

# Kosovo & Montenegro

## Why Different Outcomes?

Bachelor's Thesis in Political Science  
Fall Term 2008

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# Abstract

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**Course:** PO 5363, Political Science

**Title:** Kosovo & Montenegro – Why Different Outcomes?

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**Date:** 2008-01-15

The purpose of this study has been to assess why the pursuit for independence turned out to be a matter of such difficulty in the case of Kosovo and not in Montenegro, seeing as they are two apparent similar cases.

The research questions are:

- ❖ How can it be that two analogous situations where two regions (Kosovo and Montenegro), quite similar in several aspects, want independence from the same country (Serbia) result in so different outcomes?
  - ❖ Why has Kosovo's attempt to achieve self-government been such a difficulty?
  - ❖ Why did Montenegro manage to achieve autonomy without (great) difficulties?

The findings are that despite the similarity between these two cases, they have ample differing characteristics as well. The factors detected are that whilst the Kosovo conflict is characterized by: a troublesome history, no common ground, an existing deep hatred, Russian opposition and the nationalist Milošević; the Montenegrin case is set apart by: an intertwining, rather peaceful history, friendly relations, Russian cordiality and the nationalist Djukanović.

The interpretation of these elements according to the nationalist theory is as follows: Milošević and Djukanović (and their ideology: nationalism) are the real causes. The other elements are mere means to their ambition for nation building. The difference between these two men and the elements (their means) explains the different outcomes in the two cases.

**Keywords:** Independence, nationalism, Kosovo, Montenegro, conflict

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# 1 Introduction

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*A background to the subject, as well as problem formulation will be presented in this chapter. The chapter will also include a presentation of the purpose and the questions, along with an account of the study's delimitation, glossary and a description of the study's disposition.*

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## **1.1 Background and Problem Formulation**

At the end of the 1990s, a hot topic was Kosovo and its ambition for sovereignty. However after the war was brought to an end, the interest in the country started to fade despite the fact that the problem was far from solved and the country was in ruins. After 9/11, one can safely say that virtually all attention has been on Middle East and “the Global War on terror”.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, no definite solution to the Kosovo problem has yet been reached; and 2006 Montenegro, another former Yugoslavian state, peacefully managed to achieve independence despite existing fear of it becoming a possible new crisis when the republic first pushed for independence.<sup>2</sup> How can it be that two analogous situations where two regions, quite similar in several aspects, want independence from the same country result in so different outcomes?

This question is clearly of interest considering the many catastrophes accruing as a result of demands for independence. The Balkans is not the only region with examples of catastrophes regarding sovereignty. We have Chechnya as another case, that similar to Kosovo has ended up in the shadow of the war on terrorism. Establishing the degree of importance of troubles existing in the world today is impossible, even if it seems to be completely in the hands of the United States<sup>3</sup>, but the arising of a new evil should not mean the neglect of others.

The Kosovo issue has mainly been considered and managed in isolation even before the war on terror, “as a case of regional instability without a European dimension”. The matter of the fact is however that it needs to be taken as a warning and a lesson learned by the world as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/11/20071101-4.html>

<sup>2</sup> Buckley 2000: 393

<sup>3</sup> Bianchini & Dogo 1998: 15

## 1.2 Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this paper is to assess why the certain outcome emerged in Kosovo's case and not in Montenegro, seeing as they are two apparent similar cases. Given the narrow purpose of the study, this paper is not expected to resolve the problem of why region's pursuits for independence sometimes lead to catastrophes while other times not. The idea is only to contribute in some way to the cumulative research regarding this issue.

In order to reach the purpose, the overbridging issue in this research will be:

*How can it be that two analogous situations where two regions (Kosovo and Montenegro), quite similar in several aspects, want independence from the same country (Serbia) result in so different outcomes?* To investigate the cause of this variation, the following questions are meant to be answered:

- ❖ *Why has Kosovo's attempt to achieve self-government been such a difficulty?*
- ❖ *Why did Montenegro manage to achieve autonomy without (great) difficulties?*

## 1.3 Delimitation

As mentioned above, this study will only deal with the independence process in Kosovo and the one in Montenegro. It is therefore a matter of two specific cases, not a wide-ranging study regarding independence processes in general.

Furthermore regarding the historical factor in the case of Kosovo, it will be described in a as much detailed way as possible but not everything will be able to be mentioned considering its highly intricate as well as comprehensive nature. What can be described as "the core points" will be given.

## 1.4 Glossary

Central concepts in this study are *independence* and *conflict*, none of which can be labeled as ambiguous. They will nevertheless be defined in case the two concepts can be misconstrued, as well as to clarify the particular definitions that will be used in this study:

**Independent** (referring to states): to not be ruled or governed by another country;<sup>4</sup>

**Conflict:** "a struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or demands."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=40184&dict=CALD>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9361382>

## **1.5 Disposition**

The method and material applied in the study will be introduced in the following chapter, as well as a critical source analysis. Chapter three will contain a presentation of the theoretical framework and the hypothesis. The chapter will also include a figure of the analytical framework. After that, previous research will be discussed.

A presentation of the Kosovo case will be provided for in chapter five. The chapter will begin with the historical factor as means to detect other factors to the conflict, which will constitute the rest of the chapter.

The Montenegro case is next, in chapter six. This case will also be presented through a historical description, followed by a presentation of Montenegro's population, the existence of national sentiments amongst them and their relation to Serbs. The chapter is concluded by a report on the factors discovered in the background presentation.

In the concluding section of this study, I offer a comparison of the two cases, as well as a presentation of the nationalist viewpoint concerning the results. The results will also be recapitulated in a figure. The study will be completed with a final discussion.

# 2 Method

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*A description of the method and materials that are going to be applied will be presented in this chapter, followed by a source critical analysis.*

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## 2.1 Method and Material

The overbridging question mentioned in paragraph 1.2 clearly points towards a comparative two case study.<sup>6</sup> “Why” questions are namely usually suitable for a case study strategy.<sup>7</sup> This research design will help us get from “here” (that is the questions that are to be answered) to “there” (the answers/conclusions).<sup>8</sup> The two sub questions point in another direction, they require a process-tracing study in order to be answered.

The central analyze units are to be Kosovo and Montenegro, as the questions imply, more specifically their pursuit for self-governance. These analyze units are suitable for this study since they fulfill the criteria for appropriate cases regarding explanatory comparative studies. That is to say, the cases are heterogeneous concerning the outcome to be explained but similar regarding many other potential explanations.<sup>9</sup>

The key similar feature has to be the fact that Albanians are part of both Montenegro’s population as well as Kosovo’s. Although in Montenegro’s case it is a matter of a minority consisting of 6,6 per cent (1998), whereas over 90 per cent of Kosovo’s population are Albanians (2007). Nevertheless, the abhorrence between Albanians and Serbs has to have had to exist in both cases.

Another important similarity regarding the two region’s inhabitants is the fact that Serbs are a minority in Montenegro (1998), as well as in Kosovo (2007).<sup>10</sup> This indicates that any feeling on Belgrade’s part regarding protection of “its people” had to have been present in both situations.

Furthermore, both Montenegro and Kosovo have been part of the same federation, i.e. former Yugoslavia and both cases concerned independence from the same country.

Conclusively, yet another shared feature is that both Montenegro and Kosovo received the support of the US during their aspiration for independence.

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<sup>6</sup> Yin 2006: 37

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 17 & 22

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 39

<sup>9</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 102

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.swedenabroad.se/Page\\_38125.aspx](http://www.swedenabroad.se/Page_38125.aspx), <http://www.montenegro.yu/english/podaci/population.htm>



It is then a matter of “most similar systems design”. In this way, these variables can not be thought of as reasons for the varied factor that is to be explicated. The empirical inspection of potential explanations is thus narrowed down and so facilitated.<sup>11</sup>

As stated above, the two previously mentioned sub-questions will be answered through the set of methodological tools known as process tracing which attempts to “find and confirm the casual mechanisms that link cause(s) to outcome”. This method is appropriate to use regarding these two questions since both cases are a matter of within-case analyses and the outcome (the value of the dependent variable) is known beforehand.<sup>12</sup>

Material (books as well as articles) dealing with proceedings and actions possibly relevant to the two dependant variables<sup>13</sup> will be used in order to chart potential casual paths that are consistent with the outcomes. The books will be found by searching LIBRIS<sup>14</sup>, interlibrary books will therefore also be used. ELIN<sup>15</sup> will be used in order to find relevant articles. The material that will be used in this paper will thus mainly consist of books and articles. There is however no limitation when it comes to material appropriate for use in a process-tracing within-case study.<sup>16</sup>

The advantage of the “most similar systems design is, as stated before, “that several possible explanations can effectively be eliminated, thereby substantially simplifying the method of process tracing. The benefit of process tracing is that it basically considers all probable explanations to the outcome that is to be explained; but at the same time this touches upon its weakness, that is that it can be judged as very time-consuming and wide-spread rather than in-depth.

When the process tracing is done, the results we get from the two within-case analyses will be compared as an attempt to respond to the overbridging question. A comparative analysis will therefore take place in order to explain “unexpectedly different outcomes in apparently similar cases, rather than to establish the regularity of particular casual patterns across cases”.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Marsh & Stoker 2002: 254

<sup>12</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 144-145

<sup>13</sup> Kosovo's and Montenegro's (resulted) ambitions for independence

<sup>14</sup> LIBRIS is a library database

<sup>15</sup> ELIN is a database where students can search through electronically managed journals

<sup>16</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 145

<sup>17</sup> Marsh & Stoker 2002: 266

## 2.2 Source Critical Analysis

A source critical analysis will be conducted in this subsection in order to critically assess the truth-value of the sources, and the information provided by them, used in this study. This will be achieved with help by a set of criteria for valid sources.<sup>18</sup> The sources used have been selected and excluded based on their level of compliance with the criterions. The norms are: authenticity, independence, simultaneousness and tendency.<sup>19</sup>

*Authenticity* concerns the legitimacy of a source.<sup>20</sup> This has been determined through comparison to other independent sources.<sup>21</sup> The information provided for in paragraph 6.1.1 is an example of this. It was especially important to find other sources that reinforced what was stated in the paragraph since the information given implies that the Albanian version of history<sup>22</sup> is the correct one.

The second criterion *independence*, deals with the distance between the source and its' information as well as the source's level of independence. The main idea is that primary sources are more reliable than secondary ones, and that a credible story should not be influenced by some other person or outer circumstance.<sup>23</sup> This criterion has not been obtained satisfactorily seeing as secondary sources had to be used given that primary sources could not due to risk for subjectivity. The ambition has instead been to use independent sources.<sup>24</sup>

However, all sources applied are not secondary. An example of this is the information obtained by *Institute 4S*. Institute 4S is a non-governmental, non-profit research group consisting of Serbian members. They have created a project called *The Kosovo Compromise project* that is said to, by the research group itself, represent "a Serbian point of view on the issue of the Kosovo talks."<sup>25</sup> Given that no criticism of it being otherwise exists and after comparison with other Serbian sources<sup>26</sup>, it seemed a reliable and appropriate source of the Serbian view.<sup>27</sup>

The notion behind the criteria *simultaneousness* is that the time elapsed between an event and its' record should be as short as possible in order for the transcript to be considered

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<sup>18</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 313

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 314

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 317

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 318

<sup>22</sup> See subsection 5.1.2

<sup>23</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 319

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 318-320

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.institute4s.com/Kosovo%20compromise%20-%20FAQ.doc>

<sup>26</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 318

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 319

credible.<sup>28</sup> The Internet has played an important role in this case since up to date information is much easier to get hold of on the Internet.

The criterion *tendency* concerns the possibility of sources wanting to deliberately give a biased account of reality.<sup>29</sup> Some of the sources used have failed to meet this criterion. A number of the sources that have been put to use in this study are namely rather subjective, predominantly in the section concerning Kosovo. Subjectivity is of course commonly avoided.<sup>30</sup> This is however of no consequence<sup>30</sup> since our aim is to detect the causes to the unfortunate turnout of the Kosovo Albanians' ambition for sovereignty, not to determine if independence should be attained or not, making subjectivity a means to reach that intention. In short we are not interested in these sources credibility in view of the fact that we will not make any conclusions based on them, our interest is merely to identify any hidden grounds for the upshots. Subjectivity is therefore in this case welcomed and was intentional.

All the other sources meet the criterion, they are independent sources and the information provided for by them has been matched up to information given by other independent sources. This can be confirmed by noticing that some sources used in paragraph 7 are new ones, despite the fact that the information provided for has been previously mentioned in the study (then using other sources).

Lastly, I want to point out that, regarding the Albanian version, the Albanians' view tends to coincide with that of most scholars, with the "official" scientifically accepted analysis of the Albanians' and the Serbs' past.<sup>31</sup> The information used to present the Albanian viewpoint was therefore primarily taken from "independent" sources but is nevertheless to be regarded as a subjective version of history, not as fact, regardless of its validity or illegitimacy.

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<sup>28</sup> Esaiasson et. al. 2007: 329

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 321

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 314

<sup>31</sup> Rogel 2004: 71

# 3 Theoretical Framework

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*The conflict in Kosovo involves a clash of irreconcilable nationalisms between the nationalist self-actualizations of the Serbian and Albanian nations, which both declare Kosovo to be a vital part of their national motherland.<sup>32</sup> The Montenegro case is as well in essence a matter of competing nationalist claims. The theory of nationalism is therefore applicable in both cases, this chapter will give a more detailed description in what way.*

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## 3.1 Nationalism

Nationalism has traditionally been used to refer to an idea, ideology and a sense of group belonging based on historical grounds.<sup>33</sup> Yet another relevant definition is the one that delineates nationalism as a set of collective claims of cultural, legal and political autonomy for their national community.<sup>34</sup> Nationalism is, in a nutshell, a distinct political program often connected to a social movement with hopes of establishing or consolidating a nation-state.<sup>35</sup>

There exist two types of nationalism: ethno nationalism and citizen nationalism. The former refers to demands for sovereignty based on ethnic affinity, whilst the latter is more inclusive and alludes to territories as basis for national identity as opposed to blood ties.<sup>36</sup> The two cases at hand belong to ethno nationalism, seeing as they both are examples of ethnic communities with political ambitions. Nearly all ethnic conflicts in modern times are associated with the nation-state project. A line between an “ethnic state” and “ethnic power monopoly” is made which is critical to minority groups’ decision to establish a state of their own. An ethnic state is one where an ethnic group has a political advantage but no democratic rules are broken, the second does not follow democratic rules.<sup>37</sup>

According to Benedict Anderson<sup>38</sup>, a nation is an “imagined fellowship”. Based on his perception, it is reasoned that one of nationalism’s main duties is to expose and enhance this fellowship. Ernest Renan<sup>39</sup> states that: “the Nation, as well as the individual, is the end product of a long period of work, sacrifices and commitment.”<sup>40</sup> The memory as a social

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<sup>32</sup> Dannreuther 2001: 12

<sup>33</sup> Engelbrekt 2006: 375

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 376

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 379

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 375

<sup>37</sup> Hettne et. al. 1998: 370

<sup>38</sup> Author of the influential book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* – <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/anderson.htm>

<sup>39</sup> “An important French theorist” – <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/renan.htm>

<sup>40</sup> Hettne et. al. 1998: 281

phenomenon is thus considered to be a critical element of nationalism. Collective memory refers to “the processes in which different societies choose and institutionalize its shared memory in files, libraries, monuments and historical research for school education and mass medial historic stories.”<sup>41</sup> Traditions are established to enhance and launch official memories. The collective memories are in turn used to create nations.<sup>42</sup> Historiography is an example of the components of these kinds of projects.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.2 Hypothesis**

The general shared assumption is that the answer why Kosovo turned into such a catastrophe is mainly a matter of history, more specifically about historical myths and historical prejudices.<sup>44</sup> The trouble-free Montenegro situation is conversely explained by referring to the fact that it is not historically sensitive to Serbia, as Kosovo is. But can the problem of Kosovo really be dismissed as merely a matter of the legacies of the past? Is the problem not more multifaceted? Expected results are that there are more layers to the Kosovo conflict and “the lack of conflict” in Montenegro’s case. The general supposition seems far too basic for a clearly complex issue.

The causes to the difference between these two conflicts are assumed to be the following: dissimilarities/similarities (religion included) and manipulation of these elements. To begin with religion, there is a distinction between the by and large Muslim Albanians and the Orthodox Serbs, but not between Serbs and Montenegrins who also generally belong to the Orthodox conviction. Seeing as religion has proved to be a source of conflict time and again, it appears plausible that the religious divergence between the two cases can prove to be an explanatory variable to the unlike results. Furthermore, other dissimilarities such as the difference of origin regarding Serbs and Albanians and the reverse similarity regarding Serbs and Montenegrins, the unlike elements of Serbian and Albanian culture and the alike Serbian and Montenegrin cultures, are believed to be other valid contributive variables. Differences often imply difference of opinion, opposing needs, drives, wishes or demands which often are the causes to why conflicts arise.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Hettne et.al. 1998: 255

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 255-265

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 270

<sup>44</sup> Malcolm 1998

<sup>45</sup> See paragraph 1.4

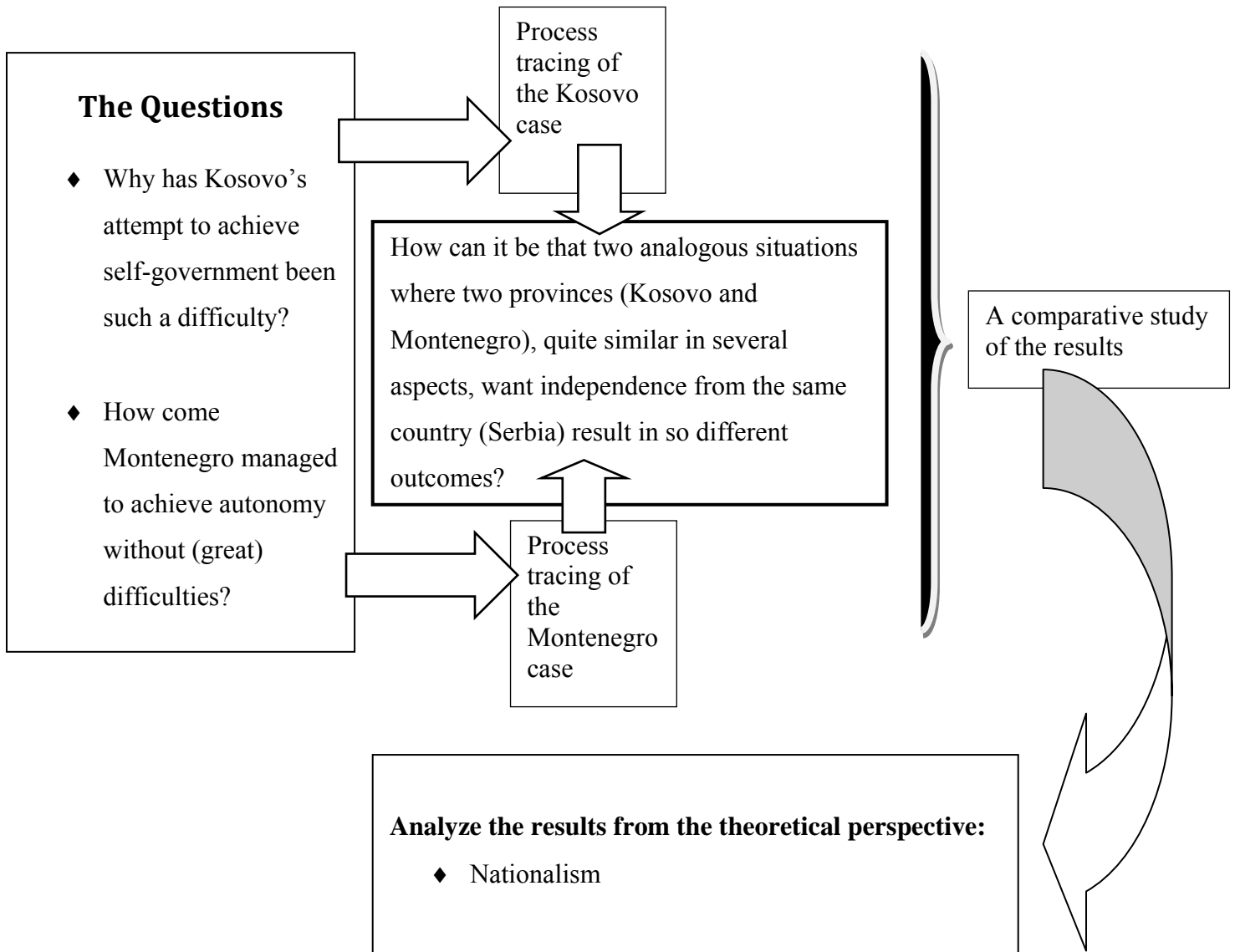


Figure 1. The Analytical Framework

## 4 Previous Research

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The amount of information available concerning Kosovo is, to say the least, immense. The books, articles, and Internet sites cover various aspects of the conflict. Many focus on the historical feature, some take a biased pro-Albanian or pro-Serbian stance, whilst others call attention to the intervention itself.

With the purpose in mind, sources that deal with the historical feature have been considered most valuable. Sources that cover other possible causes to the conflict would have also been welcome but these are unfortunately hard to come around, seeing as it is basically generally acknowledged that history is the main villain. Therefore, the sources that deal with Kosovo's historical factor were vital. They had a double task, they not only served to present the historical aspect of the situation but they were also used to detect additional probable causes. The two most important sources that were applied to this part of the study are the previously mentioned Institute 4S and Noel Malcolm. The details of Institute 4S and the information provided for by them is presented in paragraph 2.2. Noel Malcolm's<sup>46</sup> book *Kosovo A Short History* was used to account for the Albanian side. Malcolm takes on the powerful mythology of the Serbs and attempts to assess the credibility of various Serbian myths. Although he is considered a credible historian and writer and the book itself has been accepted by the general public, as well as some professionals, as an objective account of the past of Kosovo<sup>47</sup>, it can be argued that he seems to be somewhat biased. It has been argued so by *the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade*. Nevertheless, the book served its purpose: which was to present the Albanian view.<sup>48</sup>

The amount of information available on Montenegro is another issue, especially concerning its newly acquired independence. Books that focus on Montenegro are almost nonexistent so the Internet had to be relied on. An important source has been *The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF)*, "[...] a global network and a website for peace by peaceful means."<sup>49</sup> In the article *Montenegro – A state is born*, the TFF director Jan Oberg and the TFF associate Håkan Wiberg thoroughly analyze the background to Montenegro's newfound independence.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Noel Malcolm is a Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford" -

<http://www.nybooks.com/authors/490>

<sup>47</sup> Acknowledged by Serbs themselves – <http://www.kosovo.net/nmalk.html>

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/About\\_Mission\\_what.htm](http://www.transnational.org/About_Mission_what.htm)

<sup>50</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

# 5 The Kosovo Conflict

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## 5.1 The Burden of History

*The Kosovo Conflict has undoubtedly much to do with history, as is generally acknowledged.<sup>51</sup> It seems therefore appropriate to begin with a narration of the turbulent historic occurrences that this region has experienced in our attempt to trace the roots of this conflict.*

*The reason why history has such a decisive role in this situation is because both the Serbs' as well as the Kosovo Albanians' base the legitimacy in their claims of Kosovo almost entirely on historical myths regarding Kosovo's genesis.<sup>52</sup> The problem is that they have their own contrasting versions regarding many aspects that belong to the past.*

*The following three sub-sections (5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.1.3) will present the two nationalities' different accounts of history in an effort to clarify why history is considered to be such a key "villain" in this circumstance.*

### 5.1.1 The Serbian Version

#### ***The Cradle of the Serbian Nation***

Serbs define Kosovo as "the cradle of the Serbian nation".<sup>53</sup> A great part of their arguments on the subject of why they maintain that Kosovo belongs to them concerns the past. They regard Kosovo to be "the birthplace of Serbian statehood and the essence of the spiritual and cultural life of the Serbs ever since the Middle Ages." It was namely there the Serbian medieval state rose and blossomed from the 12<sup>th</sup> up to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>54</sup> Given this, it was also central to their religious conviction with several Serbian monasteries located there.<sup>55</sup>

Albanians' claims of Illyrian origin<sup>56</sup> are dismissed, they do nevertheless acknowledge that Illyrian traces have been found in Kosovo but rule them out as too few and not valid enough. They maintain that the area was largely deserted when they populated the territory around the 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Rogel 2004: 70

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ingimundarson 2007: 98

<sup>54</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>55</sup> Rogel 2004: 71

<sup>56</sup> See 5.1.2 – *Illyrian Descendants*

<sup>57</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)



### ***Ottoman Rule***

Another important historic period regarding Kosovo where Serbian and Albanian accounts differ is the Ottoman invasion of the Balkans, starting from the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and ending in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A key event for the Serbs during this period was the famous Battle of Kosovo Polje (1389), where Serbs struggled against the occupation of their lands. Despite the fact that this brought an end to the medieval Serbian state and in due course Kosovo as well as the rest of the Serbian lands fell under Ottoman rule, this single event “has reached a mythical dimension in Serbian culture, abstracted in epic poetry which warmed the hopes of liberation during the [...] occupation.” That these poems remained popular through several centuries is seen by Serbs as evidence “of their quality and of the importance of Kosovo in the national identification of the Serbs.”<sup>58</sup>

Serbs explain that as the Ottomans settled in Kosovo, they were forced to move. They continue by claiming that as they moved out, Albanians moved in.<sup>59</sup> Albanians are believed by Serbs to have been mass imported by the Ottoman Turks from the Caucasus.<sup>60</sup>

Serb-Albanian relations are described as hostile from the very beginning on both social and religious levels, thereby leaving little room for compromise. The religious level since the Albanians underwent a religious assimilation (Islam), which occurred willingly in exchange of social favors according to the Serbs.<sup>61</sup> The first direct conflict between Serbs and Albanians is described as the two liberation wars in 1876-1878 fought against the Turks by Serbs and Montenegrins, where the Albanians and the Serbs found themselves on different sides.<sup>62</sup>

### ***Albanian Nationalism***

The Turks were defeated and independence was gained 1878 at the Berlin Congress. However, the Russo-Turkish peace agreement (the same year) meant that the Serbian army was forced to retreat from the parts of Kosovo it just had “liberated”, which according to the Serbs lead to the Serbs in Kosovo being “put to terrible and bloody revenge” as well as mass departure.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Schwartz 2000: 12

<sup>61</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century is described as being marked by the rise of pan-Albanian nationalism, proclaimed by the Prizren League in 1878<sup>64</sup>. This nationalism is explained as being a means to the end to create a large Albanian state, the territorial claims on Kosovo being a part of this goal. What the Serbs term as “obsessive propaganda” is depicted as irrational given that the state of Albania was established in 1912.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Yugoslavia***

In the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913<sup>66</sup>, Kosovo was liberated from Ottoman occupation, re-integrated into Serbia and officially incorporated in *the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians* – later called Yugoslavia.<sup>67</sup>

## **5.1.2 The Albanian Version**

### ***Illyrian Descendants***

Albanians maintain steadfast that they are the descendants of the Illyrians. A people consisting of tribes that inhabited the western part of the Balkans, more specifically an area comprising of all the lands from what is now Slovenia in the northwest to about halfway down the mainland of modern Greece. For the most part, Albanians reluctantly acknowledge that their relation to the ancient Illyrians is not definite but continue arguing that data drawn from history and from linguistic, archeological, as well as anthropological studies concludes that they in fact are the direct descendants of the Illyrians. According to Albanians, their language derives from that of the Illyrians. They continue by claiming that this ancient people were indigenous of the lands they inhabited and that Illyrian culture evolved from the Stone Age and manifested itself in the territory of Albania toward the beginning of the Bronze Age, about 2000 BC.<sup>68</sup>

### ***The Greeks and the Romans***

From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, it is believed that the Greeks founded a string of colonies on Illyrian land. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC the colonies began to decline and eventually perished

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<sup>64</sup> *The Prizren League*, also know as *the Albanian League*, was founded as a means to realize national aspirations by striving to unify all Albanian territories into one autonomous state, as well as by developing Albanian language, literature, education and culture - <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42649/Albania>

<sup>65</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>66</sup> A war fought by the members of the Balkan league (Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro) and the Ottoman Empire, the reason was that the Balkan league wanted to take Macedonia away from Turkey - <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/bravo/balkan1912.htm>

<sup>67</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42640/Albania>, Ducellier 2006: 29

Soon thereafter, in 229 BC, the Illyrians were attacked and overpowered by the Romans and were by 168 BC under Rome's control.<sup>69</sup> Illyria became the province of Illyricum. The Roman rule lasted for six century but the Illyrians managed to resist assimilation, apart from some Latin words being added to their language, and their culture survived. Christianity had however manifested itself in Illyria before the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> to the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the empire began to be ruled by emperors of Illyrian origin.<sup>70</sup>

### ***The Slavs Arrive and the Illyrians Become Albanians***

When the Roman Empire divided into east and west in 395, the territories of modern Albania became part of the Byzantine Empire. In the first decades under Byzantine rule, Illyria suffered from brutal raids by Visigoths, Huns, and Ostrogoths<sup>71</sup>. Not long after these raids, the Slavs<sup>72</sup> appeared.<sup>73</sup> According to Albanians, massive Slavic invasions occurred in Balkan in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and these people forced the Illyrians into their current narrow homeland: Kosovo, Albania, eastern Macedonia and southeastern Montenegro. The Slavs are believed to be descendants of the ancient Sarmatians and come from the area from Carpathians to the Urals.<sup>74</sup> Albanians claim that the Slavs assimilated Illyrian tribes in much of what is now Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia. Only the tribes of southern Illyria managed to resist assimilation and preserve their native tongue.<sup>75</sup>

The transformation from the Illyrian population to the Albanian one allegedly took place throughout several centuries, under the impact of Roman, Byzantine and Slavic cultures. Albanians claim that Illyria eventually became Arbëri from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a name that came from the Illyrian Albanoi tribe which inhabited what is now central Albania. The origin of Albanian nationality is believed to have started around this time as the Albanian people became aware that they shared a common territory, name, language, and cultural heritage.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42641/Albania>

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42642/Albania>

<sup>71</sup> Visigoths and Ostrogoths are the two branches of the Germanic people the Goths - <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9365885>; the Huns were members of a nomadic pastoralist people - <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9367575>

<sup>72</sup> Slavs are the ancestors of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Macedonians – Schwartz 2000

<sup>73</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42644/Albania>

<sup>74</sup> Schwartz 2000: 13

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-42644/Albania>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

### ***Ottoman Rule***

The Albanians' view of the Ottoman occupation period differs from that of the Serbs' significantly. Albanians deny the existence of any affectionate feelings towards the Ottoman Turks who supposedly, according to the Serbs, mass imported them to the Balkans. They maintain that Christianity was not abandoned willingly as Serbs claim, Islam was forced upon their ancestors. The Albanians aver instead that it was the Slavs who sought privileges from the Turks, and that it was the Albanians who fought the occupants.<sup>77</sup> The Albanians refer here especially to their national hero Skanderbeg under whose leadership the Albanians waged a long struggle against the Ottoman Turks.<sup>78</sup> Albanians therefore do not argue that the Serbs and they were indeed on different sides, but have a different opinion regarding who was on what side.

### **5.1.3 History Continues – Different Interpretations**

The Kosovo Albanians point out that albeit Kosovo was regarded as an integral part of the Serbian kingdom when the Yugoslavian state was proclaimed in 1918, it was not validly so. The 1903 constitution that Serbia was operating under required an agreement by the Grand National Assembly in order for any change to the frontiers of Serbia to become legal and no such assembly was ever convened to discuss or ratify the extension of Serbia's borders to include Kosovo.<sup>79</sup> It was not valid by the standards of international law either since it is required that when territory passes from one state to another by conquest in wartime the transfer has to be recognized by a treaty between the two states after the war, which never occurred according to Albanians.<sup>80</sup>

The Serbs on the other hand understand Kosovo Albanians' interpretation of Serbia's control over Kosovo after the Ottomans as Serbian occupation only as a means to legitimize their insubordination and rebelliousness against the Serbs throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>81</sup> They point out that rebellion from the Kosovo Albanian side existed openly against Serb authorities from the very start of Serbian rule.<sup>82</sup>

At the same time, Kosovo Albanians maintain that they were mistreated in the new state by, amongst other things, mentioning that there were no Albanian-language schools in the

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<sup>77</sup> Schwartz 2000: 19

<sup>78</sup> Di Lellio (ed.) 2006: 33

<sup>79</sup> Malcolm 1999: 264

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 265

<sup>81</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>82</sup> Malcolm 1999: 272

whole of Kosovo (except for some very few secret ones), as well as no Albanian-language publication despite that almost every other minority had their own newspapers.<sup>83</sup> The Kosovo Albanians continue to argue their point by claiming that their language was not only being censored but that their very existence as a national minority was denied.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, they claim that there existed a large-scale arrangement of colonization that settled Slavs in areas that were inhabited by Albanians, a plan that included harassment in the form of confiscation of land from Albanian villagers intended to result in Kosovo Albanian emigration to Albania or Turkey.<sup>85</sup>

The Serbs on the other hand, make allegations of the Kosovo Albanians having sided with the Austro-Germans and the Bulgarians in World War I and that the Kosovo Albanians as well supported fascist Italy and formed special SS units during WW II. They continue by maintaining that the two wars resulted in Serbs migrating out of Kosovo, which only continued later on in Tito's<sup>86</sup> Yugoslavia.<sup>87</sup>

Many Kosovo Albanians did indeed not mind the new Tito regime and its policies since it gave Kosovo a form of autonomy. They saw Tito as the man who reversed the Serbian oppression but claim that Albanians in Kosovo nevertheless had a second-class position during his reign.<sup>88</sup>

Yet, the next man to come would be unpopular to a much greater extent amongst the Albanians of Kosovo: Slobodan Milošević. Milošević retook Kosovo's autonomy. The Kosovo Albanians want for independence from Serbia greatly increased as a result and *The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)*, a small militant fragmented group, was formed.<sup>89</sup> In response to KLA's guerilla campaign for independence, Milosevic launched an offensive against the Kosovo Albanians.<sup>90</sup> Due to the brutal nature of this offensive, it resulted in threats of military action by the West and escalated eventually to action by NATO in the form of air strikes.<sup>91</sup>

Since 1999, Kosovo has been a UN-protectorate but it still belongs to Serbia officially. In the end-report Ahtisaari<sup>92</sup> presented in 2007 after UN-negotiations, it was recommended

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<sup>83</sup> Malcolm1999: 267

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 268

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 269

<sup>86</sup> *Josip Tito Broz* was Yugoslavia's prime minister 1945-53, and later on Yugoslavia's president 1953-80

<sup>87</sup> [http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo\\_yesterday/kosovo\\_yesterday.htm](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/2006/pages/kosovo_yesterday/kosovo_yesterday.htm)

<sup>88</sup> Malcolm1999: 314

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9903/24/kla.history/>

<sup>90</sup> <http://www.time.com/time/daily/special/kosovo/primer.html>

<sup>91</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/map/yugoslavia/>

<sup>92</sup> Martti Ahtisaari was appointed the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the future status process for Kosovo - <http://www.unosek.org/unosek/en/speenvoy.html>

that Kosovo should receive monitored independence. Full sovereignty would thus be handed to Kosovo during a transition period, and under international monitoring. Serbia does not support this report and is backed up by Russia. Finally a troika, consisting of a representative each for Russia, the US and EU, got the assignment to initiate a new round of negotiations. Nothing conclusive has till this day been achieved, the Serbs attempt to stall the whole process whilst the Kosovo Albanians has agreed on new negotiations without budging on their demand for independence. Meanwhile, the fear of new chaos is maximal and frustration and despair is a fact, not being lessened by the high poverty and crime rates.<sup>93</sup>

## 5.2 The Religion Factor

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*The two subjective versions of history make plain that there is more to the conflict than dangerous national myths. One other possible root for the Kosovo conflict seems to be the issue of religion, an essential characteristic of Serbian national identity<sup>94</sup>, as well as Albanian national identity.<sup>95</sup> The Serbs themselves mention that initial Serb-Albanian relations were hostile on a religious level.*

*The element of religion is not an uncommon contributing factor to various conflicts. Throughout time it has, in different ways, been a dynamic feature of many clashes. Here, we will explore the possibility of it being so regarding the Kosovo question. First, a brief description of the two nationalities' religious beliefs will be presented, and thereafter the subject will be discussed from a Serbian as well as an Albanian point of view.*

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When Serbia was Serbia and Montenegro (thus Kosovo included), 85 per cent of the population were Serbian Orthodox, 5.5% catholic and only 3.2 % Muslim etc (2002 census).<sup>96</sup> The 85 per cent that are followers of Orthodox Christianity consists primarily of Serbs, whilst most Kosovo Albanians belong to the Muslim group.

The views regarding the strength of the religious attribute in the Kosovo question appear to be very varied. One of the Serbs' standpoints is that religion is not one of the conflict's features. It is argued that diverse religious communities in Kosovo have played a crucial role in building and preserving all its' ethnic groups' national and cultural identities.

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<sup>93</sup> [http://www.sakerhetspolitik.se/templates/Level2Page\\_554.aspx](http://www.sakerhetspolitik.se/templates/Level2Page_554.aspx)

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-228323/Serbia>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.beta-press.com/eng12.html>

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/yi-serbia-and-montenegro/rel-religion>

Other religious contributive features are denied. Religion is stated to have had only a secondary role during the formation of contemporary national consciousness, particularly in the case of the Albanians. And the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church supposedly only encourages national tolerance. In addition, it is stated that Kosovo has been marked by a rather high degree of religious tolerance and that this trend can be prolonged if the religious communities in Kosovo take on a constructive role in achieving peace and coexistence.<sup>97</sup>

The Kosovo Albanians seem to agree on the point that, for the Albanians at least, the conflict does not have a religious feature. They as well stress the importance of religious tolerance but do not concur in that religion has not shaped the consciousness of their nation, in fact it is even described as a key factor. They do however claim that Serbs indeed are engaged in a religious war. Accordingly to the Albanian view, Serbs have always abused religion in order to mobilize their forces to cleanse lands of Muslims and calling it a holy crusade. The force behind this is believed to be the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbian “propaganda” is thus interpreted as manipulation to gain the support of the Western public in defending Christian Europe from Islam.<sup>98</sup>

Some Kosovo Albanians agree with Serbs on the matter of religion not being of importance, at least not in a negative way, and the possibility of religion serving as a means to encourage tolerance and reconciliation is yet again encouraged. They also acknowledge the Serbian view that Orthodoxy is an important component of the Serbian identity, as well as the view that Kosovo Albanians do not regard religion to be an essential component of their national identity. The subject of the religion is however brought up in the sense that it is claimed that it was used by Milosevic and his supporters in order to manipulate people’s emotions by portraying an image of Albanian annihilation of monasteries; as well as in the sense that the Serbian Orthodox Church at first supposedly supported Milosevic but later on criticized him due to his use of violence. Furthermore, it is pointed out that the reason why Serb forces destroyed several Islamic facilities and the Kosovo Albanians responded by destroying Orthodox churches is due to a desire to eliminate any evidence of the other’s presence in Kosovo rather than caused by religious fanaticism. In addition, it is pointed out that the Serbian and Albanian religious communities are those that have been the most willing to establish a dialogue.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/yi-serbia-and-montenegro/rel-religion>

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report\\_archive/A400226\\_31012001.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400226_31012001.pdf)

The claims of the Kosovo Albanians' and Serbs' of not having involved religion in the conflict between them, as well as the statements expressing a desire to use religion as a means to reconciliation, are backed up by the inter-religious cooperation between representatives of the Islam Community, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Catholic Church that existed even previous to the NATO bombing. The conference took place in Vienna in 1999 where the representatives pleaded for the rights of all communities in Kosovo, denouncing violence, interethnic hatred and destruction of religious sites.<sup>100</sup>

### 5.3 Nothing in Common

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*The preceding accounts of history provided by Serbs and Albanians demonstrate yet another possible factor to the Kosovo conflict, namely the great many features that differentiate the two. The relevancy of this as a possible contributing factor to the antagonism at hand is made clear by the fact that dissimilarity is often linked to conflict, in fact it is even included in the definition of conflict mentioned earlier.*

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Albanians and Slavs have almost nothing in common.<sup>101</sup> First of all, no matter which of their accounts is valid, it is clear that that Albanians and Serbs are of different origins. Secondly, they have different religious beliefs. The Albanian language and the Slavic Serbian one differ significantly.<sup>102</sup>

Moreover as both their accounts of history make plain, they tend to have different opinions regarding various matters. It seems as if the only thing in common for Albanians and Montenegrins is their “love” for Kosovo.

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<sup>100</sup> [http://www.kosovakosovo.com/view\\_file.php?file\\_id=61](http://www.kosovakosovo.com/view_file.php?file_id=61)

<sup>101</sup> Schwartz 2000: 12

<sup>102</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-214072/Serbia>



## 5.4 “The Butcher”

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*An additional piece to the puzzle, i.e. Slobodan Milošević, is detected in the previous versions of history. Milošević has undoubtedly been recognized as the key actor in the Serbian-Albanian conflict in Kosovo. The extent and way he contributed will be analyzed in the following paragraph.*

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That Slobodan Milošević was very much “the architect of the Balkans bloodbath” (Kosovo included) is unanimously accepted.<sup>103</sup> The man that started (and lost) four wars<sup>104</sup> has been dubbed by International media as “the Butcher of the Balkans”<sup>105</sup> and has also been referred to as the Hitler replica.<sup>106</sup>

The whole Balkans carnage is thought of to be a detailed orchestrated plan by Milošević as means to create a greater Serbia. He is thought of to have intentionally destroyed Yugoslavia’s economy and thereafter planted nationalist sentiments among the Albanians and the Serbs (as well as the others) in order to have a pretext and support for invading and consequently build a Greater Serbia.<sup>107</sup>

Milošević’s master plan was seriously put into action when he in 1987 managed to change his image from an uninteresting Communist to an agitator of Serbian nationalism. This occurred during a Serbian protest against alleged harassment by the Kosovo Albanians. In a speech that received immense public support, he uttered something to the angry Serbs that would become a uniting cry for Serbs: no one would be allowed to beat them. The manipulation of Serbian national sentiment succeeded; in 1989, he became President of Serbia.<sup>108</sup> The rest is well-known history.

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<sup>103</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/europe/03/11/milosovic/>

<sup>104</sup> [http://transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Oberg\\_Slobo\\_1.html](http://transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Oberg_Slobo_1.html)

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/europe/03/11/milosovic/>

<sup>106</sup> [http://transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Oberg\\_Slobo\\_1.html](http://transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Oberg_Slobo_1.html)

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in\\_depth/europe/2000/milosevic\\_yugoslavia/rise.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/europe/2000/milosevic_yugoslavia/rise.stm)

## 5.5 Russia

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*The final factor discovered is the interference of Russia, Serbia's historical ally.<sup>109</sup> This matter will be explored further in this paragraph.*

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Russia has consistently supported Serbia in the matter of Kosovo and opposes therefore independence for the Kosovo Albanians.<sup>110</sup> The country<sup>111</sup> has even gone so far as to threaten to “cut off diplomatic ties with any country that recognizes Kosovo’s independence.”<sup>112</sup> The position is defended by claiming that the situation would evolve into an “uncontrollable crisis” if Kosovo were to be declared independent.<sup>113</sup>

Fear exists of the possibility of an independent Kosovo affecting Russia’s conflict zones. An independent Kosovo could strengthen hopes of independence for unrecognized republics such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transdniestria and set a precedent.<sup>114</sup> Russian officials continue by explaining that it is also a matter of protecting fellow Slavs.<sup>115</sup> Russians are namely also Slavic and what’s more, the Russians are also Eastern Orthodox Christians.<sup>116</sup>

Nevertheless, whatever the cause to the Russian opposition, the matter is that it continues until this day.<sup>117</sup> On December 2007, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov explained that “If a decision to approve a unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo is made, the veto will undoubtedly be applied”.<sup>118</sup>

Additionally, other Security Council members, such as Greece and Cyprus, have also declared their opposition to a unilateral declaration of sovereignty for Kosovo. Similar fears exist here, of the possibility for Kosovo to set a precedent for other separatist regions.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/12/19/kosovo.UN/index.html>

<sup>110</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/302747.stm>

<sup>111</sup> i.e. its’ regime

<sup>112</sup> <http://www.russiatoday.ru/news/news/19066>

<sup>113</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/12/17/kosovo.russia/index.html>

<sup>114</sup> <http://www.russiatoday.ru/news/news/19066>

<sup>115</sup> <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/12/AR2007031200972.html>

<sup>116</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/302747.stm>

<sup>117</sup> [http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=327923&area=/breaking\\_news/breaking\\_news\\_\\_international\\_news/](http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=327923&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news__international_news/)

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=24440>

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

# 6 Montenegro – A Smooth Separation

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## 6.1 Background

*Various notable aspects will be presented in this chapter in order to establish a background to the case at hand.*

### 6.1.1 Intertwining History

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*The following subsection will present a short description of Montenegro's history as an attempt to get a better understanding of the area. The historic narration will also be a means to detect reasons to why the separation went so pain free.*

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Before the arrival of the Slavs in the Balkans, Montenegro was inhabited by the Illyrians. When the Illyrian Kingdom was conquered by the Roman Empire in AD 9, it was annexed as a part of the province of Illyricum. The Slavs started appearing in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and by the 7<sup>th</sup> century Montenegro had underwent a Slavic colonization.<sup>120</sup>

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Montenegro was incorporated in the Serbian Empire. The Serbs were however defeated by the Ottoman Empire in the famous Battle of Kosovo in 1389 and Montenegro attained independence. Due to frequent confrontations with the Ottomans and Albanians, it formed an alliance with Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>121</sup>

In the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, Montenegro was a member of the Balkan league and fought against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>122</sup> Later on, it was absorbed yet again into Serbia and became part of *the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes* in 1918 (Yugoslavia from 1929).<sup>123</sup> In this new state, the Montenegrins belonged to “the other people” who were not mentioned in the state’s name and who were not really asked concerning the founding of this new state.

There existed a division in the country between those who wanted to restore its independence and those behind the slogan “Only unity can save the Serbs”. A referendum was held soon in the 1920s, where those in favor of independence got the nickname “Greens” and

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<sup>120</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/history/prehys.htm>

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9372526>

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/bravo/balkan1912.htm>

<sup>123</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

the latter group was nicknamed “Whites” referring to the colors of the ballots. The two groups were of equal size just as they are at present, as the recent referendum made clear. The former referendum was rejected as invalid by many Greens, resulting in insurgence which Belgrade had to devote years to suppress.<sup>124</sup>

The Italians occupied Montenegro during WWII, but in 1946 it was made one of the new Yugoslavia’s six (by name) self-governing federated units.<sup>125</sup> Montenegrins, along with Macedonia, was therefore finally recognized as a nation and there were no noteworthy attempts at rebellion in Montenegro.<sup>126</sup>

### ***Nationalism and Milošević***

In the beginning of the 1990s the nationalism that had begun to spread in the Balkans, reached Montenegro as well. History was rewritten to fit the various new nationalist ideologies. For Montenegrins, this meant that they no longer considered themselves to be Serbs; they had arrived in the Balkans before the Serbs. Previous alleged attempts at Serbanisation of Montenegro were mentioned etc. The Serbs were now therefore “the other”.<sup>127</sup>

Still, Montenegro supported Serbia in the wars of 1991-1995.<sup>128</sup> And after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Montenegro along with Serbia established *the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*.<sup>129</sup> Even so, since 1997, the country’s Prime Minister, Milo Djukanović, had begun to distance Montenegro from Serbia and Milošević.<sup>130</sup> When Milošević had himself elected FRY president the same year, Montenegrin authorities protested loudly. In addition, Montenegro planned to convert Yugoslavia into a confederation, in which it would have its own currency, foreign ministry, and defense system, but was rejected by Belgrade.<sup>131</sup> Nevertheless, in 1999, the German DM was introduced (in 2002 the euro) as Montenegro’s official currency by the Montenegrin government. This event was followed by a blockade of medicine supplies to Montenegro imposed by Belgrade, and a total blockade “on the raw materials and semi-finished goods for Montenegrin industry and the export of industrial products from Montenegro.” The tension was at a maximum level, fear of a war in Montenegro between advocates and opponents of independence existed, and Belgrade began

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<sup>124</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9372526>

<sup>126</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/23/world/europe/23montenegro.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/23/world/europe/23montenegro.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9372526>

<sup>130</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/22/world/europe/22cnd-monte.html?hp&ex=1148356800&en=c0947c460dec32dc&ei=5094&partner=homepage>

<sup>131</sup> Ramet 2006: 517

to organize a new military police battalion inside Montenegro. What was most alarming was that Milošević began to act in ways that were similar to the actions which had preceded the wars in Croatia and Bosnia; he cancelled the new appointments of Montenegrin officers to new posts in 2000, he urged “loyal forces” to volunteer for military service, to repressive measures against the media etc.<sup>132</sup>

Milošević continued by planning to propose a new law to the federal government in 2000, which would force Djukanović<sup>133</sup> to also include delegates from Momir Bulatović’s<sup>134</sup> Socialist People’s Party in the composition of the deputations sent by the Serbian and Montenegrin legislatures to the Chamber of the Republics (the upper house of parliament). This would consequently ensure Milošević the two-thirds majority he would need to change the constitution. Massive demonstrations took place prior to the proposal of the new law, which led to violent measures by the government.<sup>135</sup> Milošević’s plan was fulfilled and amendments were made to the constitution which ultimately meant that Montenegro’s former equality with Serbia was abolished, citizens of Serbia had now the means of outvoting Montenegro’s citizens.

That taken care of, Milošević called for elections on 24 September 2000, which he subsequently lost. According to *the Federal Electoral Commission*, his opponent Vojislav Koštunica<sup>136</sup> had not acquired more than 50% of the votes which according to the FRY election rules meant that a run-off election was required. The independent monitoring of the voting which the opposition had undertaken claimed otherwise though, Koštunica had received 54,6% of the votes. The US and West European states acknowledged therefore his victory, and tens of thousands of opposition supporters gathered in Belgrade on 25 September to celebrate their victory screaming “Kill yourself Slobodan, and save Serbia!”. Milošević was nevertheless resolved to hold a run-off election choosing October 8, resulting in large-scale demonstrations and a general strike by the opposition. It seemed as if all was lost for Milošević when even his friend Vladimir Putin acknowledged Koštunica’s victory.<sup>137</sup> He finally, after several violent measures, resigned and Koštunica was officially declared the new president.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Ramet 2006: 518

<sup>133</sup> Djukanović was at that time Montenegro’s president – Ibid, 518

<sup>134</sup> Milošević’s ally – Ibid, 517

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 519

<sup>136</sup> Koštunica was the president of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) – Ibid, 520

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 520-21

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 522

Djukanović was however still determined to redraw Montenegro from the federation, but the encouragement he had received from the West to enable his government to stand up to Milošević was withdrawn. As soon as Milošević was flown to The Hague in 2001, the Western diplomats' attitude changed; former encouragement for Montenegrin sovereignty was suddenly replaced by EU and American criticism.<sup>139</sup>

The referendum was postponed repeatedly but came finally underway under the guidance of EU.<sup>140</sup> On June 3, 2006, Montenegro achieved complete separation from Serbia.<sup>141</sup> Montenegro held an EU guided referendum where 55.5 per cent voted for independence and 44.5 against.<sup>142</sup> Serbia, along with 83 other countries, officially recognized Montenegro.<sup>143</sup> Consequently, it was admitted to the United Nations as the 192<sup>nd</sup> member.<sup>144</sup>

### 6.1.2 South Slavs

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*Who are the people referred to as Montenegrins? What is their relationship to Serbs? This will be explored in the following chapter as an attempt to get a perspective of Montenegrin-Serb relations.*

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Similar to the other former Yugoslav members, Montenegro has a rich blend of various ethnicities. The majority, 61.86 percent, of the population is thought of to be Montenegrins, followed by 90 000 Muslims, 57 000 Serbs, 40 000 Albanians, and 26 000 Yugoslavs (2002).<sup>145</sup>

The Montenegrins are believed to have belonged to the Slavic tribes that arrived in the Balkans. Thus, they are in all probability of the same South Slavic origin as the Serbs.<sup>146</sup> Upon their arrival in Balkans, the Slavs dispersed and divided into many groups such as the Montenegrins and Serbs.<sup>147</sup> Most Montenegrins closely identify themselves therefore with the Serbs through common historical and cultural ties.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, the majority of Serbs consider Montenegrins to be “Mountain Serbs” and most Montenegrins regard themselves as Serb in

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<sup>139</sup> Pavlowitch 2002: 220 & 222

<sup>140</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>141</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9372526>

<sup>142</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>143</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9437337/Montenegro>

<sup>144</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>145</sup> Pavlowitch 2002: 222

<sup>146</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>147</sup> Pavlowitch 2002: 1

<sup>148</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-Orientation.html>

origin.<sup>149</sup> The reason to this is that they share many characteristics, despite some existing differences.

Their religious beliefs is one of the attributes that they have in common, both groups managed namely to preserve their Orthodox religious traditions.<sup>150</sup> Albeit, there exists Catholic and Muslim minorities in Montenegro, most of the country's inhabitants consider themselves Orthodox.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, the language that the Montenegrins speak is considered to be basically identical to the one that the Serbs speak.<sup>152</sup> What the Montenegrins and Serbs now refer to as Montenegrin and Serbian are both a part of the same language, namely the one linguistically termed as Serbo-Croatian.<sup>153</sup> Additionally, as revealed before, the Montenegrins have traditionally sided with the Serbs.<sup>154</sup>

### 6.1.3 The Nationalist Streak

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*Despite the existing friendly bond between Montenegrins and Serbs, nationalist emotions rose amongst the Montenegrins.*

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Not all Montenegrins like to consider themselves identical to Serbs, many feel resentment towards Serbian efforts to minimize their national distinctiveness and have instead strong Montenegrin national feelings.<sup>155</sup> There are also those that regard themselves to be the noblest and bravest Serbs since the Montenegrins were the only clan amongst them that managed to defend their autonomy throughout the Ottoman period.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>

<sup>152</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-214072/Serbia>

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-History-and-Cultural-Relations.html>

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>156</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

## 6.2 Constructive Features

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*What do the various aspects presented earlier imply concerning the cause to Montenegrins' successful route to sovereignty? The answer to that question will be explored in this chapter.*

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### ***Friendly Relations***

Past experiences seem to give the impression that Montenegrin-Serb relations have, for the most part at least, maintained a fairly cordial level. Despite the existence of national sentiments among some Montenegrins<sup>157</sup>, numerous Montenegrins seem to have maintained a feeling of close connection to Serbs.<sup>158</sup> To the extent that they even consider themselves as Serb in origin. Moreover, the feeling seems to be mutual given that a good number of Serbs reportedly consider Montenegrins as fellow Serbs as well.<sup>159</sup> Albeit the Montenegrins decided to separate from Serbia, it was done so by a measly 55.5 per cent.<sup>160</sup>

### ***Shared Characteristics***

Paragraph 6.1 also makes clear yet another positive element, namely that Montenegrins and Serbs have ample common attributes, which can explain the above mentioned friendly nature of their relation. To begin with, they are believed to have descended from the same people: the Slavs.<sup>161</sup> They share therefore a common historical tie<sup>162</sup> and despite that they divided into different groups upon their arrival to the Balkans<sup>163</sup>, they managed to retain their common cultural<sup>164</sup> and religious ties<sup>165</sup>.

The as good as lone distinction one can speak of concerning Montenegrins and Serbs is that Montenegrin pronunciation resembles the Croatian accent more than the one used in Serbia.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>158</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-Orientation.html>

<sup>159</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>160</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>161</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>162</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-Orientation.html>

<sup>163</sup> Pavlowitch 2002: 1

<sup>164</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-Orientation.html>

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.montenet.org/geograph/yupeople.htm>

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.



### ***The Absence of Milošević***

Milošević was comfortably enough out of the question when Montenegro finally separated from Serbia. At the time when requests for independence began to emerge and Djukanović started to distance Montenegro from Serbia with plans of separation, Milošević was still a powerful and very intimidating opponent.<sup>167</sup> However when Montenegro achieved independence, the antagonist had been out of the picture since five years.<sup>168</sup>

In Kosovo's case conversely the nationalistic Milosevic was very much a part of the equation. He is no longer that but was very much a central antagonist when the war began. The question is if this distinction between the two cases mattered to any significant degree to the relevant outcomes, seeing as the rivalry continues in the Kosovo case long after Milošević's exit.

## **6.3 Harmful Features**

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*Subsection 6.1.2 gives a hint of one feature to the Montenegro case that, at that time, predicted a chilling future...*

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### ***A Horrible Prognosis***

According to *The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research's* associate Håkan Wiberg and director Jan Oberg, "The smaller the biggest group in a state is, the greater is the risk". What they are referring to is that the biggest group in Montenegro was in 2006 merely approximately 40 per cent and the second biggest group around 30 per cent, meaning that Montenegro's demography resembled that of Bosnia-Herzegovina's in 1991.

Experiences in Europe after the Cold War hold the lesson that ethno-nationally heterogeneous states run much higher risks of such evils such as secession, civil war, and de facto division. The scenario for Montenegro seemed therefore to be an appalling one.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Pavlowitch 2002: 222

<sup>168</sup> [http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg\\_CG-born.html](http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2006/Wiberg-Oberg_CG-born.html)

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

# 7 Success vs. Catastrophe - Comparison

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## 7.1 The Elements

### *The Matter of History*

Despite the similarities concerning the Kosovo case and that of Montenegro, the existence of dissimilarities is striking. First and foremost there is the question of history. The Kosovo case is a typical ethnic conflict in the sense of its origin dating back hundreds of years. Avid references to great migrations, epic battles and holy sites are central to the rival Serb-Albanian relations. Their accounts of Kosovo's history differ to a significant degree and historical myths are a central part of their claims of Kosovo.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, the turbulent historic happenings of this region often involved Albanians and Serbs on opposite sides. The historic aspect of the Montenegro case seems on the other hand to be nonexistent. No noteworthy fervent historic references were part of Montenegrins cry for independence, no claims of Montenegro as the cradle of any nationhood were made on either side. Quite the reverse, Montenegro's past reveals a history of Montenegrin and Serbian cordiality with common enemies.<sup>171</sup>

### *Rivalry - Cordiality*

Yet another striking difference is that of the nature of their relations. There exists a profound detestation between Albanians and Serbs whilst the Montenegrin-Serb relation is characterized by affability; which leads us to yet another distinction, namely that of common ground. As has been made clear earlier, Montenegrins and Serbs have plenty shared characteristics and are even essentially the same people whereas Albanians have nothing whatsoever in common with Serbs.<sup>172</sup>

One important factor where Serbs and Montenegrins coincide whereas Serbs and Albanians do not is that of religion. The question is whether or not this factor is of any significance? A strong will to deny any religious involvement in the conflict between them exists on both sides. On the contrary, representatives of the two sides' religious communities seem to possess an eagerness to offer a helping hand in achieving reconciliation. The

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<sup>170</sup> Rogel 2004: 70

<sup>171</sup> <http://www.everyculture.com/Europe/Montenegrins-History-and-Cultural-Relations.html>

<sup>172</sup> See subsections 5.3 and 6.2.2

meetings confirm that they in fact did try to help. Nevertheless, it must be noted that merely because the representatives of Kosovo's religious communities reject the idea of religion being a contributive factor does not mean that is the matter of reality. They undoubtedly have an interest in claiming this in order to save face; and albeit they seem to genuinely promote religious tolerance, it does not eradicate the possibility of religion being a cause to the fragmentation. The fact that religious prosecution has occurred on both sides can not be ignored.<sup>173</sup> If these religious attacks are attributable to religious fanaticism, or merely due to wanting to inflict pain on the other believing religion to be a sore spot is however hard to identify. Yet another possibility is the claim mentioned previously in subsection 5.2: that the religious violence is caused by the desire to eliminate any evidence of the other's presence in Kosovo.<sup>174</sup>

### ***The Significance of One Man***

Milošević was present both when demands for independence existed in Kosovo as well as Montenegro. The distinction is however that Milošević was still a prime figure when the tension in Kosovo had reached a dangerous degree, whilst he was absent before the pressure for independence had a chance to spiral out of hand in the Kosovo case.

There are other dissimilarities between the two cases concerning this matter to be pointed out. First and foremost, Milošević's position was quite different when the Kosovo Albanians started to push for independence from when the Montenegrins did. The Kosovo Albanians had a strong, charismatic leader that had managed to gain the affection of almost all Serbs, and even administered himself as the foreground for their nationalist sentiments, as their opponent. The Montenegrins' antagonist was on the other hand a weakened figure who not only had begun to lose the affection of his people, but who had also gained the disgust of the international community.

Second, the Montenegrins were fortunate given that that the West now considered Milošević to be their antagonist as well and gave therefore support to his opponents. The Kosovo Albanians had in contrast not received any support prior to the war. They had also been in a quite different position than the Montenegrins were when they demanded independence. Kosovo had, at that time, no autonomy whatsoever and the Albanians considered themselves oppressed. The situation for the Montenegrins was quite the opposite, they had their own customs service, currency and government; they basically shared only the

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<sup>173</sup> [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report\\_archive/A400226\\_31012001.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400226_31012001.pdf)

military forces and a foreign service. The Montenegrins could therefore afford to push for independence in a more sensitive/calm, and slow manner.<sup>175</sup>

### ***Interference***

Lastly, the differing roles Russia played in the two conflicts has to be mentioned also. As was explained in subsection 5.5, Russia strongly opposes Kosovo independence. No such opposition existed in the case of Montenegro. Moscow promptly declared its acceptance of the referendum.<sup>176</sup>

## **7.2 Nationalism as a Power Game**

All the elements above have to be viewed from the nationalist perspective since nationalist sentiments is undoubtedly critical to both the Kosovo case as well as the Montenegro case.

In the Kosovo case, the historical aspect is interpreted as simply a means to establish and intensify the Serbs' and the Albanians' collective memory. Myths are planted and symbols are created to establish fellowship and thereby automatically form enemies. History is therefore, in this view, merely a means to a greater project: creating a nation. This was of no difficulty seeing as the differences between Serbs and Albanians are so pronounced and when the project was well underway resulting religious violence and other was an expected respond, which in turn intensified the national sentiments. The instigator to all of this was Milošević, it is construed that he intentionally planted and intensified the national sentiments amongst the Serbs and the Albanians as well. The cause in this case is therefore interpreted to be Milošević alone. All the other components are merely perceived as means for his great project of nation building.

The project was of much greater difficulty regarding Montenegro as the results of the referendum showed. In view of the fact that not only do the Montenegrins and Serbs share the same origin, their former division into groups did not eradicate their similarities and they have managed to stay analogous. In order to set in motion the project of nation building, a version of history had to be fabricated. A collective memory had to be established exclusively for the Montenegrins. The Montenegrins were no longer identical to Serbs, they were the noblest Slavic clan. The wanted and expected result was that resentment towards the Serbs arose for their attempts to “crush the Montenegrins' national uniqueness”. The Montenegrin national

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<sup>175</sup> See subsections 5.4 and 6.1.1

<sup>176</sup> <http://www.vlada.cg.yu/eng/vijesti.php?akcija=vijesti&id=13485>

sentiments were therefore a fact. The feelings were not as intense as was desired seeing as the Montenegrins were not much more in number than the second biggest group in Montenegro which happened to be Serbs. Djukanović, the instigator in this case, had however other minority groups to influence in favor of his cause. Albanians were namely also apart of the Montenegrin population.

Hence similarly, the cause is interpreted to be Djukanović in this case. The difference between the two cases outcomes is in turn explained by the fact that Djukanović did not have as much to work with as Milošević had, and was not either as fanatic as “the butcher” was.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> See “nationalism as a power game” by The United States Institute of Peace - <http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pwks8.pdf>: p. 2

# Kosovo

# Montenegro

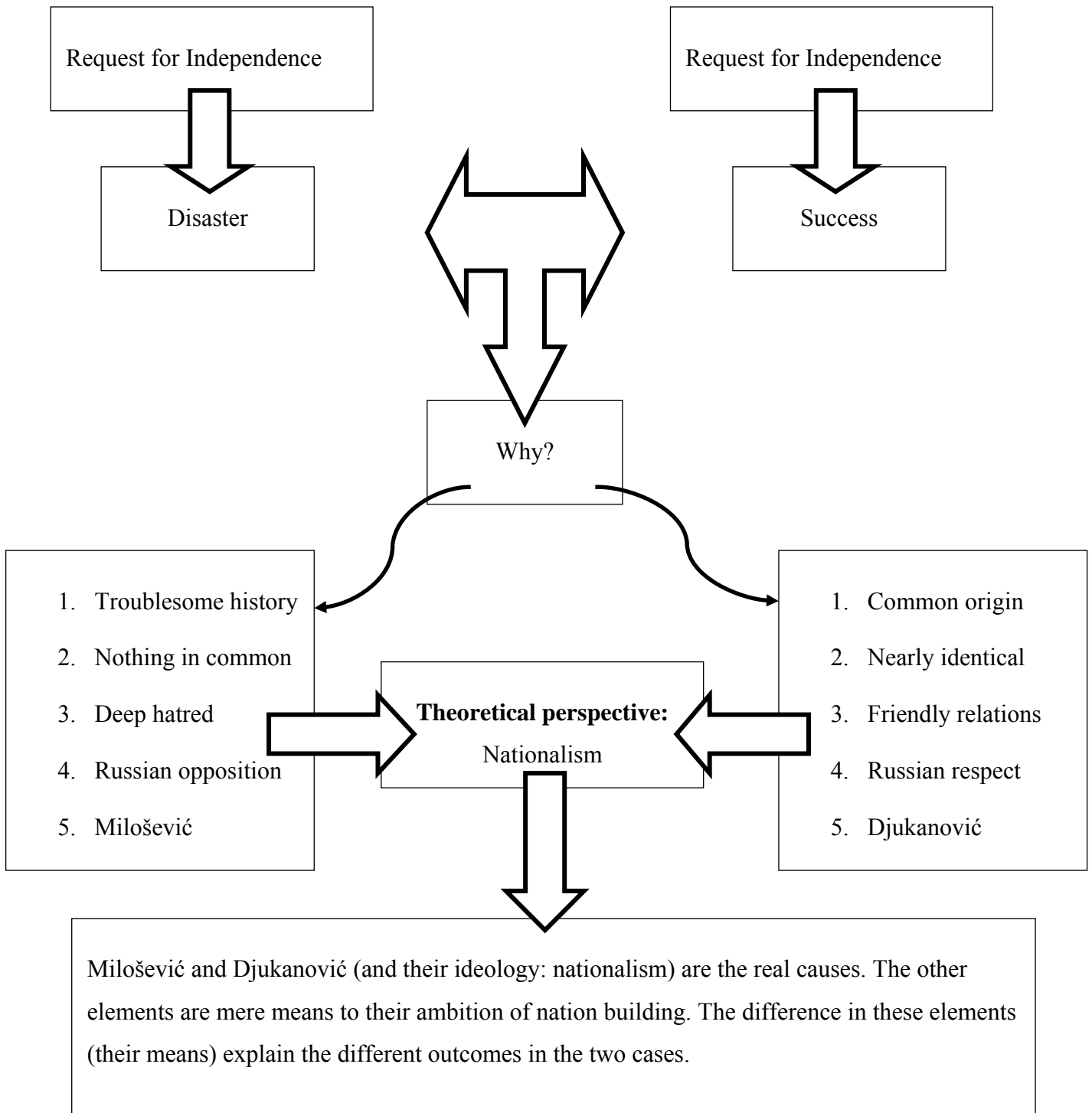


Figure 2. The Results Recapitulated

## 8 Concluding Discussion

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The aspects of these two cases revealed in this study turned out to be identical but reverse regarding their features. The Kosovo case included heaps of negative elements and the Montenegro case heaps of positive elements, all comparable elements.

A troubling history filled with conflicting myths was exposed in the Kosovo case, in accordance with the general shared assumption mentioned in subsection 2.2. However, the Kosovo Albanians' and the Serbs' subjective accounts of history did not only expose the importance of this aspect but also the sheer complexity of the crisis. Apart from its historical aspect, the Kosovo case is a conflict of manipulation of national ideology, external (Russian) interference, lack of common ground and deep-rooted hatred. Conversely, the account of Montenegro's history revealed the simplicity of the intertwining history of Montenegrins and Serbs, again in accordance with the hypothesis; but other aspects were found here as well: manipulation of national ideology, external support, common ground and friendly relations.

Thus, it seems to be that the tendency to simplify the Montenegrins' successful route to independence and the Kosovo Albanians' unsuccessful one (that has not occurred officially yet) as a mere matter of history is not exact. History is definitely a factor, an important one at that, but there are many more factors at work. The comparability of all these elements makes it plausible that these elements contributed to the variation of the outcomes of the Kosovo Albanians' and the Montenegrins' ambitions for independence.

One receives a somewhat different angle at the matter by analyzing it from the theory of nationalism. More emphasis is put on the two political figures and their manipulation of "their people" as means to create strong national sentiments necessary for their own selfish aspirations. *The United States Institute of Peace* puts it "nationalism as power game".<sup>178</sup>

This interpretation of the two situations is clearly a relevant one. Serb-Albanian relations were not perfect before Milošević, but it is doubtful the situation would have erupted in the full-scale war that it did without his pleadings to national loyalty. And Djukanović did manage to achieve independence for Montenegro. He did not have as many cards to play as Milošević did, but the conditions were much more favorable for him and his country. Montenegro was in a completely different position than Kosovo was when it first pushed for independence. Serbia was weakened, the link between Montenegrins and Serbs was a friendly one, Montenegro was not as important to Serbia as Kosovo was, no serious external

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<sup>178</sup> <http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pwks8.pdf>: p. 2

opposition existed etc. It is also important to acknowledge the difference between the two men. Milošević is believed to have had ambitions for a greater Serbia whilst Djukanović's ambitions seem to have been much more modest. So what does this mean? Can all men/women with aspirations for great power create havoc by playing this game? History has surely proved by now that humans are not difficult to manipulate.



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