NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

UNDERSTANDING ETHINIC CONFLICT:
A FRAMEWORK

by

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June 2001

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20010807 034

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.			
1. AGENCY USE ONLY ***(Leave blank)***	**2. REPORT DATE** June 2001	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** Master's Thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE: Understanding Ethnic Conflict: A Framework			**5. FUNDING NUMBERS**
6. AUTHOR(S) Roberson Patrick B.			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			**8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER**
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			**10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER**
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.			
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			**12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE**

13. ABSTRACT ***(maximum 200 words)***

Within the last ten years the phrase ethnic conflict has become extremely common. I spent the majority of my time as a Special Forces Detachment Commander dealing with ethnic conflict situations in Northern Iraq, Turkey, and the Balkans. While in these places it became apparent to me that ethnic conflict is very complicated and that most Americans have a difficult time comprehending it. My purpose in writing this thesis is to offer Special Forces soldiers or other US military personnel a framework for gaining a better understanding of the dynamics involved in ethnic conflict. This framework includes three preconditions and two advanced conditions which are tested against three case studies: Bosnia, Kosovo, and Kurdish/Turkish relations in Southeast Turkey. The framework offers an objective, non country-specific, way to sort through and make sense of the situation on the ground. After becoming familiar with this framework, it would be my hope that the individual will have the ability to function more effectively and efficiently, particularly when there is little time to become intimately familiar with the situation before arriving on the scene.

14. SUBJECT TERMS Ethnic Conflict, Bosnia, Kosovo, Kurds			**15. NUMBER OF PAGES** 88
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE** Unclassified	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT** UL

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. 239-18

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UNDERSTANDING ETHNIC CONFLICT: A FRAMEWORK

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Within the last ten years the phrase ethnic conflict has become extremely common. I spent the majority of my time as a Special Forces Detachment Commander dealing with ethnic conflict situations in Northern Iraq, Turkey, and the Balkans. While in these places it became apparent to me that ethnic conflict is very complicated and that most Americans have a difficult time comprehending it. My purpose in writing this thesis is to offer Special Forces soldiers or other US military personnel a framework for gaining a better understanding of the dynamics involved in ethnic conflict. This framework includes three preconditions and two advanced conditions which are tested against three case studies: Bosnia, Kosovo, and Kurdish/Turkish relations in Southeast Turkey. The framework offers an objective, non country-specific, way to sort through and make sense of the situation on the ground. After becoming familiar with this framework, it would be my hope that the individual will have the ability to function more effectively and efficiently, particularly when there is little time to become intimately familiar with the situation before arriving on the scene.

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I. INTRODUCTION

I have spent a great deal of time thinking about ethnic conflict. As a Special Forces Detachment Commander in 1996 I spent four months in Northern Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort. While there, my team worked closely with the Kurdish factions and the Turkish military. We witnessed, first-hand, much of the hatred and disdain that the members of the two ethnicities feel for each other. I also completed two five month tours in Bosnia during Operation Joint Guard and Joint Endeavor, working as a Joint Commissioned Observer, living with Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Muslims and providing "ground truth" to my chain of command.

In these places, I learned, up close, about ethnic conflict. I spent many hours debriefing, interviewing, and just talking to the many individuals involved. These people included soldiers, politicians, teachers, interpreters, and just about everybody in between. I found the dynamics of ethnic conflict far different from anything most of us in the US can comprehend. I learned that to really understand what was happening, what was going to happen, or how one side would react to something, a Special Forces soldier had to submerge himself in the situation. Over the course of my deployments to Northern Iraq and Bosnia I always considered my first deployment to Northern Iraq to be the most confusing. I was only able to make sense of much of what I saw after I came back. During the next deployment it took me less time – still one to two months – to understand the dynamics. During my final deployment I felt in sync almost immediately. But now, after studying about ethnic conflict more formally, I understand even more about the inner-workings of places where I was.

My aim in this thesis is to re-formulate this understanding so that other Special Forces soldiers won't have to go on three deployments before being able to quickly

understand the significance of the ethnic lay of the land, regardless of where they may be sent.

If I had had such a framework it would have saved me precious time on becoming situationally aware. Ethnic conflict is a complicated business. It often takes months on the ground – even with a thorough pre-mission train up – to figure out what has happened, what is currently happening, and what will happen. Yet, these are questions my chain of command hit us with the day our feet hit the ground. Having a framework to apply would not eliminate all the haze, but it could certainly make the situation much less opaque.

Special Forces soldiers are often involved in making assessments or providing insight and information to their superiors. It is in the operator's best interests to understand inter-ethnic workings in order to avoid becoming a tool for one faction or the other. Understanding the big picture is an operator's best defense against being used – and becoming completely biased. There is nothing worse than witnessing a detachment, negligent in doing its homework, become a simple mouthpiece. I can recall countless examples of teams that lived with one faction and eventually adopted that side's point of view. Knowledge and an understanding of the ethnic mechanics involved in ethnic conflict could prevent that.

A Special Forces soldier will build instant credibility if he can demonstrate that he has a working knowledge of the local situation. It is difficult to be taken seriously, or avoid being taken advantage of, if you don't understand the situation or can't get beyond the basics.

A framework for understanding the dynamics involved in ethnic conflict can be enlightening. If you don't have a framework to deal with, the pieces are there but they don't neatly fit together. The framework could help make better sense of a given situation

and prevent soldiers from having to completely live in the present. It also could place certain things, like economic collapse or disparity, in their proper perspective. For instance, instead of a Special Forces soldier conducting a mission in a country and thinking that the country has always been poor and benighted, a deeper understanding of the country's economic situation might make more sense of the economic disparity between groups – always a potential fault line.

A framework can also help prevent people from allowing their negative impressions to lead to sweeping generalizations. Unfortunately, this is all too tempting once one has witnessed ethic hatred. Nevertheless, views expressed in phrases such as, "these people just hate each other", "they're all just ignorant", "these people have fought for centuries and they will continue to fight for centuries", etc. actually explain very little. Worse, these negative feelings can easily build up and develop into an attitude of disinterest and apathy.

In addition to helping make sense of an otherwise unfamiliar and potentially alienating situation, the framework I propose could also be used to predict ethnic conflict. If the preconditions the framework describes are present then the chances of conflict are much greater. It would be useful to know that people can have a history of conflict and mutual hatred, but that this is rarely sufficient to *cause* ethnic war. History is just a piece of the puzzle. Economics and politics are also significant.

A. THE FRAMEWORK

After surveying a number of ethnic conflict models, and theories dealing with causes of ethnic conflict, from Martin van Creveld's *Transformation of War,* and his *Rise and Decline of the State*, Ted Gurr's *Minorities at Risk*, and Jurg Helbling's *The Nationalist Game* I found that the framework which most closely fit my own first hand observations and experiences was that described by Stuart J. Kaufman in his 1996 article

International Security article, "Spiraling Towards Ethnic Conflict". I have added a few things and somewhat modified his model, but my framework is largely based on his.

Crucial to the framework is the idea that there are three preconditions and two advanced conditions that must be present in order for ethnic conflict to occur. The first precondition is the existence of a history of ethnic tension between ethnic groups. The second precondition is an economic downturn or economic inequality between ethnic groups. The third precondition is political inequality between ethnic groups. It is necessary to have all three of these preconditions met before the stage is set for the two advanced conditions – and eventual ethnic conflict. It is very important to note that these preconditions can be real *or* perceived.

The first advanced condition is mass hostility, i.e. the common people of an ethnic group begin to hate on a large scale and are willing to engage in open warfare; this hate can be mutual or one-sided. The second advanced condition is the coming to power of political entrepreneurs, i.e. politicians ready and willing to exploit ethnic tension for their personal gain or for the gains of their ethnic group. Either one of the advanced conditions may develop first and eventually ignite the second. When both advanced conditions are met ethnic violence is almost sure to follow.

1. Preconditions

Emotional and psychological forces make ethnic conflict a less rational form of warfare. These forces are wrapped up in the precondition of a history of inter-ethnic tension. This history is very useful because in most cases ethnic groups have been steeped in it, the injustices and evil acts are real and, in the three cases I describe, there are living eyewitnesses to pass on the tales. Ethnic tension reveals itself in a historical fear of domination by one side of the other. A minority might fear it will lose its cultural identity.

Or the majority in a minority enclave may see its share of the population declining. This fear can be heightened by the use of threatening ethnic symbols, which intimidate rivals and serve as an emotional rallying point for one's own side. These symbols come in the form of flags, crests, colors, clothing, facial hair, music, etc. Another way in which ethnic tension reveals itself is in negative ethnic stereotyping and in demeaning ethnic jokes. All this hate and mistrust eventually leads – with the help of other conditions – to the belief that one side will become physically or culturally extinct. It is this feeling that leads to violence.

The economic precondition is extremely important. There may be economic inequality between groups or a general economic downturn that causes mass insecurity. This factor is critical because most people who are economically buoyant are hard to mobilize. These people have something invested in the current system, are doing well by it and thus feel little need to fight. People who feel that they have little to lose economically – or people who have lost everything – are more susceptible to mobilization along ethnic lines. A general economic downturn can also lead to large-scale unemployment – especially of young men. When this happens violence is never far away.

Political inequality is also important. When members of an ethnic group sense they are not being equally represented animosity builds. If these political inequalities – real or perceived – are not addressed a feeling will develop eventually that "we, as an ethnic group, can better handle our own affairs". When this feeling catches on, the group may peacefully, or violently struggle for more autonomy, depending on other conditions.

2. Advanced Conditions

Advanced conditions have already been described as mass hostility and the coming to power of political entrepreneurs. These advanced conditions are not clear-cut; they can

develop simultaneously or in spurts. It is very difficult to point out where and when one ends and the other begins, but both are real and necessary in ethic conflict.

The mass hostility advanced condition occurs when the mass of an ethnic group is willing to fight over grievances with another ethnic group. This stage can be arrived at through a number of means. A leader can whip up hostile feelings or the population can come to feel hostility on its own given events such as massacres, mass arrests, or an opposing ethnicity's takeover of the government. Usually there is an event or series of events that so threatens the security of an ethnic population that its members feel fighting and killing are justified, even when this means preemptive violence.

Political entrepreneurs are people who come to power and exploit ethnic tensions for their personal gain and/or on behalf of their ethnic group. The distinction is important. Rabid nationalists who come to power may be much more difficult to deal with than someone who is playing an ethnic card for personal gain. Another factor to consider is that, over time, a person who exploited nationalism to get to power may have a turn of mind and become more of a true nationalist, or vice versa. The bottom line is that political entrepreneurs who come to power will eventually either incite mass hate or use its presence to wage war in order to benefit themselves or their ethnic group. These individuals usually have maximalist aims, they are very poor at compromise, and they are willing to go to extremely violent lengths to attain what they or their followers desire.

B. CASES CONSIDERED

The cases I use for testing the framework are Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Turkish-Kurdish conflict. I limited the cases to locations I have been or am likely to go. I have been to Bosnia and Turkey. I have not been to Kosovo; however, I have done copious amounts of planning for deployments to Kosovo, and have interviewed numerous Special

Forces soldiers who have been there. I have maintained a serious interest in these places since my deployments. My Special Forces Group's regional orientation includes these countries. I have received countless intelligence briefings and have read numerous books and articles dealing with these areas. I have also used my field notes, reports and message traffic from these deployments to aid me in analyzing these cases for this thesis. The cases are similar – they all involve ethnic conflict – but are all also different enough to illustrate the universal applicability of this framework.

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II. BOSNIA

A. HISTORY OF ETHNIC TENSION

Many people would argue that the problems in Bosnia have been caused by thousands of years of ethnic hatred. This is an easy explanation, but as is usually the case, doesn't answer questions about how, when, or why tensions erupt into conflict. In the following section I will address these ethnic tensions, which are real and very powerful, but are just one piece of the puzzle of ethnic conflict.

1. Fear of Domination

In examining the Balkans – and, arguably, other regions of the world – we must bear in mind that the perception of history is much more relevant than the reality of that history; second, that history in the Balkans remains integral and relevant to all parties (i.e. things that happened 800 years ago can be mixed interchangeably with what happened yesterday); third, history is always one of the first things brought up in a conversation with any faction member, and thus must be considered an indicator of backward-looking-ness.

Serbs are probably the most backwards looking of all the factions. They use history in some very negative ways. From an objective viewpoint, it can appear to outsiders that this, among other thing, is what holds them back from a prosperous economic future.

From the Bosnian Serb point of view the Bosnian Muslims dominated them for hundreds of years under the Ottoman Empire. Although the occupying Ottomans were mild rulers by most standards, this is where *perceptions* of history come into play. Serbs have chosen to remember the worst about those times; for example they remember that they could not build church steeples higher than the mosques' minarets or that they could not own land under the Ottomans. The thing that really bothers Serbs is that they regard

Slavic Muslims as Serbs and Croats who converted in order to receive preferential treatment from the Ottomans. These Ottoman lackeys (as Serbs call them) then became the landlords of the Serbs and Croats.

It is also important to understand where the name "Cetnik" comes from. Cetnik is a slang word used to identify a Serb soldier, but it originated from Serb guerrilla fighters battling the Ottomans in the 19th Century. A large part of the Serb identity is based on fighting Muslims. One especially sees this among Serbs in the Krajina. They were brought to the Krajina for one reason: to live on the frontier and defend Europe from the Muslims. The bottom line for the Serbs is that Muslims dominated them for centuries and thus they continue to harbor a fear of being dominated by Muslims again, either through political or military means. Though outsiders might scoff at such fear today its persistence only underlines the importance of trying to understand the Serb point of view. For Serbs this is a real fear no matter how unrealistic it may seem to others.

Serbs do not have to look back very far to find historical circumstances that would cause them to fear domination from Croatians. Many Serbs who survived the WWII experience can still vividly remember the Ustase and concentration camps at places like Jasonovac. During WWII the Ustase rampaged through Bosnia, converting a third of the Serbs to Catholicism, deporting a third, and killing a third. It is also worth noting that Ante Pavlic, the founder and leader of the Ustase, welcomed Bosnian Muslims into his organization. These memories of domination and extermination are hard to expunge from a group's psyche and are easily brought back to the surface, especially when examples can be drawn from living memory.

Bosnian Muslims and Croats, meanwhile, fear domination from a Serbia that historically has felt that its destiny is to control the Balkans. Feelings about Serbian

nationalism and superiority, coupled with the brutal treatment of minorities, such as the Kosovo Albanians and Hungarians, have been enough to fuel a sense of insecurity among the Bosnian Muslims and Croats. From the Bosnian Muslim and Croat point of view there is also the militaristic character of the Serbs to deal with. For instance, once the Serbs finally did wrest control of Serbia from the Ottomans they expelled most Muslims and went about destroying everything Turkish, from mosques to Turkish coffee shops. They engaged again in this same behavior after the Serbs took parts of Kosovo and Macedonia from the Ottomans during the 1912-1913 Balkan Wars. Attempts were made to erase any hint that Islam was ever present (Bennett, 1995, pp. 25-28). These historical incidents, combined with what was happening in the early 1990s, could have led to a genuine fear of Serbian domination.

On their own these suspicions and past wrongs are extremely corrosive to the fabric of Bosnian society, but combined with the following factors they become even more powerful.

2. Threatening Symbols

Obviously, with the rise of nationalism came the highlighting of group differences and the rise of threatening symbols. To draw attention to differences, groups used not only symbols, but gestures, clothing and language. Over time, many of these were consciously used to send messages to other groups. Threatening symbols continue to play a major role in inter-ethnic relations; though not all groups are equally well equipped.

One could argue that Bosnian Muslims did not fare so well in this last Balkan war because they lacked a strong ethnic identity. The Bosnian Muslims had religion, but it was a religion that most Bosnian Muslims downplayed to a significant extent. Religion per se was not as strong a mobilizer or rallying cry as religion combined with a common ethnic

background and history, which the Serbs and Croats both had. This notion was first expressed to me by my Bosnian Muslim interpreter who stated that, before the war, if a Croat or Serb farmer needed a tractor for his crops he turned to a Croat or a Serb and knew he could borrow a tractor. A Bosnian Muslim farmer could never be sure he would be lent a tractor if he turned to another Bosnian Muslim farmer.

Taking this lack of unity into account, there were only a few symbols that Bosnian Muslims used. The most common were the Crescent and the Star and the color green – the color of Islam. These symbols were used, but never as extensively and energetically as were Croat and Serb symbols by Croats and Serbs. Part of the reason for the scarcity of these Bosnian Muslim symbols relates to how the Bosnian Muslims wanted to be perceived: as modern Europeans, not Middle Easterners. Muslim symbols were not just threatening to Serbs and Croats, but to westerners in general. Bosnian Muslim hesitancy to deploy ethnic symbols might also help explain the Bosnian Muslims initial lack of unity and mobilization (Sudetic, 1998, p.16).

The Croats have the checkerboard shield. Although this shield dates back to the original Croatian Kingdoms, it is also the symbol used to represent the Ustase. To relate it to something that Europeans or Americans understand, Croatians flaunting the checkerboard shield is akin to the German nation re-adorning itself with swastikas; there could not be anything more 'in your face' or threatening. Nor is this checkerboard shield just seen on rare occasions. Instead, it is plastered on all things Croatian, from tombstones to Croatian city halls to the Croatian national flag.

The Serbs have an equally old symbol that they utilize: the Cetri "C". This is a symbol that translates as "Four Ss". The symbol is actually a cross with a Cyrillic C in each corner. Each individual C stands for a Serbian word. Together they comprise the phrase:

"Only Unity can Save the Serbs". This saying is very revealing of the Serb mentality, which can be summarized as 'the world is against us, we must stand together'. Just like the Croat Shield, the Cetri C has been plastered everywhere. In a sense, the Serbs are luckier then the Croats because a cross with four Cs is much easier to spray-paint than is a red and white checkerboard. Some of the most telling scenes in the Balkans are of villages, which have been entirely destroyed except for one or two homes that have the Cetri C spray-painted on the door. Thus is reminiscent of lamb's blood protecting Jews on Passover.

Another means by which ethnic groups in Bosnia have separated themselves is through language. The first linguistic difference that is most evident to an outsider is the removal of the Cyrillic alphabet from Croatian and Bosnian Muslim areas. The Cyrillic alphabet is strongly associated with Serbs and Serbia. In the late 1980s both the Croats and Bosnian Muslims adopted the Latin alphabet in their schools and on any type of street sign; the Serbs retained the Cyrillic alphabet. Prior to the rise of nationalism both alphabets were taught side-by-side and all federal signs were written in Cyrillic. Also, prior to the advent of nationalism the language was called Serbo-Croat. As is normally the case when nationalism begins to take hold, language plays a key role. There was a concerted effort on both sides to make certain words Croatian words and certain words Serbian words. The Bosnian Muslims, meanwhile, began to use many old Turkish and Arabic words to set themselves apart, many with religious connotations. These efforts have been so successful even given such a short period of time that just recently the Serbian and Croatian languages have been recognized as two separate languages by the US government.

Belonging to an ethnic group as nationalism is on the rise is like being a member of a select society whose members recognize each other via special gestures – gestures that not only your side, but all sides might understand. When a Serb waves his hand to say

hello he only uses three fingers, including his thumb. This symbolizes the three fingers members of the Serbian Orthodox church use to make the sign of the cross. The Croats and Bosnian Muslims used the V sign, probably as much to imitate the western "V for victory sign" as much as any thing else.

Clothing can also become a distinguisher, especially clothing that has religious overtones, i.e. Bosnian Muslim men started to wear blue berets and Croats would wear all black on certain days. Even a crucifix is a discriminator: the Orthodox crucifix (worn around the neck) has a much higher horizontal bar than the Catholic variant. These gestures and clothing may not seem to be threatening in and of themselves, but all symbolize the extent to which groups are attempting to distinguish themselves from others.

3. Negative Stereotypes

The former Yugoslavia is rich with prejudices and stereotypes. This seems to result from citizens identifying themselves with an ethnic group versus as individuals. If a person first thinks of him or herself as a Serb or Croat his/her individual identity is immediately tied to a group identity. If Serbs and Croats think about themselves in terms of their group identity it only makes sense that they think about members of other ethnic groups in the same way, with members of other groups sharing certain characteristics, some good, some bad. Americans have a tough time understanding this. For Americans, who classify groups of people by citing positive characteristics – "they work hard" – these amount to "cultural traits". Negative traits like, considering all members of Group X lazy, are considered stereotypes and are frowned upon. People of the former Yugoslavia don't make such distinctions.

One of the most common perceptions of Serbs is that they are drunken buffoons (Daalder, 2000, p. 79) – even though this is a case of the pot calling the kettle black since

there is no shortage of drink or drinking in any Bosnian ethnic group. Another view of Serbs is that they are xenophobic and are interested in a Greater Serbia: however, there are numerous Croats who are outspoken racial purists and just as hungry for empire as are the Serbs (Sudetic, 1998, p. 80). The major way in which Serbs are stereotyped, and the one I heard most often, is that they are militaristic; they glorify their past battles, whether these ended in victory or defeat. Serbs, as it happens, also made up a large percentage of the JNA's officer corps- not through conspiracy, but though desire. There is a Serbian saying that a man only has four parties in his life: when he is born, when he becomes a soldier, when he marries, and when he dies. To Serbs it is a big deal to serve in the military. At the same time, this militarism also makes Serbs seem more threatening and intimidating. Even during the war there was a perception that Serbs were ten feet tall. Also, after the war, when traveling to the Republica Serbska, my Muslim interpreters, whether male or female, would become physically uneasy, even with large numbers of Americans present. I should add that this was not true of Serbs traveling in Muslim areas. In fact, the mere mention of certain Serb leaders was sometimes enough to send Muslims and Croats fleeing (Mueller, 2000, p. 53).

The Serbs did not regard their militaristic image as a bad thing: instead, it was actually cultivated and nurtured as a type of psychological operation to intimidate opponents. Serbs did this prior to the war by trying to get what they wanted via threat, and during the war through fear and intimidation. Whether the Serbs were as great a military people as they and others thought is questionable, but the perception is what counts. This militaristic stereotype definitely intimidated members of other ethnic groups prior to, during, and after the war.

In stark contrast, Muslims and Serbs perceived the Croats as a cultured people. The Croats were thought to be the best musicians, poets, and lovers. They were also perceived to be sneaky and double dealers not to be trusted. The thing heard most about Croats is that they were in league with the Germans. The thing that really stuck in most Serbs' minds about the Croats still related to WWII. From the Serb point of view all Croats were Ustase interested in a Greater Croatia with no place for Serbs.

Numerous unflattering stereotypes were used to describe Muslims. The first, and possibly the most damning, held by Serbs and Croats is that all Muslims used to be Serbs or Croats, but sold out their original ethnicity and religion in order to receive preferential treatment from the Turks. The second damning stereotype is that, due to their different religion, Bosnian Muslims are all fundamentalists bent on creating a Muslim state in the heart of Europe. This never seemed true, but the more a group of people are marginalized the more they do turn to religion. Thus, the more the Muslims rediscovered religion the more the Serbs and Croats pointed to them as fundamentalists. Corollary to this view is the view that Muslims were attempting to gain control of Bosnia by out-breeding the Serbs and Croats. It is a matter of fact that Bosnian Muslims did have a higher birthrate than did Serbs or Croats.

A third stereotype was that Muslims were uneducated and ignorant. This grew out of the fact that, prior to Tito's rule the Muslim religion did not require women to attend school. This also became a problem during Tito's reign and numerous Muslim men were punished for not sending their daughters to school (Sudetic, 1998, p. 42). The view of Bosnian Muslims being dumb led to numerous jokes about their mental capacity; the jokes are very similar to "Polish" jokes in the US.

In conclusion, there is enough evidence to easily show that inter-ethnic tensions existed in Bosnia prior to the 1992 war. In comparison to other ethnic wars, Bosnia probably possessed the most easily exploitable history. Although there were other factors, as we will see, in the hands of the right men the precondition of historical tension did not take long to ignite.

C. ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS

The economic pre-conditions that helped Bosnia slip into turmoil are seldom brought up, but are just as important as any other contributing factor. Without the destabilizing effects of unemployment, inflation, and falling incomes there most likely would have been no war. In order to examine the economic conditions that contributed to Bosnia's collapse one needs to go back to the rule of Tito and understand how the policies he instituted gave the Yugoslav people a false sense of security. Finally, when individuals in the Yugoslav government understood the problems and attempted to fix them they faced insurmountable obstacles from within and without. The entire spectrum of a flawed economic policy, combined with drastic attempts to correct the problem, had the effect of creating an unstable and insecure environment for all of Yugoslavia.

Tito's economic and political policies after 1948 were based upon profiting from the animosity and distrust between the Soviet Union and the United States. Yugoslavia belonged to neither of these camps, but benefited from both. Not being accepted in a bipolar cold war bloc, Tito created, and eventually became the leader of, the 77-member unaligned nations movement. As an unaligned nation and with its geo-strategic location Yugoslavia received huge amounts of aid from both East and West. During the period of the cold war the Yugoslav people did quite well. Their borders were generally open. They possessed the highest standard of living of any socialist country. And they were on the

same level as Europeans in various democracies. Also, since Yugoslavia did not possess strict population control measures its people were free to travel and work in other parts of Europe. Tito sent advisors and workers to all parts of the world. These advisors were highly sought and provided technical and military expertise to many nations of differing political ideologies. The bottom line was that many Yugoslavs traveled extensively and understood where Yugoslavia fit on the world's political and economic stage.

The tide began to turn in the 1970s, when Yugoslavia's social and economic policies could no longer be sustained. The period between 1970 and 1980 is when problems first became apparent. They went unnoticed in the 1970s because the entire world was suffering a recession, but looking back this is when the flawed system began to unravel. The unemployment, inflation, and all the other harbingers of a negative economic future began to show themselves. Yet, these indicators remained essentially ignored until after Tito's death in 1981.

An institutional legacy of Tito's Yugoslavia was a Federal Government that was extremely weak and was continually weakened over time, especially given changes to the Yugoslav constitution in 1963 and 1973. The real power lay in the six Republics. This created many economic problems because the Federal Government had trouble enforcing its rule, especially in the banking sector. Due to her failed economic policies, Yugoslavia accumulated serious debt and could not pay off her loans. There was much argument within the Federal Government about how to fix the problem. In the 1980s the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other creditors would not loan Yugoslavia any more money until the nation strengthened the federal system and enacted serious-market based reforms.

Yugoslav politicians felt they had two choices: implement reform or suffer under stifling debt. They chose reform. As with many great plans and strategies, the implementation of market-based reform had unintended consequences. The unintended consequences inflicted upon the Yugoslav economy and Yugoslav psyches turned out to be very severe (much as has been the economic suffering brought on by Russia's entry into the market). Problems such as unemployment and increases in inflation, which was 100% in 1987 and 150% in 1988, spawned yet other problems (Ramat, 1996, p. 9).

Since each of the Six Republics was basically responsible for its own economy, each tried to develop its own niche. Because of geography and a history linking them to the Hapsburg Dynasty, Slovenia and Croatia were already better adapted to the changes that market-based reforms required, especially in terms of trade with the West. These Republics had much lower unemployment rates than the remaining four Republics, which were focused on mining, agriculture, and trade with Eastern Europe. From 1979 to 1990 Slovenia had an unemployment rate of less than four percent while for the same time period unemployment rates in Serbia, Bosnia, and Macedonia were generally all between 20 and 30 percent (Woodward, 1995, p. 53). This difference in prosperity led to a great deal of animosity between the rich and poor Republics. This may have led to a feeling in Slovenia and Croatia that the remainder of Yugoslavia was economic dead weight.

The weakest of the six Republics economically, Bosnia was the last in every facet of economic measurement during Yugoslavia's existence. The only place which continuously did worse economically was the autonomous province of Kosovo. The only time that any money was pumped into Bosnia was in the late 1940s when invasion by the Soviets seemed imminent. Then, large factories were built in Bosnia with the idea that this central province, with its mountainous terrain deep in the interior of Yugoslavia, would be

the location from which to wage the war. After the Soviet threat dissipated Bosnia again slipped off the radar screen. Although many factories were built in Bosnia, most were unsound. An example of such a factory was in Gracanic, where a plant was built to process bauxite from a newly discovered, nearby mine. In the typical irresponsible fashion of the time it was later discovered that the mine did not produce the high-grade bauxite necessary for processing at the factory.

Another factor working against Bosnia was simple geography. Unlike every other Republic in Yugoslavia, Bosnia had no foreign neighbors to trade with. She was engulfed by her neighboring Republics and possessed no significant outlet to the sea. These factors alone could account for much of Bosnia's economic trouble.

But worse, the economic reforms asked for by foreign creditors proved an invitation to political disintegration. These reforms required that the federal government reduce its own power at a moment in time when the country was going through rapid change and needed civil order and stability. Without a stable civil and legal order, the social conditions created by economic changes can be explosive. Consider the combination of large-scale unemployment among youth and unskilled urban workers; demobilized soldiers and security police looking to employ their skills; an atmosphere conducive to black market activities and crime; easy access to huge stockpiles of weapons and ammunition (Woodward, 1995, p. 17). With this air of uncertainty and instability hanging over the country, communities were pushed closer together. They became closer because what they had depended on before – a government that could be counted on to provide subsistence, employment, and protection – was becoming radically narrowed in scope. It is only natural then that, in Bosnia, with the disintegration of the existing social and economic systems, communal ethnic ties became stronger and stronger.

C. ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS

In Bosnia we see a combination of perceived political and ethnic repression and a decaying and unworkable system, compounded by a scramble for power and security. These were the main political contributions to the war in Bosnia, where there also happened to be an almost evenly divided ethnic mix.

To comprehend what happened in Yugoslavia and Bosnia it is useful to understand the purposes served by individual and ethnic identity. Contrary to what some believe, Tito did not suppress an individual's ethnic identity in any way. He did not tolerate ethnic nationalism or intolerance of another's race or religion; actions of this sort were prosecuted and treated as threats to the state. Yet, the use of ethnic identity was integral to all things Yugoslav: ethnic identity was marked on census documents, school and military records, birth and marriage certificates, and most other official documents. All federal positions were rotated among the ethnicities and government jobs were allocated by representative ethnicity. Essentially, there were ethnic quotas and formulas for all levels of governance. This program was called the National Key (Woodward, 1995, pp. 31).

This delicate balancing act was implemented because Yugoslavia was basically a nation of minorities. The founding ethnicities of Yugoslavia - Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes (ethnic Muslims after 1963) – each had their own geographic Republics, but each dominant ethnic group had to deal with minorities within these Republics. In order to make all these minorities feel secure Tito went to great lengths to ensure that all ethnicities were treated equally, especially minority ethnicities in majority republics. This was done via a concept of dual citizenship; an individual was a citizen of Yugoslavia, but also a member of an ethnic nation. This was also the case for ethnicities

that did not have a home Republic in Yugoslavia, such as Albanians, Hungarians, Jews, Gypsies, Russians, Bulgarians, and Turks. They had rights as nationalities.

The unintended consequence of all this ethnic gerrymandering was that the system never encouraged anyone to become a Yugoslav. The system always encouraged people to retain their old ethnic identities. This can be seen clearly in the Yugoslav census data. For Yugoslavia as a whole, from 1961 to 1991, the highest percentage of people who considered themselves to be Yugoslav was 5.4 percent in 1981. For Bosnia 8.4 percent was the highest – and that was in 1961. It is no wonder that when things went economically wrong there was little sense of Yugoslav unity. The belief in a Yugoslav nation was quickly and easily discarded in favor of forming ethnic communities (Woodward, 1996, pp. 32-35).

As was stated earlier in the chapter, the Yugoslav federal government was a fairly weak institution. As economic and market reforms were implemented power and decision making were pushed down to the Republics, until eventually they had power rivaling that of the Yugoslav federal government. The Republics, namely Croatia and Serbia, began to push the idea that minorities in the Republics did not have the same rights as members of the majority ethnicities. This was done through mass firings of individuals belonging to non-majority ethnicities, the administering of loyalty oaths, and curbs on minority cultural rights. This was an extreme change from the Yugoslav ideal of "Brotherhood and Unity" guaranteed by the Yugoslav federal government. Almost identical examples of this can be seen in the way that the Republic of Serbia treated its Albanian minority in Kosovo and the way that Croatia treated its Serb minority in the Krajina. This stripping of minority power led to a feeling of insecurity and political inequality. It is also interesting to note that in many other places in the world this loss of minority power would be met by calls for

minority rights and equal representation. In Yugoslavia it was met by calls for minority autonomous zones. This reaction reveals a strong fear on the part of all in Yugoslavia of being a minority in Yugoslavia. To quote a recent Yugoslav saying " Why should I be a minority in your country when you can be a minority in mine?"

As for Bosnia, its political slide can be said to have started with a major change to the constitution that took place in 1963. This change granted the ethnic Muslims (mostly centered in Bosnia) status as an ethnic people in Yugoslavia. Obviously this title or status was something that was highly sought after by the Muslim population. Prior to this time they had been forced to identify themselves as Yugoslavs, Serbs, or Croats. This identification always led elements in Croatia and Serbia to claim Bosnia on the grounds that Muslims were either converted Croats or Serbs. It is interesting to note that the impetus for granting the Muslim population this "new" identity was the fact that the Muslims played a large role in Tito's non-aligned movement. For obvious reasons members of the Muslim population were chosen as Tito's representatives to the Middle Eastern countries. Once these representatives saw the vital role they were playing they demanded that their ethnicity be recognized.

This recognition of the Muslim ethnicity led the way to friction between Serbs and Muslims. The Republic of Serbia and the Serb population in Bosnia had always seen themselves as dominating Bosnia, but now the Serb population faced a new political rival: the ethnic Muslims. This new political conflict bubbled beneath the surface until other factors, such as the economy, began to give way. Then this political fault line began to show.

It was the stripping of minority rights and the perverting of Yugoslav ideals and the Yugoslav federal government that led to the next stage in the destruction of Yugoslavia and

Bosnia. Although it is not perfectly clear when exactly the political entrepreneurs first started taking advantage of these various fissures, they soon proved unstoppable in this environment of insecurity. These individuals ratcheted up the tension and inflamed the situation instead of de-escalating it to a manageable level.

D. RISE OF POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURS

The rise of political entrepreneurs and the destruction of Yugoslavia and Bosnia are intimately connected. The nationalists' politics of confrontation and no comprise, along with the attitude that the final solution would be handled militarily, led to the destruction of the country. There is a question as to whether the people of Yugoslavia wanted these nationalists in power or whether these leaders snuck in under the radar and hijacked the nation. But, interestingly, democratic elections played a key role in this process – six months after Yugoslavia's election the nation was at war. How did these entrepreneurs gain power and what was their aim?

I believe that the conditions were just right for the rise of political entrepreneurs in Yugoslavia. As I mentioned before, the groundwork for these leaders to arise had already been laid: a history of ethnic tension, a depressed and unstable economy, and developing political tensions and inequalities. The other elements that came into line that allowed these entrepreneurs to come to power were a system that was in collapse, a loss of faith in the federal government and the Yugoslav ideal, and the inability of the federal government to provide security and welfare. Combine this with the fact that Communism in Eastern Europe was disintegrating at a phenomenal rate and Yugoslavia overnight lost all the geopolitical clout it once had. When this happened people found the idea of nationalist leaders very comforting. In saying this, of course, we should always bear in mind that a nationalist political approach comes with a ready-made platform, and requires nothing

complicated, and nothing new, but instead borrows from what everyone belonging to the same ethnicity can already relate to. Such were the circumstances, the lure, and the simplicity that allowed the nationalists to step on to the scene in Yugoslavia.

1. The Leaders

Obviously the man who most Americans would argue is the architect of the destruction of Yugoslavia is Slobodan Milosevic. He was an ambitious man who in the mid1980s became the Belgrade Communist party boss, working his way up and becoming the Serbian Communist Party boss and eventually the Serbian President. He consolidated power in the Serbian Republic by stripping the autonomous zones of Kosovo and Vojvodina of their status and gaining control of politics in Montenegro. He used Serb nationalism as his vehicle. It is impossible to determine whether Milosevic was a true Serb nationalist or an opportunist with a successful platform. I think he was probably a little bit of both depending on the time and circumstances. It cannot be denied that at certain times Milosevic had the full support of the Serb people, especially in his dealings with Kosovo (Ramat, 1996, p. 27).

I believe that as Milosevic spent more time in power he became more of a true Serb nationalist. He was usually rational and seldom acted emotionally or out of control. Americans, such as Warren Zimmerman, our last ambassador to Yugoslavia, argue that Milosevic was an evil opportunist possessed by his dark side (Zimmerman, 1999, pp. 22-25). However, I believe that Milosevic usually acted in a way that he thought served the best interests of the Serb people. In his mind he tried to save Yugoslavia, but only on his terms. Once he saw that Yugoslavia was going down the road to breakup he immediately resigned himself to the idea that he should do everything possible to ensure that Serbs living outside of the Serbian Republic were safe and had equal rights. To Milosevic that

meant annexing the territory in which they lived, or guaranteeing its autonomy. If he did not act violently to protect Serbs' interests then the Croats, the Albanians, or the Muslims would beat them to the punch. To most Serbs in the early 1990s this didn't seem like a bad idea (Zimmerman, 1999, p. 17).

Franjo Tudjman, the elected leader of the Republic of Croatia, was, without a doubt, a rabid Croat nationalist of the narrowest sort. An ex-JNA general and member of the communist party, Tudjman had, in the 1970s, spent time in jail for inciting Croat nationalism. He was elected to power with less than 42% of the vote on an anti-communist, anti-Serb, and pro-independence platform. Upon election he immediately embarked on a very confrontational approach with the Serb minority in Croatia, extremely similar to the earlier approach taken by Milosevic with the Albanian minority in Kosovo – violating Serb rights, dismissing Serbs from government and press jobs, and requiring them to take loyalty oaths (Zimmerman, 1999, pp. 73-75). These moves were akin to throwing gasoline on a kitchen fire.

In Bosnia herself the 1990 elections for Republic representatives broke down almost exactly along ethnic lines in proportion to the population: 33.8% for the SDA (Party of Democratic Action), the party of Islam, led by Alija Izetbegovic; 29.6 for Radovon Karadzic SDS (Serb Democratic Party) the party that represents Serbs outside of Serbia (the same party with which Krajina Serbs identify); 18.3% for the HDZ (party for Croatian Unity), the same party as Tudjman's in Croatia. All of the above mentioned leaders were strong nationalists. Izetbegovic, for instance, spent years in prison as a consequence of his Muslim nationalist leanings. However, the voting patterns do not tell us exactly what the people of Bosnia were trying to prove. Was a vote for a nationalist party a vote against Yugoslavia, a vote for independence, a vote against another ethnic group, or a vote

promoting one's own ethnic group? It is impossible to know because elections were never held again in the complete version of Yugoslavia. What these voting records do say is that when times are bad people elect or associate themselves with those who they believe will best protect their interests. In Bosnia these chosen people were the nationalists. (Woodward, 1995, pp. 119-122)

2. The Election

An interesting note related to the ascendance of these nationalists and the elections is that when most Americans think of democratic elections they associate the term with a concept of a democratic system. This was not the case in Yugoslavia, where people were not prepared to abide by the election results. It was not a popular uprising or revolution by the common people that had put elections on the schedule in the first place. Instead, it was the politicians. It seems that politicians saw opportunity in the breakdown of communism and, given the declining confidence in the system, decided to call for elections. These politicians, being excellent judges of human nature, knew that during periods of uncertainty people vote along nationalist lines, which is what they indeed did in all the Republics. The Croatian nationalist - Tudjman - only received 40% of the vote in Croatia; however, he took power and executed nationalist policies nonetheless. I will again say that it is impossible to read people's intent in their votes. But clearly the election demonstrates that nationalism holds a very strong appeal during uncertain times and politicians are willing to take advantage of that. It also shows that during these times nationalist parties appeal strongly to politicians. The nationalist parties were made up of mostly ex-communist politicians who tried to pick a winner. There were other smaller parties that reached across ethnic lines, but they never made it off the ground.

I believe that the record shows that most people in Bosnia voted nationalist because of the instability and collapse which was going on around them. No politician mentioned, as part of his platform, that he was willing to destroy Yugoslavia. The people of Yugoslavia wanted security, not civil war. The nationalist politicians, every one of whom (except Izetbegovic) had been a Communist politician a few years before, took their election as a mandate for independence, oppression of minority rights, and conquest. The situation is reminiscent of a rich dying uncle (Yugoslavia) with many unscrupulous relatives (political entrepreneurs) fighting over how to split the inheritance between families. Could the situation in Yugoslavia and Bosnia have been defused and de-escalated by these elected officials? I believe the answer is yes. De-escalation would have been very difficult but it could have been achieved. However, instead of a conciliatory and unifying approach, the nationalist leaders took a very aggressive, no compromise stance involving a deliberate campaign of fear, propaganda, distortion, and hate that was the final set piece before open war could begin.

E. MASS HOSTILITY

All the preconditions in the world are not enough to start a war. It usually takes some very extreme circumstance to cause a man to want to kill or do damage to members of another ethnic group with whom he has lived, in peace for decades. For the purposes of this thesis I will call this state of mind Mass Hatred, a condition that induces complete dehumanization of, and contempt for, the perceived enemy. There were three main reasons for the development of an atmosphere of mass hatred in Bosnia: the first was an unstable environment brought on by wars in the surrounding Republics, the second was a steady stream of propaganda, the third was instigating tactics promulgated by criminal and paramilitary gangs.

I will address first the issue of instability and war surrounding Bosnia. Bosnia not only had to deal with its own history of ethnic turmoil, a very bad economy, and the question of secession, but several different conflicts were being fought along its borders. First, there was conflict in Slovenia between the JNA and the breakaway Slovenes; although the fight was short the conflict opened the door to complete destabilization in the region. Second was the war in Croatia. Bosnia was used as a staging area for the JNA, with intense fighting going on along the border with Bosnia. What was perhaps most important about this conflict was that, unlike the war in Slovenia, this conflict pitted Serbs against Croats: two of the major ethnicities in Bosnia. The third and possibly the most important realm of instability was in the Krajina where Serbs were the targets of Croat nationalism and later fought and declared a Serb Autonomous Zone in Croatia. Although some might argue about the Serb reaction, the initial threat to Krajina Serbs was legitimate; the complicating factor for Bosnia was that this trouble was happening directly along its western border where there was a large concentration of Serbs. Many Serbs in Croatia and the Krajina became refugees and settled in Bosnia with friends or relatives. These refugees, just like any who lose their home, have an ax to grind and little to lose. These refugees also lacked the social ties to local Croats and Muslims that many Bosnian Serbs had, therefore instigating violence was easier for them. Not surprisingly, Serbs in Bosnia were affected by what happened in the Krajina such that they too declared an autonomous zone and then fought to keep it. It is fairly obvious that the actions in Krajina added to their immediate fear and mistrust of other ethnicities. Given what happened or appeared likely to happen to Serbs in the Krajina, Serbs in Bosnia were bound to feel that their only chance at security – for their culture, ethnicity and possibly their lives – lay in autonomy. The end result was the sense that if they didn't immediately band together and defend

themselves they would be exterminated. These feelings were fueled by a healthy dose of propaganda and dredging up of the past.

Obviously, television and radio advertising work, so why not use these mediums of communication to unite your ethnic group and intimidate your rivals? This was exactly what the leaders of the Republics and other ethnic leaders did in Bosnia. These individuals controlled their respective state's radio and television and they used them to rally supporters. The method was to take an incident that happened - no matter how or who started it - and make it look like your side was minding its own business while the other side was the unprovoked aggressor. This amounts to spin gone wild. Many such events were premeditated and carefully planned by the instigating side with the intent of propagandizing and portraying their side as victims or martyrs. It was all about getting your side's story across.

There are some skeptics who would claim that people have common sense and will realize that they are being manipulated, but I would argue that even the most intelligent among us would have difficulty not being swayed by the messages people in Bosnia received. Some of the messages were mixed with historical fact. There were, for instance, film clips of Croat Ustase leaders meeting with Hitler, followed by a clip with Croat soldiers wearing the same insignia today as they were in WWII. The message was clear: these people are the same and they will do the same thing to us all over again if we do not act first. I believe there are very few people who this message would not affect; it is grounded in enough truth to make anyone think twice and to make anyone feel insecure.

It struck me while in Bosnia that the truth was devoid of meaning and that people could no longer take an objective view. Outright, boldfaced lying about the perceived enemy was normal everyday discourse and most people believed what they heard, as long

as it was negative and it was about the other side. Such propaganda also becomes self-reinforcing. The more the story grows and the wider it spreads the more it takes on the semblance of truth or fact. It amazed me how the members of one ethnic group to a person believed one version of events while members of another ethnic group offered a totally different explanation. These views were often expressed as if individuals were reading a script or reciting the party line. The influence of propaganda in Bosnia demonstrates why we can never afford to doubt the power of radio or television to influence people or make neighbor distrust neighbor.

The final step in the polarization of ethnic groups was the paramilitary influence. If a spontaneous uprising doesn't occur, as often happens, then something else is needed. That something in Bosnia was paramilitary attacks. The most famous one happened in the eastern Bosnian town of Bijelina in early 1992. Arkan, the most feared of all Serb paramilitary leaders, approaching from inside Serbia, attacked the town, and brutally executed many of its Muslim inhabitants. Serbs justified this in terms of liberating the town and protecting the resident Serbs from Muslim aggression. Both sides thus had reason to believe they were in danger. Reprisals began. More paramilitaries formed. Law and order broke down. And the area spiraled into war. At the same time, in the western portions of Bosnia near the Krajina, ethnic war was being fomented by similar techniques: staged incidents, invited crackdowns, while gun battles with local police eventually drew in the JNA which usually aided the Serb side.

Events such as these leave little room for people not to pick a side. Then with everyone suddenly polarized and feeling that if they don't fight they will surely be massacred – as so many in the past had been – the groundwork is laid. Open warfare is in progress.

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III. KOSOVO

A. HISTORY OF ETHNIC TENSION

"No Balkan society is immune from the observation that a nation is a group of people united by common error about their ancestry and common dislike of their neighbor" (Hall, 1994, p. 25). A history of ethnic tension between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs is not complete without this comment. Nowhere else is the aforementioned idea more important than between these two ethnic groups over this one territory. This portion of the paper is rather simple because, unlike the other ethnicities in the remainder of Yugoslavia, there has never really been a time in the last 300 years that Kosovar Albanians have ever gotten along with, or wanted to be a part of, Serbia or Yugoslavia, and Serbs harbor the same negative feelings towards Albanians. I have broken down the remainder of this portion of the chapter about historical tension into three parts: history of domination, threatening symbols, and negative stereotypes.

1. Fear of Domination

As far back as historical memories go, both sides involved in this dispute have believed that Kosovo belongs to them. The Kosovar Albanians believe that they were the first inhabitants of the area, through their ancestors, the Illyrians, who lived in Kosovo in the 2nd century B.C. Kosovo is also important to Albanians because it was the birthplace of modern Albanian nationalism with an event heralding the League of Prizren in 1878. Another key factor to remember about Kosovo is that currently the state of Albania has about 3 million people; 98 percent are ethnic Albanians. Kosovo holds 2 million ethnic Albanians, the largest number of ethnic Albanians outside Albania. This is important

because Kosovar Albanians subscribe to the old adage that "possession is nine tenths of ownership".

From the Serb point of view, on the other hand, Kosovo is a historic holy place, their Jerusalem of sorts. Kosovo is the ancient home to numerous Serbian Orthodox shrines and monasteries. Kosovo was the place where Serbian Kings were crowned. Kosovo Polje, where Prince Lazar was defeated by the Turks (with help from Albanians) in 1389, is located in Kosovo. Serbs trace the formation of modern Serbia back to this defeat. There is no doubt that Kosovo holds a large amount of intrinsic value to Serbs. But in 1991, after years of demographic decline, they made up only 10 percent of Kosovo's population.

Throughout the history of the region both ethnicities have had reason to fear domination by the other. One side's fear is just as real as the other's. I will start with the Kosovo Albanians. In the Balkan wars of 1912, Serbia took control of Kosovo from the Ottomans. The first thing Serbia did was declare there were no other ethnicities in Kosovo, and thereby continued a policy of forced expulsions. These forced expulsions have helped rearrange the historical landscape of Kosovo through the centuries. Kosovo has been a pressure release valve or frontier where Serbs, expelled from other areas, most recently from the Krajina in 1995, could resettle at the expense of Kosovo Albanians. The Albanian language, banned by Serbs, but extremely important to Albanians everywhere, was forbidden in Kosovo until the Austrians took over in WWI. This was a short-lived event and after the war Kosovo was again granted to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which was run by Serbia. It is interesting to note that the word Yugoslavia means "South Slavs" or the "Kingdom of South Slavs". Albanians are not Slavic and they are fiercely protective of there national identity. Albanian is not a Slavic language, nor is it related to any other European language, it is in a language group by itself (Hall, 1994, p.29).

Once the Kingdom of Yugoslavia took power the Kosovar Albanians found themselves literally and figuratively muzzled. Serbs re-colonized the area while a Kosovo Albanian insurgency against the Yugoslav Kingdom raged into the late 1920s (Vickers, 1998, p. 102). This rebellion was rife with massacres on both sides that make the 1999 war seem like child's play. During WWII the Germans united Kosovo with Albania, creating the German/Italian puppet state of Greater Albania. Although it is thought that Tito was sympathetic to awarding Kosovo to Albania after WWII, he ruled this out because of Serb protests (Hall, 1994, p. 204). In 1945 a brutal Albanian rebellion was put down in Kosovo. This rebellion lasted six months and by the time it was finished almost 50,000 Kosovar Albanians were dead (Vickers, 1998, p. 143). The impetus behind the rebellion in 1945 was that no Kosovar Albanians – neither Albanian collaborator forces nor Albanian communist partisans – wanted to live under Yugoslav rule. And they were willing to fight to the bitter end to prevent this. Thus, much as it had at the end of WWI, Kosovo entered Yugoslavia essentially under siege, and with an Albanian population under suspicion.

That being said, Tito did recognize the Albanian ethnicity and allowed the Albanian culture and language to exist until 1974, when Kosovo was declared an Autonomous Province and granted nearly the power of a Republic. However, even this did not satisfy the Kosovar Albanians because they always, at a minimum, wanted to form a separate republic. Their ethnic population fluctuated between being the third and fourth largest in Yugoslavia. First were the Serbs, second were the Croats, and in a virtual tie for third were ethnic Muslims and Albanians. The complaint was that Kosovo Albanians had twice the population as some Republics, like Macedonia or Montenegro, but not equal power or representation.

However, just as Kosovo was finally nearing Republic status, Serbia, in a bid to consolidate power in 1989, stripped it of its autonomous status and banned the Albanian language and most everything Albanian. For the fourth time since 1945 the JNA occupied Kosovo. With such a recent volatile history of forced domination it is a wonder that open warfare between Serbs and Kosovar Albanians did not break out sooner.

From a Serbian perspective, the Serbs felt they had as much to fear from Kosovo Albanians as Albanians did from them. Going back to the 14th Century, Serbs blame the loss at Kosovo Polje on Albanians, who helped the Turks. The truth seems a bit less clear-cut; Albanians fought on both sides, but as is often the case in the Balkans, historical facts get overrun by a selective version of historical spin. There are also historical examples (especially during the time of the Ottoman rule) of Albanians forcibly expelling Serbs from Kosovo. The first of these great Serb expulsions took place in 1690 when Kosovo was almost completely emptied of its Serb population. Although anything that took place in 1690 might seem like ancient history to an American, this association in Serb minds, between Albanian Muslims and the hated Ottoman Turks, is very much alive. WWI and WWII also add fuel to the historical fire; in Serb minds this recent history shows that, when given the chance, ethnic Albanians side with opposing powers. During both World Wars Albanians hunted down Serb soldiers and partisans, or massacred or expelled Serb civilians. In WWI Kosovo Albanians acted in league with the Austrians; in WWII they collaborated with the Germans and Italians and even formed their own SS Division. More recently, fear of domination has come from the fact that Serbs in Kosovo are the local minority. The Serb belief that they have been the victims of crime and violence at the hand of ethnic Albanians is not without a base in fact.

For centuries the blood feud has been the way that Albanian men settled disputes. It is estimated that in 1991 over 1000 Kosovar families had vendettas to settle with other families (March, 1999, p. 6). Since Ottoman rule, banditry has been a way of life in the hard to control mountainous regions of Kosovo. As a consequence Serbs have left the area in search of safer places to live. The appeal in 1987, by the Serb Academy of Science, which sought to stop the Albanian genocide of Serbs in Kosovo, offers a glimpse of the Serb mindset. Every instance of Albanian-on-Serb crime was blown up until there was the appearance of a "quiet ethnic cleansing". This, combined with a Kosovar Albanian birthrate that was the highest in Europe, gave the impression to Serbs that they were being driven out and eventually would lose their cultural identity in the cradle of their civilization.

2. Threatening Symbols

There are numerous symbols that strike fear into the hearts of both Serbs and Albanians. These symbols also serve as the rallying cry or mobilizer for each ethnic group. Threatening symbols have been present on both sides.

During the recent buildup to conflict the most threatening symbol that Kosovar Albanians possessed was the set of initials, UCK. In Albanian these letters stand for Ushtria Clirimtare e Kosoves, known better in English as the KLA or Kosovo Liberation Army. The letters UCK were, and are, spray painted all over Kosovo. This is intended as much to unify the Kosovar Albanians as to strike fear and insecurity into the hearts of Serbs. The UCK flies the red and black double-headed eagle flag; the same flag is used by the state of Albania and is identical to the one that flew over the WWII puppet state of Greater Albania. This can be interpreted a couple of ways. Either Kosovar Albanians are in search of a Greater Albania, just like the one they had under German and Italian rule in

WWII, and/or, they are purposely using the double-headed eagle to intimidate, since this was the family symbol of Skanderbeg, Albania's greatest hero. Skanderbeg made his name fighting for freedom (ironically against the Ottoman Turks). Not uncoincidentally, the Skanderbeg SS Division made use of both the name and the flag. So they now evoke all sorts of bad memories at a myriad of levels, and particularly for people still alive to remember.

The other threatening symbol is the written and spoken language of Albanian. This is the greatest common unifier of Albanians. The Serbs tried to replace Albanian with Cyrillic script and the Serbian language, but they failed. And this failure itself – and resurgence of Albanian in the face of state repression – made the Albanian language even more significant, both literally and symbolically. Even in terms of the name of the region, Albanians refuse to call it Kosovo; only the Albanian pronunciation Kosova will do.

Islam, the primary Albanian religion, was also considered threatening by Serbs, though Albanians were never the fundamentalists that Serbs warned against. Nor was religion a great unifier for Kosovar Albanians. An interesting fact is that most Albanians were forcibly converted to Islam from Roman Catholicism in the late 18th century – a very recent memory in the Balkans. In the 1990s a grassroots effort was even made to reconvert Albanians back to Roman Catholicism, their ancestral religion. Thus, although 97 percent of Kosovar Albanians remain Muslim, Islam was not used to rally people. Instead the resurgence of Kosovar Albanian nationalism was evoked through symbols revolving around a common history, language, and culture.

Serbs, as we saw in the chapter on Bosnia, also use a variety of symbols to evoke feelings of nationalism. One of the most common is the three-fingered salute, in which the thumb, index finger, and middle finger are extended upwards. All Serbs recognize this

gesture, while nothing evokes anger quicker from rival ethnicities. The Cetri C with its meaning of Serb unity is also present everywhere: on the Serb flag, government seals, spray-painted in Serb areas, and tattooed on Serb soldiers. This symbol is a cross with a Cyrillic C in each corner. Together the Cs are an acronym representing a phrase that roughly means "only through unity can Serbs survive". The fact that the origins of the Serbian Orthodox Church lay in Kosovo add meaning to the religious symbolism, especially since along with Serb nationalism there has been a revival of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Something else that began to gain popularity among Kosovo Serbs in the late 1980s was the growth of long hair and beards- a connection to the Cetnik guerrilla fighters of the Ottoman Wars and WWII. Music also played its part with the revival of Serb patriotic songs (Vickers, 1998, p. 228). All of these would have seemed menacing to non-Serbs who were familiar with Balkan history.

In terms of more overt threats, after Serbia stripped Kosovo of its autonomy, the police force became a Serb force. This was threatening in and of itself, but whenever the Serb police (traffic police, special police or interior police) feel they are in a war-type setting, they go to an all-purple camouflage uniform. This purple uniform was the standard in Kosovo. We referred to it as the "purple people eater suit" in large part because of its effect on non-Serbs. This uniform was feared because it was also the uniform that Serbs were wearing in locations were they were at war; it was especially associated with units which where a combination of Yugoslav FBI/Special Forces/anti-terrorists. Along with the purple uniform came an increased level of Serb militarization.

The message sent out about Kosovo to Serbs didn't have to depend solely on a display of Serb symbols. Mobilization against Kosovar Albanians also occurred as a result of Serbs reading the Albanians a certain way. It did not take much to enrage Serbs or

spread the message that "the cradle of Serb culture is being overrun by sub-class Albanian Islamists; we must gain control of this area and make it safe for Serbs to inhabit". The Serbs got this message across by associating Kosovar Albanians with mosques, poverty, overpopulation, the desire for secession, defaced monasteries and cemeteries, and crime (especially against Serbs). The resultant images -all negative in Serb eyes- of the Kosovar Albanians evoked such a visceral response in the Serb people that these negative symbols stood alone and sold themselves. It must be remembered that Milosevic's crackdowns on Kosovar Albanians were extremely popular among Serbs; the Serb reduction of Kosovar Albanians to a series of negative images and threatening symbols amounted to a call to a Serb holy war.

3. Negative Stereotypes

Like symbols, stereotypes were easy to come by for Serbs and Kosovar Albanians. Kosovar Albanians, for instance, could easily sum up Serbs and Yugoslavs. Their most prevalent stereotype was that Serbs and Yugoslavs are ethno-centrists, racists, and brutal militarists, especially after the crackdown in the late 1980s. This view helped achieve the almost total alienation of the Albanian population from the very concept of a Yugoslavia (Vickers, 1998, p. 226). The claim by Albanians that the Serbs are ethnocentrists is easily supported, since every day that the word Yugoslavia is spoken an Albanian is reminded that he is not a Slav and that his culture is deemed unworthy. Throughout recent memory Serbs and Yugoslavs have sought to muffle the Albanian language and culture. Forced expulsions of Albanians from Kosovo is the historic rule, not the exception.

The view that Serbs are brutal and militaristic is also well founded. Serbs consider themselves to be the greatest warriors in the Balkans. This doesn't translate into the idea that they are the most noble or show the most mercy to their foes. Rather, the JNA and

previous Serb armies have time and again demonstrated that they fight Kosovar Albanian rebels the old-fashioned way: via massacre, rape, kidnapping of family members, and basically by evicting populations. Related to this is the notion that Serbs would kill to keep Kosovo, but refuse to live there. Their current predicament is similar to inner city white flight in the US, with the same principles at play: a minority moves in, the minority soon becomes the local majority, the area declines, members of the majority grow afraid to remain and leave.

Consequently, Serbs hold Albanians in considerable contempt. They consider Albanians to belong to a subclass and regard them as criminal, ignorant, lazy, and backwards. None of these negative stereotypes have been mitigated because there are very few crosscutting ties linking Albanians and Serbs. There have been few intermarriages and very little interaction in the business sphere.

The view that Kosovar Albanians are criminal goes back centuries to when outlaws, especially those seeking sanctuary from vendettas, would escape to Kosovo in order to lead a life of banditry in the mountains. The fact that Kosovar Albanians have tended to settle disputes through blood feuds leaves the distinct impression that Albanians are violent, lawless, and uncivilized. Revenge, not the Yugoslav Judiciary, has been the law. Recently, Kosovar Albanians have been purported to be the largest drug traffickers in Europe. Keeping this in mind, it is no wonder that Serbs believe that if they lived in Kosovo they would be putting themselves at risk of becoming the victims of individual acts of violence or of general Albanian unrest. The fact that murders, rapes, and the desecration of cemeteries and holy sites occurred only further convinced Serbs Kosovo was unsafe. Worse, Albanians actually intimidated Serbs into leaving in order to then buy their land cheap. As a consequence it became illegal for Serbs to sell land in Kosovo to Albanians

after 1989. Perhaps most telling, even Kosovo Albanian leaders appealed to their populations to show restraint towards Kosovo's Serb minority (Vickers, 1998, pp. 219-226).

The view that Albanians are lazy, stupid, and dirty comes from the fact that there is a tendency for all former Yugoslavs (Croats, Slovenes, ethnic Muslims) to regard anything or anyone coming from southern Yugoslavia (Kosovo, Macedonia, southern Serbia) as dirty and backwards. Ethnic Muslims in Bosnia would not eat at Albanian restaurants because they claimed, "Albanians were dirty". This prejudice is perhaps best illustrated by what happened when the Belgrade government attempted to resettle Krajina Serb refugees in Kosovo. Several times bus convoys loaded with these Krajina Serb refugees mutinied once they found out, en route, that they were to be relocated to Kosovo (Malcom, 1998, pp. 353). These strong feelings about Albanians and Kosovo no doubt stem, in part, from the fact that the region is the poorest and most underdeveloped part of Yugoslavia. The birthrate issue also figures into general disdain. Any group of people that has such a high birthrate must be little better than peasants. For a people (e.g. the Serbs) trying to be seen as western, this peasant-like birthrate is not only unattractive, but also embarrassing.

Another powerful belief is that all Albanians want secession. Albanians are very clannish, suspicious of outsiders, and have thus generally been hard for others to trust. The secessionist stereotype has been bolstered by the idea that many of the Albanians who live in Kosovo came illegally from Albania. It seems to Serbs that Albanians never wanted to be part of the Yugoslav system; in 1981, only .02 percent of the Kosovo population considered themselves Yugoslavs, the lowest percentage in Yugoslavia (Vickers, 1998, p.195). It was easy for Serbs to feel that they were the landlords of Kosovo and the Albanians were malcontents and bad renters, begging to be evicted.

Even Serbs who lived in Kosovo were considered to be tainted or dirtied by the experience. Serbs in Belgrade would call these people "half black", referring to darker Albanian skin color, or "mulsmimi", a negative Muslim slur. This was the same term used by Serbs commenting on other Serbs who had lived in Sarajevo with ethnic Muslims. The rationale was that anyone who lived with a lower ethnicity must have had some of it rub off on him or her.

To Serbs, Albanians are not Slavs in a land of Slavs. Rather, they are indeed followers of Islam in the birthplace of the Serbian Orthodox Church. In the Serb view of the world, few groups rate lower on the cultural scale than Albanians. Serbs have also tried to portray Albanians as rampant Islamic fundamentalists, but as stated earlier, this was largely propaganda, designed to stir Serbs to action, or at least garner support for anti-Albanian measures.

The Kosovo example offers a clear-cut case of ethnic tension. There was a definite history and fear of domination by both sides. Threatening symbols drawn from history were openly, provocatively flaunted. There was little interaction or desire for interaction, socially or politically, between the two groups. The stereotypes each side held about the other were as bad as one can imagine. Confrontation would have been hard to prevent or avoid in Kosovo.

B. ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS

It is no secret that Kosovo was the most economically backward region in Yugoslavia. The area had the highest rates of unemployment and enjoyed the lowest per capita incomes during the entire existence of Yugoslavia. This poverty and backwardness spawned ideas of secession and self-government. These are very powerful factors in themselves, but Kosovo's economic plight also led the Yugoslav government to make a

series of critical decisions that affected trade, higher education, and precipitated Serb flight from Kosovo.

The economy in Kosovo has seemingly always been a shambles. The main sources of economic dependence in the 20th century have been agriculture and mining. The land in Kosovo, exacerbated by a serious overpopulation problem, has been overgrazed and overcultivated for centuries. This mismanagement of resources has left most farmers and herders practicing subsistence-type agriculture with only small amounts of produce left over to sell at market. The mining of coal and other minerals has been an important economic factor in Kosovo, but not enough to buoy the weak economy. Coal has always been a main export from Kosovo, although even in the best of days the quality of the coal (lignite) was low (Country Study, 1992, pp. 164-165). As Yugoslavia became more developed, its industries began to run on more modern fuel sources, like oil and natural gas and Kosovo's importance as a fuel exporter waned.

Having an excess of young men, Kosovo, provided many guest workers to Europe and the rest of Yugoslavia, i.e. Slovenia and Croatia. When the world economy faltered in the 1970s and 1980s numerous Albanian men returned to a Kosovo that had no jobs and little hope. As is the universal case, no good can come of numerous unemployed young men.

Helping to fuel the fires of Albanian nationalism was the idea that "if we (Kosovo Albanians) had complete control of our government, we would not have these economic problems." This line of reasoning cast blame on Serbs and other Yugoslavs even though Kosovo, along with other provinces and republics after 1974, was basically responsible for its own economy. National ambitions were also fed by broadcasts from neighboring Albania that painted an extremely rosy picture of what was happening inside Kosovo's

neighbor to the west. Since borders were closed between Yugoslavia and Albania, Kosovo Albanians didn't realize that they were socioeconomic giants compared to their cross-border cousins. Another factor that aided the "better in Albania" myth was the fact that after 1974 Kosovo was allowed to trade with Albania, as long as this was done at very moderate levels. During this period, Kosovars were allowed to see the most productive side of Albania, which fostered more pan-Albanianism.

The government of Yugoslavia also made what, in hindsight, has to be considered a critical mistake regarding unemployment and the education system in Kosovo. Tito decided, in the late 1960s, that if Kosovo was going to have so many unemployed youth that it was best to have them attend a university rather than roaming the streets. This was also thought to be a good idea because Kosovo lagged behind all other republics in the areas of education. Thus, numerous things could be accomplished at once, including a "feel good measure" aimed at making up for past injustices. This would be accomplished by instruction in the Albanian language and offering a full complement of Albanian cultural education. As is normally the case, many well-intended ideas have unintended consequences. In 1981 Pristina University had 36,000 full time students and 18,000 part time students, three times as many as the university was designed for. Kosovo also had the highest percentage of university students of any republic. The nationwide average was 19 percent; 28 percent of Kosovo's population was enrolled. Almost one in three Kosovars were thus receiving some type of university education. Unfortunately, most people were working on degrees in the social sciences and humanities, such as literature and history, degrees that a province with a third of its population unemployed can ill afford – not to mention that these are the degrees that mold nationalists (Vickers, 1998, pp.194-197). Something else worth noting is that this education system was developed quickly from

scratch. This meant that many of the educators were under-qualified or just plain unqualified.

Student overcrowding, which was exacerbated by Albanians flocking to Kosovo from all the other Yugoslav Republics, caused many problems. It immediately made Kosovo the center of Albanian culture. For a people that had been suppressed for years this was powerful stuff. It only intensified and furtherer concentrated the Albanian nationalist sentiment that had been simmering throughout Kosovo. In 1981, a year after Tito's death, student riots rocked Kosovo. Although these riots began as a result of the overcrowded conditions at the Pristina University, the underlying tone was the insecurity felt by Kosovar Albanians after Tito's death. Many banners expressed the desire for union with Albania or that Kosovo be granted full Republic status. In the end, the JNA was called in to quell the unexpected chaos, which left hundreds dead (Daalder, 2000, p. 8). It seemed that the Yugoslav government, attempting to satisfy an ethnic minority's unemployment problem through education, ignited the nationalist fires instead.

The final consequence of Kosovo's sorry economy was the flight of the Serb population. Most Serbs stated, after they left, that the reason for their exodus was pressure from the Albanian population. This may be true, but another major reason was the economic stagnation in Kosovo. Most of these Serbs who left Kosovo went to live in Belgrade. This was the trend for all Serbs throughout Yugoslavia, not just from Kosovo. A sizable number of Serbs left Bosnia and Croatia for Belgrade about the same time. A number of Croats left Bosnia and went to Zagreb. The tendency seemed to be for Serbs and Croats to gravitate to better financial opportunities in their respective ethnic capitals. The bottom line is that the economy is at least partially, if not largely, responsible for the Serb exodus.

It is obvious that Kosovo Albanians suffered under the worst economic conditions in Yugoslavia. These conditions bred a sentiment among Albanians that "we can do better by ourselves." Combine that feeling with unlimited schooling which preached about the greatness of Albanian culture, and it is clear that Yugoslavia created an atmosphere ripe for Kosovo's secession.

C. POLITICAL PRECONDITIONS

The case of political inequality in Kosovo is quite well documented. It is a clear-cut case of a minority within a specific geographic area feeling unfairly represented. This minority strove for greater representation, which it eventually received, only to have the rug pulled out from under it. This reduction in autonomy or status is one of the main reasons that Kosovo is only nominally a part of Serbia today. In this section I will focus on the political situation involving the Kosovo Albanians.

It is not much of a stretch to say that the Kosovo Albanians were brought into the Yugoslav fold kicking and screaming. Their anti-Yugoslav attitudes, combined with feelings of untrustworthiness, were crucial factors in the decision not to give Kosovo Albanians separate political representation in the early Yugoslavia. This was in contrast to the fact that Kosovar Albanians comprised the third largest ethnic group in Yugoslavia, behind Serbs and Croats. Macedonia and Montenegro, with approximately half the ethnic population of Albanians, both had their own republics while Kosovo remained the dominion of Serbia.

As time went on Tito eventually began to grant more power and autonomy to Kosovo. With each change of the constitution Kosovo began to receive more political power until 1974, when it, along with Vojvodina, was granted Autonomous Province status with nearly the same power as a Republic. At this time Yugoslavia was decentralizing at a

rapid pace. Kosovo, along with the other Republics, became responsible for most of its own internal management in the areas of education, economy, healthcare, policing, etc. With this, Kosovo had now gained more power over its own affairs than, arguably, at any time since Ottoman rule. Tito, unknowingly, let the genie out of the bottle, and once out it has proved impossible to put back (March, 1999, p. 3).

After Tito's death, the situation, both politically and economically, began to fall apart. Kosovo Albanians regarded Tito as their protector from domination by the Serbs; with his death a sense of insecurity quickly grew. This insecurity showed itself first in the Pristina Riots in 1981. The Albanians' actions in Pristina took the Serbs off guard and eventually, with the rise of Serb nationalism, helped convince the Serbs that Tito had granted power to the Kosovar Albanians, and others, at their expense. All these feelings came to a head when Slobodan Milosevic arrived on the scene. Between 1989 and 1992 he altered the Yugoslav Constitution and suspended Kosovo's autonomous status, stripping the region of power. A state of emergency was declared that allowed Serbia to rule Kosovo under a "special circumstances" clause (March, 1999, p. 4).

This action was very popular with Serbs, but in hindsight was a heavy-handed mistake. People, whether in a nation or as individuals, always seem to be more willing to fight to recover a perceived loss than a to acquire a perceived gain. By taking away Kosovo's political status, Milosevic took away the Kosovo Albanians' greatest political advance in centuries. I feel the only reason that war didn't break out at this moment was that the Kosovar Albanian population understood it was severely outgunned and would be massacred. Another reason rebellion was kept at bay can be attributed to the emergence of Ibrahim Rugova and the League for a Democratic Kosovo.

As the Serbianization of Kosovo began to take place, Kosovo Albanians began to withdraw from anything involving Yugoslavia or Serbia. They refused to take part in any Serbian political process and eventually set up a parallel system of government, called the Democratic Republic of Kosova. The unofficially elected Ibrahim Rugova led this government. The same election that put Rugova in power recorded a 100 percent Kosovar Albanian vote for secession from Yugoslavia (Daalder, 2000, p. 8). It is an interesting side note that, by boycotting all Yugoslav elections, the Albanians forfeited any representation in a legitimate government. This was done to show that the goal was independence, not regaining their prior status. This boycott made Kosovo Albanians' claims of undemocratic representation ring slightly hollow. The LDK wanted to have their cake and eat it too.

This parallel government was quite remarkable in the scope and width of services it provided. It was funded by a tax on the Albanian population in Kosovo and on Albanians in the diaspora. The Albanians then transferred these funds to a bank in Tirana and on to Kosovo in an effort to avoid seizure by Serbs. These taxes provided wages to about 25,000 individuals on the LDK payroll. This money also went to support education, health care, labor, and other infrastructure programs in Kosovo. One of the great triumphs of the Republic of Kosova was the development of a judicial branch to settle internal Albanian disputes that had never been brought before Yugoslav courts, which had always been viewed as illegitimate. The first order of business for this judicial branch was to create Reconciliation Councils in order to halt blood feuding. The LDK was very successful in this area, having reconciled over 1,000 family blood feuds and reportedly resolving over 23,000 criminal cases. These examples are not just important in the legal sense; they also indicate a tremendous amount of unity and ethnic resolve (March, 1999, p. 8-11).

The stated goal of the LDK and the Republic of Kosova was the eventual independence of Kosova through nonviolent means. This was carried out through intifadah-like tactics, such as civil disobedience i.e. labor strikes, protest, boycotts, etc. Along with this stated goal came a foreign relations campaign by the LDK. This campaign stressed the plight of Kosovar Albanians and their desire for independence. Despite these efforts, the LDK was never really taken seriously by the international community and the only country to recognize the Republic of Kosova was Albania.

On the other side of the coin, it is interesting to wonder why Milosevic tolerated this Republic of Kosova. He did apply a great amount of pressure on the Kosovar Albanians, but the bottom line was that he could have crushed the movement but chose not to. Some of the explanations usually given cite the fact that the movement was nonviolent and therefore non-threatening to Milosevic. Alternatively, it could be that as long as the Kosovar Albanians were engaged in their own system they amounted to a back burner problem that would not disrupt the Yugoslav system. Possibly, Milosevic was sensing that if enough pressure was put on the Kosovar Albanians a good percentage of them would just get fed up and leave Kosovo, which was happening, but at a slow pace. Regardless, in hindsight it turns out to have been a mistake to let this parallel government exist. Although its leadership espoused patient nonviolence, the parallel government soon gave rise to a resistance movement.

The concept of waiting patiently for the international community to step in and grant Kosovo a quick independence gradually wore thin. There appeared to be no movement while the situation in Kosovo deteriorated. Money was drying up, healthcare was bad, and a generation was receiving inadequate education. The kicker was that, even with a considerable amount LDK effort to publicize the plight of Kosovo Albanians,

Kosovo was barely paid lip service in the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. It thus became apparent that as long as there was a quasi-peace in Kosovo the international community would do nothing and hope the status quo would simply continue. This feeling was echoed when the leader of Albania, under pressure from the international community, stated that he hoped a solution to the Kosovo problem would be achieved within a Yugoslav context (Vickers, 1998, pp. 282-286). Kosovar Albanians felt hopeless and humiliated after seeing their fellow Yugoslavs gain international attention and independence through violence. No wonder Kosovo Albanians soon abandoned Rugova and put their faith in a new group of men with a new strategy revolving around active rebellion.

In conclusion, the political inequality precondition is definitely present in the Kosovo case. I think that what makes the political aspect even more powerful is the loss factor. A significant minority was granted a great deal of power over its own affairs and then, suddenly, these powers were illegally revoked. A minority may or may not fight to gain more power; however, if the minority feels it is losing power the chances of conflict increase significantly.

D. RISE OF POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURS

In my opinion, political entrepreneurs played a smaller role in the Kosovo case than in Bosnia. It is also my belief that there was more entrepreneurship on the side of the Serbs than on the side of the Kosovar Albanians. The Kosovar leadership failed to peacefully deliver the goods and was overtaken by a more radical mass. In both instances the leadership had maximalist goals with no room for compromise, a sure recipe for conflict.

On the Serb side, entrepreneurship came in the form of Slobodan Milosevic. His hard-line stance with the Kosovar Albanians sounded the death knell for Yugoslavia. The reason I consider his stance in Kosovo entrepreneurship is because, although there were

real ethnic, social, political, and economic problems in Kosovo, he chose to take action that would inflame the situation rather than calm it. This made him very popular with Serbs, but laid the groundwork for future problems. Milosevic's actions in Kosovo were not as popular with the Serb leadership as they were with the Serb population. Ivan Stambolic, the former president of the Serb Republic and the man who brought Milosevic in under his wing, did not agree with these hard-line maneuvers. Stambolic, believing that a hard-line policy in Kosovo would lead to trouble, publicly voiced his opposition and was eventually purged from the party by his former comrade, Milosevic (Vickers, 1998, pp. 227-229).

It should be noted that Milosevic's stance on Kosovo was not even close to being extreme. Individuals who ran against Milosevic for the Serb presidency held much stronger views regarding the protection of Kosovo Serbs and Serbs in other areas of Yugoslavia. One of Milosevic's competitors, Vojslav Seselj, was the leader of the Serb Radical Party and a very popular Serb politician. From the beginning, his party's stance was that all Albanians should be forcibly expelled from Kosovo. Milosevic clearly felt pressure from these more radical groups to tighten the screws on the Albanians, a "keep up with the Jones" effect.

It also seems to me that Milosevic personally disliked Albanians. Warren Zimmerman, the last American Ambassador to Yugoslavia, singled out three traits about Milosevic. The first one was that he strongly disliked Albanians (Zimmerman, 1999, p. 26). This is powerful because Milosevic made war on three other ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia. Yet, according to Zimmerman, he really disliked Albanians. I believe Milosevic approached much of his policy on Kosovo from his gut.

On the other side we find Ibrahim Rugova, a poet by trade, whose father was executed by the Yugoslav government in 1945 as an enemy of the state. Rugova came to

power in his party, the League for a Democratic Kosovo, under the banner of nonviolence with the eventual goal of international recognition for an independent Kosova. After Rugova took power he ran a campaign to stifle all other Albanian political parties in Kosovo. He felt that the LDK was the only legitimate representative of Kosovar Albanians. Despite this slightly undemocratic system, Rugova was a favorite of international politicians, being hosted by the likes of President Clinton and Lord Owen. As Rugova found out, this congeniality with international leaders did not translate into favorable changes for Kosovar Albanians. International leaders never cozied up to the idea of an independent Kosovo and always attempted to fix the crisis within the context of Serbia and Yugoslavia.

I would classify Ibrahim Rugova a political entrepreneur, but of the less dangerous sort. He did not seek violence, but his policies are certainly to blame for much of the bloodshed in Kosovo. By setting the bar high i.e. only independence for Kosovo, he fed his supporters (the majority of Kosovar Albanians) an unrealistic expectation that such a state could gain international recognition. He gave Kosovar Albanians the impression that they would peacefully gain their independence within a few years of the Serb crackdown. When it became obvious that Rugova's policies were ringing hollow, the Kosovar Albanians abandoned him in favor of a more violent wing. The international community bears some blame in this story also. The international community verbally supported this man's nonviolent approach, but in actions only rewarded violence. Through neglect in the Dayton Accords, the international community essentially assured a military solution to the Kosovo problem.

The international community made it clear to the Kosovar Albanians that, due to Rugova's stipulation regarding the alteration of existing territorial boundaries, their

aspirations of independence could not be achieved. The Kosovar Albanians cried foul about this because, at Dayton, the Bosnian Serbs had been granted separate Republic status within Bosnia, with the possible later option of confederation with Serbia. For the majority of Kosovar Albanians, the writing was on the wall: violence is the only way to secure the goal of independence.

It should also be remembered that at this time the majority of young Kosovar Albanians could not speak Serbian and viewed Belgrade as an occupying power. Due to the Kosovar Albanians' high birth rate, youth constituted a substantial portion of the population, a portion that was not only predisposed but could effect a more radical approach.

After the Dayton Accords, rival political parties began to emerge that discredited the LDK and pushed for a violent solution. Killings of Serb policemen and civilians began to escalate. From 1996 these actions began to take the form of multiple coordinated attacks, demonstrating a fairly high level of sophistication. The shadowy Kosovo Liberation Army emerged to claim credit for these attacks. The KLA also began a ruthless policy of killing suspected collaborators. After these killings the, KLA would issue threatening statements urging Albanians to "stay the line" against Serbs.

A sure sign that the secretive KLA was taking control was the 1997 funeral for an Albanian schoolteacher killed by Serb Security Forces. Three masked KLA gunmen gave a speech to the cheers of 20,000 attendees. The speech referred to the fact that violence was the only way to achieve Kosovar Albania's goals (Vickers, 1998, p. 313).

I don't believe the KLA or its political wing fits in the political entrepreneur category. The KLA was a loosely affiliated, grass roots organization that barely had any central command. This is apparent in the organization's continuous infighting and the lack

of coordination between regions. The KLA was organized around family, clans, and regional affiliations. Its popularity cannot be denied. Its ranks swelled so quickly that it had to turn away many prospective recruits. If there ever was an organization that sprang from the masses, the KLA was it.

Thus, although entrepreneurship played its role in Kosovo, I feel politicians did what the constituents wanted. Milosevic rose to power, backed by the Serb populace that loved his get-tough policy on Kosovo. Rugova came to power because his goal was independence from Serbia. When Rugova couldn't deliver on his promise the Kosovar Albanian people backed the men who they felt could deliver, the KLA.

E. MASS HOSTILITY

In the case of Kosovo, considerable mass hate already existed before the crisis in the late 1980s. In reality there was never much love lost between Serbs and Kosovar Albanians. Preconditions were slowly building towards a violent confrontation that would have been hard to avert. Some of the same things that we saw in Bosnia we can see in Kosovo: propaganda, paramilitary gangs etc. However, the difference is that in Bosnia many of the events were manufactured or hyped. In Kosovo, both ethnicities had a more legitimate reason to fear for their safety, culture, and general way of life. Kosovo would have gone up in flames eventually. The reason that violence intensified when it did has a lot to do with the Mass Hate factor. Certain events made mass hate more contagious: the general insecurity caused by war, an influx of refugees, and the collapse of neighboring Albania.

I believe that mass hate existed for a long time among a certain percentage of Kosovar Albanians. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s there were numerous incidents of rape and violence directed against Serbs in an attempt to force them to leave Kosovo. It

seems that these efforts were not organized from the top, but occurred at the grass roots in order to gain an ethically pure Albania (Vickers, 1998, p. 220). This contrasts sharply with the current situation, in which a coordinated effort is being made from the top by Kosovar leaders to expel Serbs. It should be remembered that the maximalist aims of the parallel government, which had 100 percent of the populace's support for secession, was not for autonomy and not for Republic status.

The Kosovar Albanians were initially willing to out wait the Serbs for two reasons. The first reason had to do with the emergence of Ibrahim Rugova who promised the eventual recognition of an independent Kosovo through peaceful means. The second was the lack of arms; even individuals who are ready to fight need arms, especially against an efficient military force like the JNA. Both of these issues were overcome between 1995 and 1997.

In 1995 Rugova was discredited when the international community refused to clarify the Kosovo issue during the Dayton Accords. Hatred built as the Kosovars waited in vain for recognition, while Serb repression only grew. The population changes within the Kosovar Albanian society were also significant. The children, growing into adulthood at this time, spoke no Serbian and had been brought up feeling that Serbs were oppressive foreign occupiers.

As for weapons, the KLA received an absolute windfall as the neighboring government of Albania collapsed. Albania's armories were laid wide open and the border, at least on the Albanian side, suddenly proved more porous. There was an immediate influx of new weapons and equipment from Albania. This influx did not completely alleviate the KLA's weapons shortage, but carried it a long way from where it previously stood (Kosovo: Background to Crisis, 1999, pp. 6-9). Also just the fact that the KLA was

able to evolve in a very short time from a small terrorist organization to a guerrilla force controlling up to 50 percent of Kosovo demonstrates the people's willingness for an armed solution.

On the Serb side, there was also a lot of residual hate, almost to the point of hysteria (Sudetic, 1998, p. 80). There was, of course, government propaganda, but when 80 of the top Serb intellectuals petitioned to stop the genocide against Serbs in Kosovo, things rose to a new level. This wasn't hate as practiced by ignorant peasants; this was hate that was a reinforcing theme, which cut across and through all levels of Serb society. When, for instance, Warren Zimmerman recounts, that he asked a sophisticated female artist at a dinner party, how she would deal with the Kosovo problem and she responds "Simple, just line all the Albanians up against a wall and shoot them" (Zimmerman, 1999, p. 17), one can't help but recognize that hate was there.

One of the things that transformed this hate into violence was the instability fomented by surrounding wars. As Serbia began to lose historically Serb territory in the Krajina and Bosnia, refugees began to filter into other Serb-held lands. This created an opportunity for the Kosovo re-colonization program. The refugees tended to be radicalized and had little respect for any long-term local relationships between Kosovo Serbs and Albanians. Kosovar Albanians clearly reinforced this, as they displayed some restraint toward long-term Serb residents of Kosovo. However, newly arriving Serb refugees were immediate targets. Another brand of new arrivals, meanwhile were ex-soldiers of the Serb campaign in the Bihac pocket. Many of these soldiers, some wanted by The Hague as war criminals, had been paid handsomely for their service. Along with them came members of Arkan's and Seselj's paramilitaries who recruited and formed affiliated units in the area.

Coupled with a campaign by Belgrade to arm all Serbs in Kosovo, this only further fed local mistrust.

The mutual dislike and hatred between Serb and Albanian, more than between any other Yugoslav ethnicities, was not something that anyone had to create. It has been there for centuries. Yugoslav leaders had successfully managed to keep the lid on the pot. All these measures created an even more tenuous atmosphere in Kosovo which in 1998 led to the quick spiral into violence. With the lid taken off, the heat turned up, and other ingredients boiling, violence was bound to spiral out of hand, which it did in 1998.

IV. THE TURKISH/KURDISH ISSUE IN SOUTHEAST TURKEY

A. HISTORY OF ETHNIC TENSION

The Turkish/Kurdish problem is of a more recent origin than that between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs. The tension does not go back centuries. The actual rift started only in the 1920's. Yet the violence and hatred are as real as in any other ethnic crisis. The Kurds and Turks are also, generally, of the same religion and held nearly equal status in the Ottoman Empire. Because of these similarities it is illuminating to chart their course from partners to hated enemies.

1. Fear of Domination

The fear of domination by one side over the other is historically very young. Since both Turks and Kurds are predominantly Muslim, both faired relatively well in the Ottoman Empire. This is one of the underlying contradictions in the whole Turkish/Kurdish dispute. In the Ottoman Empire only groups who were not Muslim could attain minority status, like the Serbs or Greeks. This attitude paved the way for non-Turkish Muslim cultures to be marginalized in modern secular Turkey.

The fear of domination came into play for the Kurds directly after the formation of modern Turkey in 1923. The Kurds were instrumental in helping the new Turkish republic rise from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. They assisted the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, in both defeating the Armenians and the Greeks. The Kurds were strung along and led to believe they were fighting to expel and repel the Christian menace and rebuild an Islamic nation where they would be the equals of the Turks, just as in the Ottoman days.

As time went on, however it became apparent that Ataturk was a staunch advocate of secularism and very much a Turkish nationalist. Ataturk was so much a Turkish nationalist that he refused to identify any minorities in Turkey, claiming that all citizens of Turkey were Turkish. His successor, Ismet Inonu, summarized the feeling in 1925, "We must turkify the inhabitants of our land at any price, and we will annihilate those who oppose the Turks." (Barkey, 1998, p. 10)

This did not sit well with certain Kurds, especially in the Southeast of the country where the majority of the Kurdish population was located. Resentment about Turkish domination immediately sparked the Sheik Said Rebellion in 1925; this rebellion sought a reinstatement of the Caliph and a separate Kurdish state in the southeast. The rebellion was put down, but a series of other separate Kurdish rebellions, each of which was defeated, continuously sprang up until 1940.

The Turkish state responded to these rebellions in a very heavy-handed fashion. It did not give an inch and instead began to institute a policy of cultural extinction through assimilation. In 1925 the Southeast became a Military District under control of the Army. This situation did not change until 1965. Also, at this time all Kurdish language schools, organizations, and publications were banned (Gunter, 1997, p. 5). The speaking of the Kurdish language was eventually deemed a terrorist act, its use punishable by imprisonment. But perhaps the most effective method implemented by the Turkish state in combating the Kurdish nationalism is and was the far-reaching policy of forced migration and assimilation.

Turkey does not tolerate anyone who claims to be or acts as anything other than Turkish. Unlike other ethnicities (i.e. Serbs or Albanians), being a Turk, at least if one is Kurdish, is as easy as claiming to be a Turk. And, it seems, that there is very little stigma

attached to Kurds who disavow their Kurdish ancestry. There are slight physical distinctions between Kurds and Turks, but nothing that is a dead giveaway. All avenues and opportunities are open to Kurds who embrace the Turkish "ethnicity", including business and politics. Therefore, to the Turks, assimilation is as good as eviction or extermination.

Beginning in the 1920s the goal of the assimilation program was to forcibly move Kurds from the Southeast to the urban areas of the west. The end state was to have the Kurdish population represent less then five percent in any area. Kurdish children were also taken from their families and raised as Turks. This was a very effective campaign but did not work completely due to the sheer size of the Kurdish population. It is estimated that Kurds make up from 12 to 20 percent of the population of Turkey; in the last seven years 2,000,000 have been forcibly displaced (Barkey, 1998, pp. 62-63).

Also, along these lines of assimilation came the trend of portraying the Kurdish culture as having Turkish roots. The Kurdish language, it is claimed, has only 800 words and is therefore inferior to Turkish. This was taken to the point where the word 'Kurd' was itself claimed to be a corruption of the sound made underfoot when snow crunches; hence Kurds should be called Mountain Turks. All effort was made to consciously and subconsciously ethnically unify Turkey.

Much as with the United States government's assimilation program towards the American Indians, the Turkish program to assimilate Kurds was not without effect. There are many Turkish citizens of Kurdish origins who are completely happy to live their lives as Turks, some in extremely high political positions. At the same time the success of this perceived cultural extinction scares other Turkish Kurds.

The Turkish fear of domination can be traced back to the founding of the Republic and the ideology of Kemal Ataturk. In the early 1920s there were several major efforts to carve territory out of the area that was then the Ottoman Empire, on the verge of becoming modern Turkey. In 1922 the Greeks thought the Empire was weak and made a failed attempt to grab the portion of western Turkey that contained a large Greek population. The Armenians also tried to carve a home out of portions of northeast Turkey, but were also defeated. In 1923, out of chaos, Ataturk founded the new Turkish state.

At the end of these wars, with their massive population exchanges and exterminations, the Kurds wound up the largest minority in Turkey making up anywhere from 12 to 25 percent of the population. Drawing further attention to this potential threat was the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, which carved up the Ottoman Empire, granted the Armenians statehood, and promised the Kurds autonomy with the option of a nation in the future. After Ataturk formed the Republic he reneged on the treaty, but the wars and the treaty instilled within the Turkish psyche a great fear of being dismembered like its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire.

Kemal Ataturk and his successors have viewed Kurdish nationalism in Southeast Turkey as a direct security threat to the state. Kemal founded the nation on secularism and Turkish nationalism; the mere mention that other ethnicities existed could land a person in prison. Given these historical conditions and Turkey's neighbors – Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, and Greece, none of which can be said to be extremely friendly – Turkish fears could be warranted. Most of Turkey's neighbors at one time or another have supported the current Kurdish nationalist movement and possess historical grievances against Turkey over territory, water rights, etc. Essentially, modern Turkey has evolved in a state of paranoia. Any concession to the Kurds, including the admission of their mere existence, is

believed to lead to greater concessions and eventual secession. To quote the Turkish Vice Chief of Staff on recognizing the Kurdish language and education, these are, "salami tactics, the more slices we cut the more they will take" (Gunter, 1997, p. 11).

Another factor in the Turkish view of the Kurdish nationalist threat has to do with the military's role in the government. The Turkish military is considered the protector of the state and the most strident supporter of the Kemalist ideology. The Turkish military has reserved the right to seize power when even the state has veered away from Ataturk's vision. This seizure of power has happened three times since the nation's inception, with coups in 1960, 1971, and 1980. Following each coup, a military crackdown ensued, aimed at not only Kurds, but also leftists, rightists, Muslim fundamentalists, or anyone else deemed a threat to the state. This military control has led to a feeling that the only solution to Kurdish nationalism is through military force. To quote chief of staff of the Turkish armed forces, General Dogan Gures, "there is no Kurdish problem in Turkey...There is a problem of assault on the Turkish Republic"(Gunter, 1997, p. 74).

2. Threatening Symbols

Both sides possess threatening symbols but they differ in degree and in kind. The Kurds deploy language and cultural symbols. The Turks have a much more threatening military and police force operating in the Southeast.

The first symbol of Kurdish nationalism has to be the language. As is true in the case of the Kosovars, language is the tie that binds Turkish Kurds. Although Turks have claimed that the Kurdish language is nothing but a corrupted version of Turkish, it is, in reality, very different from either Turkish or Arabic (Barkey, 1998, p. 60). There have been efforts to eradicate the language and make its use criminal, but to this day there are many people in the Southeast who speak only Kurdish. It should also be recognized that

although the Kurdish language is a great unifier it was never a language used by the Ottomans for administrative purposes and therefore never achieved a written form until after the dissolution of the empire. Its suppression in Turkey did not help its evolution.

Another threatening symbol would have to be the colors red, yellow, and green. These colors appear together on the flags and crests of various Kurdish nationalist movements throughout Europe and the Middle East. It is interesting that in the 1980s and 1990s the Turkish government tried to change stoplight colors from red, yellow, and green to red, yellow, and blue in an attempt to break up the nationalist colors. Another example of this flag's power was demonstrated to me in 1996 during Operation Provide Comfort in Northern Iraq. The forces involved were composed of Americans, French, Brits, and Turks. Since most of the local Security Forces were Kurdish, the American commander also let the Kurds fly their flag. This outraged the Turks, who lodged a formal complaint with their government and eventually we had to take the flag down.

The final symbol the Turks consider threatening is the traditional dress of the Kurds. Kemalist ideology prides itself on modernity. To Turks, traditional Kurdish dress is threatening not only because it seems to flaunt Kurdish nationalism, but also because it represents a certain primitiveness that modern Turkey has spent decades attempting to distance itself from. The traditional clothing that Kurds wear in Iraq is prohibited in Turkey in favor of a more western type appearance, such as coat and tie. It is almost impossible to find a Kurd in Turkey wearing baggy pants, the sash, and the turban.

To Kurds, the Turkish security regime is the number one threat in both real and symbolic terms. There are layers upon layers of Turkish Security Forces in the Southeast. The Southeast has been the domain of the military off and on since the Republic's inception. Not only has the Army been involved but also the Turkish Intelligence (MIT),

the Gendarmerie, and groups called Special Teams and Special Units. The last three of these units have been involved in the torture and suspicious deaths of opposition politicians, human rights advocates, journalists, and Kurdish nationalists. I found being in Southeast Turkey akin to living in a police state; population control measures were stifling. Turkish forces were omnipresent and basically adopted a shoot first and ask questions later policy.

The symbol of these security forces is the Turkish flag with its red crescent. As mentioned earlier, flags in Turkey are extremely important. The symbol of the Turkish equivalent of the Red Cross is the organization called the Red Crescent. This organization and the symbol are threatening because the Red Crescent is considered by Kurds to be a front for the Turkish Intelligence.

The other set of symbols which threatens Kurds is what the Turkish Forces leave behind after conducting village "evacuations". Evacuation is a euphemism for the destruction of a Kurdish village and the deportation of its inhabitants to the west. This is done in an effort to deprive the Kurdish Workers Union (PKK) or other nationalist elements of support. Depopulation of Kurdish villages has been going on since 1925 and empty devastated villages themselves serve as threatening symbols. Also the very threat of "evacuation" is often used on village elders in order to get their villages to cooperate with Turkish forces, either by providing Kurdish village guards or by not supporting other Kurdish nationalist forces. It is extremely powerful to see a village that has existed for centuries disappear; the remains serve as a warning to those who refuse to cooperate. In 1995 the US State Department's human rights report ranked only Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Burma, and Cuba as bigger human rights violators than Turkey (Gunter, 1997, p. 13).

3. Negative Stereotypes

Kurds view Turks as obvious ethnophiles who make no room for other ethnicities. Linked to this idea is the belief that Turks hold a very high view of themselves and their culture. I personally recall an event in Bosnia while walking through an ancient castle with my Bosnian interpreter. The interpreter had just explained to me the history of the castle and which ancient Bosnian king had built the structure. At that very moment a Turkish officer struck up a conversation with us, commenting on how ancient Turks had built this castle. This anecdote is related to the stereotype that the Turks play fast and lose with historical fact and cannot be trusted. Kurds believe Ataturk misled them during the formation of the Republic. This has led to a credibility gap.

Turks consider Kurds primitive. The Kurdish economy was based on herding, and the entire society revolved around this way of life. Kurds occupy the fringe of nations to which they belong. Their education level is generally not as high as that of Turks and their language is not as evolved as is Turkish. Turkish authors reinforce this view by writing books that claim Kurds are actually Turks, and that the Kurdish language is a subset of the Turkish language. Blood feuding and inter-village warfare are the norm. The Southeast is a poverty-stricken economic backwater that is 180 degrees different from the West.

Turks also view Kurds as secessionist and thus consider them a security threat to the state. This is reinforced by news reports disseminated to Turkish citizens that blame most of the problems in the Southeast on the Kurds and Kurdish nationalists.

In my dealings with Turkish officers in Turkey and Northern Iraqi I was told more than once in response to my providing information gleaned from Kurdish soldiers that "all Kurds lie and cannot be trusted."

B. ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS

Southeast Turkey is the economic backwater of the Republic. It has the highest unemployment rates and lowest per capita incomes. In 1992 the average GNP for Turkey was $2032, in the Southeastern provinces it was $300 (Barkey, 1998, p. 188). There are several reasons for this, including the economic history of the region, geography, and war. This poor economic condition has directly led to the increase in ethnic violence.

One of the reasons the Southeast is less wealthy when compared to the remainder of the country is that currently about half of the population is involved in animal husbandry and much of the remaining portion is involved in agriculture. This is historically the way that Kurdish people have sustained themselves, but it is not the path towards economic equality with an industrialized West.

Investment in the Southeast by Turkish business interests has never been looked upon very favorably. Even if the area were not embroiled in ethnic turmoil its mere location does not lend itself to trade. The Southeast is mountainous and landlocked, the transportation network is poor, and currently the Middle Eastern markets are not open to Turkish trade. The reasoning goes: why would a person invest in an area that is in constant turmoil when you can easily manage a safer and more reliable return on your money by investing in the West with its Mediterranean ports and European markets.

The Turkish government has, over the years, attempted to economically invigorate the Southeast though a series of economic initiatives, but many of these seem half-hearted attempts at best. Sometimes the completed factory stands empty, sometimes partially built, and sometimes these plans are just never acted upon. It has been speculated by Kurds that it is the Turkish government's policy to keep the area economically weak in order to encourage Kurds to emigrate from the area and thereby assimilate them.

Another problem with the economy in the Southeast is that land is disproportionately concentrated in the hands of a small number of people. Turkey went though a phase of land reform in the early 1940s, but for political reasons the Southeast remained untouched. In order to secure the votes of the Kurdish landowners – the aghas – a status quo agreement was reached. This feudal type system has only hurt the Kurdish nationalist movement and divided the Kurds themselves along class lines and loyalties to the Turkish government (Barkey, 1998, pp. 187-191).

Such economic disparity, which can actually still be found throughout the Republic, directly spawned a large Turkish leftist movement in the 1960s. Much of the Kurdish nationalist movement fell in alongside this leftist movement hoping for an alliance. When it appeared the leftists were not representing the Kurdish interests in a vocal enough manner the Kurdish Worker's Party emerged. This organization not only wanted an independent Kurdish state, but was also based upon a strict Marxist ideology preaching land reform and economic equality.

When guerrilla warfare increased in the late 1980s, the Southeast's economy only suffered further. The PKK and government forces killed or took hostage much of the livestock that Kurds depend upon. Business investment became even less likely than it already was and the war amounted to an even greater drain on the overall Turkish economy. Comparing my 1995 stay in Southeast Turkey to my 1996 stay in Bosnia I thought there was more government neglect of infrastructure, more poverty, and more destruction from warfare in Southeast Turkey than in Bosnia. The difference between the Southeast area and Istanbul was even starker; going from Istanbul to the Southeast was like visiting a different planet.

Surprisingly, the biggest advocates of a peaceful solution to Kurdish ethnic problems in Turkey are members of Turkey's business community. They are paying the bill for the huge cost of maintaining a military presence in the Southeast and have become the most liberal spokesmen for finding a political rather than a military solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey.

There is much danger in maintaining the economic status quo in the Southeast. As the economically displaced Kurds flood the cities of the West with few job skills and little education the situation can only become increasingly unstable. Although things seem calm now, it is easy to envision the Turkish government inadvertently exporting a Kurdish rebellion to all corners of the Republic.

C. POLITICAL PRECONDITIONS

Political inequality is an understatement for Kurds in Turkey. Inequality is taken to a new level when the state that you belong to refuses to acknowledge that your ethnicity even exists. This is the case in modern Turkey with reference to the Kurds. For a long time, their existence was not recognized politically or even spoken about in political circles. The Kurds had no party that represented their interests, even in a minority fashion. This lack of representation is where political problems began.

In the beginning, and until very recently, the Turkish Republic's policy was that all Kurds were basically "Mountain Turks". They had no special status or representation and were expected to melt into the Turkish population. Therefore, there was no representation of them in government nor was there even any debate about their existence. Talk about the Kurdish issue in political and private circles was taboo. The official government policy, which has been engrained in the populace's mind, was that anyone who claimed to be a Kurd was a separatist and an enemy of the state.

The spirit of Kemal Ataturk, who invented modern Turkish politics, lives on. The conviction that Turkey is a unitary state with a uniform national identity, is, and has been, alive and well in Turkish politics and especially in the Turkish military. After each of three coups there has been a crackdown on any perceived Kurdish political identity. This has been done through the banning of political parties, arrests of key individuals, and the implementation of emergency rule in the Southeast. The military has not only stifled Kurds, but also any other perceived threats to Kemalism, whether posed by leftists or Muslim fundamentalists. The knowledge that the military will not hesitate to step in has stifled intelligent political thought and has led to a very unimaginative approach to Kurdish issues.

After the 1980 coup and military takeover of the government, which lasted until 1983, the implementation of the new constitution laid the groundwork for a government that revolved around the Prime Minister, the President, the National Security Council, and the Turkish General Staff. The office responsible for initiating change has been the Prime Minister's, while the Presidency became the office containing this change. The National Security Council is the most influential body in Turkish policy making. This body is a civil-military institution created in the aftermath of the 1960 coup. The NSC is presided over by the President and includes the Prime Minister, Secretary of Defense, and heads of all services including the Gendarmerie, ministers of defense, interior, and foreign affairs. This is an advisory board, but given its composition is the most powerful body in Turkey (Barkey, 1998, p. 143).

In these government bodies it has never been considered possible to debate or discuss Kurdish issues until the mid 1990s. The situation eased up then with president Ozal's declaration in the late 1980s that he recognized the Kurdish reality (i.e. Kurds are a

minority that do exist in Turkey). This statement seems rather obvious to casual outside observers, but to Turks it was extremely controversial. Another point about this statement is that it was not made as a consequence of political bargaining but thanks to fighting in the Southeast. The Turkish government was only willing to make this concession in hopes that it would appease the PKK and Kurdish nationalists.

1990 was the first year that a political party claiming to represent Kurdish interests entered the scene. The HEP (Labor party), which evolved into the DEP (Democratic party) was based on a platform which sought the abolition of emergency rule in the Southeast and freedom of use of the Kurdish language in schools, print, and broadcast. In 1991, the HEP, representing the Southeast, won 22 seats in parliament. During the parliamentary swearing in ceremony the new representatives chose to wear traditional Kurdish colors and speak Kurdish while taking the oath. They were subsequently arrested. This scene has played itself out with party members being arrested and Kurdish parties being banned several times. The government has also accused these parties of collaborating with the PKK. As a result, since 1990 there have been 92 murders of members of these parties; no one has been brought to trial (Barkey, 1998, pp. 84-89).

Political representation for Kurds has led to improvements over the years with the declaration that Kurds exist and the increased political activities of Kurdish political parties. However, tension still exists. There continues to be a feeling on one side that it has given too much while the other side feels as though it barely got anything.

D. RISE OF POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURS

Political entrepreneurship, in distinctive flavors, was and is alive and well in the Turkish/Kurdish case. This region boasts a long history of political strong men dating back centuries. On the Turkish side, entrepreneurship has come in the form of a single-

minded, unbending approach to dealing with Kurdish nationalism. In my opinion, on the other side there is a culture that falls easy prey to personality worship, and these personalities have at times hijacked the Kurdish nationalist movement for limited gains.

Modern Turkey's seminal political entrepreneur has to be considered Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. His original name was just Mustafa Kemal; the name Ataturk was given later – the translation is "Chief of the Turks". And his spirit certainly lives on in today's Turkey. His busts are everywhere; his likeness is held in enormous regard. US soldiers are warned not to laugh in his statue's presence for this is a crime. For his time Kemal was a great reformer. His vision and efforts to modernize Turkey were monumental. However, in his ideology of "one Turkey, one people" lies the foundation for the Republic's ethnic problems. Where the leadership of Turkey has erred is in not changing certain aspects of Kemalist ideology to adapt to the times, especially since Ataturk's ideology condones intolerance and the oppression of all non-Turkish ethnicities.

The organization that has carried the banner of Kemalist ideology through the Republic is the Turkish military. As an American, I found it fascinating to work with the Turkish military and had the good fortune to speak with many Turkish military officers about a number of subjects. On many occasions I can remember the high regard with which they spoke of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. During any discussions about Turkey or the Kurdish issue he and his ideology were always brought up at the outset of every conversation. It would be similar to a US officer continually quoting or referring back to George Washington.

This intense guardianship of the Republic has led the military to intervene in government affairs, either through policy or directly via coup. One can argue that this strongman looking over the shoulder of Turkish politics has slightly retarded the natural

progression of the Kurdish issue. Turkish politicians, gun-shy of the Kurdish subject, never forced the issue. In the end, because the politicians have not wanted to handle the Kurdish issue, the Turkish Military has become almost the sole proprietor of the Southeast. Obviously, this creates a square peg/round hole problem. The military, when given complete control, will go to the extreme and seek a military solution. In the long run, this will not solve the problems associated with Kurdish nationalism.

In recent years there have been changes brought about by some Turkish politicians. President Ozal, who took power in 1984, came in with a hard-line stance on the Kurdish problem, but eventually became the man who recognized that there was a Kurdish reality. He led the way on innovation and reform in the Southeast, with such things as the 1993 ceasefire with the PKK and subsequent talks. Many times these initiatives were met with the disapproval and scorn of his colleagues. After his unexpected death later in 1993 things went back to business as usual with many of his policies either overturned or neglected.

On the other side of the court, the Kurds, especially Turkish Kurds, have been latecomers to the arena of nationalism. Geographic remoteness, and linguistic and cultural differences can explain this slow self-recognition. These factors, combined with the suppression of the Turkish Kurds by the Republic, have made it very difficult for the development of a sense of Kurdish nationalism. Another factor that comes into play with Kurds is the idea of political entrepreneurship in the form of clan leaders. One of the main problems of Kurdish nationalism is a lack of unity; much of this lack of unity is a direct result of infighting among Kurdish leaders. Much of this fighting is orchestrated by outside powers, but a lot of it is the result of Kurdish leaders wanting to hang on to what they have at the expense of other Kurdish clans. This shortsightedness is the result of self-interested

entrepreneurship. One clan leader who attempted to change the paradigm and must be considered the inspiration behind modern Kurdish nationalism is Mullah Mustafa Barzani.

Mullah Mustafa Barzani was not a Turkish Kurd, although he was born near the Turkish border with Iraq. He became a leader of the Kurds in Northern Iraq and in the early 1970s began to wage war for autonomy against the government of Iraq. His campaigns are legendary; as a Kurdish warrior or *peshmerga* he has no equal. He was very successful, and the Iraqi government eventually had to yield to his demands. Barzani united the Kurds in Northern Iraq and temporarily gained autonomous status for the Kurdish region of Northern Iraq. This was the greatest achievement for Kurds in a century. Although the Turkish government tried to downplay Barzani's accomplishments, these events in Iraq did not go unnoticed by Kurds living across the border in Turkey. The victory gave birth to the possibility of gaining similar recognition and autonomy in Turkey. The Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), currently controlling more than half of Northern Iraq, is Barzani's creation. In the 1970s, an underground political party, mirroring Barzani's organization in Iraq, sprang up in Turkey. To this day all Kurds revere his name. Mullah Mustafa Barzani is arguably the most influential Kurd of our times.

A man who was strongly influenced by Barzani's feats in Northern Iraq is the currently incarcerated Abdullah Ocalan. Ocalan was born in Southeast Turkey and came of age during Barzani's successes. Although influenced by Barzani, Ocalan chose a different path for his brand of Kurdish nationalism. Kurdish culture is traditionally very hierarchical. Ocalan chose to go against the grain of this by founding his organization, the Kurdish Worker's Party, on Marxism. His leftist leanings immediately alienated many Kurds, especially clannish followers of Barzani. Once Ocalan had established the PKK and

gained a following in the late 1970s he and his organization narrowly escaped to Syria after the 1980 military takeover in Turkey.

In Syria, Ocalan determined that the time for action had come. He felt the takeover by the Turkish military was too much for Turkey's Kurdish population to bear. He worked out an agreement with the Syrian government which provided the PKK with training areas and a safe haven in Syria and Lebanon. After approximately four years of gathering and training recruits, Ocalan felt it was time to return to Southeast Turkey.

When the PKK moved back into Southeast Turkey Ocalan established an absolutist philosophy that the PKK was the only true representative of the Kurds. This philosophy called on the PKK to first exterminate all Kurdish opposition in a most brutal fashion. The opposition to be squelched included the traditional Kurdish leadership (who the PKK considered collaborators) and any other leftist or Kurdish parties. The excessive violence of the PKK, which often killed entire families, was only to be outdone by the soon-to-arrive Turkish Security Forces (Galletti, 1999, p 1). Only after Ocalan had ridden himself of his Kurdish rivals was he prepared to take on the Turkish establishment. However, by killing so many Kurds, Ocalan and the PKK incurred the hatred of numerous Kurdish families and clans. This blood feuding is extremely hard to overcome and is a major reason why most of the people killed in Turkey have been Kurds targeted by other Kurds, not by Turks.

Another Ocalan factor is his maximalist aims. He sought nothing less than the creation of an independent Kurdistan carved out of parts of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. This posed serious threats to the Kurdish factions in Northern Iraq for a series of reasons. First, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have fought hard to get the territory they have; why take a chance on giving it up on the long shot of a united Kurdistan? Second, the US, Turkey and several other countries

recognize and support the KDP and PUK. These other countries oppose an independent Kurdistan. So, the KDP and PUK would have risked external support and any legitimacy they have if they bought into Ocalan's PKK agenda. Thus, just on their own, Ocalan's goals went a long way to dividing Kurdish factions.

The Turkish military could not have asked for a better situation. The military had warned Turks for years that Kurds were separatists and terrorists. Enter Ocalan and the PKK with its brutal tactics, fulfilling the expectations of Turks, and giving the military free rein to take control of the Southeast and clean house.

E. MASS HOSTILITY

Mass hate is an interesting prospect in the case of the Turks and Kurds. Of all the cases this is the one where mass hate has taken off, but has not spread like wild fire. There is plenty of hate to go around, but much of it is focused among Kurdish factions in the Southeast.

Turkish civil society has never regared the Kurdish issue as something to take seriously. It is not something that has been given much dialogue or visibility. Over the years it has been the government's policy that Kurds were just Mountain Turks who spoke a corrupted form of Turkish. There has been some polarization, but Kurds who live in Western Turkey have not threatened Turkish citizens, nor have there been large-scale attacks instigated by Turks against Kurdish enclaves. Over the last ten year hatred of Kurds has risen because conflict has intensified. But much of the hate seems to be focused on Ocalan and the PKK versus the Kurdish people.

As far as the Kurds go, there is mass hate. But much of it is directed against the Turkish government and Security Forces, not against the Turkish people per se. Although there is animosity and the situation could still change there is not the visceral hatred that

exists between Serbs and Albanians. Most Kurds give credit to the PKK for gaining concessions, but in surveys in the Southeast less than half the Kurdish population supports the PKK's methods and objectives (Gunter pg 129). By using such excessive brutality against so many Kurds and Kurdish families, the PKK divided, rather than united the Kurds in Southeast Turkey. As in most tribal societies, revenge is a strong motivator. When the PKK killed members of rival Kurdish organizations and traditional Kurdish village leaders, it sank its own ship. Instead of liquidating the opposition the PKK created more opponents.

The PKK has also basically followed the policy of "having no quarrel with the Turkish people" The PKK claims its war lies with Turkish government. This has, for the most part, led the PKK to not attack Turkish civilians in the west. This decision has led to limited polarization of Turkish and Kurdish societies. This is a very different approach than that chosen by many ethnic nationalist organizations; many would have taken the war to the Turkish civilians, hoping for reprisals against Kurdish civilians and an escalation of the conflict.

Another reason for the limited take-off of mass hate is that most Turkish Kurds do not want an independent Kurdistan. The majority would be happy with a federation that recognizes their ethnic identity. This difference in objectives between the majority of Turkish Kurds and the PKK demonstrates that the PKK has not been able to radicalize the Turkish Kurds on a large scale. It also shows that a majority of Kurds do not hate Turkish society enough to want a total split. This popular outlook is critical when comparing the Kurds to Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, and Bosnian Croats who, during referendums on independence, consistently voted above 90 percent for independence from Serbia.

The Turkish Security Forces have also done an excellent job of encouraging hatred and division among different factions of Kurds in the Southeast. The Turks are experts at

the divide and rule strategy. They implemented the village guard system by which they paid groups of Kurds, usually through the village leader, to fight and defend their village from the PKK. This was an easy way, in a clannish society, to instill hatred among the Kurds.

The Turks had also have an advantage in the human intelligence arena, unlike Serbs and Albanians. Visually, Turks and Kurds can pass for one another, the language barrier is minimal because many Kurds do not always speak Kurdish and, for the most part, Islam is the shared religion. This gives the Turks an upper hand in penetrating and destabilizing Kurdish organizations.

I feel the reason that hate has not blossomed is that most Kurds do feel it is the Turkish government – not the Turkish people – that is oppressing them. The two cultures are similar enough that, with a common religion and a majority of Kurds speaking Turkish, Kurds can identify with Turks. And even though the Turkish Security Forces have killed and displaced many civilians they have not engaged in wholesale slaughter, which is something that invariably unites an ethnicity and turns a limited war into a total life and death struggle. There is also the fact that many Kurds are well integrated and accepted in Turkish society. This leaves a lot of Kurds hoping that their ethnic problems can be settled in the political arena.

In the long run, Kurdish mass hate is focused on the Turkish Government and other Kurds. Turks for the most part do not detest Kurds, although they detest the PKK. This could all change if the PKK or other nationalist movements begin attacking targets in the west, especially civilian targets.

V. CONCLUSION

After completing the case studies it is my conclusion that the framework presented in this thesis can work as both a predictor and a key to gaining a better understanding of ethnic conflict. All of the cases studied easily fit into the framework, but each was slightly different in its own way. In the conclusion I will draw out some of the major themes, as well as some of the differences and the similarities among cases. This comparison and contrast will also demonstrate that the framework has wide applicability. I will finish this chapter with recommendations.

A. COMPARISION AND CONTRAST

Under the precondition of there being a history of pre-existing ethnic tension, all factions in every case had legitimate grievances against one another. In the cases of Kosovo and Bosnia, the historical tension goes back centuries as opposed to Southeast Turkey, where the tension began only in the 1920s. In all three cases there are living witnesses and survivors who felt personally aggrieved. The fact that these people are the living repository of ethnic memory increases the likelihood that ethic conflict will reoccur. These cases also suggest that a long history of ethnic tension combined with recent violence is more powerful than just a recent history of tension. A long history often gives people and politicians much more material to work with when trying to incite hostility. Hence, in Bosnia and Kosovo the historical dimensions are more powerful than they are in Southeastern Turkey.

Stereotypes and generally held views also contribute to the fear of domination. An interesting similarity between the Bosnian Muslims, Albanians in Kosovo, and the Kurds in Southeastern Turkey is that they are regarded by Serbs and Turks as primitive, ignorant

and, to some extent, as lawless. Both Albanians in Kosovo and the Kurds in Southeastern Turkey are traditionally herding peoples and thus tend to be very clannish.

On the one hand, then, local interactions and historical interrelations must certainly be considered important. On the other hand, at the national level, economics may be more powerful still. Most people generally will not fight if they are economically prosperous and have something economically invested in the system. Without question, general economic insecurity greatly contributed to Bosnia's collapse. Bosnia had always been the least prosperous and most economically troubled of Yugoslavia's Republics. It also suffered greatly in the midst of a failed Yugoslav economic system. Similarly, in Kosovo and Southeastern Turkey the majority of the inhabitants are dependent on agricultural and pastoral occupations. These areas were economic basket cases and a perceived financial drain on the remainder of their respective countries. Thus, the inhabitants of Kosovo and the Kurds in Southeastern Turkey found that economically-speaking they had little to lose by fighting.

As for political inequality, the three cases represent two different pictures. In Bosnia and Kosovo the trend has been to emphasize distinctly different ethnic groups. These groups have long been granted specific rights and protections; some ethnic groups even have republics in which they are the majority. Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Kosovo Albanians were never encouraged to think of themselves as Yugoslav first and members of their ethnic group second. Combine this almost complete loyalty to different ethnicities with a weak federal system and the result was political conflict *between* ethnicities and Republics. Turkey, in contrast, heralded the concept of "one Turkey, one people". As far as the Turkish state and Turkish nationalism were concerned everybody was Turkish, whether they liked it or not. There was no room for any other ethnicity; even

the discussion of the topic was taboo. Yet, Kurds clearly knew they belonged to a different ethnicity and were not being represented by the government. This feeling and their commitment to remaining Kurdish eventually contributed to open warfare. The lesson to be drawn from both of these cases is that either of these extremes – too much emphasis on ethnicity or too little – can lead to ethnic conflict. Somewhere in the middle there must be a balance, but a balance no one pays much attention to.

There are also instances of political entrepreneurship in each of these cases. The characteristics that define these entrepreneurs remain the same: men who have maximalist aims, who take a "no compromise" approach, and display willingness to have others use violence in pursuit of their objectives. Again, as with too much or too little emphasis placed on ethnicity, there seem to be two types of entrepreneurs: rabid nationalists or those riding the nationalist train to get to the top. On the rabid nationalist end of the spectrum are such leaders as Croatia's Franjo Tudjman and the Bosnian Serb, Radovon Karadzic. These entrepreneurs basically hated anyone who was not a member of their ethnic group and were out to get everything they could on behalf of their fellow-Croatians or fellow-Serbs. Entrepreneurs of this type are generally very committed to their cause and therefore hard to deal with. On the other end of the continuum was an individual like Slobodan Milosevic. Milosevic is generally considered to have acted with his personal interests in mind, using Serb nationalism as a vehicle to secure his position at the top. Less clear is what motivated the Kurdish leader, Abdul Ocalan. Perhaps he falls somewhere in the middle. He definitely had maximalist aims and displayed a 'no compromise' approach. But it was his willingness to use copious amounts of violence on his own people which is what really set him apart. He was not even willing to compromise with Kurds who shared his objectives, but disavowed his methods. Ironically, even the Turkish military establishment has to be

considered entrepreneur-like in its approach. This organization has not let the political wing of the Turkish government settle the Kurdish problem. The military has instead always approached the situation with a "no compromise" attitude. Its end state is a military solution, which will never solve the real problem, which is to satisfy the Kurds' desire for ethnic recognition at the very least.

Finally, mass hostility has proved rampant in all three cases. Kosovo is the place where very little outside instigation was needed. The differences between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs are so great that mass hatred, burning at different levels, already existed, for quite some time. Much of the fear and mistrust was grounded in reality and reciprocal negative perceptions. Stoking mass hate in Bosnia needed a bit more assistance, which was provided by political entrepreneurs spreading a message of hate and mistrust, refugees from other conflicts settled in Bosnia, and an increase in violence perpetuated by criminal and para-military groups. Interestingly, the Turkish/Kurdish mass hostility is not quite at these levels yet. It has not taken complete hold for a number of reasons. The Turkish and Kurdish cultures are similar (thanks to a shared religion and history), clannishness focused Kurds' animosities on other Kurds as much as on Turks, the Turkish government is willing to accept assimilation as an alternative to expulsion or extermination, and Kurdish nationalists have generally chosen to not target Turkish civilians, thereby limiting the visceral hatred that spawns large scale ethnic violence.

B. HOW THE FRAMEWORK CAN HELP

I don't think there is any doubt that, armed with the insight from this framework, a Special Forces soldier on the ground will be more effective. The name of the game is the ability to gain quick understanding of a complex situation. Ethnic conflict is complex.

This framework will assist an operator on the ground in determining what is important in the deconstruction or the prediction of ethnic problems or crises.

The ability to spot key indicators such as symbols is priceless. Many soldiers could go into an area and not notice subtle indicators of difference such as longer hair, the wearing of berets, or changes in spoken or written language. These subtleties are crucial in seeing clearly through the haze of ethnic conflict.

This framework also points to the importance of noticing financial disparity or insecurity caused by an unraveling economic situation. If one ethnicity in the area is economically disproportionately ahead of the others, or is perceived to be, this is key information and a fault line that bears watching. General economic insecurity is just as important to note. This insecurity and resource competition can divide groups along ethnic lines.

Political inequality is also something this framework emphasizes. It is critical to understand how a population sees itself fitting into the political apparatus. If a group feels that the government is not representing its best interests fighting could soon follow.

Along with political inequality comes the rise of political entrepreneurs. The operator could learn not only what leaders are like, but also what the people that follow them think – i.e. are they behind the leader because he promises a better economic policy or are they behind the leader because he is against the opposing ethnicity. These are key points this framework encourages soldiers to consider.

The factor of opposing the other ethnicity feeds into noticing mass hostility. Mass hostility is a great example of a factor that is best picked up by operators on the ground. Indicators can come in the form of speech, general actions, and hostile actions. A person on the ground can best determine if certain hostile actions are the work of a select few

troublemakers or whether thy instead signal that the general population is turning to violence. The difference is critical.

If nothing else, the framework gives the operator on the ground something to focus on besides reacting to everyday events. A framework offers depth and provides a more strategic way of approaching a situation.

Examining these cases, while in a school setting was very enlightening. I have had the luxury of time to prove that the framework is valid. I think that knowledge of this framework would help any Special Forces soldier better understand the ethnic conflict dynamic, thereby enabling him to function more effectively and efficiently, particularly when the one thing he lacks – time to study the situation objectively – is what he most needs. The framework offers an objective way to sort through the situation on the ground. It is not culture or country-specific, yet in its application forces operators to consider local conditions and aspects of life not only those on the ground are likely to reflect.

This framework could be introduced in the Qualification course, just as are the theories of guerilla warfare. Or it could be a part of pre-mission training depending on the mission. Either way, operators need some exposure to an ethnic conflict framework.

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