision whether or not to vote in Kosovar elections.

I'm here now and probably will not vote [121 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

One Kosovar related his parent's inability to vote in Kosovo/a as they lack updated documentation to prove they are citizens of Kosovo/a.

I can [vote] but my parents cannot ... because they didn't have updated information ... It is really very frustrating there trying to get all the information that you lived there but the thing is that you cannot because everything is destroyed [111 – Kosovar – Vancouver].

Judah (2000) reports that as the Kosovars fled,

the police stripped most refugees of their documents ... [I]n this way Milosevic may have hoped to make it impossible for them to come home later as they would have no way of proving that they were Yugoslav, as opposed to Albanian or Macedonian citizens (251).

These factors increase the difficulty of proving Yugoslavian citizenship and problematize aspects of citizenship, including the ability to vote. The recognition of transnational social fields and relations problematizes current understandings of citizenship premised on a bounded state, and recognizes that people's everyday lives are complicated by multiple and ongoing relationships in both Kosovo/a and Canada.

Despite the strong presence of transnational kinship ties and a shared identity as 'Kosovar', a lack of political mobilization precludes the formation of a 'transnational community'. Thomas Faist (2000) differentiates between

⁸⁶ Over 90% of the Kosovars interviewed indicated their intention to vote in Canada once they are eligible.

transnational kinship groups, which are premised on the concept of reciprocity and typically involve remittances, and transnational communities, which are premised on a collective identity and involves the “mobilization of collective representations” (195). Koser (1999) asserts “kinship is one motivation for the maintenance of these transnational networks, another equally important motivation is social obligations relating to the extended family” (Koser 1999, 7). The Kosovars can be said to be developing transnational relations, but like the Bosnians and Eritreans studied by Al-Ali et al (2001b) have not emerged into a ‘transnational community’. Rather, the relations formed and activities undertaken represent a transnational kinship group.

Conclusion: I am here, I was born in Kosovo

Unlike many refugees, whose immediate concerns are to establish themselves in their host country, the Kosovars benefited from being granted immediate recognition and status. In this respect, the experiences of Kosovars differed from those of the Bosnians and Eritreans who expressed “concern and insecurity with respect to their legal status” (Al-Ali et al. 2001b, 628). For the Kosovars, however, it is their position in the country of origin, rather than the host country, that is uncertain. The continued presence of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the uncertain political fate of Kosovo/a (i.e. as a province or an independent state) prolong the uncertainty and hasten settlement in Canada. In the absence of a secure future in Kosovo/a, the majority of Kosovars have elected to remain in Canada. For the Kosovars, their position in Canada is far more certain than their position in Serbia-Montenegro. As noted by Abu-Laban et al. (2001b), the Kosovar war did not end in independence as did those involving the Bosnians and the Eritreans, but rather in a “proto-independence” (628). ‘Home’ is marked with uncertainty about the political future.

Despite their intention to remain in Canada, however, many Kosovars still identify themselves as Kosovar, as opposed to Yugoslavian. One person who felt that he would remain in Canada expressed

I'm Albanian. Born Albanian, and Albanian I'll die. My heart is there ... I have no way of helping them in any way, but ... that's my

country and that's my homeland [106 (through interpreter) – Kosovar – Vernon].

People have developed transnational relations between Kosovo/a and Canada that create a continuous social field across borders and negate the idea that one lives solely within the bounds of one nation-state. For the Kosovars interviewed, their daily lives necessitate a complex negotiation of roles and expectations in both Kosovo/a and Canada. Even for those who intend to remain permanently in Canada, their daily lives take place within a nexus of interactions that straddle both Kosovo/a and Canada. The transnational linkages Kosovars in B.C. maintain with the place they come from do not necessarily detract from their integration into Canada. It is impossible to examine settlement and integration in Canada without consideration for the transnational social, political and economic ties that are formed. As one Kosovar characterized it,

I am here, I was born in Kosovo [121 – Kosovar – Abbotsford].

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH: HOPE AND UNCERTAINTY

This study documents the settlement experiences of Kosovar refugees in small and medium-sized centres in British Columbia: Kelowna, Vernon, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Surrey, and Vancouver. The majority of Kosovars were settled outside the Lower Mainland, which is unique in that government assisted refugees sent to B.C. are normally destined to Vancouver as this is where immigrant and refugee-serving agencies are concentrated. Drawing on forty-one individual interviews and seven focus groups with Kosovars and representatives from immigrant and refugee-serving agencies, this research has examined the settlement of Kosovar refugees in non-metropolitan centres of B.C. In so doing, I have sought to examine whether location matters in the settlement of refugees in large and smaller B.C. cities. For the Kosovars interviewed the ability to obtain employment is influenced by age (with older people citing more difficulty), educational background (professionals have little success in obtaining employment based on previous credentials⁸⁷), and location (people settled in Kelowna and Vernon have experienced the least success in obtaining employment, which may relate to wider unemployment trends in the region).

⁸⁷ Given the spatial mismatch that exists in some communities between the job skills of the refugees (i.e. in manufacturing) and the types of jobs available (i.e. in service or tourism

Those settled in Abbotsford have obtained employment more than any other study site. Findings indicate the importance of employment in successful settlement and integration. Specific factors, such as employment opportunities and the presence of family and friends, influence the willingness to stay.

Settlement and integration occur within the context of a nexus of social, political and economic relations that simultaneously connect immigrants and refugees to multiple nation-states (Al-Ali and Koser 2002, Vertovec 1999, Portes 1997, Basch et al. 1994). Findings further suggest that the transnational linkages Kosovars in B.C. maintain with the place they come from do not detract from their integration into Canada. The settlement of the Kosovars in B.C., although not generalizable to all refugees or newcomers, offers a number of important theoretical, methodological and policy-oriented contributions.

Contributions to the Literature

Government interest in the regionalization of immigration, or 'dispersion' of immigrants to non-metropolitan centres requires research that examines settlement outside metropolitan centres. To date, research on the settlement of immigrants and refugees in small and medium-sized centres remains sparse. In the absence of research on immigration to small and medium-sized centres, the work of Walton-Roberts (forthcoming) and Henin and Bennett (2002) offer important insights about non-metropolitan centres. The settlement experiences of refugees outside of Canada's major metropolitan centres, however, remain understudied. Abu-Laban et al. (1999) addresses the lack of "information on the consequences of the practice of destining refugees to smaller urban centres" (1), and in so doing, makes an important contribution to the Canadian immigration and refugee settlement literature. This research addresses the dearth of research on the settlement of refugees in B.C., particularly outside major metropolitan centres.

industries), a better match between the job skills of the refugees and the local labor market should be ensured.

The Kosovars interviewed have developed a multitude of social, economic and political relations both in Kosovo/a and Canada, as well as other countries in which the Kosovars have settled. These transnational identities and relationships have emerged from extant social networks with family and friends, aiding people with remittances and gifts. In Canada, ample evidence points to the existence of transnational information networks. This research is consistent with the recommendation by Hiebert and Ley (2003) that transnational studies should involve coverage of the entire community rather than sampling the dependent variable. Probing transnationalism was part of the larger project. Structuring the project in this way enabled us to trace links to social integration of Kosovars within B.C. as well as the extent and types of transnational activities.

The identities developed by many of the Kosovars interviewed straddle two nations. Like the Bosnians studied by Al-Ali et al. (2001a) 'being Kosovar' "governs many people's sense of identity and sense of belonging" (591). In spite of their commitment to obtaining Canadian citizenship, the majority of Kosovars interviewed continued to identify themselves as Kosovar. Settlement has occurred within the context of current living conditions in Kosovo/a and Canada, and (new) identities are forged across this space. The choices that are made in Canada, such as whether to repatriate, are made with reference to conditions in Kosovo/a. The establishment and maintenance of transnational identities and relations has resulted in a reconstitution of 'home' for the Kosovars interviewed. 'Home' is a social field that straddles the borders of both B.C. and Kosovo/a. Even as they struggle to build a new life in Canada, many Kosovars maintain ongoing linkages with Kosovo/a.

Acquiring Canadian citizenship, or 'becoming Canadian', represents another facet of a continuously emerging identity. Unlike the liminal status usually associated with refugees, in which a refugee belongs neither to their country of origin nor their country of settlement, the establishment and maintenance of transnational ties encourages multiple identities and belongings. For the Kosovars in BC, they are both Canadian and Kosovar. As one Kosovar noted:

*... I'm [not] Canadian yet. But I feel like ... I have home here too ...
When I went [to Kosovo/a] for two months last year. It was kind of
pushing me sometimes to go back there. Pulling me to come over
here ... I see myself like fifty-fifty [132 – Kosovar – Chilliwack].*

Citizenship is not viewed as being either/or, but rather as reflecting different parts of their identity that transcend the boundaries of the nation-state. For some, Canadian citizenship offers security and a new beginning, while for others Canadian citizenship offers mobility and the opportunity to visit Kosovo/a without restrictions. One family, for example, returned to Kosovo/a after receiving Canadian citizenship. In this way Canadian citizenship is a form of insurance and mobility that enables them to return to Canada when and if it is necessary. The recognition of transnational social fields and relations problematize current understandings of citizenship premised on a bounded state, and recognizes that people's everyday lives are complicated by multiple and ongoing relationships in both Kosovo/a and Canada (Al-Ali and Koser 2002, Basch et al. 1994). The transnational ties, identities, and relationships that are forged between Kosovo/a and Canada affect the daily lives of the Kosovars in B.C. The ability of the Kosovars to remain well-connected with family and friends in Kosovo/a has enabled them to live somewhat in both countries.

In proposing the term 'refugee transnationalism' I recognize its embedded and competing discourses. 'Refugee' is a political and legal category framed by 'international' discourse focused on the nation-state. Refugees are outside the borders of their country, and are seen to occupy a liminal position in which they are between nations, belonging neither to their country of origin nor the host society. The idea of 'refugee' transnationalism, however, reframes the category refugee to consider the ways in which refugees develop identities and form ongoing relationships that simultaneously embed them within both the country of origin and the host society. In this way the state is decentred as the sole scale of analysis.

Unlike many refugees who receive temporary protection (e.g. in Britain), and whose immediate energies are focused on obtaining status in the host country, the Kosovars in Canada benefited from being granted immediate

recognition and status. In this respect, the settlement experiences of Kosovars differed from those of the Bosnian and Eritrean refugees interviewed by Al Ali et al. (2001b) who expressed “concern and insecurity with respect to their legal status” (628). For the Kosovars, however, their status in Canada is far more certain than it is in Serbia-Montenegro. Continued political and economic uncertainty in Kosovo/a (i.e. as a province of Serbia-Montenegro or an independent state) may hasten settlement in Canada. The inability to foresee a future at ‘home’ in Kosovo/a, at least in the next five to ten years, has meant that those Kosovars who remained in Canada plan to stay and have begun to establish a future for themselves. ‘Home’ in Kosovo/a is marked with an uncertain political future. Research on settlement and integration in Canada cannot be done without consideration for the transnational relations and identities that contribute to and influence this process.

Finally, the research presented extends the methodologies available for working with refugees by incorporating a collaborative approach to research. Immigrants and refugees, as well as the sector served by them, were not mere research subjects, but were actively involved in the design and administration of the research project. This thesis has benefited from the input of people directly involved in various stages of the settlement of the Kosovars, as well as the Kosovars themselves. The collaborative relationship established with ISSBC has been extremely beneficial as it has facilitated access to and rapport with the Kosovars, enabling us to build upon the knowledge and strengths of all the people involved. It has also a mutual learning experience. Representatives from the immigrant and refugee-serving agencies have shared invaluable insights, and assisted in setting up meetings and interviews.

In their research with Burmese refugees in Vancouver, Hyndman and Walton-Roberts (2000) noted that working with refugees was complicated by the refugees’ prior experiences with officials in Burma and the government itself. Kosovars in this project, although wary of government involvement, welcomed the participation of settlement counsellors from local immigrant and refugee-serving agencies who provided a basis upon which to extend a relationship of

trust. When working with refugees establishing trust is critical to succeeding. Immigrant and refugee-serving agencies can play an important role in both the design and implementation of the research.

Full Circle: Giving back to the community

In May 2002, a focus group was held with six Kosovar participants to discuss our ideas for the project, get feedback and guidance from the participants on whether they thought the project was viable, and what they wanted to know from such research. During this meeting one of the Kosovars expressed a desire for information on how Kosovars were doing in other centres.

It would be interesting if we have kind of information from you, because you are interviewing other Kosovars, so we would like to know, me personally I would like to know how happy they are, how comfortable they are, in the other place, like I told you how I am feeling from myself and from my family so, it is good to know about other Kosovars who living in different cities. How they are adjusted, and how are they doing - hopefully good. Because we don't have connections with them, with anyone [301E – Kosovar – Vancouver].

On September 27, 2003 the research process came full circle. All of the Kosovar participants were invited to a “Dissemination meeting and social night” that was held in Surrey. In addition to being a ‘thank you’ party, this meeting served two purposes: (1) to disseminate results; and (2) to facilitate contact among Kosovars in B.C. and potential community building. The attendance was high: in total, forty-seven adults and approximately thirty children from Vernon, Kelowna, Surrey, Vancouver, Abbotsford and Burnaby came to hear the results and celebrate with us. During the evening a brief presentation of the results was made.⁸⁸

Providing a potential space for community-building was an important motivation for the event: this was the first time that many of the Kosovars had been together since they fled Kosovo/a. The dispersal of the Kosovars to non-metropolitan centres has made it more difficult for Kosovars to connect and, in

⁸⁸ The initial welcome and opening comments were provided in Albanian and the remainder of the presentation, including the results, was in English. Each participant was provided with a thank you letter and a page of results that was written in both Albanian and English (see Appendix H). In this way, participants could follow along in their first language.

my view, to develop a sense of community in Canada. This event was an effort to bring Kosovars together from different centres; it was satisfying to see people talking and exchanging phone numbers.

As part of the dissemination meeting we distributed exit surveys to each of the adult participants (see Appendix I). While an imperfect research instrument, the exit survey provided a snapshot of settlement a year after the interviews. Participants were asked to identify where they live: as such, it is not possible to directly compare the results from the survey to earlier findings at the individual level, but at the city level a rough comparison is possible. We received forty responses from among forty-seven adults. Almost 70% (27/40) of respondents are not considering moving either now or in the future. Of the people who are considering a move, none is thinking of moving to another country, and one person from Vancouver is thinking of returning to Kosovo/a (for educational reasons). During the organization of this event we discovered that one family had returned to Kosovo/a after obtaining Canadian citizenship, while another family had moved to Ontario.

Kosovars living in Abbotsford, Burnaby, and Kelowna reported the highest intentions to remain in their current city: places that also have relatively high employment rates for the respondents. Of the eleven respondents living in Abbotsford, nine indicated they are not considering moving either now or in the future. Ten of the eleven respondents from Abbotsford indicated they are employed, with seven reporting full-time employment.⁸⁹ Eight of the Kosovars interviewed in Abbotsford have applied for Canadian citizenship, although only two have received their citizenship thus far.⁹⁰ The high numbers of people in Abbotsford who have applied for citizenship may relate to high employment rates in the area, as there is a \$200 fee for adults applying for citizenship, and a \$100 fee for children.

⁸⁹ Conducting an exit survey enabled us to differentiate between people who are employed on a full-time and a part-time basis, as well as those who are unemployed but not looking for work and those who are unemployed and currently looking for work.

⁹⁰ This compares with 65% (26/40) overall who have applied, but not necessarily received, Canadian citizenship. To date, 25% (10/40) have received Canadian citizenship.

Kelowna was notable for the number of people who had obtained employment over the last year. In Kelowna, four of the eight respondents who answered this question indicated they have obtained full-time employment. This differs significantly from when the interviews were conducted and only one person was employed at all. Currently six of the nine respondents from Kelowna indicated they are not considering moving either now or in the future. Those who are considering moving intend to remain within Canada or BC, and cite job opportunities and educational opportunities as the main factors influencing the decision to move. Overall, 58% (23/40) of respondents are employed, up from 43% (15/35) last year, with 40% (16/40) indicating full-time employment.⁹¹

Respondents were asked, “what factors are important for your decision to stay or leave the city [they] are currently living in”.⁹² As in the original interviews, job opportunities (55% or 22/40) and the presence of family or friends (37.5% or 15/40) were the two most frequent responses. One other factor that arose was educational opportunities with 32.5% (13/40) people indicating this would influence their decision to stay or leave. Interesting differences emerged between Vancouver CMA and the other metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. In the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, slightly more people from outside Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver indicated job and business prospects (37.8%) were important factors influencing the decision of where to settle than did those selecting family and friends (35.6%). Unlike the LSIC results, however, Kosovars outside of Vancouver CMA were over twice as likely to select job opportunities (18/22) than they were to select family and friends (9/22).⁹³

⁹¹ As previously noted, our original interviews did not differentiate between full-time and part-time employment.

⁹² Respondents were asked to check all that applied from the following list: job opportunities, family or friends, the presence of large numbers of Albanian Kosovars, educational opportunities, and other. One person indicated that safety was also a factor influencing his or her decision.

⁹³ The LSIC breaks results into Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and All other CMAs and non-CMAs. For this analysis, I have amalgamated responses for Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey to represent Vancouver CMA and Kelowna, Vernon and Abbotsford to represent All Other CMAs and non-CMAs. For the purposes of the exit survey, respondents were able to choose all that factors that applied. Consequently, the numbers used will not add up to 100% as people could choose more than one factor.

The increased emphasis on job opportunities may also relate to the settlement of extended family groups in these places. Of two respondents to the exit survey from Vernon, one is employed on a part-time basis and one is unemployed, but looking for work. Both are considering moving to another city in Canada and indicated job opportunities, and to a lesser extent the presence of larger numbers of Albanian Kosovars, influenced their decision to move. Of the Kosovars living in Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), nine of the eighteen respondents indicated family and friends influenced the decision to stay or leave particular centres, compared to only four who chose job prospects. Interestingly, eight of the eighteen respondents in Vancouver CMA chose educational opportunities as being important. In Surrey, for example, both of the people who are considering moving are students who indicated educational opportunities were important factors in deciding whether to stay or leave. The results of the exit survey, while small in number, speak to the importance of job opportunities and the presence of family and friends during settlement. In so doing, they echo the results presented in Chapter 3.

Policy implications and further research

The success of Kosovars settlement in small and medium-sized centres depends on one's definition of success. If the goal is retention, the settlement of Kosovars in B.C. was a success. Kosovars have overwhelmingly chosen to remain in British Columbia and the particular centres. The majority of Kosovars in this project have little intention of moving. With one exception, all of the participants who are considering moving have indicated their intention to remain either in B.C. or in Canada.

If success is measured by the degree to which the Kosovars have obtained some type of employment and are beginning to establish themselves in Canada, the results are more variable. In those cities where Kosovars have obtained employment, people have little intention of moving. Where employment is scarce, however, participants expressed a strong desire to move. Retention in these communities is influenced by the availability of employment and the

presence of family or friends. The degree to which communities are equipped with the conditions necessary for settlement (e.g. job opportunities, settlement services, and the presence of family and friends) will ultimately affect retention. Prior to the destining of refugees to smaller centres adequate supports must be in place to assist in settlement. Capacity mapping and capacity building are needed to assess the degree to which services and supports exist to meet the needs of incoming immigrants and refugees.

Throughout this thesis a number of areas have been identified for future research. Of these, two warrant further discussion. This research focuses on the settlement experiences of refugees settled in small and large centres in B.C. In so doing, however, cursory attention is given to the host society's attitudes towards immigration and settlement. Given the importance of the initial reception in the host society to settlement and integration (Waxman 2001, Ferris 2001), further research is needed on the host society and the reconstitution of place that occurs during settlement.

Further, transnational relations and identities were examined at one point during settlement. As such, we were not able to examine changes over time. In light of current suggestions that transnationalism may be a short to medium-term settlement strategy, longitudinal research is needed. The examination of transnational relations over a longer time period would enable a more in-depth examination of the impact of transnational relations during settlement and integration.

Final thoughts

As I complete this thesis, the future of Kosovo/a seems more uncertain than ever. Newspaper headlines proclaim "Patrols stepped up after attack in Kosovo" (Scaverta 2003), "Growing ethnic violence plagues Kosovo, dimming peace prospects" (Gera 2003), "Serbia: Belgrade Declares Kosovo 'Indivisible' Part of Country (RFE/RL 2003), and on a more optimistic note "Kosovo Albanian leaders appeal to refugees to return" (BBC 2003). The first talks between Belgrade and Kosovo/a's ethnic Albanian leaders since the 1999 bombing of

Yugoslavia occurred on October 14, 2003 in Vienna (B92 News 2003). As former FRY President Slobodan Milosevic sits on trial in the Hague, some respondents talk about their families in Kosovo/a beginning the long process of rebuilding their lives, while others lament conditions of widespread unemployment and homelessness in Kosovo/a. Uncertainty about the political and economic future surfaced during interviews and focus groups, and there is a sense that despite proclaiming their intention to remain in Canada some Kosovars are quietly contemplating a return should the political and economic situation improve in Kosovo/a. Most, however, have their feet and their futures firmly planted in Canada.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PROJECT BROCHURE

The settlement experiences of Kosovars in British Columbia



Kathy Sherrell
and
Dr. Jennifer Hinchman

Department of Geography
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5A 1S6

To:

Working together

We want to work with you to create a project which meets your needs as well as our own.

We want to know what you think and what you experienced.

We want to hear your stories about the places where you lived, and what you thought of them.

Your input and ideas in organizing the project, and your participation in the project are greatly appreciated.

We want to know your thoughts about the re-settlement experience, and what changes are necessary in the future.



What do we want to know?

We are interested in talking to Kosovars who came to Canada as part of Operation Parasol in 1999.



We want to study the ways in which the place where a person is settled (eg what city or town) affects a persons settlement experiences.

We are interested in your:

- ongoing ties with Kosovo/a,
- experiences in the settlement location,
- whether you have thought of leaving the city or town where you live,
- employment experiences,
- English language training,
- anything that made your settlement experiences easier or more difficult.

A Bit About Ourselves

Kathy Sherrell

I am a student in geography at Simon Fraser University working on my Master's degree. I am interested in studying the ways in which resettlement is affected by the place of settlement. For example, is there jobs? Housing? Support services? This research project forms the basis of my thesis.

Dr. Jennifer Hyndman

(<https://www.sfu.ca/~hyndman>)
I am an assistant professor in Geography at Simon Fraser University. I have worked with refugees in the Lower Mainland over the last five years. I also do research in/on conflicts that create refugees and other displaced persons. I.e. in Kenya, Somalia, and Sri Lanka.

How will we go about it?

We want to talk to people in focus groups and individual interviews.

Focus Groups

Focus groups involve getting a small gathering of people together to talk about their thoughts and experiences. This is a chance to hear your opinions, and listen to your experiences in your own words.

Individual Interviews

Individual interviews involve a researcher asking a participant a series of questions. Participation is voluntary, and confidentiality is guaranteed.

What can't we do?

As university researchers, we are completely independent from government. We do not have the power to make policy or implement changes. Our hope is that this research will inform future research and policy making. We can help you do research on issues of importance to you.

If you are interested in participating in this project, or if you have any suggestions:

Please contact Kathy Sherrell.

Pager: 604-293-0802

Telephone: 604-299-8422 (collect)

E-mail: kmsherre@sfu.ca

Department of Geography
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5A 1S6

Phone: 604-291-3321
Fax: 604-291-5841

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW (KOSOVARS)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group. All information collected will be kept confidential. Your participation in this focus group is voluntary. You may withdraw your participation at any time.

1. I would like to begin by going around the room and having each of you tell me how long you have lived in this community? Where did you live before this?
2. What did you expect B.C. to be like? (e.g. what sort of housing, jobs, weather, people?)
3. Has B.C. met your expectations? Why/Why not?
4. When you arrived, and in the period shortly after, were you made to feel welcome, or not? Give examples.
5. What is the BEST thing about living in (location)?
6. What is the WORST thing about living in (location)?
7. What opportunities do you see for yourself in B.C.?
8. What obstacles or difficulties do you experience in B.C.?
9. What do you need most right now? Can you get this here?
10. Have you ever thought of leaving here? Why/Why not?
11. Do you think you will ever return to Kosovo/a? Why/Why not?

APPENDIX C: HONORARIUM FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

8888 University Drive
Burnaby, British Columbia
CANADA V5A 1S6



Robert C. Brown Hall

Telephone: (604) 291-3321
Fax: (604) 291-5841

Principal Investigator: J. Hyndman

Receipt of honorarium

This is to certify I, _____ have received an honorarium
of \$20.00 for participating in a interview/focus group held on (date).

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Social Insurance Number: _____

APPENDIX D: KOSOVAR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Before we begin, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. All answers are voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question. You may choose to end this interview at any time. Your identity will be kept confidential.

.....

I would like to begin by asking you a few questions about yourself, and your current living arrangements.

1. Sex: Male Female
2. What year were you born? _____
3. Where were you born (e.g. city)? _____
4. What is your current marital status? Single Common-Law Married
Divorced Widowed Other _____
5. Do you have any children? Yes No D/K N/A
6. If yes →

	current age	year of birth	sex
Child 1	_____	_____	_____
Child 2	_____	_____	_____
Child 3	_____	_____	_____
7. How many people live in your home? _____
8. Who all lives with you? Partner #___ of Children Parents Others
9. Are there any other family members living in (*location*)? Yes No D/K N/A
10. Who? _____
11. What language do you primarily use at home? _____

I Would Like To Talk About Life Before You Came To Canada

12. What part of Kosovo/a did you live in? _____
 13. How long had you lived in that city/town? _____
 14. Who lived with you? Partner #___ of Children Parents Others _____
 15. Were you employed in Kosovo/a? Yes No D/K N/A
 16. [If so] What kind of work did you do? _____
 17. Did you receive formal occupational training before coming to Canada? Yes
No D/K N/A
 18. [If so] What kind of training did you receive? _____
 19. When did you leave your home in Kosovo/a? _____
-

I would like to talk about life in Canada

20. When did you arrive in Canada? (d/m/y) _____
21. At which port of entry? (e.g. airport) _____
22. When did you arrive in (*location*)? _____

23. If different from #4, where was that time spent? (e.g. military base?) _____
24. If military base, did you receive your orientation services there? Yes No
D/K N/A
25. If yes, did you also receive any services when you arrived in
(location)? Yes No D/K N/A
26. Please explain. _____
27. Have you received English language training since coming to Canada? Yes
No D/K N/A
28. To what level? (e.g. ELSA 3, ELSA 2)
29. Do you wish to attend further English language training? Yes No D/K N/A
30. Why/why not? _____
31. Has anything prevented you from attending language training classes?
Please explain. _____
32. Are interpreters available in (location)? Yes No D/K N/A
33. Do you believe they are needed? Yes No D/K N/A
34. Please explain. _____
35. Are essential materials and/or services available in Albanian (e.g. Medical
info, prescriptions)? Yes No D/K N/A
36. Has this created any problems for you? What are they? _____
37. Does (location) have the kinds of agencies and organizations that you need to
help you adjust to life in Canada? Yes No D/K N/A
38. Please explain _____
39. Are you currently employed? Yes No D/K N/A
40. What kind of work do you do? _____
41. What kind of work have you done since coming to Canada? _____
42. Do you think there are good job opportunities for you in (location)? Yes No
D/K N/A
43. Why/why not? _____

.....

44. Do you keep in contact with people in Kosovo/a? Yes No D/K N/A

45. Specify

Relation	Frequency	Nature of Contact	Location
Specify	# of times per day week month year	Specify (eg email, phone, fax, mail)	Where are they?
	# per d / w / m / y		
	# per d / w / m / y		
	# per d / w / m / y		
	# per d / w / m / y		

46. Do you send money back to Kosovo/a? Yes No D/K N/A

47. If so, to whom? _____

48. Do you know what it is used for? (e.g. day-to-day expenses,
rebuilding province, other) _____

49. How much/month? _____

50. Does this require you to work extra? (i.e. more hours, second
job?) Yes No D/K N/A

51. Do you keep up with events in Kosovo/a? Yes No D/K N/A
52. How do you find out what is happening in Kosovo/a? (e.g. internet chat room, media, ethnic-newspaper, newsletter) _____
53. Are you still involved in any organizations in Kosovo/a? (e.g. societies, clubs, human rights groups) Yes No D/K N/A
54. Please explain. _____
55. Do you still have property in Kosovo/a? Yes No D/K N/A
56. Can you vote in Kosove elections? Yes No D/K N/A
57. If so, do you plan on voting? Yes No D/K N/A
58. How do you identify yourself? Ethnic Albanian Kosovar Kosovar-Canadian Canadian-Kosovar Canadian Landed Immigrant Other
59. Have you applied for Canadian citizenship? Yes No D/K N/A
60. If not, do you intend to? Yes No D/K N/A
61. Please explain. _____
62. If you obtain Canadian citizenship, would you vote? Yes No D/K N/A
63. If possible, will you sponsor any relatives to come to Canada? Yes No D/K N/A
64. Will you visit Kosovo/a in the next 5 or 10 years if you have the money? Yes No D/K N/A
65. Since you arrived in (location) have you or your family (e.g. children) gotten involved in any Canadian groups, clubs, sports teams or other activities? (E.g. bingo, sports, festival, government) Yes No D/K N/A
66. Please explain. _____
67. [If kids] Do you attend parent – teacher meetings? Yes No D/K N/A
68. Do you participate in the parent advisory committee? Yes No D/K N/A
69. Do you volunteer at the school? Yes No D/K N/A
70. In ten years time, describe where you want to be:
- Physical location _____
- Employment hopes _____
- Housing _____
- Other _____
-

I would like to ask you some questions about your experiences as a [woman/man] since coming to Canada.

71. *Earlier, you indicated that you do/do not work, does your [husband/wife/partner] work?* Yes No D/K N/A
72. *Is this arrangement the same as before you left Kosovo/a?* Yes No D/K N/A
73. *Why, or why not?* _____
74. *Have your opportunities for work as a [woman/man] changed compared to Kosovo/a?* Yes No DK N/A
75. *Please explain.* _____
76. *Within the home, who is primarily responsible for housework and cooking?* Female Male
77. *Has this changed from Kosovo/a?* Yes No D/K N/A
78. *Please Explain.* _____

79. What jobs are men responsible for? _____
80. What jobs are women responsible for? _____
81. (If children) Who takes care of the children? Female Male Both
82. Have men's parenting responsibilities changed from Kosovo/a? Yes
No D/K N/A
83. Please explain. _____
84. Are there conflicts about who does what jobs (e.g. housework, childcare)? Yes No D/K N/A
85. If conflicts exist, how are they different from those experienced in Kosovo/a?
86. As a [woman/man] do you feel you have new opportunities in Canada than did not exist in Kosovo/a? (e.g. education, volunteering) Yes No D/K N/A
87. Please explain. _____
88. Do you think the [the opposite sex] have different opportunities in Canada? Yes No D/K N/A
89. Please explain. _____
.....
90. What community were you originally destined (sent) to? _____
91. If different from current location, why did you choose to move? _____
92. Do you know anyone who has chosen to leave (location)? Yes No D/K
N/A
93. Where did they move (e.g. another city in Canada, repatriate)? _____
94. Are you aware of any reasons why they chose to leave (location)? Yes No
D/K N/A
95. [If so] Why? _____
96. In previous interviews and focus groups, we have heard that "it is not in the Kosovars nature to move". Can you comment on this?
.....
- I would now like to talk to you about your experiences in (location).
97. Is (location) a good place to live? Yes No D/K N/A
98. Please explain. _____
99. Is (location) a good place in which to raise a family? Yes No D/K N/A
100. Please explain. _____
101. Are the people in (location) friendly and welcoming? Yes No D/K N/A
102. Please explain. _____
103. Have you experienced racism or discrimination since coming to Canada? Yes No D/K N/A
104. Tell me about it _____
- 105.** Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your refugee experiences either before or after coming to Canada? _____

Thank you again for participating in this interview. In case of problems/concerns can contact Dr. Alex Clapp, Chair, Department of Geography, SFU.

APPENDIX E: IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE-SERVING AGENCIES AND SPONSORS

Name of agency:

Address:

Name of interviewee:

Job title:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

To be detached and stored separately once completed

Settlement Agencies and Service Providers Interview Schedule

1. What are your responsibilities in the settlement of refugees?
2. How long have you been involved with this organization?
3. How did your organization assist in the settlement of Kosovar refugees in (location)? (e.g. housing, ELSA, jobs, transportation)
4. How many Kosovar refugees did your agency assist?
5. Are there any differences in the needs of Kosovar refugees as compared with other government-assisted refugees?
6. Do you believe adequate services exist to meet the needs of incoming refugees?
7. Please explain. (done above)
8. What if the government increased the numbers of refugees and the funding? Is the community ready?
9. Explain why, or why not.
10. What other services do you believe should be offered?
11. What factors influence a refugees decision to stay or leave a community?
12. Did some of the Kosovars leave (location) before funding ended? Yes No DK NA
13. Explain.
14. Did some of the Kosovars leave (location) once funding ended? Yes No D/K N/A
15. Explain
16. Do you know where they went? Why?
17. [If yes] How long would you say they remained in (location) before leaving?
18. Are you aware of any Kosovar refugees who have repatriated? Yes No D/K N/A
19. [If yes] Do you know why they returned?
20. How well do those who stay integrate into the community? Examples.
21. Have most found work? Yes No D/K N/A
22. What kind of jobs? Is there evidence of occupational segregation?

23. Do you believe the extra funding given to the Kosovars has affected their integration into the community? Yes No D/K N/A
24. [If so] How?
25. In your opinion, is (location) a good place to send refugees? (e.g. jobs, attitudes) Yes No D/K N/A
26. Why or why not? (e.g. enough jobs? Questions of English? Accents?)
27. What recommendations would you make to CIC., if Canada were to find itself in the position of having little time to plan for the arrival of a large number of government-assisted refugees again?
28. Is there anything you feel I should know about your organization and experiences?
29. May I contact you if I require clarification or more information? Yes No N/A D/K

Thank you again for participating in this research. If you have any comments or concerns please contact Dr. Alex Clapp, Chair, Department of Geography, at Simon Fraser University.

APPENDIX F: ETHICS LETTER OF APPROVAL

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: 604- 291-4370
FAX: 604-291-4860

April 11, 2002

Dr. Jennifer Hyndman
Department of Geography
Simon Fraser University

Dear Dr. Hyndman:


**Re: The Impact of Place in the Settlement of Refugees in Smaller Centers
Outside the Lower Mainland**
"Social Cohesion and International Migration in a Globalizing Era"
Transnational Solidarities and Newcomer Incorporation in Canada
SSHRC

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced Request for Ethical Approval of Research has been approved on behalf of the Research Ethics Board. This approval is in effect for a period of three years from the start of the research project or for the term of your faculty appointment at SFU, whichever comes first. Any changes in the procedures affecting interaction with human subjects should be reported to the Research Ethics Board. Significant changes will require the submission of a revised Request for Ethical Approval of Research.

Best wishes for success in this research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Acting Director
Office of Research Ethics

c:  K. Sherrell, Co-Investigator
J. Pierce, Dean

/bjr

APPENDIX G: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

CONSENT FORM BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

The University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures. Your signature on this form will signify that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Name of Principal Investigator: **Dr. Jennifer Hyndman**

Title of Project: **"Non-Metropolitan Settlement Among Kosovar Refugees in British Columbia"**

I have been asked by **Dr. Jennifer Hyndman** of the **Department of Geography** of Simon Fraser University to participate in a research project. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time.

Any identifying information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential. Identification materials will be held in a secure location and will be destroyed after the completion of the study. However, it is possible that, as a result of legal action, the researcher may be required to divulge information obtained in the course of this research to a court or other legal body.

I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have about the experiment with the researcher named above or with **Dr. Alex Clapp**, Chair of the Department of Geography at Simon Fraser University.

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion, by contacting: **Dr. Jennifer Hyndman, Dept. of Geography, SFU, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6 tel: 604-291-5464 or at <hyndman@sfu.ca>**.

I have been informed that the research material will be held confidential by the Principal Investigator.

I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in such a study as this.

I agree to participate by:

Meeting with the principal investigator or Kathy Sherrell at a time convenient to me;

Allowing myself to be interviewed or participate in a focus group for no longer than 2 hours;

Reserving the right to conclude the interview at any time or refuse to answer any given question;

during the time period: June 2002 to August 2004 at a location convenient to me.

NAME (please type or print legibly): _____

ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ WITNESS: _____

DATE: _____

ONCE SIGNED, A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM AND A SUBJECT FEEDBACK FORM SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO THE SUBJECT.

**APPENDIX H:
THANK YOU LETTER AND
OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS
(ALBANIAN AND ENGLISH VERSIONS)**



7 shtator 2003

Na lejoni që me këtë rast të ju falemnderojmë për pjesëmarrjen tuaj në projektin studiuës “vendosja e Kosovarëve në B.C. jashtë metropoleve”. Pjesëmarrja dhe kontributi juaj ishte shumë i çmuar.

Nëse keni ndonjë koment ose pyetje, ju lutem kontaktoni:

Kathy Sherrell kmsherre@sfu.ca ; ose
Dr. Jennifer Hyndman hyndman@sfu.ca .

Ju faleminderit,

Jennifer Hyndman

Kathy Sherrell

Fisnik Preniqi

Si kanë kaluar Kosovarët?

- Shumica (86%) kanë plan të vendosen në Kanada, dhe prej tyre, shumica të qëndrojnë në qytetin ku erdhën në fillim.
- Të vjetrit ka më shumë gjasa të jenë ri-atdhesuar në Kosovë.
- Papunësia ndryshon gjeografikisht; është më e larta në Kelowna dhe Vernon, kurse më e ulëta në Chilliwack dhe Abbotsford.
- Ka fakte të rëndësishme në lidhje me punësimin, që tregojnë një lëvizje poshtë në profesione. Momentalisht shumë pak persona profesionalë janë duke punuar në lëmitë e veta.
- Vërehet një diferencë mes gjinive në lidhje me dëshirën për të vazhduar mësimin e anglishtes. Gratë më shpesh përmendën kujdesjen për fëmijë si një pengesë për të vazhduar kurset, kurse burrat më shpesh i lanë ELSA-kurset për t'u punësuar.

Ndihma për t'u vendosur: roli i agjensive për shërbimin e imigrantëve dhe refugjatëve dhe sponsorëve

- Disa ofrues të shërbimeve mendojnë se ka nevojë për qartësi në caktimin e roleve të sponsorëve dhe ofruesve të shërbimeve.

Sa patën sukses qendrat të ofrojnë shërbime të përshtatshme?

- Kosovarët në përgjithësi janë të kënaqur me shërbimet e gjuhës dhe të vendosjes që ju janë ofruar.
- Duket se Kosovarët në Surrey kanë një rrjet jo-zyrtar, por mjaft të zhvilluar të përkthyesve.
- Kosovarët në Kelowna dhe Vernon shprehën më së shumti vështirësi për të gjetur përkthyes.

Nevojë për shërbim për gjetjen e punësimit

- Kërkesa më e madhe ishte për shërbime që gjejnë punë. Ndihma praktike dhe konkrete e gjetjes së punës mendohej se do të ishte më e dobishme sesa kurset për përgatitjen e resume-së.
- Shërbimet e tanishme të punësimit kritikohen se janë tepër të ulëta dhe nuk përbushin nevojat e personave me profesione.

Cilët faktorë ndikojnë në vendimin e Kosovarëve për të shkuar ose për të ndejtur?

- Mundësitë për punë, prezenca e Kosovarëve tjerë, dhe faktorët tjerë socialë, si madhësia dhe ritmi i qytetit.
- Mendohet që qendrat e mëdha (p.sh. Toronto, Calgary dhe Edmonton) ofrojnë më shumë shansa për punë dhe komunitete më të mëdha ku flitet shqipja.



September 27, 2003

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for your participation in the research project "Non-metropolitan settlement of Kosovars in B.C.". Your participation and input was greatly appreciated.

If you have any comments or concerns please contact:

Kathy Sherrell kmsherre@sfu.ca; or
Jennifer Hyndman hyndman@sfu.ca .

Thank you,

Jennifer Hyndman

Fisnik Preniqi

Kathy Sherrell

How well have Kosovars fared?

- The majority (86%) intend to settle permanently in Canada, with most planning on staying in the original host city.
- Older people were more likely to have repatriated to Kosovo/a.
- Unemployment is geographically variable, with the highest rates in Kelowna and Vernon, and the lowest rates in Chilliwack and Abbotsford.
- There is significant evidence of downward occupational mobility among professionals. Currently, very few professionals are working in their previous field.
- Gender differences have emerged in relation to the desire for further English language training. Women were more likely to cite childcare responsibilities as preventing them from undertaking further classes, while men were more likely to have foregone ELSA classes in order to obtain employment.

Facilitating settlement: the role of immigrant and refugee-serving agencies and sponsors

- Some service providers believe more clarity is needed in defining roles for sponsors and service providers.

How well have the centres provided appropriate services?

- Kosovars are generally happy with the language and settlement services they have received.
- Kosovars in Surrey appear to have a very well developed informal network of interpreters.
- Kosovars in Kelowna and Vernon expressed the most difficulties in locating interpreters.

A need for job placement services

- The biggest demand was for job placement services. The practical, hands-on assistance of job placement services was seen to be more helpful than resume-writing courses.
- Existing employment services are criticized as being too basic and not meeting the needs of professionals.

What factors influence the decision of Kosovars to leave or stay?

- Employment opportunities, presence of other Kosovars and social factors such as the size or pace of a city.
- Bigger centres (i.e. Toronto, Calgary and Edmonton) were seen to offer more job opportunities and a larger Albanian-speaking community.

Additional Comments: _____

APPENDIX I: EXIT SURVEY: NON-METROPOLITAN SETTLEMENT OF KOSOVARs IN B.C.

City of Residence:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abbotsford | <input type="checkbox"/> Chilliwack | <input type="checkbox"/> Surrey | <input type="checkbox"/> Vernon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burnaby | <input type="checkbox"/> Kelowna | <input type="checkbox"/> Vancouver | |

1. Have you applied for Canadian citizenship?
 - Applied but not received
 - Received
 - Have not applied

2. Has your employment situation improved in the last year?
 - Yes
 - No

3. Are you:
 - Employed full-time
 - Employed part-time
 - Unemployed, but looking for work
 - Unemployed, but not looking for work
 - Student

4. Are you considering moving either now or in the future?
 - Yes, to another city in B.C.
 - Yes, to another city in Canada
 - Yes, to another country
 - Yes, I am thinking of returning to Kosova
 - No
 - Undecided

Please turn page over →

5. What factors are important for your decision to stay or leave the city you currently live in? (Check all that apply)

- Job opportunities
- Family or friends
- The presence of larger numbers of Albanian Kosovars
- Educational opportunities
- Other _____

6. Was participating in this research project:

- A good experience
- A bad experience
- No opinion

7. How could we improve the research experience?

8. Other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

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- Interview 106 (through interpreter), Kosovar, Conducted in Vernon, BC, on July 27, 2002.
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- Interview 109, Kosovar, Conducted in Kelowna, BC, on July 28, 2002.
- Interview 110, Kosovar, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on August 2, 2002.
- Interview 111, Kosovar, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on August 22, 2002.
- Interview 112, Kosovar, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on August 24, 2002.
- Interview 113, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on August 30, 2002.
- Interview 114, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on August 30, 2002.
- Interview 115, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on August 30, 2002.
- Interview 117, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on August 30, 2002.
- Interview 118, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on August 30, 2002.
- Interview 119, Kosovar, Conducted in Abbotsford, BC, on October 25, 2002.
- Interview 120, Kosovar, Conducted in Abbotsford, BC, on October 25, 2002.

- Interview 121, Kosovar, Conducted in Abbotsford, BC, on October 25, 2002.
- Interview 130, Kosovar, Conducted in Chilliwack, BC, on January 21, 2003.
- Interview 131, Kosovar, Conducted in Chilliwack, BC, on January 21, 2003.
- Interview 132, Kosovar, Conducted in Chilliwack, BC, on January 21, 2003.
- Interview 134, Kosovar, Conducted in Kelowna, BC, on January 25, 2003.
- Interview 140, Kosovar, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on September 6, 2002.
- Interview 141, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on September 6, 2002.
- Interview 144, Kosovar, Conducted in Surrey, BC, on September 6, 2002.
- Interview 150, Kosovar, Conducted in Burnaby, BC, on May 27, 2003.
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- Interview 202, Immigrant & Refugee-serving-Agency, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on July 18, 2002.
- Interview 203, Immigrant & Refugee-serving-Agency, Conducted in Vancouver, BC, on August 8, 2002.
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