

POST-CONFLICT SHIFTS IN INTERETHNIC ATTITUDES:

A TRAUMA-BASED PERSPECTIVE

By

DAVID CLAUD MARTIN

(Under the Direction of Sherry Lowrance)

ABSTRACT

In this study I attempt synthesis of mainstream accounts of ethnic conflict with theories derived from social psychology to shed light on the nature of persistent interethnic antipathies after conflict. Many theoretical approaches focus on ethnic prejudice as a cause of conflict; I argue that more attention should be paid to the effect of conflict as an independent variable on interethnic attitudes. I examine the evidence for a link between conflict exposure, psychological trauma and interethnic attitudes in the former Yugoslavia, arguing that exposure to violence during a critical period of psychological development can significantly decrease one's trust for ethnic others relative to those of other age groups. While a direct link is elusive from the results in this study, I suggest that better data collection and more precise theorizing may yield more positive results. I conclude with a discussion of the relevance of this research to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

INDEX WORDS: Ethnic conflict, Intergroup relations, Attitudes, Trauma, Political psychology, Former Yugoslavia

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DAVID CLAUD MARTIN

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by

DAVID CLAUD MARTIN

Major Professor:

Sherry Lowrance

Committee:

Jeff Berejikian  
Maurits van der Veen

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
August 2008

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

A common dilemma remaining after the conclusion of a conflict is the question of how society might be re-formed or made whole again. Whether this is put in terms of transitional justice, reconciliation, or otherwise, it is often necessary both for symbolic as well as practical means, to firmly establish the new social and political order. Above and beyond the common desire to seek justice against the wrongs done by one side of the conflict, there is the practical necessity of deciding who can be trusted to uphold the new order.

By way of a historical example, post-World War II Allied forces followed a policy of de-Nazification in order to remove the upper strata of Nazi officialdom. However, the membership rolls of the Nazi party included legions of followers who could be said to share some degree of culpability for the regime's crimes – and sympathy with its aims – not to mention the masses of people whose tacit support was essential to the regime's success, regardless of their party membership. In short, the entire population could not be implicated and purged. New regimes following civil strife face a similar dilemma: determining the best means to mark the transition from one regime to another and ensure that the values and aims of the new regime are propagated throughout the people who are served by it, but without the wholesale banishment of those who supported the *ancien regime*. It is difficult to determine who may be convinced and who not.

For a more current example, I turn to the conflict that led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. It seems beyond dispute that this was a conflict in which animosities between people of different ethnic groups played a large part. In the aftermath of the conflict, it became necessary to rebuild new societies from the wreckage of the old. And while a certain degree of what came to be called 'ethnic cleansing' had left many areas more ethnically homogeneous than they had been before, it became necessary for people of different ethnic groups to engage once again politics – if only in some cases

across international borders. But some individuals are more apt to trust and cooperate with members of different ethnic groups than others. It is unclear, however, what factors cause an individual to be more trusting – or, put another way, perhaps more susceptible to a message of conciliation – and who would be least susceptible to change.

As Ward et al (2006) note, it is a common-sense expectation that those who have experienced conflict would be mistrustful of their former foes once the conflict concluded, but it is a proposition rarely empirically tested. The charts below show the aggregate levels of interethnic mistrust in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia. Figure 1 depicts mistrust measured in 1989, just prior to hostilities and figure 2 shows relative levels of mistrust after conflict. By this gross measurement, it is possible to determine to what extent relative aggregate attitudes about members of other ethnic groups might have changed among the three republics in question. One observation that is notable from these figures is that in the aggregate, the average Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian changed their minds over time, but in different directions – despite their common experience of conflict and their shared history as parts of Yugoslavia.

It is possible that these national-level differences are the result of aspects of national<sup>1</sup> culture and history, breeding differential levels of mistrust for ethnic others. It is also possible that these national differences reflect individual-level differences writ large: differences that result from the experience of conflict. Either way, in the service of determining to what extent certain societies or segments of populations might be susceptible to messages of post-conflict reconciliation it is worth investigating further in order to better focus future efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> That is, ‘nation’ in the sense of ethnicity, referring in this case to the heritage of one’s republic. This distinction, as it applied to the Yugoslav context, is discussed at greater length in Chapter V.

<sup>3</sup> This map is based on: ‘Former Yugoslavia’ 728410 (R00472) 4-93. Central Intelligence Agency. 1993, hosted at the Perry-Castañeda Library, University of Texas online collection. Retrieved: July 18, 2008 from: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/former\\_yugoslavia.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/former_yugoslavia.jpg)

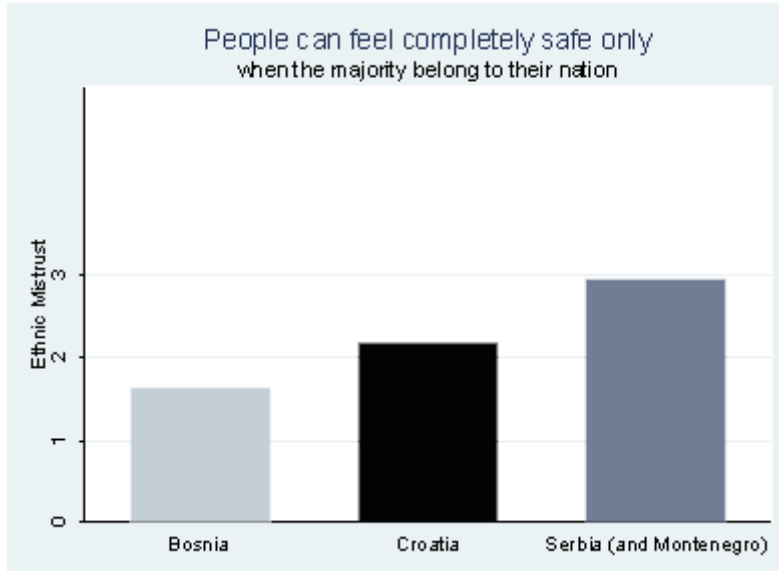


Figure 1

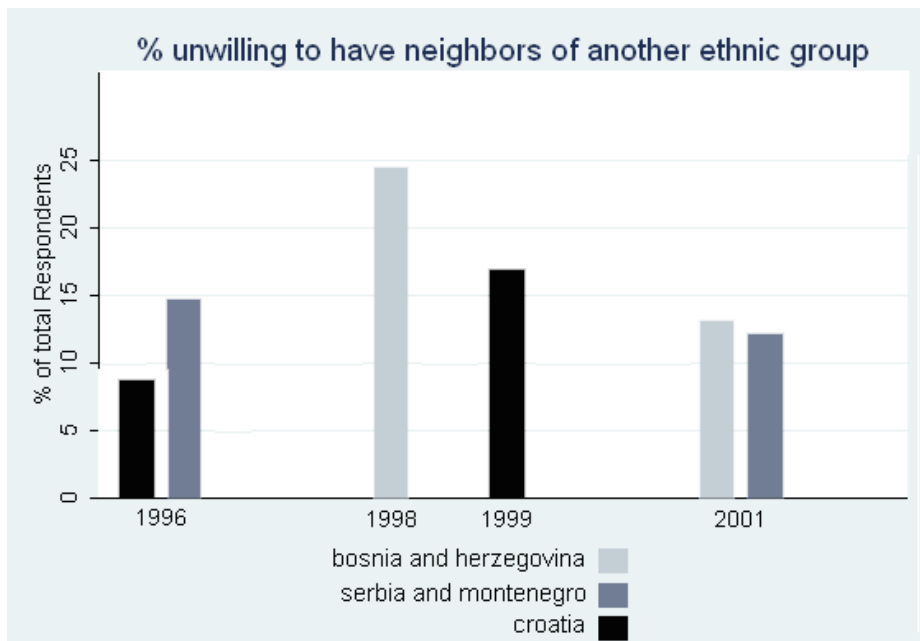


Figure 2

It is worthwhile, in this light, to look at how the respective societies (re-)formed in the wake of conflict have dealt with the legacy of interethnic mistrust inherited from these conflicts, and what factors account for the observable variations. Put another way, given three very similar post-conflict republics, all of whom had to deal with similar issues of recovering from war, why did each society take a different path in terms of their attitudes toward former ethnic ‘foes’?

Certainly the individual styles and decisions of leadership figures (mostly war-time leaders: Izetbegović, Tudjman, Milošević, etc) and their respective propagandizing were significant. Moreover, in each case, there was a path-dependent progression from nascent contemporary nationalist movements, and historic memories of the same, during the final decades of the Yugoslav period, which can help account for divergent paths between Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia. However, there are other important factors which are often underplayed by scholars in this field.

For the purposes of this study, I aim to highlight individual-level processes relating to stress responses to mass-violence as a powerful factor that affects an individual's – and by extension, a nation's – attitudes about ethnic others. In particular, I argue that those ex-Yugoslavs who experienced mass violence at a critically fragile period in their psychological development are more likely to mistrust ethnic others after the fact. Given that violence was unequally distributed throughout the region, this can help account for differences between countries. If I am correct, this may allow for a clearer picture of the underpinnings of change in hostile intergroup attitudes, potentially improving methods for reconciling former foes.

I begin with a broad overview of macro-level theories of ethnic conflict, examining the ways in which – whether explicitly or implicitly – intergroup attitudes become a part of the equation. From this discussion I move on to an individual-level view of intergroup attitudes that can better address some of the micro-foundations of widespread phenomena such as interethnic mistrust. This is followed by a discussion of post-conflict traumatization and the links between persistent exposure to violence and changes in intergroup attitudes. Lastly, I argue for a possible age-contingent effect of traumatization, as it relates to interethnic attitudes. I argue that those people who are exposed to persistent, extreme violence during a critical period of their emotional and social development – namely, their adolescence and very early adulthood – will exhibit a categorical difference in their subsequent interethnic attitudes. That is to say that I expect to find that those who were exposed to violence during this critical period will be more likely than their fellow countrymen of different ages to have negative interethnic attitudes and that this difference will persist for years afterward.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE BALKAN CONFLICTS OF THE 1990s

Before continuing with this study, it is worthwhile providing a brief overview of the conflicts in the Balkans between 1990 and 1995. First established as a short-lived monarchy after World War I as a nation for members of southern Slavic ethnic groups, Yugoslavia had reformed as a Socialist state after World War II. It was a federation of six republics: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. Serbia, in turn, had two autonomous provinces: Kosovo, with an ethnic Albanian majority, and Vojvodina, with a large ethnic Hungarian minority. While the republics had been organized in part along ethnic lines, geographic concentrations of ethnic minorities were spread throughout Yugoslavia.

Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Communist partisans who liberated Yugoslavia from Nazi occupation and established the socialist state, led the country until his death in 1980. As I will discuss at greater length later, Tito had been a strong stabilizing force, establishing the strength and primacy of the Federal government. His death ushered in a period of economic and political instability. The various republics had grown in power relative to the federal government in previous decades and without Tito's powerful centralizing influence, the republics found their voices – to varying degrees – in promoting the politics of nationalism over appeals to Communism and solidarity among the various Yugoslav ethnic groups. A variety of crises erupted in quick succession, each affecting one another. Among these were: a Serbian crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists in Kosovo, ethnic Serb separatists based in the Croatian city of Knin threatening to break away and join Serbia, and the election of increasingly nationalistic leadership in the various republics who sought independence. Both Slovenia and Croatia declared independence in mid-1991. While some had already been killed in the various crises leading up to these, the declarations were a clear sign that war had broken out.

For Slovenia, the war ended quickly, with less than 70 total deaths (UCDP, 2008). In just over a week, the republic's territorial defense force repulsed the Yugoslav National Army (JNA). For Croatia however, the conflict would be costly, with a death toll between six and ten thousand (SIPRI, 1994; Sarkees, 2000). While originally a conflict between the Croatian republic and ethnic Serb separatists, the

JNA and other Serb irregular forces intervened to offer support. In practical terms, these forces often became indistinguishable from one another in their aims and membership. A ceasefire in 1992 brought in UN peacekeepers and fighting slowed for some time in Croatia, just as war was beginning to break out in neighboring Bosnia. Low-level fighting, successively broken ceasefires and rounds of negotiation followed for the next few years until fighting escalated again in 1995 with two strikes (in May and August, respectively) by the Croatian government to regain two major enclaves of Croatian territory under the control of Serb separatists, Western Slavonia and Krajina. The Eastern Slavonia region remained under Croatian Serb control until it was demilitarized by a transitional administration under the supervision of 5000 UN troops (as part of the UNTAES mission; UCDP, 2008). Sovereignty of Eastern Slavonia was returned to Croatia from UNTAES in January 1998.

After the secession of Slovenia and Croatia, the government of Bosnia began to see no reasonable future in a federal Yugoslavia that would be overwhelmingly dominated by Serbia. This led to Bosnia's declaration of independence in March 1992 and war. The republic's population was roughly 40% Muslims, 30% Serbs and 17% Croats. Bosnian Serbs, fearing mistreatment by a Muslim majority, declared an autonomous Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As with the conflict in Croatia, both regular JNA forces and various Serb irregular militias (originating both from within Bosnia and from beyond) fought Bosnian government troops, and at times, each other (UCDP, 2008). In May 1992, a new Yugoslav constitution had entered into force and the JNA officially withdrew from Bosnia, but despite this there were allegations and reports of Yugoslavia's continued support of Serb militias (ibid). Serbs advanced throughout the Bosnian interior, with only a few small enclaves holding out, including the besieged Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. High levels of fighting continued through 1994. The UN had been involved in the conflict nearly from the beginning, maintaining the Bosnian Muslim enclaves as official 'safe areas.' In 1995, with repeated Serb incursions against the safe areas, NATO began air strikes against Bosnian Serb military targets. Many different peace negotiations had been held throughout the conflict with little success until US-sponsored talks in Dayton, Ohio in November 1995 brought the conflict to an

end. In the end, over 250,000 had been killed in Bosnia, with roughly three million displaced (USDoS, 1996).



Figure 3<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to place this study within the broader context of the ethnic conflict literature, I begin with a review of major macro-level approaches. Specifically, I examine the ways in which these theoretical explanations address intergroup attitudes, and under what conditions one might expect such attitudes to change.

As my analysis includes both macro- and micro-level explanations for variation, I present below a discussion of various theoretical mechanisms at each level of analysis. Moreover, as I argue for the possibility that individual-level differences can help account for differences in the aggregate, I seek to make a clear connection, where possible, between these two levels of analysis, in order to form a more complete picture. Furthermore, I feel the need to make the theoretical case that certain types of attitude change are possible – by whatever means – as the literature is largely silent on this topic, and this idea is central to the premise of my research.

Following this discussion, I discuss individual factors related to exposure to traumatic events that may serve as one roadblock to post-conflict reconciliation. I go on to suggest that age may be a factor in one's susceptibility to trauma-related attitude change and discuss other confounding means by which age may relate to post-conflict attitudes.

### MACRO-LEVEL APPROACHES TO INTERETHNIC ATTITUDE CHANGE

There is a hypothesized relationship between ethnic conflict and (a) the hardening of group identities (ie, the lines separating groups become more salient and resistant to change; Van Evera, 2001) and (b) an increasing negativity of intergroup attitudes (Kaufman, 1996). Group membership is a deeply-held human need (Horowitz, 1985:143-147), it can provide meaning in uncertain times (Staub, 2006), and in times of danger, people tend to band together in the face of a common outgroup threat (Lake and Rothschild, 1996: 56).

However, there are various explanations for how these dynamics play out, both at the group- and individual-level, relative to intergroup attitudes. While few theories of ethnic conflict explain directly how intergroup attitudes relate to macro-level structural change, many have hypothesized changes in intergroup attitudes and beliefs as either a causal factor leading to conflict or a result of conflict. In order to compare results from mainstream political science research with work from the field of social psychology, it is fruitful to briefly review these major approaches as they address this issue.

Taras and Ganguly (2002:10-33) make a distinction between what they call “direct” and “indirect” theories of ethnic conflict. The former category comprises those approaches (such as primordialism and instrumentalism) that are more directly concerned with the nature and origin of ethnic groupings. These are commonly posited as explanations for conflict under circumstances when such behavior would otherwise not seem likely. Indirect theories generally rely on structural changes in a given society as specific irritants that goad groups to come into conflict, focusing less on the nature of group identity itself (examples of this latter group include modernization and economic competition theories (e.g.: Olzak and Nagel, 1986; and Horowitz, 1985:96-135); democratization/regime change (e.g. Mousseau, 2001); state collapse/ethnic security dilemmas (e.g. Posen, 1993)). Such distinctions are important. Certainly, there is no single cause of any kind of conflict, and theories at varying levels of analysis have provided useful knowledge to the field. That said, our current study is more concerned with the former category.

In general, primordial accounts tell us the least about interethnic attitudes. The idea that conflict can change identities and attitudes between ethnic groups stands in contrast to a once-commonly-held journalistic account of ethnic conflict implicit in much of the coverage of the hostilities in the former Yugoslavia over the 1990s: the so-called “ancient ethnic hatreds” model. (for example, see Robert Kaplan’s influential *Balkan Ghosts* (1993).) The central assumption of the model is that group identities have been largely persistent, and not particularly positive in attitudes toward ethnic others, throughout time (Smith, 1991). In the case of the former Yugoslavia, only Communist autocracy was able to keep peace. This model is a relatively extreme statement of primordialism, but nevertheless emphasizes the

central tenet of the approach: an assumption that attitudes and volition are highly resistant to change. This is consistent with a skeptical outlook on the likelihood of successful reconciliation.

Even accounts that look a little closer at the effect of attitudes and beliefs on conflict are skeptical that attitudes can improve. Chaim Kaufman (1996) puts forward what can be seen as a sort of ‘soft primordialism.’ He argues that ethnic identities are (more or less) “fixed at birth,” but the experience of conflict further hardens the boundaries between ethnic groups (ibid: 140-1). For various reasons, as conflict is heating up, one’s ability to ‘choose sides’ is diminished by various negative incentives imposed from both the in-group and the out-group. The most persuasive of these incentives is a group-level fear of extinction at the hands of the out-group, whether such fears are realistic or not (ibid: 143-4). In any event, the damage is hard to undo.

This quasi-primordialist stance shows some strain in what at times seems to be the author’s conflation of an individual’s sense of ethnic affiliation and attitudes about the ethnic outgroup<sup>4</sup> and a certain ahistoric bias.

“even if ethnic hostility can be ‘constructed,’ there are strong reasons to believe that violent conflicts cannot be “reconstructed” back to ethnic harmony. Identity reconstruction under conditions of intense conflict is probably impossible because once ethnic groups are mobilized for war, they will have already produced, and will continue reproducing, social institutions and discourses that reinforce their group identity and shut out or shout down competing identities... Intense violence creates personal experiences of fear, misery, and loss which lock people into their group identity and their enemy relationship with the other group. Elite as well as mass opinions are affected...”  
(ibid: 153; 154)

The major fallacy of this argument is that Kaufman – like many theorists of ethnic conflict - contends that interethnic attitudes can get worse but they can’t improve (Kaufman, 2006a: 203 mentions a similar sentiment). Ethnic group members’ fear, mistrust and hatred for one another can only grow with experience, regardless of the passage of time. Biased historical narratives (Volkan, 1997) can serve to give longevity to chauvinistic interethnic attitudes, but Kaufman overstates the point when he says that “atrocities cannot be reconstructed; victims can sometimes be persuaded to accept exaggerated

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<sup>4</sup> for a good discussion of the tendency to overstretch ‘identity’ and related concepts, see Brubaker and Cooper, 2000

atrocities, but cannot be talked out of real ones” (Kaufman, 1996:154). While groups, particularly national majorities, are not likely to forget past atrocities, there are prominent examples in which such atrocities have been reframed, so as to strip contemporaries from culpability for the actions of their forbears. It certainly seems logical to assume that interethnic attitudes are sticky, and that conflict makes them stickier, but this does not preclude them from eventually getting unstuck.

Many empirical works have cast doubt on the proposition that ethnic heterogeneity, as such, makes conflict more likely. Moreover, data from just prior to hostilities in Yugoslavia suggest that the strong hand of Communist authority was not necessary; neighbors across ethnic lines seemed to have a genuinely healthy trust of one another – at least insofar as they were willing to admit to those administering surveys (Sekulic, Massey and Hodson, 2006). This suggests that interethnic attitudes can change, if only in this case. Either way, primordialist approaches offer little answers as to how to account for whatever changes we might observe.

Perhaps most germane to the topic of changing attitudes vis a vis ethnic mobilization and conflict are those approaches that emphasize a logic of psychology or emotions (perhaps most prominently, that of Stuart Kaufman (2001)). These accounts are based in the notion that ethnic identity is constructed by intellectuals and other socio-political elites who determine what content to attribute to group membership (Fearon and Laitin, 2000). This constructed narrative draws on, adds to, and reinterprets a ‘myth-symbol complex’ consisting of common values and shared mythologies (Smith, 1986). Rather than being based on rational calculations of expected utility, “the central assumption of symbolic politics [is]...that people make political choices based on emotion and in response to symbols” (Kaufman, 2001: 29).

In this approach, fear, or another strong collective emotion, is the key independent variable. This is sometimes worded as a specific fear of extinction, at other times this concept is broadened to include threats to things of material or symbolic value to the group (e.g. Brown et al, 2001; Duckitt, 2003). According to Kaufman, such emotions are generally derived from the myth-symbol complex (2001:31), which, in addition to providing the basis for a group’s self understanding can also provide clues for how to interpret the actions, and imagine the intentions, of other groups. Such mythologies commonly involve

collective memories of past victimization (Volkan, 1997). Following the 'symbolic politics' approach, opportunistic elites can manipulate these fears through public invocations of relevant symbols (Kaufman, 2001: 36), though their power to shape and disseminate any specific message is not necessarily absolute (Snyder and Ballentine, 1996).

As with most macro-level studies of ethnic conflict, Kaufman is interested in explaining group behavior (namely, mass mobilization leading to violence), not the mental states of individuals. For example, the model does not explain the origins of the myth-symbol complex, and in some cases, the fears themselves are exogenous to the model. The model does best at pointing out the various feedback loops – between mythology and emotion, between emotion and the security dilemma, between hostility and mobilization, etc. The theory directs our attention to where the relevant factors interact to amplify tensions and make conflict more likely. The model can, however, offer some predictions as to when fears are likely to be heightened and thus, when interethnic attitudes are likely to be at their most negative. Still, this notion of 'ethnic fear' does not capture the full range of emotions which might elicit conflict behavior, or be associated with negative intergroup attitudes.

Petersen (2002) sees macro-level structural changes that correlate with ethnic conflict in terms of more proximal causes: the "cognitive-emotional sequence[s]" they set in motion (ibid: 21). In his analysis, these responses fall into four categories of emotions: Fear, Hatred, Resentment and Rage (which are analogous to concerns about relative safety, dislike and status concerns, respectively; the assumption is that these are desired by all people, and the frustration of these desires creates certain emotional reactions which provide the motivation for specific kinds of behavior (ibid:3)). He traces different paths for each – in response to different circumstances and leading to distinct results; in other words insecurity leading to fear is not the sole cause of conflict. This distinction can make a great deal of difference at the individual attitudinal level, even given similar structural circumstances (ibid: 37).

One major problem with many of these theories, as mentioned above, is that they do not leave room for interethnic attitudes and behavior to improve. They are solely intent on explaining how conflicts heighten (Kaufman, 2006), or in some cases, how structural constraints can keep groups from coming into

conflict, with the assumption that interethnic attitudes will not change (at least among the masses). At their worst, such approaches are over-determined; at their best, they leave the scholar interested in interethnic attitude change at a loss.

As a counterbalance to the received wisdom that conflict worsens interethnic attitudes, Ward et al (2006) suggest (with no real theoretical support in the literature) the common sense possibility that “time heals all wounds” – implying that the passage of time may make more historically distant slights smart less.

There is also some mention of improvements in intergroup attitudes between groups formerly in conflict in the literature on reconciliation, which focuses on the ability of nationwide reconciliation process (South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) being the paradigmatic case) to provide psychological healing (Vinjamuri and Snyder, 2004; Gibson, 2004, 2006a; Staub, 2006; Kaufman, 2006; Long and Brecke, 2003), but the dearth of empirical evidence to support such claims is in stark contrast to the enthusiasm of such processes’ supporters (Mendeloff, 2004).

Much of the work in the reconciliation paradigm begins with the (often implicit assumption) that traditional approaches to peacemaking are not wholly adequate. According to this line of argument, the absence of open violence may simply disguise a conflict that has gone dormant but remains in the minds of the ex-combatants (a so-called ‘negative peace’). There is much less emphasis on fostering an environment wherein violence is less likely to occur – not because of third-party safeguards or incentive structures, but because the heat of the conflict, the will to violence, is removed (thus making for a ‘positive peace’). This latter scenario speaks more to an internal, psychological state writ large in society. For example, Bar-Tal argues that persistent conflict leads to the development of a ‘conflictive ethos,’ the content of which comprises certain widespread ‘societal beliefs’ that must be altered to form a ‘peace ethos’ in order for conflicting parties to be truly reconciled (2000). Gibson (2006a) and Staub (2006) take similar general views of the fundamentally psychological, attitude-oriented nature of the change that reconciliation involves.

Reconciliation, it is argued, is at least one of the means to create this type of macro-level psychological (or attitudinal) shift, if not the sole or primary way. Depending on the author, again, the scope of the term ‘reconciliation’ takes on different dimensions. While Gibson focuses on the case of South Africa’s TRC and various related efforts (2004, 2006a), other authors look to war crimes tribunals and transitional justice proceedings (Vinjamuri and Snyder, 2004), peace education/workshops (Maoz, 2000) and national media campaigns (Staub et al, 2005). Long and Brecke extend the term to include rapprochement between former combatants in both intrastate and interstate conflicts. Drawing on evolutionary evidence from primatologists, they argue that reconciliation is an evolutionarily-endowed ability that comprises a choreographed set of discrete, incremental behaviors that effectively restore social order (2003). While many of these efforts share a similar spirit, they do not always share the same explicit and functional goals in each context. Beyond superficial similarities, it is unclear what might be doing the real ‘work’ of reconciliation, given so many varying accounts. True reconciliation may be best undertaken in very specific circumstances, such as in a public, judicial forum – or it may simply refer to any effort that attempts a very public examination of recent societal history. In its various uses, the word in itself ceases to retain much meaning. With such a large amount of ambiguity surrounding the operationalization of the most basic concepts of these theories, it is difficult to measure and test reconciliation’s effect (Mendeloff, 2004:366).

Moreover, many of the more specific claims of institutionalized reconciliation simply lack rigorous proof. For one brief example, Mendeloff examines the logic of the claim that ‘truth-telling’ reconciles former foes (given favorable conditions). He argues that there are compelling reasons to believe that those traumatized by violent acts may be just as likely to be re-traumatized in the retelling as they are to find catharsis (ibid). Despite the widespread claims in favor of truth-telling as a necessary component of reconciliation, there is little clear empirical proof that this is so (ibid).

In general, empirical proof for the claims of reconciliation are lacking (though Gibson’s work (e.g.: 2006a, b) is an exception). A good deal of the problem is a lack of good data (Kaufman, 2006), but

much of the literature consists of *a priori* theoretical discussions, works that focus on policy prescriptions rather than empirics, or case studies with limited generalizability beyond the immediate context.

What few quantitative studies exist are largely cross-sectional. As is often the problem with such studies, it can be difficult to distinguish between causation and correlation. For example, while Gibson points to the success of the nation-wide process of Truth and Reconciliation as a causal factor in driving conciliation among racial groups in South Africa (2004), others have argued that such success is best viewed as an *outcome* of previous processes accomplished through traditional political means (Lieberfeld, 2002). Gibson (2004) attempts to empirically test the extent to which ‘truth’ causes ‘reconciliation.’ As the author operationalizes the concepts, a respondent’s accepting the ‘truth’ promulgated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is denoted by an agreement with some basic principles, among them: that the apartheid system was unjust, that abuses were committed by both sides (those who struggled for *and* against apartheid), that the whole system (not a few evil individuals) was the origin of the abuses, etc. ‘Reconciliation’ was measured as an index of responses to questionnaire items gauging the respondent’s willingness to use stereotypes about other racial groups, their comfort with and understanding of other groups. Gibson himself notes the ambiguous claims to causality that one can make from a cross-sectional analysis, suggesting that an aggregate-level, longitudinal study would be necessary to gauge the true effects of South Africa’s TRC (*ibid*). However, he neglects a further methodological issue: he tests the relationship between two attitudes: those about the TRC and those about inter-racial relations, but does not test the extent to which the TRC caused either one. While he suggests that “it’s difficult to test the causal hypothesis linking truth acceptance and reconciliation, since truth may contribute to reconciled attitudes, but reconciled attitudes may also make it easier to accept the truth about the past” (*ibid*), he neglects that both of these attitudes may or may not have been caused by the TRC itself. One might have arrived at either set of attitudes on one’s own. To my understanding, this study only demonstrates the

likelihood to which different populations may hold these two sets of attitudes at once. One is left then with the implication that attitude change is possible, but, once again, there is little proof and no clear explanation for the mechanisms by which it might occur beyond the circumstances of a single given case. So, while current research on reconciliation processes points to means by which attitudes might be changed by way of an organized, nation-wide intervention, the research project is still yet to provide robust, convincing evidence commensurate to the enthusiasm of its advocates.

#### INTERETHNIC EMOTIONS AND ATTITUDES AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

One problem in the conceptualization of attitude change in large groups is the attribution of individual-level phenomena to the behavior of groups. It is certainly commonplace in the literature to attribute individual emotional and cognitive processes to large groups (Mendeloff, 2004). This is an understandable lapse, given the power and intuitiveness of the metaphor, but it is nevertheless logically suspect from a theoretical point of view. This is largely because attitudes and emotions can only be held by individuals. Aggregate measures of a 'mean' attitude or emotion can be taken, but this may overlook the lack of a unitary coherence to any group in real functional terms.

Emotions are generally understood as impetuses toward some kind of action or behavior (Panksepp, 1998). As such they are instrumental in nature – they are associated with specific kinds of goals (Petersen, 2003: 19). They help us make decisions by providing clues as to what kinds of information are salient, and they aid in the interpretations of these clues, in quick, adaptive ways (Gigerenzer, 2007).

As one might imagine, emotions elicited from social interaction between individuals have an effect on intergroup attitudes (Tam et al, 2007). A good deal of research suggests that people have a natural tendency to favor insiders and derogate outsiders. Social Identity theorists argue that the existence of an in-group tends to cause members of that group to have attitudes and behaviors more favorable towards fellow members (Tajfel, 1982). This can lead to negative views of the outgroup, (Gibson, 2006b); though some argue this second step is not necessarily a consequence of the first (Brewer, 1999). There are

certain countervailing factors against the tendency to reify boundaries between groups. For example, friendly contact with persons of another group can mitigate outgroup prejudice under certain favorable conditions (Allport, 1954; Brown and Hewstone, 2005).

Many argue that such emotions are evolutionarily endowed so as to make us adaptive, and thus more successfully pass on our genes (Cosmides and Tooby, 1992). The problem for individuals in the modern world is that evolution has prepared us for the world of our prehistoric ancestors, not our own. While tribalism and hyper-vigilance toward external threat might have heightened chances of reaching procreative age at an earlier time, these processes may not work as well in our contemporary world.

In theories of ethnic conflict that take emotions into account, it seems clear that emotion is a vital part of decision-making - along with certain beliefs about the nature of the world (derived from ideology/worldview/myth-symbol complex). Thus the decision to enter into conflict with another group is strongly related to negative inter-group emotions and attitudes. However, the fact of conflict itself – not as an aspect of history or mythology, but as a personal experience – can in turn be seen as an independent variable that can, in turn, impact attitudes and emotions in relatively predictable ways.

#### TRAUMA AND ATTITUDES

Generally overlooked in this literature on how intergroup attitudes can change over time is the potential for traumatic experience to radically alter one's attitudes and beliefs about the world and the nature of intergroup dynamics. While trauma is experienced as an individual and ethnic conflict is largely thought of in terms of mass- or group-level units of analysis, in situations where conflict is pervasive, one might assume that the psychological outcomes of widespread violence and destruction are likewise pervasive.

To put this in more concrete terms, there is evidence that some people who are exposed to violent conflict are changed by the experience, such that their ability to perceive threat in a healthy (i.e., functional, realistic, “rational”) way is impaired.<sup>5</sup> For example, Staub (2006) sees the trauma of extreme

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<sup>5</sup> DSM IV provides guidelines for what might qualify as traumatic events preceding PTSD, including “military combat, disaster, and criminal violence” (DSM-IV, 1994), there is reason to believe that other events that are highly

violence (e.g. genocide, protracted civil war, etc) as creating a range of psychological “wounds,” including a sense of a loss of agency, larger meaning and positive social identity, in addition to the loss of trust between ethnic groups, thus generating an increased drive to seek restoration through ethnic community. “They feel diminished and vulnerable, seeing the world, other people, and especially members of groups other than their own as dangerous....In response to threat they may strike out, believing that they need to defend themselves, but actually becoming perpetrators” (Staub, 2006: 871). Trust can become nearly impossible. On the other hand, there are some findings that disconfirm this link, as in Ward and colleagues’ conclusion that there was no significant, independent effect of being a personal witness to violence in relation to views about potential interethnic cooperation (2006).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the name given in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV)<sup>6</sup> for the condition that first gained widespread currency, after World War I, as ‘shell-shock.’ In addition to accompanying depression and anxiety disorders, in general, symptoms of PTSD are correlated with: less support for an ethnically inclusive community and less support for ethnic interdependence (ibid: 608); avoidance of ethnic others (ibid: 610); interethnic hatred and a desire for retribution (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2000; 2004); diminished belief in the benevolence of people in general, loss of a sense of control/agency and meaning in one’s life (Basoğlu et al, 2005); and a greater sense of personal insecurity (Bleich, Gelkopf and Solomon, 2003; Basoğlu et al, 2005). In many cases, in addition to the strong relationship between violence-related stressors and PTSD symptoms, there are also significant relationships between cumulative exposure to such traumas and the abovementioned cognitive/ emotional effects, regardless of whether or not PTSD is diagnosed (Pham et al, 2004). Moreover, these effects are persistent over time. PTSD symptoms have been measured five to ten years after the traumatic events occurred (Pham et al, 2004; Basoğlu et al, 2005). In short, “[t]here is

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stressful and sharply divergent from everyday experience (death of a loved one, for example) can produce similar symptoms (Breslau, 2002). As such, it seems the distinction between conditions that are simply stressful and those that are traumatic is not necessarily objective (hence the need for DSM guidelines in the first place). For my purposes, trauma may range from combat exposure and sexual victimization to forced displacement and the death of family members, but generally refers to events experienced by an individual that are highly distressing and extraordinary in nature.

<sup>6</sup> the standard reference for psychiatric diagnosis in the United States

little doubt that the stress of war leaves residual psychopathology ... among its sufferers” (Zuckerman, 1999: 100).

Some empirical work seems to have contradicted this point. Ward et al (2006) were surprised to find in their analysis that personally witnessing violence did not have an effect on the respondent’s belief in the possibility of interethnic cooperation. Roughly 25% of their respondents had personally witnessed violence. The authors suggested various methodological reasons that might account for this outcome (including sampling/case selection problems) and proposed further research on the subject. Similarly, Sekulić and colleagues (2002), did not find significant correlation between specific individual losses during wartime and ethnic intolerance; based on this, they argue that, while attitudes can only truly be measured at the individual level, ethnic attitudes are necessarily collective in nature – developed through media characterizations by ethnic entrepreneurs. This seems to relate to the basic findings of Contact Theory (e.g., Allport, 1954; Brown and Hewstone, 2005; inter alia): it is easier to stoke interethnic prejudice on a group level, with the groups abstracted from their constituent members, or by use of a composite, stereotypical stand-in for individuals, rather than based on experience between individuals (Oberschall and Blumer, 1998). This does not, however, contradict my central thesis. In my account, it is not the fact of being victimized by an ethnic other that makes one mistrustful of that specific group. It is the fact of victimization, and thus traumatization as such, that causes individuals to have a dysfunctional lack of trust, leading to a circling of the ethnic wagons. This combination creates mistrust in ethnic others.

This change in attitudes – from conflict exposure to traumatic stress – should be distinguished from simple learning. It’s true: from these results, it’s difficult to draw a clear line between what is functional (ie, rational/adaptive) and what is pathological (or ‘dysfunctional’). Kroll notes that much of the literature on post-conflict psychiatry overstates the effect of PTSD:

“PTSD, like many other constructs, has been incorporated into social awareness in a simplified and exploitative manner that claims too expanded a territory and too broadened an explanatory principle. Not every ill that befalls a person is, or results in,

PTSD and, conversely, many of the ills and sufferings that do befall persons cause much more than PTSD” (Kroll, 2003. 667).

There are, of course, ‘normal’ responses to trauma that don’t necessarily cause significant psychological dysfunctions in the long term. And there are many attitudinal associations with traumatic experience found in the literature which seem like they could be perfectly “rational” conclusions to draw from experience. For example, Bleich et al (2003) find an association between experiencing terrorist attacks and having a decreased sense of security.

“In a dangerous and violent world, we can see how these mechanisms would be helpful and likely serve to protect an individual from an evil and unforgiving world. Unfortunately, though, such cognitive biases and distortions also serve to deplete brain and body resources, allowing a person to only narrowly focus on, and sometimes even misperceive, threatening cues, denying them the opportunity to attend to other environmental cues and serving to push others away.”  
(Joshi and O’Donnell, 2003: 282)

Clearly, the line between rational decision-making and pathology can be difficult to draw in these contexts. ‘Normal’ social functioning and context appropriateness are key, but these can be difficult to discern in situations where rule of law and/or intergroup tolerance may not be the norm. I believe, however, that there is an added value to trauma-based explanations of negative interethnic attitudes insofar as it can help explain the persistence of certain attitudes, both in degree and in kind, while providing some predictive power that other explanations might lack.

I began with the puzzle of how to account for change in interethnic attitudes among members of different former Yugoslav states after conflict. I have reviewed both macro- and micro-level theories of ethnic conflict, in an effort to shed light on how the process of leading up to conflict, exposure to violence, and changing factors after the fact of violence might affect ethnic attitudes. Moreover, I have shown some possible mechanisms by which the macro- and micro-level processes interact and influence one another in ways that neither can explain alone. Specifically, I have focused on the impact of exposure to violence as a factor that can negatively affect individuals’ interethnic attitudes

On its own, exposure to violence can potentially help explain differences in individual attitudes, but individual-level data on this is often hard to come by. It is possible, however, to test a related

hypothesis – that of an age cohort effect that might mediate the relationship between conflict (looked at in the aggregate, for a country as a whole) and interethnic attitudes.

### CHAPTER III

#### THEORY & HYPOTHESES

Thus far I have made a case for a potential relationship between exposure to violence and change in interethnic attitudes. I argue that trauma can potentially influence the interethnic attitudes of those affected, in predictable ways. However, due to limitations on available data it is not possible in the current study to directly test the relationship between exposure to violence and change in interethnic attitudes. Data is available, however, on the age of respondents to the survey. Thus, once again assuming a certain level of country-wise exposure to violence, without being able to differentiate between respondents with regard to exposure to violence, it is possible to test if there is a differential effect of national-level violence on people of different ages.

In order to address this question, I review a selection of the literature from the ‘Social Cognitive Development’ paradigm (see Olson and Dweck, 2008) that touch on ways in which different stages of social and cognitive development may leave an individual more or less prone to developing negative interethnic attitudes. I argue that there is a critical period of sociocognitive development at which point people are most susceptible to the influence of exposure to violence on interethnic attitudes.

#### THEORY

A good deal of research has demonstrated that a person’s political attitudes develop and change over time, as one is socialized into the larger society and as one’s cognitive capacities develop (Sears and Levy, 2003). However, despite many studies on age variations along the conservative/liberal continuum in American politics, in addition to those specifically related to interethnic attitudes “life cycle effects on attitudes have been especially difficult to pin down” (ibid: 90). For example, some have argued that attitudes are most malleable during one’s ‘impressionable years’ during childhood, adolescence and young adulthood (Sears, 1975), and that attitudes are likewise less apt to change with age (Visser and

Krosnick, 1998). Others argue, that, while one is highly susceptible to attitude change at a young age, the same is true for the end of one's life cycle (Sears, 1983). Still others have argued that human beings are more or less always open to new attitudes and ideas (Lerner, 1984). In addition to this scholarly controversy over the degree to which attitudes are more or less likely to change during different periods of the life cycle, the picture is muddied by the fact that many of these accounts are based on an ideal of 'normal' psychological development and socialization in the developed, Western world, generally drawn from experimental results in the US. In many cases they rely on social factors (such as school attendance or work- and family-related responsibilities) that may not be present, or may have very different outcomes, in a recently post-conflict environment.

While age does not have a clear, direct effect on attitude plasticity, there is a demonstrated difference in the capacity of people of different ages to tolerate traumatic stress. Shaw notes: "Children's psychological responses to trauma are comparable to that of adults with one exception: the children's responses are mediated through a developing organism continuing to mature physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially" (2003: 238). Above and beyond the potential psychological effects that trauma may have on adults, trauma can disrupt the 'normal' development of cognitive abilities, morality, personality, interpersonal relationships and coping skills (Barenbaum et al, 2004). Having a secure environment in which to develop and experiment with the social world, and with varying roles in that world, allows the child to develop a broad repertoire of emotional expressions and problem solving skills. "On the contrary, emergency needs in wartime create an atmosphere where complex moral dilemmas are simplified and people are split as good and bad," leading children to more strongly identify with their immediate community (Punamaki, 2002).

In addition to a stronger attachment to one's in-group, there is evidence of a stronger propensity to violent behavior being linked to children developing in traumatic environments (Ruchkin et al, 2007). Studies of particularly aggressive adolescent delinquents find that those who are noticeably violent by ages 8-10 are responsible for the majority of teenage aggression, suggesting an aspect of 'training' in early childhood responsible for long-term outcomes (Patterson, 2008). Parent psychopathology, social

disadvantage, parents' criminal status, divorce, poverty, and poor economic conditions have been associated with anti-social violent behavior, while "disrupted parenting" is a "direct cause" of such violent behavior (ibid). This effect has been tested in a range of contexts including physical or sexual abuse (Dodge et al, 1995), urban community violence (Ruchkin et al, 2007), incarcerated populations (Dodge et al, 1990), war and terrorism (Barenbaum, 2004; Williams, 2006) with similar results.

While much of this literature focuses on behavioral outcomes (in this case, aggression) as opposed to attitudes (as with our study, specifically negative ethnic biases), it is possible that such behaviors are linked to attitudes as well, though there has been no empirical test of this link. Interestingly for my purposes however, Dodge (1995) suggests that there are particular cognitive biases underlying much of the aggressive behavior observed in children raised in traumatic environments. This mechanism of psychological change seems to occur without necessarily coinciding with PTSD (Ruchkin, 2007). From evidence gathered in the United States, Dodge and colleagues found that children who are subject to abuse in their first five years of development "may become defensively hypervigilant to hostile cues and not attend adequately to relevant nonhostile cues. This child may become perceptually ready to attribute hostility to others in circumstances in which most persons would not make such an attribution." Dodge, (1999)

In other words, Dodge and colleagues – in an attempt to explain persistent aggressiveness in some adolescents – suggests that many engage in more aggressive behavior because their experience has primed them to be more likely to view others as meaning them harm when they do not. Seen as an adaptive strategy<sup>7</sup>, this makes a good deal of sense: if experience has shown that others are more likely than not to behave aggressively, this behavior is functional as a defensive mechanism in a dangerous world. However, as much of the above work suggests, this is not a faculty that one can easily unlearn (without psychiatric intervention) once the danger has passed. This may be added to the list of possible causes for difficulty in post-conflict conciliation: a tendency to view ambiguous signals as threats.

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<sup>7</sup> Of course, it should be stressed, this is not a *conscious* strategy, but a cognitive bias that affects the individual's subjective assessment of others' intentions

However, it should be noted that all the standard caveats apply to applications of individual-level phenomena to macro-level processes, especially as the latter are generally mediated through broadcast or print media and not through direct experience. Nor do Dodge's results explicitly indicate that there is any group-level dynamic associated with this cognitive bias. Presumably, one's ability to assess threat would be equally deficient with friends as former foes, though this is not clear.

While it is possible that trauma may disrupt normal patterns of sociopsychological development in children, the limited cognitive capacities of children at different ages may cause traumatic events to be perceived differently by individuals of different ages. Some have argued that younger children may be less likely to be severely traumatized than their older siblings. Older children and early adolescents may be more prone to pathological reactions to traumatic stress as their cognitive capacities are better developed, allowing them to better assess threat and complex social dynamics. Younger children are less capable of abstract reasoning, and more apt to rely on their parents' appraisals of danger (Vizek-Vidovic et al, 2000). Moreover, teenagers are already particularly prone to a sense of alienation which is only heightened by the experience of trauma (Joshi and O'Donnell, 2003).

Despite the above evidence though, it is not a forgone conclusion that the young would be most adversely affected by exposure to conflict-related trauma. In one of the few cases in the literature where age is considered as a factor in post-conflict interethnic attitudes, Ward et al (2007) find that older respondents are most dubious about the possibility of interethnic cooperation in the absence of trust. The above evidence suggests further testing is necessary.

It should also be mentioned that the proposed causal relationship between age and interethnic attitudes, mediated by traumatic stress, is not the only means by which age might affect attitudes. As Ward et al note (*ibid*), young men are the most likely to serve in the military and thus they are more likely to be directly exposed to violence than the population at large. So, a differential relationship with interethnic attitudes for members of this age group may also be due to this, rather than a difference in PTSD susceptibility for this age group. At present, this is not a proposition my data is able to account for, as I do not have data on individuals' military service, but it should be noted this is a possible confounding

variable. Moreover, it is also possible that young people are more susceptible to nationalist rhetoric and thus attitudes may not be related to traumatic stress, rather from one's contemporary political climate. In order to help account for this, I have included the case studies, which serve to document some of the differences between states in this regard.

### HYPOTHESES

The formation of public opinion in the former Yugoslavia, looked at in the aggregate, is undoubtedly a path-dependent process, in which each separate republic-cum-independent state takes different directions. These directions are most likely influenced by the interaction of cultural norms and narratives, the rhetoric of political entrepreneurs, and reactions to contemporary events. However, if the above arguments regarding the effect of trauma are correct, and if there are age-related differences in response, this will demonstrate inter-cohort differences within these republics/states in order to explain some aspects of attitude stability, despite prevailing aggregate trends. I expect:

Hypothesis 1: that those who were in their late childhood and early adolescence (What I will hereafter call the 'critical cohort') while their country was at war are more likely to have had their attitudes toward ethnic others negatively influenced by this experience. Thus, I expect to see a positive relationship between a respondents' membership in the critical cohort and their mistrust of other ethnic groups in the years following conflict. Alternately, given theoretical and empirical reasons reviewed above, the following propositions should be tested:

Hypothesis 2: prejudice increases with the age of respondents in a given period of time. Thus, in a given year, I would expect a positive relationship between respondents' age and mistrust of ethnic others. Also,

Hypothesis 3: it is possible to make a similar assumption – that there is a reliable progression, in the aggregate, of ethnic mistrust following conflict – but to suggest a different path. It is also reasonable to assume that the youngest are highly susceptible to an age-contingent effect, with this susceptibility decreasing quickly with age, such that there would be very little difference between very young and very

old adults. Thus, I alternately hypothesize a positive relationship between ethnic mistrust and the square-root of respondents' age: a curve that is initially very steep, but gradually approaches a flat line.

Hypothesis 4: In the aggregate, I expect that the mistrust of the youngest cohort, at whatever level they may be, will change the least in comparison with other age groups over time.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA & METHOD

As one means to test a potential link between widespread violence and interethnic attitudes, I have proposed a study that directly tests the relationship between age and interethnic attitudes, before and after conflict, in three Balkan successor-states to Yugoslavia. While Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia were all constituent republics of Yugoslavia as of 1990, their populations nevertheless had important differences, which might affect their attitudes with regard to different ethnic groups. Most obviously, each country was based – to one degree or another – around an eponymous ethnic group with its own respective history. Moreover, each had a distinct political leadership that led them into war and out again. For my analysis, I compare individual-level factors as well as comparisons between country-years. I do not, however, believe that different levels of traumatization or conflict necessarily accounted for apparent differences. By way of a crude control variable in my analysis of aggregate-level outcomes, I seek to provide some explanation for variance between countries in their respective histories. Any analysis of variation between these three former Yugoslav republics should necessarily trace the development of their historical claims to nationhood insofar as it might influence later interethnic sentiments in the aggregate, as well as the extent to which political leaders promulgated a nationalist agenda as part of their mandate. This analysis is provided in the following chapter.

This case study is followed by regression models for each year observed in each country, showing the independent correlations between the independent variable (age) and the dependent variable (mistrust).

For my quantitative analysis, I draw my data from the World Values Survey (WVS; 2006) and the survey of Socio-cultural Development of the Consortium of Institutes for Social Science in Yugoslavia (SKR; 1990). Both surveys interviewed adults (over 18), with samples proportional to ethnic

make-up and population of the territories in question. The latter is drawn from door-to-door interviews conducted between 1989 and 1990. The WVS data set was collected at different times depending on the country. For Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), surveys were conducted February 14 - 21, 1998 (n=800) and December 3 – 10, 2001 (n=1,200). For Serbia and Montenegro surveys were conducted in 1996 and 2001. Surveys were conducted in Croatia in December 5 – 15, 1996 (n=1,196) and March 1 – April 30, 1999 (n=1,003).

For my dependent variable, I use a measurement of the respondent's assessment of his/her ability to trust members of other ethnic groups. Unfortunately, between the two data sets (representing periods before [SKR] and after [WVS] conflict) these questions are not exactly the same. They do, however, deal with the same substantive issue, to allow for rough comparison. The SKR asks respondents to indicate to what degree they agree or disagree with the following statement: "People can feel completely safe only when the majority belong to their nation" (this is labeled *Mistrust*<sub>1</sub>, in my model).<sup>8</sup> The WVS asks respondents to indicate whether they would like to have as a neighbor, members of various groups of people, among them, people of a different ethnic group (*Mistrust*<sub>2</sub>).<sup>9</sup> Certainly, the question that elicits the data for *Mistrust*<sub>1</sub> is a stronger statement than for *Mistrust*<sub>2</sub>. Moreover, the dependent variable drawn from the WVS is dichotomous, while SKR is ordinal-level data, so a comparison of the intensity or prevalence of a given attitude, across time between the two is not possible. My interest is in making a rough comparison, within in each time period, between respondents in each republic/country relative to one another.

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<sup>8</sup> NB: "nation" in this sense, would refer to the major ethnic groups of the former Yugoslavia (for a more in-depth discussion of such terminology and related cultural understandings of nationality and ethnic identity in the former Yugoslavia, see Hodson, Sekulic and Massey, 1994:1543)

<sup>9</sup> NB: The English questionnaire specifies the term, "race," though this does not seem to have the same currency in the former Yugoslavia as it would in the United States. A full discussion of the distinction between race and ethnicity is beyond the scope of the present study, but suffice to say that it does not have much significance beyond places with a history of colonialism where race was a historically salient social marker. In the Croatian-language version of the WVS questionnaire from 1996, the survey item is rendered as a direct translation using a Croatian cognate: "ljudi druge *rase*." Use of the term 'race' is potentially significantly different from the term 'ethnic group', but I argue that it essentially measures the same construct, as 1) I imagine respondents in the context of the Balkans would use the most directly socially salient/relevant grouping for their society in their response and 2) such responses correlate closely with responses that more directly indicate mistrust/intolerance for other ethnicities and religions these variables, unfortunately, are not available across all cases such that they can be used in my analysis.

I see both survey items as measuring the same substantive concept and treat them as comparable. Both imply aversion and suspicion of an ethnic other. Among studies of prejudice, there is evidence that there are two distinct modes: 'disliking' and 'disrespecting,' the former of which corresponds to higher negative affect and aversion (as opposed to low positive affect and domination in the former case; (Duckitt, 2003).

In order to obtain a significantly large group to analyze age-relevant effects, I aggregated cohorts of respondents by birth year, in ten-year increments. For the purposes of this study, I see the first age cohort as corresponding to late childhood/early adolescent exposure to violence, while age cohort 2 corresponds to late adolescent, early adulthood exposure.

Table 1<sup>10</sup>

Group #	Birth-year cohort	Age during Croatian War	Age during Bosnian Conflict	Age as of 1996	Age as of 2001
1	1976-1985	6 – 15	7 - 19	11 - 20	16-25
2	1966-1975	16 - 25	17 - 29	21 - 30	26-35
3	1956-1965	26 - 35	27 - 39	31 – 40	36 – 45
4	1946-1955	36 - 45	37 - 49	41 – 50	46 – 55
5	1936-1945	46 - 55	47 - 59	51 – 60	56 – 65
6	1935 or earlier	56+	57+	61 – 70	66+

From the SKR data, I have used ordered probit to establish the relationship between age cohorts and the dependent variable prior to the outbreak of conflict. The purpose of this regression model is to establish a baseline for comparison with models drawn from later time periods. According to the logic of my theoretical argument, I would only expect to see an age-contingent effect on interethnic attitudes following conflict (as the theoretical mechanism for change in interethnic attitudes is trauma resultant from conflict). Thus, I do not expect to see a significant relationship between Age and Mistrust<sub>1</sub>. I include Mistrust<sub>1</sub>, with relevant control variables, in order to determine the relative levels of trust across the republics of then-Yugoslavia prior to conflict.

When at all possible, great attention was paid to select variables for inclusion that would be

<sup>10</sup> According to data used by Doyle and Sambanis (2000), the Bosnian conflict lasted from 1992 – 1995 and the conflict in Croatia lasted throughout 1991.

roughly comparable between the SKR and WVS data sets. This limited variable section to a certain degree. Data availability between various cases (and even between various observations within individual country-years) was an even greater limitation. Nevertheless, there was adequate availability of data to include some standard control variables commonly employed in the literature on interethnic attitudes.

There is good reason to believe that a person's individual economic situation may be influential on his/her attitudes about people of other social and ethnic groups (Citrin et al, 1997). As such, I included a variable for unemployment in the model. It has also been hypothesized that higher levels of education foster greater understanding, on the whole, between ethnic groups (Schuman, Bobo, and Steeh, 1985), so a variable has been included that measures the respondent's level of education (here it is coded as a set of categorical dummy variables, with the lowest level of education being excluded to avoid perfect collinearity). The literature on traumatization suggests that community support, close personal relationships and a greater sense of meaning in life can mediate the pathological impact of trauma on a person's life (Staub, 2006), so variables for the respondent's marital status, frequency of church attendance (here coded as a dichotomous, yes/no variable), and spiritual beliefs (belief in god and a life after death, coded dichotomously) have been included.

Variable selection for analysis with the WVS data varied slightly, due largely to data availability between cases, from the SKR dataset. Data for employment, marital status, church attendance, belief in god, and belief in an afterlife were included. Additionally, I included a variable controlling for the respondent's interest in the interview, the respondents' religious affiliation, and also a measurement of the size of town the respondent lives in. While ethnic competition and mistrust certainly exist in larger cities, it is possible that the latter variable might be associated with a more 'cosmopolitan,' and thus benign, outlook concerning ethnic relations. I make no specific predictions for this variable.

## CHAPTER V

### CASE STUDIES

I have argued above that both national- and individual- level processes can help account for any observed differences between countries' aggregate interethnic attitudes. It is my contention that, in line with Kaufman's symbolic politics approach (2001), elite opinion –leaders can incite ethnic mistrust and hostility through the manipulation of symbolism related to ethnic affiliation. The extent to which leaders do this can account for attitudinal differences between countries that may not entirely be explained by individual –level factors. Moreover, the basic repertoire of possible ethnically relevant symbols and narrative that may be employed are path-dependant, derived through a process of successive generations re-imagining and interpreting history. Thus, through the brief set of case studies that follow, I will trace the development and prevalence of nationalist movements in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia in order to demonstrate how these have most likely impacted aggregate attitudes.

#### ETHNIC POLITICS IN YUGOSLAVIA

It must be noted that, while the hard-primordialist approaches assumed enduring perennial ethnic hatreds, “No amount of government effort could have suppressed *all* semblance of conflict between groups, but there just weren't significant incidents reported that required repression” (Sekluić, Massey and Hoson, 2006). Burg and Berbaum, in an article published in 1989, just prior to the state's collapse, found a recent up-tick in the number of citizens identifying themselves as ‘Yugoslavs’ (as opposed to ethnic or religious labels) in the most recent census. They interpreted this as a demonstration of growing personal identification with the federal state, over and above republican/national identities, indicating a high level of “political integration and diffuse regime support.” This after a dip since the rise of republican-centered nationalistic sentiments (as opposed to ‘Yugoslav’ nationalism) in the ‘60s and ‘70s (1989: 536).

Contemporary reports of the years immediately leading up to the outbreak of war note that, while roughly 43% of respondents believed interethnic relations were ‘very bad’ in general only 2.7% reported that the situation was ‘very bad’ in their own locale (Dugandzija, 1991). Sekulić and colleagues argue that this indicates a growing expectation of interethnic tensions in other parts of Yugoslavia, but no significant change in the everyday lives of the vast majority of Yugoslavs.

Taken together, the above observations from the mid- to late-1980s paint a picture of a populace that is generally tolerant and well integrated, but wary of the potential of a group of chauvinists upsetting the applecart. In particular, the large consensus of respondents that the situation would soon become dire despite the lack of any evidence clearly visible in the individual’s own experience suggests the influence of political and cultural elites creating an atmosphere conducive to dire predictions. Thus, it is useful to consult some of the state-specific factors that could lead to divergent paths for inter-ethnic attitudes, including the goals and strategies of leaders (ie, Croatia’s Franjo Tudjman, Bosnia’s Alija Izetbegović and Serbia’s Slobodan Milošević) relevant to recent political history that could inform the ‘myth-symbol complex’ through which national identity, and thus the nature of the conflict itself, was viewed.

The goal of this section is not to analyze the causes of the conflict as such; this task has already been ably undertaken by many scholars before me. My purpose here is to trace the development of nationalism among each of the three major Yugoslav ethnic groups. Both of these together may provide context from which to better assess the independent effect of trauma.

In the case studies that follow, I briefly trace the development of nationalist discourses from the early days of Tito’s Yugoslavia, after World War II, and how the Yugoslav state’s official policies reacted to this social reality. I further examine the resurgence of nationalist movements through the 1970s and the rise of leaders, in the 1980s and ‘90s, who variously embraced or partially rejected ethnic nationalism as a significant portion of their political message. Through this analysis, I intend to account, in part, for the disparate levels of interethnic mistrust between the Yugoslav republics of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia prior to conflict in the 1990s. Specifically, I argue that Bosniaks, as a relatively vulnerable minority within Yugoslavia, and a group that lacked a unifying, nationalist political objective, gave their support to

a leadership that sought a conciliatory strategy in the run-up to conflict. On the other hand, Croats and Serbs found themselves with leaders who had consolidated power around a clearly nationalist objective of territorial expansionism and nationalist chauvinism.

Through brief profiles of these men's careers, taken as illustrative of more general trends, I am able to provide some basis for a partial account of differences between Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia in terms of their respective political cultures, vis a vis Yugoslavia's constituent nations.

While Yugoslavia's ethnic cleavages were given their fullest political recognition in the decentralizing Constitution of 1974, from its beginning as a polity, Yugoslavia had always been a de facto mosaic of national groups, with Serbian hegemony at its core, despite Titoist ideology extolling 'brotherhood' among the various nations (Hodson, Sekulić and Massey, 1994). Yugoslavia's first incarnation was as a short-lived inter-war monarchy that crossed what had long been the shifting military border between Habsburg Austria and the Ottoman Empire. The three primary ethnic groups of Yugoslavia (that is, leaving aside Hungarians, Albanians, Slovenes, Macedonians and others) – those I will concern myself with in this study – are all generally understood to belong to the larger ethnic designation of Slavs, speaking with some dialectal variation, essentially the same language: what was standardized in Yugoslav times as Serbo-Croatian. Serb and Croat groups have been seen as distinct, but closely-related groups since the arrival of Slavs to the Balkans region over a thousand years ago (Malcolm, 1996: 6-8). With the introduction of Islam from the Ottomans in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, a third group emerged. This was a community which came to see itself, and be seen by others, as a separate ethnic group: those Slavs who practiced Islam, largely taking Islamic names and certain related cultural practices, but continued speaking the same language as their neighbors. Today, these are alternately known as Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks.

#### IZETBEGOVIĆ AND BOSNIAN NATIONALISM

The story of The Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia is perhaps the most complex, with regard to national identity and nationalism. Muslim Slavs – who were mainly concentrated in Bosnia – were in a particularly difficult position with regard to expression of their collective identity, as it was originally

seen to be primarily based on religious practice, rather than what was understood to be an ‘ethnic’ distinction between Serb and Croat. It was assumed by early architects of the Yugoslav state that successive generations of Bosnian Muslims would eventually ‘decide’ to see themselves as either Croats or Serbs (ibid: 198). Even once they had coalesced into a recognized social and political unit, intellectuals and elites on either side of them (ie, Croats and Serbs), argued that Bosnian Muslims were ‘really’ members of their ethnic group who had lost their way at some bygone date (ibid: 204; 218). While the Yugoslav census had previously only given the option to identify as either Croat, Serb or Yugoslav, Bosnians were first allowed to declare themselves to be “Muslims, in the ethnic sense” in 1961 (ibid: 196). In 1968, after initial resistance, a Bosnian party communiqué was the first to designate Bosnian Muslims as a distinct, constituent nation of Yugoslavia, affording the group certain constitutional rights and protections they had previously lacked in the state. But, though the distinctiveness of Bosniaks was generally their Muslim heritage, the drive for recognition as a ‘nation’ was never a religious movement, Malcolm argues (ibid, 200). There was a parallel religious movement, however, led by Alija Izetbegović, an oft-noted product of which was his *Islamic Declaration*, published in 1970 – a work that was anti-Communist but not explicitly nationalistic. The book, articulating the ideology of the movement at the time, was mostly concerned with reconciling Islamic practice with modernity in the larger world, less with Bosnia itself (ibid). Far from being religious nationalists, Communist Party leaders of Bosnia at the time had become increasingly concerned about the growing outspoken-ness of Muslim intellectuals’ anti-Communist rhetoric, particularly after the Iranian revolution of 1979. Izetbegović, along with 12 others, was imprisoned in 1974 for such activities.

Ethnic nationalism was an ongoing concern for Yugoslav party leaders throughout most of Yugoslavia’s existence, and particularly in the 1960s and early ‘70s. Until the 1960s, Tito’s ideology promoted an ‘integral Yugoslavism’ which sought to promote a state- rather than ‘nation-’centered identity (ie, the promotion of a Yugoslavian identity, such as it was, over Croatian or Serbian identification), but this had eventually been abandoned. The nationalist movements that came to the fore in the 60s were fiercely suppressed. Tito purged Croatian party leaders in 1971 and the Serbian leadership

were removed in 1972, both for their espousal of nationalist ideals (Kaufman, 2001: 170). However, most of the nationalists' demands were met by a change in the Federal Constitution, in 1974, shifting the balance of power from central control to control by the party organizations of the respective Republics. "Federalism under party control was meant to satisfy aspirations for national autonomy and expressions of national identity. However, it was unacceptable for the republican Communist parties to seek alliances with traditional nationalist groups in pursuit of national goals." (Hodson, Sekulić and Massey, 1994: 1540). Still, the weakening of the central government, particularly with Tito's passing in 1980, caused the individual republics to compete directly with one another for resources, which caused them to "rely on traditional national goals to articulate and legitimate its bargaining position relative to other republican communist parties" (ibid).

Released in 1985, Izetbegović would become the only post-Yugoslav leader national leader to have never been a Communist Party official, as leader of Bosnia's SDA (Party of Democratic Action). While placing emphasis on the distinctive qualities of Bosniaks – ie, their Muslim-ness – in its appeal, the SDA "emphasized that they stood for the preservation of Bosnia's unique character as a multi-national, multi-religion republic" (ibid: 219). While at times these goals – representing a religious minority and maintaining diversity – came into conflict, Izetbegović persisted in conciliatory gestures, as in his formation of a party of national unity in December of 1990 (prior to the conflict in Bosnia) between the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), led by Bosnian Serb nationalist and later war crimes indictee Radovan Karadžić, and the Bosnian arm of Franjo Tuđman's HDZ party. He did this despite being able to form a coalition with a narrower, Bosniak base. Even after Slovenia and Croatia declared independence in June, 1991, Izetbegović went to great lengths to avoid conflict with Serbia. Bosnia's leadership still sought a limited legislative autonomy short of independence, urging Serbia of its neutrality in the crisis in Croatia (which, Serbia was quick to remind them, they had no authority to do, lacking full sovereignty). This despite the fact that a rump Yugoslavia would leave Bosnia without Croatia as their historic counterweight against Serbian dominance, and thus potentially in a much weakened position at the federal

level. Izetbegović understood that neither he nor Bosnians as a group had anything to gain from national chauvinist policies and only declared independence when it became clear that conflict was inevitable.

We have thus seen evidence of a changing national climate vis a vis national expression, and amidst this trend, the status of Bosniaks had risen in Yugoslavia, giving rise to an internal discussion in the Muslim community over the nature of its identity. Given a certain amount of contention among Muslims themselves as to what form and role Bosnian collective identity might take, and an only relatively recent recognition of Bosniak national identity, as well as the fact that Bosniaks – while a plurality in the Yugoslav republic of Bosnia – never constituted the majority there, Bosnian nationalism did not have the same driving force and momentum as Serb and Croat nationalism did prior to conflict.

#### MILOŠEVIĆ AND SERBIAN NATIONALISM

While a deteriorating economic situation and a decentralizing state can be seen as structural conditions that favored Yugoslavia's dissolution, the process's driving force and the flavor of its rhetoric most likely can be seen as the result of other actors' reactions to those of Serbia. And, by the late 1980's, this meant that Slobodan Milošević has been largely cast as history's villain in the 1990's Balkan debacle.

Beginning in the mid-to-late 70's, Serbia, along with the other republics, was taking more interest in the symbolic and mythological trappings of nationalism that ran in parallel with increased political autonomy. There was a revival of interest in Orthodox Christianity among ethnic Serbs, rumblings of concern over certain historical slights in the form of territorial 'losses' and a rehabilitation of the previously taboo legacy of the Četniks – Serbian nationalist anti-Communist guerrillas who had been enemies of Tito's partisans during World War II (Malcolm, 1996: 218). These were by no means widespread sentiments in the beginning, but nationalist elite intellectuals such as Vuk Drašković and Dobrica Ćosić began to be heard by a larger audience. In addition, an increasingly anti-Muslim public sentiment began to grow – due in large part to serious unrest in Kosovo (with a mainly Muslim, ethnic Albanian population, though a province of the republic of Serbia) steadily increasing from the early 1980's onward. One of the first public events that brought Serbian nationalism to the fore was the publication of 'Memorandum' by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. This report, while mainly

centered on an analysis of Yugoslavia's economic woes, also asserted that minority Serb populations in Yugoslavia were in danger from their neighbors of other ethnic groups. The Memorandum went so far as to describe moderate unrest among ethnic-Albanians in Kosovo as a "genocide of the Serbian population" there (Kaufman, 2001 :179).

This was the stage on which Slobodan Milošević rose rapidly to power, from a party apparatchik, eventually to total control over the Yugoslav and Serbian state apparatus. After a brief career in business, Milošević moved up in the Serbian Communist Party organization, from President of the City Committee of Belgrade's League of Communists in 1984, to Chairman of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia in 1986. According to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia's indictment, it was in 1987 that he broke from longstanding party policy and began "endorsing a Serbian nationalist agenda...[and] exploited a growing wave of Serbian nationalism in order to strengthen centralized rule in the SFRY [Yugoslavia]" (ICTY, 2001). The event that marked this shift was an orchestrated rally commemorating the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kosovo Pole, the heavily mythologized defeat of Serbian Prince Lazar to advancing Ottoman forces in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Milošević's speech, echoing themes from the Memorandum of the previous year, implied the Serbian nation was once again in danger of being overpowered by Muslims. The event was well-televised, and an orchestrated riot was touched off, in which Milošević publicly sided with Serbs against ethnic Albanian police. This gained him a good deal of public support throughout Serbia.

Milošević continued to gain power as he pursued a policy of threatening to expand Serbian territory and increase its sovereignty over territory already its own. In June 1990, he dissolved Kosovo's provincial assembly as part of his policy of restoring greater Serbian sovereignty over its territory. Under the constitution of 1974, Kosovo – a province of Serbia – had been devolved powers granting it an autonomous status tantamount to, but just short of, a full-fledged republic. He openly promoted a policy of aligning ethnic-Serb areas of Bosnia and Croatia with Serbia proper. In March 1991, Milošević threatened to annex ethnic Serb areas of Yugoslavia to Serbia if Croatia and Bosnia made any attempts to

further loosen Yugoslavia's Federal structure. The declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia followed three months later.

During a period of massive student protests in Belgrade and ambiguous public sentiment in Serbia, in March of 1991, Milošević urged Yugoslav Federal President Borisov Jović to declare a state of emergency. Milošević, at this time, was the President of Serbia, still nominally under Jović's authority. Jović declined, his resignation was forced, and Milošević later made a TV address stating he would no longer obey the Federal Presidency.

In parallel developments, ethnic Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia began to assert themselves against their republics' governments with Serbian support. Under the leadership of Radovan Karadžić, Bosnian Serbs established the SDS, a party with close links to Serbia. It was revealed in August, 1991, that the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), by this time at war with an independent Croatia and dominated by ethnic Serbs, was making ongoing delivery of arms to Serb communities in Bosnia (MAR, 2005a). Parallel governing institutions were established by ethnic Serbs in areas of Bosnia where they predominated, a region that eventually became known as Republika Srpska. In December 1991, Serbs in Croatia declared the independence of the Serb Republic of Krajina, an area that had been predominately Serb prior to the conflict and had been held by Serb forces since near the beginning of hostilities.

While the fortunes of Milošević and his fellow Serb nationalists waxed and waned in public opinion throughout his tenure in the political leadership, it is clear that fomenting suspicion and fear of non-Serbs was an integral part of their political program, even from the mid-1980s. Certainly, such sentiments did not find their genesis with Milošević, nor would they die after his ouster from office and death in ICTY custody. Whatever its origins, the unifying effect of well-established historical and symbolic concerns of ethnic Serbs, along with the ability of leaders to co-opt the state apparatus in service of nationalist aims, went a long way toward increasing the prevalence, and electoral success, of such attitudes.

## TUDJMAN AND CROATIAN NATIONALISM

As had been an ongoing concern of many Croats at the beginning of the first incarnation of Yugoslavia (in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century), by the 1970's, Yugoslav Croats began to see the Federal arrangements in Yugoslavia as an instrument of Serbian hegemony in a pluralistic disguise (Malcolm, 1996: 203). The so-called 'Croatian Spring' was an upwelling of Croatian nationalist sentiment that was fiercely cracked-down on by Yugoslav authorities in 1971.

Just as certain factions of the Serbian intelligentsia began to revive the memory of the World War II-era Chetniks, so Croatian nationalists began to invoke the Ustaše: a notoriously brutal nationalist paramilitary organization that was installed as head of a Nazi puppet regime over Croatia (and much of present-day Bosnia) in 1941. While Croatian nationalists in the '70s were not Ustaša sympathizers per se (some *would* be by the time of the outbreak of violence in the early '90s), neither did they condemn Ustaša atrocities, nor they did not go out of their way to assuage the fears of other ethnic groups (Malcolm, 1996: 214). For example, Croatian nationalists of the '70s adopted the *sahovnica*, a red and white checkered banner, as their emblem. It was a symbol used by previous Croatian national movements, but also a symbol strongly associated with Ustaša terror. The legacy of these historical fascist sympathizers, even among ardent nationalists, was certainly mixed, as is evident in the following quote from Croatian national hero and former President Franjo Tuđman: their regime was "not only a quisling organization and a Fascist crime, but was also an expression of the Croatian nation's historic desire for an independent homeland" (Binder, 1999).

Tuđman was keenly aware of this ambiguity, as he himself had fought with Tito's Partisans during World War II, against the likes of the Chetniks and Ustaša. He rose to the rank of General in the JNA, leaving service in the '60s to eventually become a professor of history. He became publicly critical of the Party and was eventually expelled from membership in 1967 for his increasingly vocal nationalism. He was imprisoned twice, in 1972 and 1981, for nationalist activities, becoming ever firmly entrenched as a dissident. Tuđman founded the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) in 1989, backed with funds garnered from the anti-Communist Croatian diaspora. He won the Croatian presidency in May 1990.

Mr. Tudjman personally did not balk from ethnically-charged statements. He confided his dislike and mistrust of Bosniaks to UK MP Paddy Ashdown in 1995, calling Izetbegović "an Algerian and a fundamentalist," and publicly saying: "Thank God, my wife is neither a Serb nor a Jew" (Binder, 1999). Moreover, upon winning a mandate from 1990 elections, he made every effort to faithfully execute the nationalist program he had campaigned on. He riled many Croatian Serbs – roughly 12% of the population at the time – by explicitly stating that Croatia was the state for members of the Croatian national/ethnic group and dismissing many Serbs from government jobs. It seems clear that this was a strong contributing factor to the eventual mobilization of Croatian Serbs and the formation of the Republic of Serb Krajina (ibid).

However, according to Kaufman, while Tudjman was exceedingly popular, by the time of the elections held in 1990, the Croatian leadership was more extreme in their nationalism than public opinion at large (Kaufman, 2001: 183).

From the brief sketches above, it seems likely that Bosnians would be the least pre-disposed to prejudicial attitudes prior to conflict. And, while the leadership of wartime Serbia and Croatia would most likely be very similar in their levels of antipathy toward ethnic others, it seems likely that there was broader public support for nationalist policies in Serbia, though this distinction is not entirely clear from the evidence.

## CHAPTER VI

## RESULTS

The following figure shows a graph of Mistrust1, sorted by age cohort (labeled 1-5, with 5 being the oldest) and Yugoslav republic (these data are drawn from the SKR data set of 1989). Higher values of Mistrust1 indicate higher levels of interethnic mistrust. It appears that, taken as a whole, Bosnia is least mistrustful, while Serbia is most mistrustful.

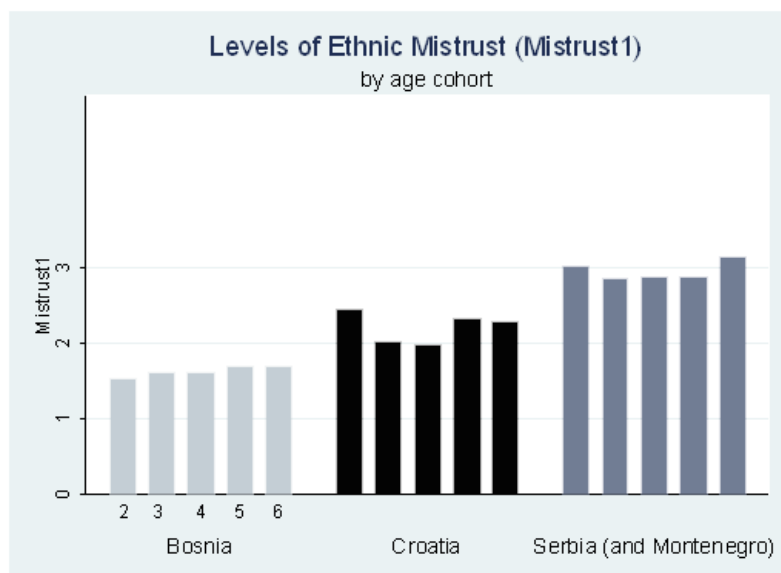


Figure 4

Among Bosnians, the chart shows a slight increase in mistrust as age increases, but this effect is very minor. In Croatia and Serbia (with Montenegro), however, there is a distinctly higher level of mistrust among the youngest cohort, those who are roughly between 18 and 23 at the time of measurement (Group #2, born 1966-1971), and relatively higher values for those in the oldest two groups (#5 and #6, those born before 1946) of respondents, those roughly 44 and older. In Serbia, the numbers

are more uniform, with a slightly relatively higher value for the youngest and oldest (respectively: 18-23 and 54 or older).<sup>11</sup>

The chart below (Figures 5), shows the percentage of respondents who answered that they would be unwilling to live next to a member of another ethnic group (Data from WVS). These responses are similarly grouped by age cohort, arranged right to left, in order of age. It seems from these graphs that Croatia is increasing over time in mistrustfulness, on the whole, while Bosnia is decreasing and Serbia remains roughly the same.

For Figure 5, I have added a younger cohort (Group #1), representing those born 1976-1985. In Croatia and Bosnia, there is an apparent trend, wherein the youngest group (#1) undergoes large shifts while the oldest group (#6) hardly shifts at all. It is worth pointing out that, both in Croatia and Bosnia, the youngest group is never the most mistrustful, but it *is* the group that seems to undergo the greatest change. In Serbia, however, in both years sampled, the youngest group has the lowest levels of mistrust of the age groups in a given year – and relatively low levels of mistrust in comparison with age groups in other countries in other years.

Two of the graphs seem to represent a neat unimodal distribution: Serbia and Bosnia in 2001, centering on groups # 5 and 3 respectively. In other words, in 2001, the most mistrustful Bosnians had been in their late 20s and 30s during the war and Serbians had been in their late 40s and 50s during the Bosnian and Croatian conflicts.

Looking at Table 3 below, one can see that contrary to expectations we find a barely significant, positive relationship between membership in the critical cohort and Mistrust1. This seems to indicate the possibility that younger people are more explicitly mistrustful of ethnic others than their elders. Furthermore, the insignificance of the interval-level age variable indicates that the relationship between age and Mistrust1 prior to conflict is most likely not linear, just as I would have expected post-conflict.

One can gauge the relative levels of trust between ethnic groups in the constituent republics of Yugoslavia, in reference to the excluded variable, the dummy variable for the Serbian province of

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<sup>11</sup> See Table 1 for full description of age groups in each cohort

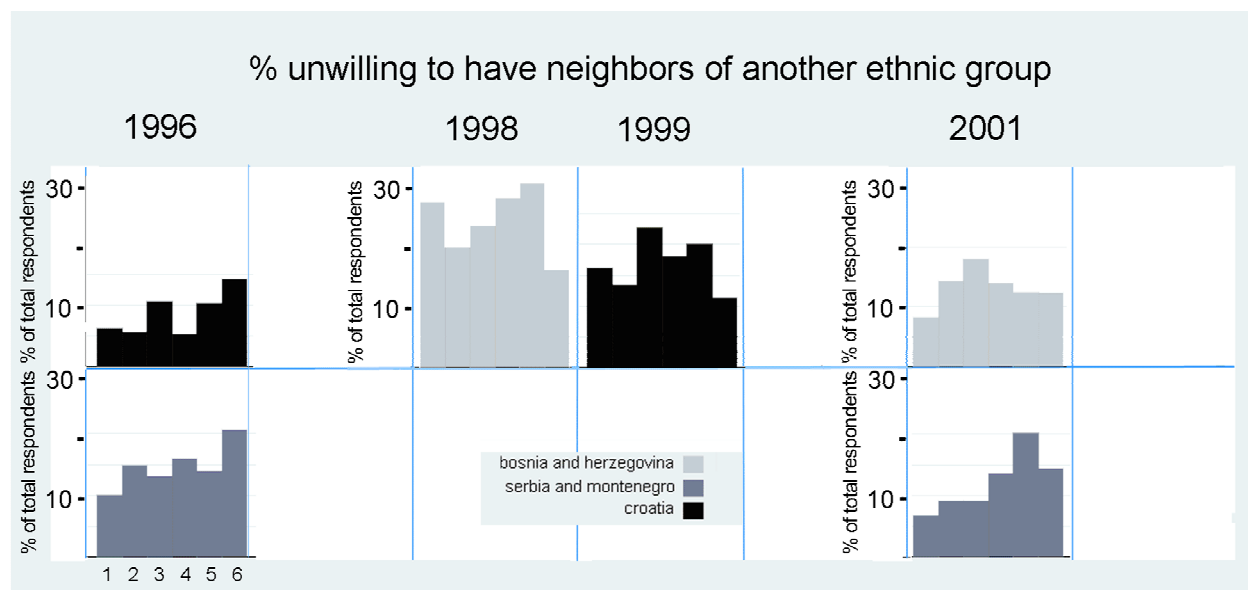


Figure 5

Table 2: Change in Attitudes over time

Country	Group #	Change in % mistrustful (ordered by absolute value)
Bosnia 1998 - 2001: 3 years	1	-19.5219
	5	-18.5917
	4	-14.4491
	3	-6.03346
	2	-5.9087
	6	-4.16851
Croatia 1996 - 1999: 3 years	4	12.7985
	3	12.1158
	1	9.895537
	5	9.661629
	2	7.794641
	6	-2.75462
Serbia 1996 - 2001: 5 years	5	6.326293
	6	-6.16023
	2	-5.74619
	3	-4.02212
	1	-3.28078
4	-2.33848	

Vojvodina. Even with control variables included, it seems Figure 1 accurately represented the overall relationship between the republics. It appears that Kosovans are by far the most distrustful of one another (which, given the progressively repressive actions of the Yugoslav state vis a vis Kosovo in the late '80s – far beyond what had been done elsewhere – this is not entirely surprising), Bosnians appear to be the least distrustful. (consistent with your predictions from the case study)

Table 3: Mistrust<sub>1</sub> (SKR)

	Yugoslavia 1989	
	Coefficient	P> z
Age	-0.0136	0.691
<b>critical cohort</b>	<b>0.0932</b>	<b>0.048</b>
square root of age	0.0231	0.562
<b>Bosnia</b>	<b>-0.5354</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>-0.1591</b>	<b>0.001</b>
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>0.3482</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Kosovo</b>	<b>1.3652</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>0.5879</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Religion: Catholic</b>	<b>0.3602</b>	<b>0.021</b>
<b>Religion: Orthodox</b>	<b>0.3194</b>	<b>0.039</b>
Religion: Muslim	0.0798	0.615
Religion: None	-0.0340	0.828
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>0.1636</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Belief in Afterlife?</b>	<b>0.2062</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Belief in God?</b>	<b>0.1897</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>regularly attends church</b>	<b>0.1426</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Marital Status: Unmarried	-0.0484	0.166
Marital Status: Divorced	-0.0193	0.763
Marital Status: Widowed	-0.0833	0.126
Education: Primary school	0.0026	0.969
<b>Education: High School</b>	<b>-0.1693</b>	<b>0.014</b>
<b>Education: post-High School</b>	<b>-0.3036</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Education: University</b>	<b>-0.3555</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Education: other	-0.1841	0.329
observations: 11,112		
pseudo r <sup>2</sup> : 0.0983		

One can see that religious beliefs (in god and an afterlife) and church attendance are significantly, and positively, related to the dependent variable, as are unemployment, as expected. It is unclear what conclusion to draw from the fact that religious faith and practice (in 1989) makes one more prone to

distrust for ethnic others, other than the possibility that those who are more religiously observant may also be more apt to strongly identify with their ethnic identity to the exclusion of others – Yugoslav national identity cleavages being almost entirely drawn along religious lines. Kunovich and Hodson (1999) argue that the connection between religiosity and ethnic intolerance is largely spurious, saying that the correlation disappears when the model controls for the individual's wartime experience and for measures of interethnic polarization caused by conflict.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, due to data limitations, a comparison with these results is not possible. Alternatively, that ethnic distrust, religiosity and a sense of external threat are all correlates of a general attitudinal dimension of social conservatism and communalism, often described in terms of a Right-Wing Authoritarianism index (Duckitt, 2003: 578-81).

Turning to the WVS data, we can see changes in attitudes over time. Having been collected at different times in different countries, there is no reliable means to compare between countries over time. As such, my analysis was conducted with six separate logit models: one per time period measured, per country.

Looked at as a whole, there are no clear trends across countries and time periods. Regarding the relationship between trust and age, a significant cohort effect is evident only in 1996 Serbia, whereas the "critical" age is only significant for 1996 Serbia and 2001 Croatia; the latter case cannot be taken into account, however, as it failed a chi-square test as a whole. As for 1996 Serbia, as predicted, there is a positive relationship between Critical Age and Mistrust<sub>2</sub>, indicating that those who were exposed to violence during a critical developmental period are more likely to be mistrustful of ethnic others. Further, as Age increases, Mistrust<sub>2</sub> diminishes, and from the significance – in this case – of the square root of Age, we can infer that mistrust drops precipitously following the critical age period, with relatively little change as Age reaches higher values.

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<sup>12</sup> For their model, Kunovich and Hodson had separate measures for one's nationalistic pride, one's willingness to extend rights to ethnic others, and one's level of trust for ethnic others

Table 4: Mistrust<sub>2</sub> (WVS)<sup>13</sup>

		Bosnia		Croatia		Serbia and Montenegro	
		1998	2001	1996	1999	1996	2001
		coeff.	coeff.	coeff.	coeff.	coeff.	coeff.
		(Std. Err)	(Std. Err)	(Std. Err)	(Std. Err)	(Std. Err)	(Std. Err)
Age cohort		0.0246 (0.3093)	-0.5918 (0.3945)	-0.3457 (0.4022)	<del>0.1204</del> <del>(0.3476)</del>	<b>-1.2966</b> <b>(0.2985)</b>	0.3940 (0.2764)
Critical cohort		0.0625 (0.3424)	-0.2414 (0.4226)	-0.4272 (0.5263)	<del>-0.8327</del> <del>(0.3753)</del>	<b>0.7710</b> <b>(0.3867)</b>	0.1063 (0.3697)
Square root of age		-0.0007 (0.4088)	0.6184 (0.5050)	0.6381 (0.5068)	<del>3.517</del> <del>(3.1663)</del>	<b>1.9808</b> <b>(.3910)</b>	-0.1341 (0.3811)
Gender		<b>0.5740</b> <b>(0.1976)</b>	-0.0915 (0.2352)	<b>0.6489</b> <b>(0.2826)</b>	<del>0.0845</del> <del>(0.2076)</del>	-0.2567 (0.2012)	<b>-0.4014</b> <b>(0.1896)</b>
Region		0.8890 (0.6038)	-0.6078 (0.5595)	N/A	N/A	0.1509 (0.2610)	<b>-1.3359</b> <b>(0.2072)</b>
Married?	<i>Unmarried</i>	-0.2212 (0.3235)	<b>-0.7492</b> <b>(0.3557)</b>	<b>0.8024</b> <b>(0.4129)</b>	<del>-0.1785</del> <del>(0.3227)</del>	-0.1343 (0.3370)	-0.2786 (0.3483)
	<i>Divorced</i>	-1.0711 (0.8377)	-1.4774 (1.0567)	0.7784 (0.6799)	<del>-0.6883</del> <del>(0.6364)</del>	-0.4321 (0.5144)	0.6627 (0.4040)
	<i>Widowed</i>	-0.4399 (0.4720)	-1.4774 (0.4722)	<b>1.0308</b> <b>(0.3992)</b>	<del>0.3968</del> <del>(0.4033)</del>	-0.4983 (0.3556)	-0.2956 (0.3265)
Size of R's town		<b>-0.2302</b> <b>(0.0485)</b>	-0.0658 (0.0486)	<b>-0.1964</b> <b>(0.0547)</b>	<del>-0.0644</del> <del>(0.0412)</del>	-0.0415 (0.041)	<b>-0.1413</b> <b>(0.0442)</b>
Attends Church?	<i>Daily</i>	<b>0.9098</b> <b>(0.3112)</b>	-0.5925 (0.4848)	-0.2531 (0.6228)	<del>0.6748</del> <del>(0.4187)</del>	-1.5314 (1.0782)	-0.5472 (0.7850)
	<i>Weekly</i>	<b>0.7002</b> <b>(0.2875)</b>	<b>0.9459</b> <b>(0.3391)</b>	-0.0286 (0.3595)	<del>0.6419</del> <del>(0.2709)</del>	<b>1.0608</b> <b>(0.4029)</b>	-0.5762 (0.4685)
	<i>Monthly</i>	0.4783 (0.2914)	<b>0.7652</b> <b>(0.3211)</b>	0.2837 (0.3701)	<del>0.3746</del> <del>(0.2989)</del>	0.1427 (0.3033)	0.1709 (0.3263)
	<i>Rarely</i>	0.3848 (0.3395)	-0.4304 (0.5151)	-0.7318 (0.4972)	<del>0.123</del> <del>(0.4504)</del>	<b>-0.8620</b> <b>(0.2765)</b>	0.3095 (0.2248)
	<i>Does not attend</i>	-0.5851 (0.6058)	0.0124 (0.6430)	-0.1717 (0.5423)	<del>0.2354</del> <del>(0.6136)</del>	<b>-0.8068</b> <b>(0.3290)</b>	0.1068 (0.3556)
Belief in God?		<b>0.7113</b> <b>(0.3616)</b>	1.0358 (0.7242)	-0.2526 (0.5429)	<del>0.6005</del> <del>(1.086)</del>	-0.4323 (0.2785)	-0.1201 (0.2794)
Belief in Afterlife?		0.3398 (0.2338)	0.0791 (0.2871)	0.1729 (0.2886)	<del>0.0018</del> <del>(0.2571)</del>	-0.0567 (0.2311)	0.1378 (0.2218)
Unemployed		-0.0245 (0.2448)	0.1935 (0.2887)	0.1219 (0.4528)	<del>-0.0523</del> <del>(0.3244)</del>	-0.0864 (0.3680)	0.2468 (0.2876)
Interview interest	<i>Some</i>	-0.1904 (0.1949)	0.4152 (0.2503)	-0.2343 (0.2873)	<del>0.2302</del> <del>(0.2132)</del>	0.1303 (0.2150)	-0.0845 (0.2053)
	<i>None</i>	0.0338 (0.3114)	<b>1.4782</b> <b>(0.3509)</b>	-0.1705 (0.4343)	<del>0.6295</del> <del>(0.3492)</del>	0.4915 (0.2664)	0.0459 (0.2642)
Religion	<i>Catholic</i>	-0.5222 (0.2879)	-0.5494 (0.3667)	-0.4120 (1.1040)	<del>1.0373</del> <del>(1.0579)</del>	-0.7386 (0.6835)	0.6040 (0.4711)
	<i>Orthodox</i>	0.5220 (0.5724)	1.6643 (0.5729)	Dropped	Dropped	1.1557 (0.4494)	<b>0.8125</b> <b>(0.3135)</b>

<sup>13</sup> NB: the regression model for Croatia, 2001 failed to pass a chi-square test, thus none of the results are significant; Those figures in bold are significant to the .05 level.

	<i>Other</i>	<b>1.6787</b>	<b>2.3472</b>	0.8321	<del>Dropped</del>	1.1809	0.0515
		<b>(0.6790)</b>	<b>(1.0881)</b>	(1.5576)		(1.2049)	(1.0895)
Constant		-2.2190	-5.3890	-4.4703	<del>-159.15</del>	-10.2489	-2.0870
		(1.7608)	(2.3719)	(2.3363)	<del>(141.14)</del>	(1.6967)	(1.7577)
# of observations		702	802	771	<del>700</del>	910	1424
pseudo r-squared		0.1082	0.1788	0.0851	<del>0.0423</del>	0.1106	0.1083

Though it does not constitute a trend per se, weekly church attendance and the size of the respondent's town seem to be the most reliable indicators of a respondent's level of interethnic trust, the former being negatively related to  $Mistrust_2$  and the latter positively related. (can you draw any conclusions for your hypotheses?)

Unfortunately there is a lack of data for many of the cases in our analysis. As such, in the interest of piecing together the information that is available, I have provided below an analysis of one specific sub-set of the data that provides a slightly closer look at the relationship between violence and attitudes. The WVS data collected in Croatia in 1999 provides a variable for administrative regions within Croatia (these are called *Županije*, roughly corresponding to American counties), so that I can determine to what extent certain differences in attitudes are regionally circumscribed. I can, for example, see if respondents in areas that experienced heavier violence are consequently more likely to be mistrustful of ethnic others.

The map below<sup>14</sup> shows the counties in Croatia that are statistically significant in relation with the dependent variable. I have overlaid on this map a rough approximation of the area under control of Serb forces in the break-away, self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Krajina, where the majority of the fighting occurred. The chart suggests a positive relationship between the violence of conflict and negative attitudes about ethnic others. This does not directly address the specific hypothesis that I have laid out for this study. However, it buttresses my general claim that interethnic violence gives rise to negative inter-ethnic attitudes. The concurrence is not perfect, but it is suggestive, particularly in the county where the

<sup>14</sup> The map is a rough approximation, adapted from two sources: a political map (c. 2000) compiled by the US Central Intelligence Agency (Accessed through the Perry-Castañeda Map Collection of the University of Texas, <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/croatia.html>), and a graphic from "The changing shape of Yugoslavia (1815-1999)" by Philippe Rekacewicz and Cécile Marin. January 2000. *Le Monde Diplomatique* <http://mondediplo.com/maps/yugoslaviamdvd49>.

short-lived Republic's capital was located, Knin, as well as in the eastern Slavonia region (near Osijek and Vukovar) that was, until 1998, under the administrative control of the UN's UNTAES mission.

By way of empirical test of my hypotheses I have presented a series of analytical approaches, each of which provides a different angle on the extant data. In the chapter that follows, I will discuss my results and offer some tentative conclusions based on my findings.

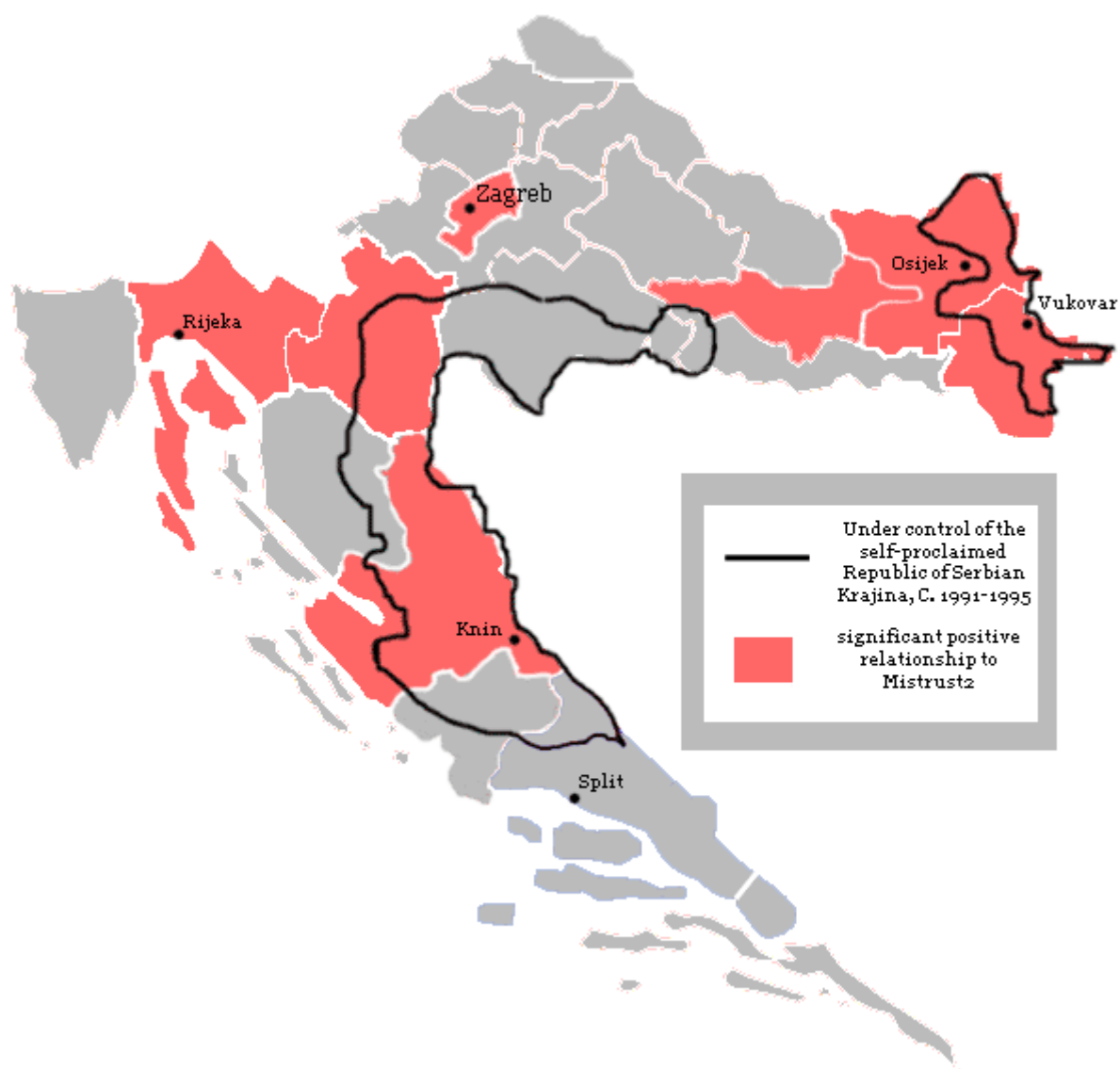


Figure 6: Croatia, 1999 (WVS)

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis above I have attempted to explain distinct patterns of variation in intergroup attitudes between three of the successor states to Yugoslavia following the conflict(s) of the early- to mid-1990s. While antecedent political culture and elite rhetorical strategies can partially explain some of the differences I have attempted show – through quantitative analyses – that there are important individual-level factors that might not only serve to differentiate individual-level outcomes, but also aggregate, national-level outcomes as well., Namely, I have argued that trauma, as a result of exposure to violence, can account for divergent patterns of attitudes among respondents, as exposure to conflict is not equally distributed throughout the region. Further, I argue for a possible age-cohort effect in response to conflict-related trauma. Due to data limitations, I have been unable to directly test the relationship between attitudes and exposure to violence and thus have used age as our primary independent variable.

My expectations were contradicted by the empirics in nearly every test. Membership in the critical cohort was found to be significant in the first model – from 1989, prior to conflict – and *not* significant in most other cases (with the exception of post-Dayton Serbia, in 1996). This is surprising in light of my underlying expectation that the experience of conflict-related trauma would worsen the interethnic attitudes of the youngest people of the former Yugoslavia. I did not expect to find that the attitudes of the young were already positively related to mistrust prior to the outbreak of organized violence. This finding seems to suggest the possibility that young people may be inherently more inclined to view ethnic others with suspicion, but that experience of conflict largely makes this distinction fade away. It is also possible that, prior to the actual outbreak of violence, but during a period of rising interethnic tensions, it is precisely young people who are most interested in asserting their national identity. There is strong evidence that adolescents and young adults feel most acutely a sense of alienation and a desire to seek out an identity for themselves (Joshi and O'Donnell, 2003). For example, people of

this age are most likely to join criminal gangs and armed rebel groups, for example. Research drawing from the tradition of Social Identity Theory also emphasizes a propensity for strong in-group identifiers to attribute less benign motives to outsiders. These two insights taken together may help explain why we see a positive relationship prior to conflict, across all groups and all republics.

With regard to Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3, I cannot reject the null hypothesis for any post-conflict cases but post-Dayton Serbia-Montenegro. In this case, however, there are some interesting findings. Not only do I find that members of the critical cohort are significantly more prejudicial than the others at this time and place, but that older age more generally correlates with a decrease in prejudice. The question then remains: Why in this case, and why not in others?

As for the question of why we might observe this trend in Serbia in 1996 and not 1998 – In 1998, Serbia was once again gearing up for war. At the time, Serbia and Montenegro comprised the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – a reconstituted rump Yugoslavia. Serbia's leader was ratcheting up violence with an as-yet coalescing guerilla force known as the Kosovo Liberation army that had not been party to the earlier conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia. Compared to just a few years previous, when Milošević had negotiated an end to hostilities in Bosnia in 1995, with a chastened, sober national mood. In 1998, the war machine had begun to roll again.

I thus suggest that, in defeat, the age cohort effect will be present. But when one's national goals have been achieved, or seem to be easily achievable, the effect will not be present. There is a good deal of evidence that a state engaging in war may expect a boost in its public's national pride and support for the government, ie the 'rally-round-the-flag' effect (Baum, 2002). This public support, however, may not last long, and is contingent on many factors, not least of which may be the perceived competence and success of the government's leadership in achieving national goals (Richards et al, 1993). Social Identity Theorists argue that a powerful determinant of the nature and intensity of an individual's identification with a group, along with related out-group attitudes, is the human drive for positive self-regard – in other words, the desire to see oneself in a positive light (Tajfel 1982). As has been said above, young people (adolescents in particular) crave solidarity in groups as a source of well-being to a much greater degree

than people of other age groups (Joshi and O'Donnell, 2003). In an atmosphere where national pride is low in the aggregate, adolescents may feel this deficit more deeply than adults who have already securely developed personal identities. On the other hand, youth who are still developing socially, still developing their sense of personal and group identity, may depend more on asserting their national-level identity. Social Identity Theory also suggests that a higher intensity of identification with an in-group has a tendency to find an outlet in ethnic mistrust, or even to be a means for achieving relative in-group well-being (Tajfel, 1982). So, in situations of national defeat, we might expect young people to be differentially affected, due to their higher reliance on national-level identification for their positive self-regard. 1996 Serbia represents the only case where national pride has reason to be low. Bosnian and Croatian national leaders had at least partially achieved their ends, and achieved national sovereignty. Even Bosnian Serb leaders were able to achieve a qualified victory, in the division of the new state of Bosnia and Herzegovina into a two-entity federation with substantial autonomy for Serb-held lands. But, while Serbia had suffered a great loss in 1996, by 1998, national pride had again surged in anticipation of a victory that would put the long-standing symbolic issue of Kosovo to rest – the issue, it should be noted – that helped catapult Milošević to power in the first place. Of course, in order to test this hypothesis, further research would be necessary.

With regard to Hypothesis 4, given the data available, I can make only qualified conclusions. However, with that caveat in mind, there does not seem to be a clear trend with regard to the change in attitude of young people in the countries studied. In fact, while Serbian youngsters were relatively equally mistrustful from 1996 to 2001 (with a change of -3.28), the critical cohort in Bosnia showed the greatest change (-19.52) between 1998 and 2001.

#### LIMITATIONS

Any discussion of the results of this study must necessarily include a disclosure of its limitations. Most notably, the precision with which I was able to test certain relevant hypotheses and the confidence with which I can make inferences from the results above have been severely limited by a poverty of data. As the nature of the present research program is necessarily interdisciplinary – spanning the fields of

public health, psychology and comparative politics, there are few sources of comparable, individual-level data on rates of exposure to conflict, traumatization and intergroup attitudes. There are promising developments in data gather along these lines – most notably the Southeast European Social Survey Project (based on the SKR questionnaire used above), which touches on many of the questions of interest here.

The work already done by Sekulic and colleagues using restricted datasets is promising for the project's full public release (2006). I have used the World Values Survey which is likely the most complete and comprehensive survey of global attitudes widely available. It provides the closest approximation of the information this project requires. However, there is a great deal of comparability lost between countries and years due to inconsistencies in how sub-national regions and ethnic groups are coded, as well as due to the large amount of data that is simply missing. I have made a concerted effort to verify that cases missing data were not selected along certain categorical lines (i.e., for certain regions or ethno-religious groups) and could find no such pattern that would seem to systematically bias my analysis.

Certainly, the lack of a single data set with cross-country observations both prior to and following conflict presents methodological challenges. Nevertheless, I have been careful to select dependent and independent variable that I believe to be sufficiently comparable so as to draw tentative conclusions. While, for example, I would concede that a direct comparison between  $Mistrust_1$  and  $Mistrust_2$  in terms of intensity would be inappropriate (as I believe the nature of the survey items makes one seem a more extreme statement than the other). I nevertheless contend that their substantive similarity allows me to draw conclusions from the relative levels of each dependent variable, for example, among the different countries in each year.

Additionally, there is some grounds for concern that, due to the potential ambiguity of the wording of the survey item that yields  $Mistrust_2$ , the variable itself may not be entirely reliable across different countries and at different times. While this is no doubt a limitation to the standard of rigor with which the current study may be pursued I would argue that it is nevertheless valid for our purposes.  $Mistrust_2$  may

not perfectly match other potential measures of interethnic trust, but it, at very least, serves to capture a vital element of ingroup/outgroup dichotomy, based on historical national origin, which likely serves as the underpinning for nationalist chauvinism and prejudice. While I would argue that the measurement is even more precise than the latter contention would indicate, this more loose interpretation, I believe, would prove minimally adequate for our present purposes.

Furthermore, even in light of the various problems derived from a lack of perfect data, I believe this study has provided a venue for a worthwhile exercise in theory-building, as well as a foray into somewhat uncharted empirical waters.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In an ideal experiment, I would additionally be interested in seeing more precise measurement of duration, intensity and location of conflict and displacement. The addition of geographic data – as I attempted in a somewhat crude form above – could add precision to similar analyses.

Regarding the broader implications of a prospective interdisciplinary research program along the lines that I have begun to sketch here, it is my belief that much of the contemporary approach to peacemaking and peacebuilding neglects the micro-foundations of patterns of collective hostility. While formalized structures of peacemaking are important to beginning the peacebuilding process, more subtle reconstructive surgery is necessary to heal the wounds of protracted intra-state conflict. While the imposition of greater stability, prosperity and government provision of services can likely help instill a greater sense of collective well-being and trust, more direct, systematic efforts at re-establishing inter-communal peace may prove necessary. What is lacking however, is solid, empirical investigation of the relationships between change in mass-level intergroup sentiments, the experience of intergroup conflict and various mechanisms designed to - in a sense – counteract such negative experiences. While efforts such as public transitional justice campaigns and truth and reconciliation commissions are laudable, it is as yet unclear what they might accomplish, how most effectively to accomplish their goals, and what the reasonable scope and duration of such events might be. Particularly, these institutions, for which proponents make claims based on psychological mechanisms lead to change in social and political

behavior, the links between micro-foundations and macro- phenomena must be better understood. It has been my hope that this project might become a part of that larger effort.

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