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Editors

# War, Community, and Social Change

Collective Experiences  
in the Former Yugoslavia

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organised the general logistics of the process. Marina Franic-Kadic was the PRISM project leader for TRACES and provided first-hand documentation of the fieldwork for the study's overall methodological report (Spini et al. 2011).

Moreover, as a result of new collaborations developed as part of the Scientific Co-operation between Eastern Europe and Switzerland (SCOPEs, SNF fund No 100012-109623, Prof. Dario Spini, main applicant; Guy Elcheroth, project coordinator), we were able to further develop the project together with Prof. Dinka Corkalo Biruski (University of Zagreb, Croatia), Prof. Vera Cubela Adoric (University of Zadar, Croatia), and Profs. Gordana Jovanovic and Mirjana Vasovic (University of Belgrade), who were also co-applicants in this SCOPEs project. This collaboration resulted in the integration and development of new research perspectives and led to a more thoughtful analysis of the contextual factors involved in our research.

We must also underline the role of our colleagues from the University of Lausanne. Jean-Marie Le Goff has been very helpful in designing the life calendars. We are indebted to the *Centre for Life Course and Life Styles Studies* (PaVie Center, Universities of Lausanne and Geneva) and to the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research LIVES for their financial assistance during the project's starting and final phase respectively. We must thank Tatiana Marcacci for her continuous support with all administrative questions. Within the PaVie Center, we have benefited from the thoughtful advice and support of our colleagues Prof. Dominique Joye, Prof. Eric Widmer, Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, and Francesco Giudici. Finally, we would like to thank our colleagues Prof. Thomas David, Prof. Alain Clemence and Prof. Willem Doise for their advice and support during the course of this project. At a more advanced stage, Profs. Daniel Bar-Tal, Sabina Cehajic, and Dusko Sekulic further enriched the project's international network with their experience and expertise, as reflected in their more theoretically oriented contributions to the present book.

This book is not a research text intended for researchers only. The scholars who were involved in the making of this book are committed to conducting research that is relevant to society, and our work together has generated a dialogue with individuals from the media as well as the political and humanitarian arenas. This dialogue has supplemented our academic work with direct, on-the-ground experience and attention to practical issues. This willingness to discuss applied and contextualised issues publicly was visible in the diverse public lectures and exhibition activities that were financed by the *Anthropos* fund at the University of Lausanne and co-ordinated with a great deal of commitment by Sabina Rondic first, and then by Anne-Romaine Favre Zuppinger. Some participants in these dialogues were also willing to write down their thoughts as privileged witnesses of the processes in which we were interested: Svetlana Broz, Ivana Macek, and Florence Hartmann. Their texts are presented here as *Voices*.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all of the participants who devoted their time to reporting their experiences and expressing their opinions via TRACES. We dedicate this book to them: all of the people from the countries from the former Yugoslavia who survived the wars and the rapid social changes in the region and who were willing to share lessons on how communities can possibly face, resist or overcome collective violence.

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## Chapter 3

# Ethnic Intolerance as a Product Rather than a Cause of War: Revisiting the State of the Art

Dusko Sekulic

### The Myth of Ethnic Hatred

Among the most popular interpretations of the dissolution of Yugoslavia is the theory of “ethnic hatred”. This theory assumes that the breakup and accompanying war were the result of deeply embedded mistrust and hatred between the different ethno-national communities that lived together in Yugoslavia. In this view, Yugoslavia is seen as an “artificial creation”—a cage imposed on its inhabitants, who took the first opportunity to eliminate it. In the political parlance of that orientation, Yugoslavia was called “Versailles Yugoslavia”, implying that it was artificially created at the negotiating table after the end of World War I.<sup>1</sup> The peculiar pattern of diffusion of this theory should be emphasised. It was widespread among journalists, popular writers and politicians but less present in academic circles and among professional researchers. One of the main proponents of this theory was Robert Kaplan (1993), who considered the peoples of the Balkans unusually wild and predisposed to violence. For him, the Balkans were even the source of Nazi hatred: “Nazism, for instance, can claim Balkan origins. Among the flophouses of Vienna, a breeding ground of ethnic resentments close to the southern Slavic world, Hitler learned how to hate so

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<sup>1</sup> The problem with this interpretation is that Yugoslavia was created in 1918 and the Versailles conference began in 1919. It is impossible for a later event to influence an earlier one. Clearly, Yugoslavism was an ideological force that was already in operation in the nineteenth century and that culminated in the creation of the Yugoslav state (Djilas 1993). However, that Yugoslavia was not “artificially” created does not mean that it had universal support or that it was created democratically. In that sense, it is possible to find the seeds of Yugoslavia’s destruction in the elite policies that created it (see Banac 1984; Ramet 2006, especially Chap. 2).

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infectiously". Kaplan was inspired by another author, Rebecca West (1964),<sup>2</sup> whose earlier accounts of her travels through Yugoslavia can be described as a specific form of "Orientalism", in that she depicted herself as surrounded by strange and bloodthirsty people. Kaplan sees ethnic hatred as deep-seated and the Balkans as the seed of all European evils:

Twentieth-century history came from the Balkans. Here men have been isolated by poverty and ethnic rivalry, dooming them to hate. The politics has been reduced to the level of near anarchy that from time to time in history has flowed up the Danube into central Europe.

The negativity of the published reviews<sup>3</sup> of these books was inversely proportional to the books' influence in the public arena. The theory of ethnic hatred was accepted and promulgated by many politicians, including then-US President Bill Clinton. His vice-president, Al Gore (1995), characterised the situation as "... a tragedy that has been unfolding for a long time, some would say 500 years." John Major, speaking in the House of Commons on 23 June 1993, explained the disintegration as the result of the lid on ancient hatreds being lifted after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

There are many problems with the "ancient hatred" theory. Ramet (2005) provides a compelling enumeration of its flaws. Here, I will simply summarise the core of her critiques. First, as we know from Clifford Geertz (1964), linguistic choices are important; ideology is based on the symbolic power of words. The word "ancient" communicates that ethnic hatred has a long history. However, the important question remains: what does the term "ancient" truly mean? If we conventionally take that "ancient" signifies the period before the fall of Rome in 476, then Serbs and Croats were not even in the Balkans during "ancient" times. How, then, is it possible to describe their hatred as "ancient"?

To paraphrase Ramet (2004), it does not make sense to assume that relations among peoples of the Yugoslav area were marked by an inherent hostility that would make them different from, for example, relations between Germans and French. As Noel Malcolm (1994) stated in his book on Bosnia:

... the political history of late twentieth-century Bosnia has not been determined by what happened in the thirteenth or eighteenth centuries. Commentators who like to give some hastily-assembled historical authority to their writings can always pick out a few bloody episodes from the past and say: 'It was ever thus'. One could perform the same exercise with, for instance, the history of France, picking out the religious wars of the sixteenth century, the barbarity of the St Bartholomew's Day massacre, the frequent regional rebellions, the Fronde, the brutal treatment of the Huguenots in 1685, the appalling violence of mass-murder which followed the French Revolution, the instability of nineteenth-century politics, even the whole history of collaboration and resistance in the second world war. But if a number of foreign-backed politicians and military commanders began bombarding Paris with heavy

<sup>2</sup> Kaplan writes, "My guide was a deceased woman whose living thoughts I found more passionate and exacting than any male writer's could be. I would rather have lost my passport and money than my heavily thumbed and annotated copy of *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*" (Kaplan 1993, p. 8).

<sup>3</sup> One of the reviewers of Kaplan's book wrote, "... unimpressed by his ignorance of local languages and history, he has cobbled together *Balkan Ghosts*, a dreadful mix of unfounded generalizations, misinformation, outdated sources, personal prejudices and bad writing" (Cooper 1993, p. 592).

artillery tomorrow, we would not sit back and say that it was just inevitable consequence of 'ancient French hatreds'. (Malcolm 1994)

Because the use of the term "ancient" creates the illusion that ethnic hatreds have persisted over a long history, it also suggests that they are so deeply ingrained that they cannot be changed. They can be suppressed, or, in Major's words, the "lid" can be put on them, but nothing else can be done. In this manner, the notion that ethnic hatreds are "ancient" distracts the reader from examining the relevant evidence and the conduct of contemporary actors.

What explains the popularity of that "theory"? As is usually the case, the popularity of the theory does not depend on its explanatory power, but on its capacity to satisfy the ideological needs of important constituencies or publics. We can detect two important constituencies whose interests are reflected in ethnic hatred theory. First, the protagonists: nationalist leaders and followers like to see their actions as inevitable or as a reflection of some historical necessity. For example, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman explained that Serbs and Croats belong to two different civilisations (Croats to the West and Serbs to the East, being similar to Turks and Albanians) and therefore, regardless of a common language and other similarities, they cannot live in the same state (Voirst 1991). The second constituency consisted of leaders of Western countries: they could justify their inaction by the notion that nothing could be done because the Balkan people's behaviours are motivated by deeply ingrained hatred. If a conflict had been developing for 500 years, then any intervention would be a waste of resources.

This explanation is also satisfactory to the Western public because it plays on supposed differences between the "wild Balkan people" and the "civilised" West. The atrocities and bloody events sustain the image of the wild Balkans as very different from civilised Europe. This image of difference is functional in erecting a wall between the "civilised world" and the "rest of the world". If the Balkan people are so different and wild, the feeling of moral obligation to intervene to help stop atrocities is diminished as compared with a situation in which the Balkan people were perceived as "equally civilised".

### War and Ethnic Intolerance: A Temporal Comparison

Let us now turn to the empirical verification (or rejection) of "ethnic hatred theory". From the standpoint of empirical science, two types of indicators can be used: behaviour and attitudes. I will concentrate on attitudes, but I should first say a few words about behaviour. If "ancient hatred" theory were correct, then we could expect that regardless of the authoritarian (or totalitarian) nature of the Yugoslav regime, the supposed "suppressed animosities" would find a way to explode. If we look at India, for example, we can see that in spite of central government policies of Hindu-Muslim coexistence and accommodation, there are periodic outbursts of "communal" violence. In addition, clashes between the Han Chinese and Uighurs in China's Xinjiang province are an example of persistent ethnic tension under an authoritarian regime.

These examples illustrate that if intense animosities exist, governments (whether democratic, as in India, or authoritarian, as in China) cannot prevent periodic outbursts of violence. Obviously, I leave aside the question of whether Hindu-Muslim animosities in India or Han-Uighur animosities in China are truly “ancient”. What is important for the argument is simply that governments are not in a position to prevent inter-ethnic violence if the underlying animosity is sufficiently strong. However, there were no such outbursts in the former socialist Yugoslavia, with the exception of Kosovo.

In the absence of violent events, it is difficult to justify the argument that the government suppressed “ancient hatreds”. That said, I do not deny the ideological importance of the “national question” for party policies or the presence of nationalism as an ideology and worldview. What is noticeable is the absence of “hate crimes” and of inter-ethnic conflict at the level of villages or cities. If inter-ethnic tensions eventually rose, it was more the result of a top-down spread of inter-republican party conflict than it was a spontaneous outburst of ethnic violence.<sup>4</sup> To conclude, nothing in the behaviour of national groups in the former Yugoslavia (with the exception of Kosovo) indicated that suppressed animosity was waiting to explode.

The second set of indicators involves attitudes. In the relatively open climate of the former socialist Yugoslavia, beginning in the 1980s, a large number of surveys asked questions about ethno-national relations and about beliefs and attitudes (see Sekulic et al. 2004, for an overview). “Ancient hatred” theory would predict the presence of high intolerance, nationalism, or ethnic exclusivism *before* the outbreak of the wars accompanying the dissolution of Yugoslavia. However, one of the main findings of our research is that the rise of ethnic intolerance (or exclusivism) actually *followed* the outbreak of war in the former Yugoslavia.

To take the example of Croatia, average intolerance across four questions<sup>5</sup> (on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 5 means highest intolerance) was 2.86 in 1985, 2.78 in 1989, 3.45 in 1996, and 3.11 in 2003 (Sekulic et al. 2006). For the whole of the former Yugoslavia (without Slovenia, which was not included in the 2003 study), the picture is the same. Simkus and Listhaug (2008) constructed a similar scale of five items.<sup>6</sup> They used a dataset from the Consortium of the Sociological Institutes for 1989/1990 and compared it with their own data from the South European Social Surveys. Results for ethnic groups by country at the two time points are shown in Fig. 3.1.

<sup>4</sup> Similarly, rising Serbian-Croatian tensions in Croatia in 1971 were already the result of party policies rather than their cause, according to Bilandzic (1999).

<sup>5</sup> The four items were: (1) Among nations, it is possible to create cooperation but not full trust; (2) A man can feel completely safe only when the majority belongs to his nationality; (3) Without a leader, a nation is like a man without a head; and (4) Nationally mixed marriages are necessarily more unstable than others.

<sup>6</sup> Three items on mixed marriages, feelings of safety among co-nationals, and the possibility of trust and cooperation are the same as mentioned in the previous footnote. The two different items are: (a) Nationality should be a main factor in choosing a spouse; and (b) It is best that villages, towns, and cities be composed of only one nationality.

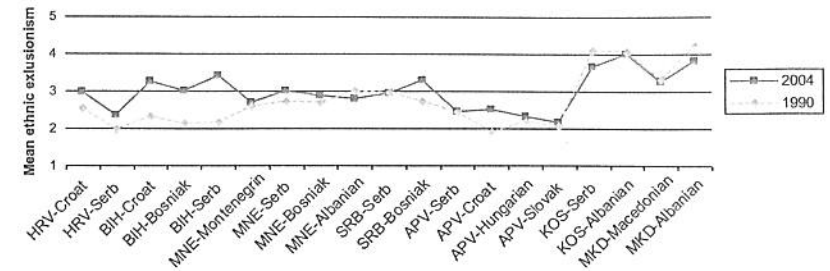


Fig. 3.1 Means for the Exclusionism Scale by country or region and ethnic group in 1990 and 2004. (Source: Simkus and Listhaug (2008))

The main conclusion is that ethnic intolerance increased in Croatia and in most other parts of the former Yugoslavia after the war. The exceptions, as Simkus and Listhaug (2008) conclude, are the communities in which intolerance was already very high in 1990, notably in Macedonia and in Kosovo. I would add that within this overall pattern, several other explanatory variables are hidden. It appears that the increase is strongest in the areas where the violence was most intense: Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The comparison between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina is telling. Before the war, these were the most tolerant places in the former Yugoslavia. However, after the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina became one of the most *intolerant* places, whereas Vojvodina remained among the most tolerant places. The only plausible explanation for this difference is that Bosnia and Herzegovina was the theatre of the worst inter-ethnic violence and atrocities, to which the events in Vojvodina cannot be compared. When we analyse the difference between ethnic groups *within* Vojvodina, we can also reach some interesting conclusions. Namely, the greatest increase in intolerance is observed among Croats (1.9–2.5). No change can be detected among Serbs, and only a subtle change can be detected among Hungarians (2.2–2.3). This pattern is partially explainable by the different recent histories of these groups within the region. Although Vojvodina was not a theatre of war, an ethnic threat was present in the region. During the 1990s, between 50,000 and 100,000 Hungarians and about 45,000 Croats were driven from their homes in the area, according to Ramet (2002). This experience appears to have increased ethnic exclusionism among Croats (but not Hungarians). Comparatively, the Serbian majority, who were not exposed to similar threats, did not change their attitudes. Similarly, if we look at Serbia proper, which was the only part of Yugoslavia without inter-ethnic violence on its own territory,<sup>7</sup> we can see that the levels of exclusionism did not change. The same holds for Serbs in Vojvodina, but not for the local minorities. Although no open war took place in the territory of Vojvodina, the surrounding and direct threats to minorities by extremists increased their intolerance.

<sup>7</sup> Actually, the war was waged from the air by NATO, but there were no ground operations conducted by members of other ethno-national communities.



Finally, in Montenegro, the internal Serbian-Montenegrin conflict and external violence across the Croatian border appear to have exercised a detrimental influence on ethnic tolerance among the Serb minority.

These variations in the increase of exclusionist attitudes in the post-war period are very difficult to reconcile with the ethnic hatred theory. One prediction that could be derived from the theory is an increase in exclusivist attitudes as the result of the removal of political pressure. In the socialist period, which was characterised by the "brotherhood and unity" ideology, there was political pressure against expressing nationally intolerant attitudes. With the fall of the communist parties, this pressure disappeared, and people could express their "real" attitudes after the political transition. If this explanation were true, we would expect a uniform rise in "suppressed" intolerant attitudes and ethnic exclusionism. However, this was clearly not the case.

The variations in the increases in exclusionary attitudes also preclude another explanation. It could be argued that after the fall of communism and the rise of nationalist parties (or the transformation of the former communist parties into nationalist parties, as in Serbia and Montenegro), social pressure turned in the opposite direction, towards *more* ethnic exclusivism propagated by the mass media (see Thompson 1999). However, in Serbia, the media were (at least) as vitriolic as they were in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but exclusivist attitudes did not rise in Serbia. It is clear that neither the disappearance of old political pressure nor the appearance of a new kind of media propaganda can explain the observed changes.

The most meaningful explanation refers to the war events themselves and a feeling of threat that was unevenly distributed among different nationalities in different territories of the former Yugoslavia. Collective experiences of violence and threat created an increase in exclusionary attitudes. The largest relative increase in intolerance happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where exclusionary attitudes reached levels as high as in Kosovo and Macedonia. The level of exclusionary attitudes in Kosovo and Macedonia did not change substantially, but remained extremely high.

At first glance, it could be argued that Kosovo and Macedonia provide positive evidence for ethnic hatred theory because intolerant attitudes were already high there in 1990. However, in Kosovo, ethnic clashes had already occurred *before* 1990, whereas Macedonia had witnessed important demographic change (an argument to which I will turn later). The wave of unrest and demonstrations began in Kosovo as early as 1981, when the region became an arena of rising interethnic conflict and confrontations (Bilandzic 1985). Whereas, for the other parts of the former Yugoslavia, the 1990–2004 comparison can be treated as a comparison between the situations before and after violent conflict, for Kosovo, 1990 was already the "after" point. The higher intolerance observed in Kosovo in 1990 can thus be interpreted as the result of earlier concrete unrest.

From the foregoing, we can draw two main conclusions:

1. Exclusionary attitudes were not high before armed conflict, so the outbreak of violence itself cannot be explained by these attitudes. However, exclusionary attitudes rose after the violence as its consequence. The causal arrow does not go from intolerance to violence, but from violence to intolerance.

2. Explanations of the rise in exclusionary attitudes that point to decreased pressure not to express such attitudes as a consequence of the demise of socialism are not corroborated. The highly variable increase in exclusionary attitudes is more meaningfully explained by the various events that occurred across different parts of the former Yugoslavia than by the rather uniform ascendance of nationalist parties to power and the diffusion of their exclusivist propaganda.

### Theoretical Approaches to Ethnic Intolerance and Heterogeneity

Thus far, I have discussed various explanations of the short-term changes in exclusionist attitudes from the end of the former Yugoslavia to the post-war period. Now, I will address the issue of how to explain cross-sectional and probably more deeply ingrained variations in exclusionism and tolerance that predated the events of the 1990s. I will attempt to find a theoretical framework that explains this variation.

#### Contact Hypothesis

Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis claims that under specific circumstances, contact between the members of different groups will reduce prejudice.<sup>8</sup> Allport (1954) formulated his hypothesis as a counter-position to the assimilationist paradigm that prevailed in ethnic studies during his time. For example, one proponent of assimilation theory, Robert Ezra Park (1914), stated that contact among racially and ethnically different groups passes through four stages. In the first stage, groups come in contact through migration. In the second stage, groups engage in competition, which is often accompanied by conflict. This competition occurs within the framework of laws and customs and is restrained by them. In the third stage, accommodation emerges. Park asserted that even within an oppressive system such as slavery, intimate and personal relations among groups develop and temper the most sinister aspects of the system. One indicator of accommodation during slavery in the southern USA was, according to Park, that the number of slaves granted freedom increased steadily despite legislation and customs that did not support such a practice.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, in Park's fourth stage, assimilation occurs and differences between groups are erased.

Although Park recognised variations in the speed of assimilation between groups—for example, African immigrants assimilated more slowly than European immigrants did—he was vague about explaining such differences. His main argument was that the process of assimilation is progressive and irreversible. We can

<sup>8</sup> Allport formulated this theory in his famous book, *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954). The first formulations of the contact hypothesis in modern sociology were made in 1947; however, by Robin Williams in *Reduction of Intergroup Tension* and by Watson in *Action for Unity*.

<sup>9</sup> One might argue that Park's "third stage" anticipates Allport's contact hypothesis.



conclude that his theory reflected the popular belief in America at the time that over several generations, group boundaries will break down and society will become homogenous.

Allport's hypothesis is directed against this "linear" assimilationist assumption, or, to use his words, against the "peaceful progression" of assimilation, which he dismisses as a universal law. He argues that some groups do not assimilate (he cites Jews) and some groups do not accommodate such as African Americans (in the terminology of his time, "Negro stock"). He also warns that the assimilation process is not irreversible, citing the destiny of highly assimilated German Jews as the most obvious example. Allport states that "whether or not the law of peaceful progression will hold seems to depend on the *nature of the contact* that is established" (Allport 1954, p. 251). Allport further analyses the conditions in which contact will or will not decrease prejudice. The main preconditions for contact to reduce previously existing prejudices are: (a) contact must be between persons of equal social status; (b) prejudice reduction through contact requires an active goal-oriented effort (common goal); (c) attainment of the common goals must be an interdependent effort involving intergroup cooperation without group competition; and (d) prejudice reduction through contact requires the support of authorities, laws, and customs.

Although Allport is often quoted in the literature as the creator of the contact hypothesis, we can see from this brief analysis that the originality of his contributions was more in elaborating the precise conditions in which contact reduces prejudices than in the formulation of the hypothesis as such. Instead of creating the hypothesis, Allport placed limits on its scope. The hypothesis already existed; it had been formulated by Robin M. Williams in 1947. Allport also quotes Lee and Humphrey's (1943) work on race riots. However, Allport was not satisfied with the simplicity of the hypothesis and the lack of specified validity conditions. Not all contact leads towards reduced prejudice, just as assimilation is not the preordained outcome of the interaction between any migrant group and its host society.

The general implication of the contact hypothesis is that under certain conditions, contact between "different" groups reduces the initial amount of prejudice. The consequence of this hypothesis is that in a closed homogenous society with limited contact with "outsiders", prejudice will be high. Conversely, in an open and heterogeneous society, prejudice will be low.

### *Threat Hypothesis*

A decade later, Hubert Blalock (1967) formulated his threat theory based on the idea that discrimination and prejudice increase with the proportion of minorities in a society. Chapter 5 of his seminal book is titled "Minority Percentage and Discrimination". In addition, Blalock distinguishes between two key factors that increase with rising minority percentages—competition and power threat. Without elaborating the details of Blalock's theory, we can concentrate here on the contradictory predictions that derive from Blalock and Allport.

Allport's theory is formulated at the micro level and deals with contact between individuals. To expand its logic to the macro level, we would predict that when the proportion of minorities increases, opportunities for inter-individual majority-minority contacts increase as well. As a consequence, if the preconditions specified earlier are satisfied, prejudice should decrease. Blalock's theory is formulated on the macro level and specifies different sociopsychological processes (feeling of threat, competition) that lead to increased prejudice. Blalock ignores increased contact opportunities and concentrates on perceived competition and power threat. Thus, he derives the opposite prediction: an increased minority proportion will lead to increased prejudice.

### *Empirical Findings*

Allport's and Blalock's theories have inspired a large number of empirical studies. Most often, these empirical studies were formulated within the framework of *one* of these two theories and ignored the perspective of the other. I will now concentrate on what empirical data tell us with regard to the contradictory predictions of these two theories.

After providing a comprehensive summary of the history of tests of Allport's contact hypothesis, Forbes (1997) concludes that the direction of findings depends on the type of research design and, critically, the unit of analysis. Research on the level of interpersonal interactions overwhelmingly supports the contact hypothesis. It has been regularly found in surveys, observations, and experiments that people who have friends who are minorities are less prejudiced compared with those who do not have such friends and who lack contact or experience with minorities.

This type of research often leaves open one important issue: the question of causal direction. Do contacts decrease prejudice, or are less prejudiced people more willing to have contact with minority group members? When this question is addressed explicitly using endogenous switching regression models (extracting the effect of close interracial friendship on selected racial attitude variables while accounting for possible selectivity bias), the conclusion still holds; thus, the observed association between interracial contact and racial attitudes is not an artefact of an unobserved selection process (Powers and Eillson 1995). Although there is a general propensity to avoid various groups, which reduces the amount of contact, contact still has an independent positive effect on the reduction of prejudice. The same conclusion has been reached with data from the USA (Wilson 1996) and Europe (Pettigrew and Meertens 1995).

According to Forbes, results such as these, which confirm Allport's contact hypothesis, are obtained on the micro level, when interpersonal contact is directly observed or induced by the researcher in laboratory or quasi-experimental studies. When we move from the interpersonal level to studies of larger territories or even whole countries, however, the results are mixed. For example, studies of neighbourhood integration projects in South Africa (Bauman 1992) revealed no significant

correlation between the ethnic composition of respondents' workplaces and their attitudes towards Afrikaners among a national sample of "coloured" people. Among Afrikaners, contrary to the contact hypothesis, there were significantly *more* negative attitudes towards "Coloureds" among employees of organisations in which the majority of employees were Black or Asian. Thus, the situation of working together produced negative rather than positive attitudes. Another example, from the USA, concerns interracial housing. It also indicates a more complex picture than is assumed by the contact hypothesis. The study measured the attitudes of Black and White housewives in three housing projects in Lexington, Kentucky (Ford 1973). The data supported the contact hypothesis for White housewives, but not for Black housewives. Black housewives living in segregated settlements showed *less* prejudice than those in integrated projects, and the longer they lived in integrated projects, the greater their antipathy towards Whites became.

These two examples, which were selected from the large body of published research testing the contact hypothesis on an intermediate (meso) level, complicate the relation between contact and prejudice. Of course, it is always possible to explain contradictory findings by claiming that some of the necessary preconditions for the "positive" effect of contact are not met. However, as Pettigrew (1971) notes, if all negative results can be "explained away" by ad hoc conditions, we do not have a predictive theory but only a set of post-hoc explanations.

Finally, we can consider research designs that correlate different levels of ethnic heterogeneity in regions, cities, or states with the ethnic tolerance of their populations. Here, Allport meets Blalock, because Blalock's theory is directly formulated in terms of "proportionality", as explained above. It is important to stress that the social and psychological mechanisms on which Allport and Blalock concentrate are different. For Blalock, what counts are personal perceptions of threat, which are created by rising proportions of the minority. For Allport, what is important is the nature of interpersonal contact. From Allport's perspective, mere increased numbers without contact or contacts of the "wrong" type are not relevant for prejudice.

Extensive empirical findings from the USA clearly indicate that prejudices, segregationist voting, and discriminatory behaviour are greater in places (cities, states, and territories) where the percentage of Blacks is greater. Olszak (1992) examined newspaper reports of ethnic collective actions in 77 US cities between 1887 and 1914 and found that conflict is highly dependent on the growth of immigration. Similarly, anti-busing protests were most frequent in areas where racial segregation was breaking down. Increased interracial exposure in schools and neighbourhoods triggers racial and ethnic conflict (Olszak et al. 1994). A comprehensive study of 12 European countries conducted by Quillian (1995) indicates that perceived percentage of non-EEC immigrants (in EEC countries) and economic conditions are the strongest predictors of racial and anti-immigrant prejudices. In a more recent study, Semyonov et al. (2006) arrived at similar conclusions using four waves (1988–2000) of the Eurobarometer surveys for 12 European countries between 1988 and 2000 to obtain comprehensive information on attitudes towards foreigners. Their findings are in accordance with Blalock's theory: anti-foreigner sentiment tends to be higher in places with a proportionately larger foreign population and less economic prosperity.

On the basis of these analyses, we can see that in the large majority of studies based on proportions, Blalock's theory is confirmed and, by implication, Allport's theory is disconfirmed. However, when experimental and small group studies are conducted, Allport's contact theory is generally confirmed.

How can we explain the fact that different types of research designs produce different results? One plausible interpretation is that in the proportional research, some of the fundamental requirements for contact to reduce prejudice formulated by Allport are not satisfied. For example, in all studies that deal with European immigrants, one can argue that immigrants are generally of much lower status than the host population. Contact between the educated European population and unskilled immigrants does not fulfil the requirement that groups be of equal status, which is one of the key prerequisites formulated by Allport.

Alternatively, Forbes (1997) has argued that seemingly contradictory findings across levels of analysis should be expected and can be interpreted based on theory. Forbes admits that, on the individual level, contact produces positive effects, although he argues that these effects are more closely related to the reduction of underlying cultural differences than they are to prejudice reduction per se. However, at the societal level, processes of mutual cultural assimilation between the individuals who are most directly involved with one another ironically trigger the hostility of a significant portion of majority members, and hence increase overall intolerance. Namely, members of the majority group who are ardent believers that the culture, habits, and customs of their group represent the best, the truth, and the sacred will find contact with outsiders threatening to their fundamental values and beliefs. They will try to keep members of the out-group in a subordinate position and to decrease contact opportunities. These more conservative people can become even more hostile towards outsiders when they perceive that other majority group members have friendly contact with the out-group. When only a small fraction of the dominant group is in a position to have contact with minorities, such contacts can paradoxically produce greater overall intolerance, because they provoke negative reactions among the many majority group members who avoid such contacts.

### **Ethnic Heterogeneity and Ethnic (In)Tolerance in Pre-War Yugoslavia**

Now, I relate the foregoing discussion to our results from the former Yugoslavia. These results stem from a classical proportion study where ethnic heterogeneity in the former republics and autonomous provinces was correlated with ethnic tolerance (Hodson et al. 1994). The findings depicted in Table 3.1 reveal a clear aggregate-level relation: greater ethnic heterogeneity accompanies greater ethnic tolerance. Bosnia and Herzegovina was the most heterogeneous *and* the most tolerant context, followed (on both dimensions) by Vojvodina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and finally Slovenia. There are also two outliers: as mentioned before, Macedonia and

**Table 3.1** Average tolerance levels and ethnic heterogeneity of the republics of the former Yugoslavia in 1989. (Adapted from Hodson et al. 1994)

Republic or province	Mean ethnic tolerance <sup>a</sup>	Index of heterogeneity <sup>b</sup>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.88	0.64
Vojvodina	3.88	0.61
Croatia	3.63	0.45
Montenegro	3.45	0.45
Serbia proper	3.28	0.27
Slovenia	2.67	0.19
Macedonia	2.53	0.41
Kosovo	1.71	0.39

<sup>a</sup> Ethnic tolerance ranges from 1 to 5 (maximal tolerance) on the tolerance scale, with 5 meaning maximum tolerance and 1 maximum intolerance

<sup>b</sup> The heterogeneity index ranges from "0" (all individuals are part of the same ethnic group) to "1" (equal distribution of individuals across ethnic groups)

**Table 3.2** Tolerance of majority and minority group members in the republics/provinces of the former Yugoslavia in 1989

Republic/province	Majority	Tolerance	Main minority	Tolerance
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosniaks	3.88	Serbs	3.82
Vojvodina	Serbs	3.65	Hungarians	3.86
Croatia	Croats	3.60	Serbs	3.93
Montenegro	Montenegrins	3.32	Bosniaks/Muslims	3.40
Serbia	Serbs	3.24	Bosniaks/Muslims	3.39
Slovenia	Slovenes	2.71	Croats	3.33
Macedonia	Macedonians	2.61	Albanians	1.84
Kosovo	Albanians	1.79	Serbs	1.99

Kosovo were already the least tolerant places in Yugoslavia in 1989, even though they were more heterogeneous than Serbia and very similar to Montenegro and Croatia.

Analyses within republics/provinces showed that in most cases, the dominant majority is less tolerant than the minority (see Table 3.2). This was true for Serbs in Vojvodina, Croats in Croatia, Slovenians in Slovenia, and Albanians in Kosovo, with two additional cases pointing in the same direction, but not reaching statistical significance (Montenegrins in Montenegro and Serbs in Serbia). The only exceptions to this pattern were Bosnia and Herzegovina, with no substantial difference between Muslims and Serbs, and Macedonia, where the Albanian minority was even more intolerant than the Macedonian majority.

Strikingly, these results perfectly contradict Blalock's ethnic threat theory and Forbes' mixed model because both models would predict a negative relation between heterogeneity and tolerance at the aggregate level that we considered in these analyses. Ironically, these results appear to be congruent with Allport's contact hypothesis at a level of analysis where the literature would expect the theory to be least applicable.

To make things even more puzzling, an additional pattern emerged when we changed the level of analysis in a subsequent study (Massey et al. 1999). In the previous study, the units of analysis were defined by political-administrative divisions.

We further divided the territory of each of these territorial units into *enclaves* (where the overall minority forms a local majority; for example, areas in Croatia where ethnic Serbs are in the majority) and the remaining territory (where the overall majority is also the local majority). As a consequence, it became apparent that the level of tolerance is generally lower within enclaves than within the remaining parts of the corresponding republic or province. Members of the minority ethnic group are less tolerant in the enclaves, where they constitute the majority, than elsewhere, where they represent a local (as well as national) minority. So far, contact theory can still account for these findings: people have statistically more opportunities for out-group contact when the "out-group" is more numerous where they live, that is, when their "in-group" is a local minority. However, the question remains: how can we account for the findings that both minority and majority members are, overall, less tolerant in the enclaves than their ethnic counterparts in the rest of the territory?<sup>10</sup>

To summarise, a twofold challenge arises. First, I need to explain why our results differ from those found in other aggregate-level studies (based on proportions). Second, I need to develop an explanation for why the heterogeneity-tolerance relation found in the majority of republics/provinces in the former Yugoslavia did not hold for Macedonia and Kosovo overall or for enclaves in other parts of the former Yugoslavia.

### *Did (Lack of) Cultural Distance or Demographic Change Play a Role?*

In the previous section, I explained the "deviant" results for Kosovo and Macedonia by referring to the fact that, unlike other parts of Yugoslavia, ethnic clashes there started before 1990. We should also discuss an alternative interpretation of these findings that frames them in terms of cultural distance. In one recent study that directly confronted the contact and threat hypotheses, Dixon (2006) came to an intriguing conclusion. His findings suggest that, in the US context, the contact hypothesis holds for Whites' contact with Hispanics and Asians; after controlling all relevant variables, more contact opportunities decreased prejudice. However, the same conclusion did not hold for Black-White relationships. Higher proportions of Blacks within counties or metropolitan areas increased prejudice among Whites, and individual (superficial) contact with Blacks (unlike Hispanics or Asians) was not sufficient to decrease their prejudice.

<sup>10</sup> For example, in Croatia, the average tolerance level for Croats living outside of enclaves was 3.53 (on a scale of 1 = maximum intolerance to 5 = maximum tolerance). For Serbs living outside of enclaves (in Croatian-dominated territories), the figure was 3.67, which is statistically significantly higher. For Serbs living in enclaves (Serb-dominated territories in Croatia), the comparable figure was 3.36. That is statistically significantly lower compared to the average level for Serbs living outside of enclaves. Although it is not statistically significantly lower than the tolerance level of the Croats, this result points in the predicted direction of lower tolerance.



These outcomes are quite similar to the results of some Canadian surveys. For example, Kollin and Denny (1982) compared small geographical areas (census tracts with a median population of 5,333). Their findings showed increasingly positive mutual evaluations between French and English Canadians with increasing proportions of the respective other group. However, the opposite trend was shown regarding native Indians: the more numerous they were, the less favourably they were evaluated by members of other groups. The authors interpreted these results in accordance with the contact hypothesis because relations between French and English Canadians involved people of relatively equal status, whereas the native Indians living in the cities were of much lower status. However, native Indians were also more culturally distant from French and English Canadians than the latter two groups were from each other (see Mitchell 1968, or Ray 1983, for similar studies in the Australian context on culturally distant White and Aboriginal groups). Obviously, the fact that unequal social status and cultural distance are confounded here, as in Dixon's US study, leaves room for alternative interpretations and debate about the theoretical significance of these findings.

Despite this problem, let us take seriously the idea that contact can decrease prejudice more easily among more culturally similar groups and consider its implications for inter-ethnic relations in the former Yugoslavia. There are good reasons to argue that Albanians are the most culturally distinct group in the former Yugoslavia. They are religiously (Muslim) and linguistically (Albanian, a non-Slavic language) different from the rest of the population. Although Bosniaks are also religiously Muslim, they share a common language with their neighbours. Is "cultural distance" the reason that the low levels of tolerance in Kosovo and Macedonia did not fit into the pattern of the rest of Yugoslavia and, by the same token, that ethnic intolerance in the rest of Yugoslavia does not follow the same laws as anti-Black sentiment in the USA or anti-immigrant sentiment in the EU?

As a matter of fact, most ethnic groups across the former Yugoslavia—with the notable exception of Albanians—are culturally similar to each other. One could argue that Albanians are more distant from the rest of the Slavic population in the same way that native Indians in Canada, but not French Canadians were distant from English Canadians or that Blacks, but not Asians or Hispanics were distant from Whites in the USA. Is the pattern observed in the former Yugoslavia then a case in point for Forbes' (1997) argument that the contact hypothesis holds within "cultural boundaries", but not beyond them? According to Forbes:

Intergroup conflict (...) may be a function not just of the level of contact between two ethnic or cultural groups but also of their cultural differences. No such conflict will develop if there are either no contacts between the groups or no differences between their cultures. There will be more conflict, at any given level of contact, where the cultural differences are greater. (Forbes 1997, pp. 148–149)

We must be aware that this explanation implies a threshold where cultural distance becomes large enough to reverse the relation between the local proportion of a minority group and intergroup tolerance or prejudice. At this point, I cannot offer a more elaborate basis for a theory of cultural difference than post-hoc interpretations

of the cases at hand. For example, the Albanian/Slav difference involves linguistic (Albanian is a non-Slavic language), religious (Muslim vs. Christian), and historical components (perception of a different origin) that have been further rendered salient by repeated Serbian-Albanian clashes. It may be the case that the combination of these elements produces what some might call a "deep cultural divide". In contrast, the Muslim-Christian divide in Bosnia and Herzegovina is less deep because it is tempered by linguistic similarity and an awareness of similar origins.<sup>11</sup>

There is no direct way to adjudicate between the "cultural" explanation and the explanation based on the fact that ethnic riots began earlier in Kosovo than in other areas of the former Yugoslavia. To provide a more reliable answer to this dilemma, we would need to examine a territory shared by culturally distant groups that have not experienced violent conflict. In that case, more negative attitudes could be attributed directly to cultural differences. Macedonia does not qualify as such an example because it borders Kosovo, so violence in that region contributed to permanently tense Macedonian-Albanian relations. One must also accept the possibility that there is no a priori reason why the social phenomena should have just one explanation. In other words, cultural differences and the post-conflict rise in negative attitudes could operate together as causal forces.

Let us now move from the explanation of the few "deviant" results *within* the former Yugoslavia to explaining the "deviant" nature of the overall results for Yugoslavia when compared with findings from other European countries (where an increased proportion of ethnic minorities means more negative attitudes towards them). The main answer could lie precisely in the fact that in the context of most (Western) European countries, ethnic minorities are mainly composed of *immigrant populations* whose numbers have increased in relatively recent times. In these contexts, the fact that "native" populations are confronted with recent immigration contributes to the perception of threat. In the Yugoslav case, however, we are not dealing with recent immigration, but with communities that have been living side by side for centuries. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not "immigrants" from Croatia, and Serbs in Croatia are not "immigrants" from Serbia. Where there were recent immigrants (as in Slovenia) or a changing demographic balance (as in Kosovo or Macedonia), we can also observe high levels of intolerance.

One particular finding from the European studies provides additional credence to this conclusion. Semyonov et al. (2008) found that negative views of foreigners' impact on society are most pronounced either in countries where the proportion of foreigners is relatively small or in countries that have only recently begun hosting foreigners. Similar results were found in the USA. Whereas Brodburn et al. reported

<sup>11</sup> Conversely, in neighbouring Bulgaria, the Turkish/Bulgarian divide displays differences that are similar to the Albanian/Slavic divide in Kosovo and Macedonia. McIntosh et al. (1995) found that people living in mixed Bulgarian-Turkish communities in Bulgaria are more intolerant than people living in mixed (Romanian-Hungarian) communities in Romania. The authors interpret this finding as the result of the fact that Romanians still constitute the majority in the mixed communities, whereas Bulgarians are the minority in many mixed communities. An alternative interpretation would be that there is less tolerance between Bulgarians and Turks because the cultural divide that separates them is much deeper than the cultural divide between Romanians and Hungarians.

in 1971 that White respondents held the least favourable attitudes towards Blacks in neighbourhoods with either a high or *rapidly growing* proportion of Blacks. Olszak (1992) again concluded that ethnic animosities strongly depend on the growth of immigration. If that is the case, demographic change is a critical factor in determining ethnic animosity. In the Yugoslav case, overall, ethnic communities can look back on a long history of living side by side. The stability of ethnic proportions may therefore have contributed to majority-minority relationships that were in accordance with the contact hypothesis until the outbreak of war. Where cultural differences were large or where substantial demographic change was occurring, intolerance and animosity were already on the rise in 1990.

## Conclusion

Multiple causal forces impact sentiments between ethnic communities and exert their influences over time. Stable ethnic heterogeneity allows ethnic tolerance, but short-term increases in ethnic heterogeneity work against it. The cultural distance between ethnic communities must also be considered because co-existence and contact have different effects on tolerance between culturally similar compared with dissimilar groups. All of these factors are likely to have contributed to the variations in the level of ethnic (in)tolerance across Yugoslav communities and regions at the eve of war. However, one critical point is that none of the factors that led to ethnic *intolerance* can explain where or why ethnic *violence* occurred during the following decade.

Conversely, violent conflict—whatever its causes and circumstances—had a profound detrimental impact on ethnic tolerance across post-war communities. Therefore, the findings and arguments reviewed in this chapter dismiss some widely used explanations of conflict in the former Yugoslavia based on “ethnic hatred” theory. Hopefully, they also help to explain why theories about relations between “ethnic” majority and minority communities that are grounded in Western European or American experience and research cannot be mechanically transposed to the realities of dynamics between communities in the former Yugoslavia.

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## Chapter 4 The Demise of Mixed Marriage?

### Ethnic Boundaries Between Families in Changing Societies

Jean-Marie Le Goff and Francesco Giudici

The literature on marriage before the recent conflicts in the former Yugoslavia presents an unexpected perspective on the demographic trends in this country. This literature is mainly focused on mixed marriages and often provides a number of details on rates according to nationality or partner's region of origin. At the beginning of the 1990s, articles on mixed marriages were even published in American newspapers, such as the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post (Botev 1994). Today, this focus on inter-ethnic marriages appears surprisingly in light, for example, of the literature mentioned in Sekulic's introductory chapter on the "ancient hatred" among nationalities.

Demographers from the former Yugoslavia were interested in mixed marriages in part because these marriages were promoted by the communist state for several reasons. First, these marriages present opportunities for the partners' families to create contacts and alliances (Morokvasic-Muller 2004; Smits 2010). Second, mixed marriages give birth to mixed and acculturated children; thus, mixed marriages were believed to facilitate the amalgamation of different nationalities into a unique Yugoslav society in which everyone would be emancipated of his or her traditional culture. Thus, mixed marriages were considered in the former Yugoslavia as not only an indicator but also a *means* of promoting integration into the new society. Petrovic (1985, quoted by Mrdjen 1996) describes mixed marriages as "a general Yugoslav process".

In Kalmijn's (1998) theoretical view of mixed marriages, public valorisation and incentives, in addition to coercion or sanctions against mixed marriages which were observed during the 1990s conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (Morokvasic-Muller 2004), constitute only a first-level explanation of the changes in the rates of mixed

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