

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

**THE CONSEQUENCES OF ETHNIC SEGREGATION: THE
CONTACT HYPOTHESIS IN THE CASE OF MACEDONIA**

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Abstract

The Aim of this Thesis is to discover what causes ethnic tensions in Macedonia. During the times, when in all others Yugoslav Republics, wars broke out Macedonia stood aside from the happenings in the neighboring regions and managed to get its independence by peaceful means and during the 1990's Macedonia was described as a miracle and 'oasis of peace.

However this image was not maintained for long and in 2001 the country experienced an armed conflict, which deepened even more the already existing ethnic tensions. The conflict was successfully ended with the Signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and the changes made in the Macedonian Constitution.

The new constitution gave equal right to all citizens in Macedonia. However, even these changes did nothing to reduce the ethnic tensions in the country and people nowadays are even more divided along ethnic lines. This is especially evident between the two dominant communities in Macedonia- the Albanian and the Macedonian ethnic community. The level of prejudices between the people is higher than ever and if the prejudices are not resolved in future they might cause other conflict.

This is why the paper examines what causes this tensions and the findings has revealed that the political parties promote segregation and then this segregation causes high level of prejudices among the members from both ethnic communities. Moreover the findings revealed that people nowadays are not as divided among ethnic lines as they are divided along political ones

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Introduction

Since the country independence, Macedonia was considered a model of multiethnic coexistence. According to the 2002 census, Macedonia is a home of 64.18 % Macedonians, 25.17 % Albanians, 3.85% Turks, 2.85% Roma, 1.78% Serbs, 0.48% Bosnians and 1.04% others¹, which just show how ethnically diverse the country is.

During the times, when in all others Yugoslav Republics, wars broke out; Macedonia stood aside from the happenings in the neighboring regions and managed to get its independence by peaceful means and during the 1990's Macedonia was described as a miracle and 'oasis of peace'.

However, Macedonia gained its independence leaving a lot of unresolved issues behind, like the status of its different ethnic groups in the state. In the newly formed state, one group (Macedonians) became predominant and the status of minority groups was also not clearly defined. So, as a result of all these unresolved issues the ethnic tensions in the country were constantly growing and in 2001 the country experienced an armed conflict between the NLA (National Liberation Army) and the Macedonian police forces. The NLA claimed that it was fighting for the human rights of the Albanians in Macedonia and

¹ Maleska, Mirjana, Lidija Hristova and Jovan Ananiev, *Spodeluwajne na Vlasta : Nov Model Multikulturnite Opstini vo Makedonija*. Istrazuvacki Izvestaj: Vtoro Izdanie (ADI, MCMS i Ian Collins, 2007) p. 17
(Maleska, Mirjana, Lidija Hristova and Jovan Ananiev, *Power sharing: New Model of the Multiethnic Municipalities in Macedonia*. Research Report: Second Edition(ADI, MCMS and Ian Collins, 2007)) p. 17

for constitutional reforms.²The Government officials, on the other hand labeled KLA as being a terrorists who are trying to divide the country along ethnic lines.

After seven months, the conflict was finally ended with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement on 13 of August. The leaders from the main political parties in Macedonia, together with representatives from the EU, US and NATO (Francois Leotard for the EU and James Pardew for the USA) signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement that stopped the fighting between the KLA and the Macedonian Police Forces. The agreement also brought for major changes in the Macedonian constitution and it was good for both sides. On one hand, it satisfied the demands of the Albanians, giving them better political and legal status. On the other hand, the agreement maintained the unitary character of the state, a provision which the Macedonian leaders had insisted on.³ So according to the changes made in the Macedonian Constitutions all ethnic groups got equal status that should have resolved the existing ethnic tensions between the different ethnic groups in Macedonia.

However, even the changes made in the constitution did nothing to reduce the ethnic prejudices that exist among the population in Macedonia. These prejudices are especially visible among the two dominant ethnic groups in Macedonia- the Slavic Macedonians and the ethnic Albanians. With the signing of the Ohrid Framework

² Zidas Daskalovski, *Walking on the edge: consolidating Multiethnic Macedonia* 1989-2004. Zidas Daskalovski. 2005 p.80

³ Vasko Popetreski and Vetoni Latifi” The Ohrid Framework Agreement Negotiations” Conflict Studies Research Centre, June 2004. Online available on: [www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/balkan/csrc_mpf-2004-07-22/04\(15\)-Chap3-JP.pdf](http://www.defac.ac.uk/colleges/csrc/document-listings/balkan/csrc_mpf-2004-07-22/04(15)-Chap3-JP.pdf)

Agreement and the changes made in the 2001 constitution instead of prejudice reduction there was increase in prejudices.

Research Question

The changes that were made in the Macedonian constitution, which gave equal status of all ethnic groups within the country in 2001, seemed just perfect for final resolution of ethnic tensions between the ethnic Albanians and Macedonians, in Macedonia at those times. However, unfortunately today's reality is that the changes made in the constitution and the signing of the Ohrid Framework agreement, did nothing to decrease the ethnic tensions and prejudices. Nowadays, people more than ever are divided among ethnic lines. People from both ethnic communities have prejudices and stereotypes toward the other community and in future unless the prejudices are changed they might well sow the seeds of future conflict. This was the reason that I decided to investigate: "Why, even with the changes made in the constitution, there are still ethnic tensions between the two dominant communities in Macedonia- the Albanian and the Macedonian and what causes this tensions?"

Research Methodology

In order to answer the above posed question I decided to undertake an informal survey research in which the target group were citizens from the areas where the armed conflict took place, since they were the ones who were directly involved in the ethnic strife and victims in the conflict. I chose this area since in this area the tensions between the two communities are most visible.

Instead of formulating questionnaires and distributing them among the research subjects, I decided to travel to Macedonia and use a qualitative approach in an attempt to understand the problem from the subjects' point of view and to unpack people's experiences.⁴ For that purpose, I chose three villages in Macedonia: Brvenica, Sarakino and Strimnica. All these villages are in the North western part of the country and they all belong to the same municipality- Brvenica. Moreover they all have approximately the same population and in all villages the main economic activity is agriculture. The only difference between the three villages is the ethnic composition of the population.

My research was guided by the Allport Contact Hypothesis which says that more frequent contact between different ethnic groups under the right conditions will bring in reduction of prejudices. By investigating the relative levels of prejudices across the three villages, I wanted to discover what causes the ethnic tensions between the groups in Macedonia in general. By testing the level of stereotypes and prejudices, I was also testing the attitudes that the people have toward the other community and through open-ended, semi-structured interviews, I examined if the extent of contact between people has an effect on their attitudes toward the other community.

Summary of findings

By testing the Allport Contact hypothesis, I was able to discover and confirm that indeed people who live in ethnically mixed regions have a lower level of prejudices toward the other ethnic community. By testing the level of prejudices I also discovered what causes ethnic tensions in Macedonia. The findings reveal that the political parties in

⁴ Steinar Kvale. *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage publications. 1996 p.1

Macedonia are the ones who are responsible for the segregation of the people among ethnic lines. Moreover, people are not as divided along ethnic lines as they are divided along political ones. Thus, the political parties promote segregation and this segregations cause's high level of prejudices and tensions between the two ethnic communities. In future unless this problem is solved there is a latent risk for outbreak of future conflicts in Macedonia.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The tensions that exist in Macedonia and in the Balkans more generally has been explained by a lot of theories of ethnic conflict. In the following passages I will describe only the most relevant theories, which are used to describe the ethnic tensions in Macedonia. After presenting the most relevant, at the end, I will throw a light at one particular theory, namely the Contact Hypothesis, which is the only theory that tries to explain the tensions from a socio- psychological point of view, which is highly relevant not just for the past but also for the present situation in Macedonia.

After describing how competing theories of ethnic conflicts explain the ethnic tensions in Macedonia and the reasons why these ethnic tensions erupted in armed conflict I will shift my focus to the Allport contact hypothesis, as it is the most relevant for explaining why people are still divided among ethnic lines in Macedonia, why these divisions are bigger than ever and what causes them.

Common people from both ethnic communities in Macedonia have negative stereotypical understandings for the other community, each side blaming the others for the eruption of the 2001 conflict. These attitudes are largely emotionally-driven and filled with prejudice, and if left unchanged, are likely to stifle the effort to overcome existing animosities and may well sow the “seeds of future conflicts.”⁵ So, in the following

⁵ Violeta Petroska- Beska and Mirjana Najcevska “Understanding History, Preventing Future Conflict” *United States Institute of Peace, Special Report*. February 2004 (p.1)

passages let me briefly describe some of the most relevant theories that were used to account for the conflict and the existing tensions in Macedonia.

Many authors while referring to the Balkans in general, saw the reasons for the conflict and ethnic tensions deeply rooted in primordial understandings. According to this approach, both ethnic groups, the Macedonians and the Albanians, felt strong affiliations with their own community. So through the lens of this theory, people have intense loyalties to their own ethnic community based on common descent, language, religion and traditions. This approach holds that the conflicts that emerged in Ex- Yugoslavia were a product of 'ancient hatreds'. Their explanation for why ethnic groups were not in conflict during their existence in the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia was that the perennial hatred between groups was suppressed by an outside power. Robert Kaplan argued that the process of history and memory were kept on hold by communism for forty-five years "thereby creating a kind of multiplier effect for violence."⁶So according to this theory, with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the hatred that existed between the ethnic groups finally came to surface.

However, this theory is not useful for explaining what is happening in Macedonia for a number of reasons. The first problem with this theory is the fact that even after the dissolution of Yugoslavia Macedonia managed to gain independence peacefully, and did not encounter any conflict, not until 2001, long after the dissolution of the communism. The second reason why this theory is not applicable of explaining the Macedonian case is based on facts and research conducted by the Centre for Ethnic Relations at the Institute

⁶ Dusko Sekulis, Randy Hodson, Garth Massey. "War and Tolerance" in Quarterly *Sociological Journal* . Croatian Sociological Association, 2002. No1-2 <http://www.hsd.hr/revija/en/contents.htm> p.1

for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research in Macedonia. This institute undertook research in the 1980 and 1990's focusing on the interethnic relations in Macedonia, and the stereotypical attitudes that people had toward each community. According to the writings of the research center, they stressed that in any multiethnic society, it is normal for some prejudices to exist. However, these prejudices in the case of Macedonia were mostly based on differences in the way of life. Although in the research that was conducted, the Macedonians and the Albanians had the highest degree of prejudices (Macedonians toward Albanians and vice versa), they were not prejudiced based on emotional hatred. More than 70 % of the total population even in the 1990's did not exhibit an "emotional hatred" or any form of aggressiveness toward the other communities. Only ten to fifteen percent of the overall population openly exhibited extremely negative attitudes (people who were ready to start even a war in the interests of their nation).⁷

So based on this data, it is more than clear that the primordial theory of ethnic conflicts and tensions is not applicable in the case of Macedonia. Even after the country gained independence, the level of prejudice between the two communities was very low, and in that time, Macedonia managed to gain independence by peaceful means. According to the same research, there has only been an increase in prejudice over the past 10 years. This increase was especially evident among young people. When the research was undertaken in 1988 and young people were asked if they hated any particular community, they considered the question itself rude. There were no signs of inter-ethnic

⁷ Emilija Simonoska. "Macedonia: a view on the Inter-Ethnic Relations". In *Journal of International Affairs*, June- August 1997 Vol. 2. <http://www.sam.gov.tr/volume2b>. p.3

hatred, but only some differences in thinking people had about culture. So, this demonstrates that ethnic tensions in Macedonia are not based on some primordial understanding of existing ancient hatreds.

Another theory that has been used to explain ethnic tensions in Macedonia was the ethnic security dilemma. This theory is especially elaborated by Barry R. Posen. The theory is based on the neo-realist assumptions. With the collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, Posen explains, the newly formed countries were left without sovereign, so in the pursuit of security, ethnic groups at the sub-state level armed themselves, presenting threats to the other group. As Posen has said, when the communal groups can no longer trust the state to protect them against possible intergroup violence, all groups must mobilize for self- defense.⁸

This theory explains the situation in Macedonia in the following way. The separation of Macedonia from Yugoslavia was supported by 75 percent of the Macedonian Slavic population, while on the contrary the Albanian population started to boycott the Slav-dominated state and started creating their own institutions. The Albanians felt discriminated and oppressed by the Macedonian state and requested greater rights. On the contrary, the Slavic Macedonian population perceived this as an Albanian attempt of sabotaging the state. Thus, the Albanian population at this time not only created its own political parties and institutions, but they also isolated and closed themselves off from the majority.

So, on the issues of why the conflict erupted only in 2001, the security dilemma gives the following explanation. In 1992, there were a lot UN and NATO peacekeeping

⁸ Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict", in Michael Brown ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998),103- 124. (p.104)

forces deployed in the country. In this case, they represented a kind of sovereign that prevented the escalation of any conflict. However, when the war started in Kosovo, new windows of opportunities were created. The border issue between Macedonia and Kosovo was not resolved, so the Albanian paramilitary groups had a chance to form alliances with their fellow Albanians on the other side of the border and prepare themselves militarily in order to avoid victimization.

This is why in 2001 clashes between the two ethnic groups escalated. The Albanian point of view was that they fight and use weapons as a means against the discriminatory Macedonian politics. The KLA members declared that they fight for greater rights of the Albanian population in Macedonia. Among government officials, the KLA was perceived as terrorists, and they were blamed for trying to destabilize the country. Among the ethnic Macedonian Slavs, there was an understanding that penultimate goal was the separation of the northwestern parts of the country, which would then be unified with Kosovo and Albania.

The different accounts of the conflict were reinforced in the ethnic Macedonian and Albanian minority media, each representing different truths about the conflict. These different presentations of the conflict only breached the fears and mistrust between the two ethnic groups.

However this is not what happened in Macedonia. This theory can be easily disproved if we take various researches conducted. According to a study conducted by The Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, the primary concern of both the Albanian and the Macedonian population was not the lack of trust. One of the main reasons for the ongoing conflict, both communities agreed, was organized crime,

which included businessmen, paramilitaries and politicians. According to this research the real reasons for the eruptions of the tensions into armed conflict were not the distrust between the communities, but rather the Slipover effect from Kosovo and the operations of paramilitary groups in trafficking illegally held weapons in the regions. Moreover, for both the Albanian and the Macedonian public, another reason for the ethnic tensions and their outburst into an armed conflict was the failure of the Macedonian economy and the lack of understanding of democracy by elected politicians.

Both groups agreed that the reason for the ethnic tensions was the serious organized crime in the country that involved businessmen, politicians and paramilitary organizations. According to the poll, the reasons behind the ethnic tensions and their outburst into ethnic conflict were many. Certainly the fear and mistrust that existed among the two communities was not one of them. Rather, the high level of corruption in the country, the serious organized crime among politicians and the weak Macedonian economy were the real reasons for the ethnic tensions.⁹

From the abovementioned facts, we can clearly see why these theories, cannot fully explain both the outburst of the conflict in 2001 and the present tensions that exist in Macedonia. Both theories first of all focus overly on the institutional and societal level rather than looking at factors operating at the individual level. The reason for the conflict, as the research has shown, was not perennial 'ethnic hatreds', because the hatreds and the stereotyped images appeared at much latter stage of the conflict in the case of Macedonia. In addition, the ethnic security dilemma is also not effective in explaining the ethnic

⁹ Colin Irvin, "Peace, Stability and Elections", *Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeastern Europe*
www.cdsee.org/pdf/polling_report_english.pdf p.3

tensions in the country, because as the results from the poll has showed it was not the existing fear between the communities that caused ethnic tensions and conflicts but rather the high level of organized crime in Macedonia.

In addition, none of the two theories is capable of explaining why, even after the Framework Agreement and the changes made in the Macedonian constitution, where all citizens now have the same rights there are still tensions between the Macedonian and Albanian ethnic community. Nowadays more than ever people are segregated among ethnic lines and the two above mentioned theories are not capable of explaining why there are still tensions between the two communities and what causes them.

This is why, given the inadequacies of these two approaches in explaining ethnic tensions in Macedonia, I will introduce a theory that can explain both the emergence of the armed conflict and today's segregation between the two ethnic communities. The advantage of this theory is that it looks at things from socio-psychological point of view, and takes into consideration other variables, among the most important of which is the degree of regular contact between ethnic groups on a daily basis. None of the above-mentioned theories pays attention to the lack of contact between the two communities and their demographical separation as a driver of sustained prejudice and negative ethnic stereotypes, which may eventually produce conflict. This is why in the following paragraphs I will present the Contact Hypothesis.

Chapter 2: The Contact Hypothesis

In this part I will describe the famous Allport Contact Hypothesis. In doing so, I will first refer to the background of the theory. After careful examination of the history of the hypothesis and its emergence I will present the initial Allport hypothesis first coined in his famous book “The Nature of Prejudice”.

History of the Contact Hypothesis

Speculations about the effect of contact started much earlier than the Allport's contribution toward his famous Contact Hypothesis, which was coined in his famous book “The Nature of Prejudice” namely in chapter 16 called “ The effect of Contact”. William Graham wrote in 1906 that inter-group contact would almost certainly lead to conflict. According to Graham theory, as it is described in the words of Pettigrew and Tropp in” On the Nature of Prejudice: 50 years after Allport hostility toward out-group is a reciprocal function of an in-group sense of superiority.¹⁰ He posited that most groups feels themselves to be superior to other groups, thus, according to his theory, inter-group hostility and conflict were the inevitable outcome of contact.

Later in the twentieth- century, writers continued to speculate about inter-group contact, without the benefit of empirical evidence. According to Baked, as he described

¹⁰ Pettigrew, Thomas F. and Tropp, Linda R. “Allport's Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: Its History and Influence. In *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty years after Allport*. Ed. John F. Dovidio, PeterGlick and Laurie A. Rudman. Malden, MA; Oxford; Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing. 2005 p.262

in 1934 book “Negro-White Adjustment”, contact between races and ethnic groups, even under conditions of equality would “only breed suspicion, fear, resentment, disturbance and at times often conflict.”¹¹ In contrast, scholars writing after the Second World War were more optimistic. For example, Lettin wrote in 1945 that shared interracial experiences with a common objective lead to mutual understanding and regards. So in these times there was a general thinking understanding, as Brameld wrote in 1946, “When groups are isolated prejudice and conflict grow like a disease.”¹²

After the Second World War, there was therefore not only more optimistic writing about inter-ethnic cooperation, but students of social psychology began to study seriously the process of inter-group contact. These studies first appeared in the United States at some universities that were investigating the results of contact between blacks and whites.¹³ As the system of segregation between whites and blacks began to be dismantled in the 1960’s, the Social Science Research Council asked Cornell University Research Psychologist Robin Williams Jr, to conduct research on inter-group relations. Williams in his 1947 monograph entitled “The Reduction of Inter-group Tensions”, offered 102 testable propositions on inter-group relations. So, based on his research he came to the conclusion that inter-group contact would reduce prejudice when: a) two groups share similar status, interests and tasks, b) when the situation fosters personal, intimate inter-

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid p.245

¹³ Grim Patrik, Evan Selinger, William Brayen and others..” Reducing Prejudice: A Spartialized Game-Theoretic Model for the Contact Hypothesis”. Rochester Institute of Technology, Department of Philosophy. <http://www.sunysb.edu/philosophy/faculty/pgrim/ReducingPrejudice.pdf>. P.1

group contact; c) when the participant do not fit the stereotyped conception of their groups and d) when the activities cut across group lines.¹⁴

The Allport Contact Hypothesis

It was in this positive climate that the famous Allport Contact hypothesis emerged. Actually, Allport's contribution is not in the fact that he invented something that did not exist before. Rather, he managed to collect and nicely analyze all the work done so far in that field. His theoretical work mostly followed the understandings of those times when channels of communications opened the hostile person from the opposite group to discover that his "enemy does not in fact wish him harm."¹⁵

In his work, Allport cited an article in which he stressed the importance of the institutionalized barriers to communication. In the Newcomb's cited article, Allport stressed the fact that when there are institutionalized barriers to communication between groups, segregation between groups will only encourage more hostility and stereotypes between them. So, in order to reduce hostility and discrimination between groups, the barriers of communication must be broken so each group will have a chance to form a realistic view of the intentions and characteristics of the other group. To reduce a

¹⁴ Pettigrew, Thomas F. and Tropp, Linda R. "Allport's Intergroup Contact Hypothesis: Its History and Influence. In *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty years after Allport*. Ed. John F. Dovidio, Peter Glick and Laurie A. Rudman. Malden, MA; Oxford; Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing. 2005 p.263

¹⁵ H.D. Forbes *Ethnic conflict: Commerce, Culture, and the Contact Hypothesis* Yale University Press. New Haven and London. 1997 p.19

prejudice, it is necessary for the members of each group to have a chance to know the members of the other group individually.¹⁶

Based on the above-mentioned finding, Allport wrote his famous book the “Nature of Prejudice”. There is no doubt that this book is the cornerstone of the social psychology of prejudice. In the preface of his book “On the Nature of prejudice,” fifty years after Allport, Kenworthy says:” The Nature of Prejudice delineated the area of study, set up the basic categories and problems, and cast it in a broad, eclectic framework that remains today.”¹⁷ And indeed there is no doubt that this hypothesis has been a major topic for further social and psychological research.¹⁸

This is why in the following passages, I will summarize Allport’s writings, which are set in the chapter 16 of his book named: “The Effects of Contact”. Allport saw contact as a solution to the problem of prejudice and stereotypes, thus identifying four types of contact through which people can have a reduction of prejudices. Here it is also important to notice how Allport defines prejudices. For him prejudices are incorrect, unjustified negative assumptions about the other group, which do not possess the unpleasant “characteristics we attribute to it”.¹⁹

¹⁶ Ibid. p.20

¹⁷ Dovidio, John F., Glick, Peter and Rudman, Laurie A. “Introduction: Reflecting on the nature of Prejudice: Fifty years after Allport” in *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty years after Allport*. Ed. John F. Dovidio, Peter Glick and Laurie A. Rudman. Malden, MA; Oxford; Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing. 2005

¹⁸ University of Oslo. “Comparing Conflicting Groups in Contact: Effects of Contact and Dialogue in Peace Education Encounters” University of Oslo documents.. 09/2005
http://www.uio/studier/emner.sc/psykologi/PSY4500/h05/opp1_PSY4500.DOC p.3

¹⁹ Dana Bramel.”*The Strange Career of the Contact Hypothesis: in The Psychology of Ethnic and Cultural Conflict*.ed. Yueh-Ting Lee, Clark McCauley, Fathali Moghaddam and Stephen Worchel. Praeger Publishers Press, 2004 p.50
http://www.intech.mnsu.edu/leey/03.49_68.pdf.

So as a solution to the problems of prejudices and stereotypes Allport sees the contact between groups. Here, as I have said it is important that the contact should be more frequent and everyday, which is the only kind of contact in which, groups and individual can learn about each other differences and they can understand that their prejudices and stereotypes are based on wrong assumptions.

However, Allport was fully aware that the effect of contact would depend upon the “kind of association that occurs and upon the kinds of persons who are involved.”²⁰ Moreover this contact should be voluntary and certain criteria’s under which the contact occurs need to be satisfied.²¹

Allport in his book identified four types of contact. One kind of contact that people encounter is casual contact. In this kind of contact, in our mind we already have an image and understanding about the person belonging to the 'other' groups, and thus since in this situation we do not directly communicate with the person we encounter, our prejudice cannot be changed. So casual contact permits our thinking about the out-group to “remain on an autistic level”²², and this kind of contact can only increase, rather than decrease our prejudices, since in this type of contact both sides unconsciously perceive things, which only confirm our stereotypes.

²⁰ Allport, G.W *The Nature of prejudice* Cambridge, MA:Addison-Wesley. 1954 p.251

²¹ Prentice A. Deborah and Dale T. Miller “The Psychology of Cultural Contact” in *Cultural Divides: Understanding and Overcoming Group Conflict*. Ed. Deborah A. Prentice and Dale T. Miller. ,Sep.2001 <http://www.russellsage.org/publications/books/0-87154-689-2/chapter1.pdf>.

²² Allport, G.W *The Nature of prejudice* Cambridge, MA:Addison-Wesley. 1954 p.251 p.252

The second type of contact is the acquaintance contact. According to Allport, true acquaintance lessens prejudice. This kind of contact is accomplished through education, where people can learn about the different customs of other groups. This can be achieved through intercultural education. One fact that is important here is individual willingness to participate in these programs. As a result, an increased knowledge would lead directly to a truer set of beliefs. This does not always mean that it will reduce the prejudices that a person has. Here, Allport was really careful to say that even people who know a lot about the other group might still have prejudice. Also, Allport gives an example- “people might learn that Negro blood is not different in composition from white blood without terribly learning to like Negroes”.²³ Nonetheless, contact that brings knowledge and inter-group acquaintance are likely to engender more moderate beliefs concerning minority groups and for this reason contribute to the reduction of prejudice.

The third type of contact that people encounter is residential contact. Here the question of segregated and integrated housing comes up. No matter whether groups are coercively or voluntary segregated, segregated housing means segregation in every respect. In the case of segregation between the two communities, it means that the children of each group will be raised by people from their own group, without really being able to get to know the other groups better. In the future, such segregation may cause ethnic upheavals and tensions, since many kids might simply adopt wholesale the already learned prejudice created by their own group. According to Allport’s research, “segregation markedly enhances the visibility of the groups”²⁴ and future conflict may especially erupt at the bordering line between groups. This threat is felt more by the

²³ Ibid.p.255

²⁴ Ibid p.256

dominant group. The dominant group feels that the minority by spreading and increasing their number will bring about changes in the relative status of the two groups. At the boundaries of the ethnic groups, there are higher chances for ethnic riots if the “minority belt” expands due to asymmetrical birth rates.

Another important discovery toward which Allport contributed is the fact that people who live in mixed regions first of all have less prejudices toward the other group, and even if they do have prejudice, this is quite different from the prejudice of people who do not have frequent with the other group. Allport came to a conclusion that the zonal residential conflict makes for increased prejudices, while when people are integrated they have a better knowledge and acquaintanceship and are less prejudiced. When groups live in intermixed regions, there is reduction of negative stereotypes and substitution of the negatives understandings of fear and hostility that the other group might cause problems.²⁵

The fourth type of contact that Allport mentions is occupational contact. The occupational difference between members of different groups is an important factor in creating and maintaining prejudice. In this kind of contact, people should be careful to ensure that both groups are represented in the upper and lower occupational levels. It does not always mean that if the two groups work together the prejudice will be changed; this is unlikely unless they are striving and working toward a common goal. If people strive to accomplish the same things, then the solidarity between them will increase and this will eventually lead to a reduction of prejudice. An important point worth mentioning here is that people should also be willing to cooperate with the other community. However, a good will on its own it's not enough if both groups do not have concrete

²⁵ Ibid p.256

common goals. Moreover, if laws are established that “artificially induce” equality between the groups”²⁶ and are not supported by a sound political leadership, there will be no changes and reduction in prejudice between the two communities.

So based on the four types of contacts and the conditions under which they occur Allport concluded that:

*Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (laws, customs, local atmosphere), and if it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups.*²⁷

After this careful examination of the famous Allport hypothesis in the following chapter, I will demonstrate how the Contact Hypothesis explains the pattern of ethnic tensions in the case of Macedonia.

²⁶ Ibid p.266

²⁷ Ibid p.2.67

Chapter 3: Macedonia through the lens of the contact hypothesis

According to the Allport hypothesis, the stereotypes and prejudices that exist between members from different ethnic groups will be reduced only if the following conditions are satisfied: the groups should have an equal status, common goals, there exist an intergroup cooperation and of course support from the authorities, laws and customs.²⁸ Here it is important to note that contact alone is not a sufficient condition for reducing prejudices. First of all, equal status of the ethnic groups is the main precondition for peaceful coexistence between the ethnic groups. This is important because without equal status one group feels superior, and members from the other group feel like second class citizens.

Second, both groups must be striving toward achievement of the same goals. Intergroup cooperation, rather than competition helps to reduce prejudices between people. The third criterion is acquaintance potential, meaning that people should have more frequent contact, where they could learn about each other differences. If the conflicting groups are in more frequent and everyday contact, which is best achieved through education, people from both ethnic groups will likely reduce their prejudices.

²⁸ Pettigrew F. Thomas and Linda R. Tropp, “Summary of A Meta-Analytic Test and Reformulation of Intergroup Contact Theory” *University of California and Boston College, Mar. 2008*
<http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/meta-elements/html/troppsummary.htm>

However, in order for this contact to work it needs to be supported by existing laws which are institutionally supported.

So in the following passages let me describe how none of the above mentioned conditions were fulfilled in a case of Macedonia before the 2001 conflict. The first thing that it is worth mentioning is the demography of the Republic of Macedonia. According to the official 1994 census of the population in Macedonia, the country is home to 1.3 millions Slavic Macedonians (66.5%), 443 000 ethnic Albanians (22.7%), 78.019 Turks (4%), 43,707 Roma (2.2%), 40,228 Serbs(2.1%), 8,601 Vlachs (0.4%) and 22,891% members of other nationalities (1.2%).²⁹

As we can see from the abovementioned statistics, the Albanian community in Macedonia is second in terms of population. The Albanians, as the most numerous nationality, live in compact settlements in the western part of Macedonia (near the border with Albania) and in the northwestern parts (towards the border with Kosovo), as well as in Skopje and Kumanovo. They comprise the majority of the population in Tetovo, Gostivar, Debar, and other towns.³⁰ So from these statistics, we can see that the majority of the Albanian population lives in the North western parts of the country and as a result not many members from the Macedonian community have contact with the Albanian Community, and vice versa. Another factor worth mentioning is the fact, as the previous

²⁹ Lyn Carter, Alice Ackerman, Goran Janev, "An Assessment of Ethnic Relations in Macedonia". *USAID Macedonia*. December 200nOnline available on:

www.pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACK427.pdf p.3

³⁰ Project on Ethnic Relations. *Albanians as Majorities and Minorities: A Regional Dialogue*. Princeton, N.J. 2001

censuses have shown that the number of Albanians has grown constantly since 1953, due to their significantly higher birth rate in comparison with the other inhabitants of Macedonia. So in the case of Macedonia, ordinary people from both communities have a lack of contact and interaction, which gives fertile ground for the formation of prejudice between the two ethnic communities in Macedonia.³¹

This separation became even more evident in the Northwestern parts of the country with the process of urbanization. The Albanian community is far less urbanized than the Slavic Macedonian community. Since the 1950's, as a result of the end of urbanization, more and more citizens started to migrate to the cities. The majority of those who migrated were Macedonians. As a result, the number of Macedonians in the villages was constantly declining, and combined with the higher birth rate among ethnic Albanians, the rural population in these areas was constantly increasing, leading to the 'Albanization of the countryside'. According to data gathered on the eve of the Second Balkan War in 1913, the percentage of Macedonians living in Macedonia was 55% of the overall population, where the Albanians made only 14%. In contrast, as the census conducted in 1994 shows, the number of Albanians from 1953 (162,524) had increased by 313%; this had a direct impact on the demographical and ethnic composition of the country.³²

The two main reasons for this change are the differences in birth rate and migration patterns. Albanian families have a far higher birth rate than the Macedonians, with an average of four children per family. Also another reason was the breakout of

³¹ Vladimir T.Oratovski, "Interethnic Relations and Minorities in The Republic of Macedonia" in *Southeast European Politics*, Vol2, No.1, May 2001 online available on: www.seep.ceu.hu/issue21/oratovski.pdf

³² Planungstaab des Auswartgen Amtes(German Foreign Ministry), " The other Macedonian Conflict" European Stability Initiative online available on: www.auswartiges-amt.de

Yugoslavia. As was noted by a study conducted by researchers from the ethno barometer institute in the 1990's, there was a net in-migration of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and Albania into Macedonia. So according to the 2001 census, Albanians appeared to make up to 40% of the overall population in Macedonia.³³ What is worth mentioning here is that even the people who immigrated from Kosovo and Albania, were populating the Northwestern parts of the country where the Albanian community now is most heavily populated. So, one of the reasons for the lack of contact and the formation of prejudices between people from both ethnic communities is territorial segregation.

The second criterion for the reduction of prejudice was also not fulfilled; this was the unequal status of the then called minorities groups, and now with the new 2001 constitution nationalities in Macedonia.³⁴ This unequal representation, as the Albanians were claiming, was in every segment of the society. Also while the government and the Macedonian people were always claiming that all nationalities were given full rights under the constitution, the Albanians felt systematically disadvantaged.

If we take a closer look at the statistics, we can see that there was unequal employment of the minorities in Macedonia. Since most of the Albanian population lives in the rural areas their main activity is agriculture, and before the conflict only small percentage of the Albanian population was employed in the public sector. This trend accelerated in the 1980's when the majority of the Macedonian population left the

³³ Maleska, Mirjana, Lidija Hristova and Jovan Ananiev, *Spodeluvajne na Vlasta : Nov Model Multikulturnite Opstini vo Makedonija*. Istrazuvacki Izvestaj: Vtoro Izdanie (ADI, MCMS i Ian Collins, 2007); (Maleska, Mirjana, Lidija Hristova and Jovan Ananiev, *Power sharing: New Model of the Multiethnic Municipalities in Macedonia*. Research Report: Second Edition(ADI, MCMS and Ian Collins, 2007) p.17

³⁴ The Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia" The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia" online available on:
http://www.minelres.lv/NationalLegislation/Macedonia/Macedonia_Const2001_excerpts_English.htm

countryside and moved to the cities. In the cities, the Macedonians were overrepresented in the public sector and held all the higher positions. This was directly linked with the process of the urbanization on the part of Slavic Macedonians. The government at those times was making a lot of investments in improving the infrastructure and the public services, while the rural areas were left to fend for themselves.³⁵ If we directly connect this with the process of urbanization, we come up to the conclusion that the discriminatory treatment of the two ethnic communities by the state was an unintended consequence of the socialist political economy.³⁶

According to statistics conducted in 1981, 51.3 percentage of the Albanian population was employed in the primary sector, namely agriculture and forestry. On the contrary, the percentage of Macedonians in this sector was much lower making up only 29 percent. The situation was the same in the tertiary sector. The Macedonians made up almost 40 percent, while Albanian employment in this sector was only 16 percent. These tendencies were left unresolved during the time of Yugoslavia, but when Macedonia got its independence they became more evident. According to research conducted by the Centre for Socio- Economical and Judicial Research in Skopje, although Albanians made up 22.7 percent of the overall population, they constituted only 10 percent of employees in the overall state administration.³⁷

The situation was similar in other crucial areas. In the area of security, namely the military, the Albanians made up only 2.9 percents of all military personnel, and this was

³⁵ Planungstaab des Auswartgen Amtes(German Foreign Ministry), “ The other Macedonian Conflict” European Stability Initiative online available on: www.auswartiges-amt.de

³⁶ Ibid. p .5

³⁷ Ibid

before the conflict. This was also the case with employment in the police force. Even in the ethnically mixed areas and in the areas mainly populated with Albanians, the Macedonians had a much higher percentage of employment. Examples of this are two ethnically mixed cities, Tetovo and Gostivar. There, in the textile industry, 91 percent of the employees were ethnic Macedonian.³⁸

Moreover the Albanian population was relatively inactive in one of the crucial areas-education. Before the conflict, minorities in Macedonia were only allowed to attend elementary and high schools in their mother tongue. If we compare the statistics, we can see that in 1992 only four percentages of children in secondary schools were educated in Albanian, which is quite striking for a multiethnic country such as Macedonia. This number increased by 1996 making up to 11 percentages, but still if we compare this number with the number of the Albanian population in the country is relatively low.

As for the higher education, even though in 1994 the Albanian opened their own private university in Tetovo, it was not recognized by the Macedonian government.³⁹ This was a problem, because the Albanians also needed university education in their native language as a means of achieving social and economic parity with the ethnic Macedonian majority.⁴⁰

All of the above mentioned facts demonstrate that the minorities in Macedonia did not have equal status. As the facts has show, there was lack of representation of minority groups in the public sector, and even in terms of occupational contact, the

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Project on Ethnic Relation. *Macedonia's Interethnic Coalition: The First Year*. Mavrovo, Macedonia. Dec.13-14, 2003 p. 18

⁴⁰ Vladimir T.Oratovski, "Interethnic Relations and Minorities in The Republic of Macedonia" in *Southeast European Politics*, Vol2, No.1, May 2001 online available on: www.seep.ceu.hu/issue21/oratovski.pdf

minorities held lower status jobs. This separation in employment is an important reason behind the formation of prejudices and stereotypes, which may lead to aggression and future conflicts between the groups.

Moreover, for effective prejudice reduction, according to Allport, the equal status of the two ethnic communities needs to be supported by the government and the existing laws. Before 2001, according to the preamble of the Macedonian Constitution, Macedonia was constituted as a “national state of Macedonian people and the nationalities living within its borders, which are part of the Albanian nation, the Turkish nation, the Vlah nation, the Serbian nation, the Roma nation, the Bosnian nation and others”.⁴¹ This fact was rather offensive to the minorities that lived in Macedonia. Under the 1992 constitution although minorities had been guaranteed equal civil rights and co-existence with the Macedonian people, they and especially the Albanians, considered this policy of the government discriminatory. The Albanians were feeling as second class citizens and they wanted co-national status.⁴²

As I have mentioned earlier, the laws before 2001 gave rights to the Albanian population, but only to a certain extent. Indeed they were allowed to use and get educated in their mother tongue, but only up to high school and not all the way to university level, which made the Albanians feel that some of their most important rights were taken from them. Moreover they felt discriminated and not supported by the existing laws in

⁴¹ Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia online available on:
<http://www.constitution.org/cons/macedoni.txt>

⁴² Helsinski Komitet za Covekovi Prava I Centar za Covekovi Prava I Razresuvajne Konflikti. *Vooruzeniot Konflikt Na Teritorijata Na Republika Makedonija vo 2001*. Skopje 2005(Helsinki Committee for Human Right n Macedonia and The Center For Conflict Resolution. *The Armed Conflict un Macedonia in 2001*. Skopje, 2005 p.2

Macedonia, since in the 1992 Macedonian Constitution, the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet was made the only administrative language used in Macedonia.

Also the third Allport condition for the reduction of prejudice- the common goals of the different ethnic groups was not full field . The Albanians since always has been striving for better political rights and representations in Macedonia. As I have mentioned above their primal goal was to get a co- national status with the Slavic Macedonian Ethnic community. Moreover they requested higher education in Albanian as well as the right Albanian to be used as a second language in the Parliament. They also had a goal to improve their status in terms of employments in the public sector, especially in the crucial institutions such as the military and the police forces.⁴³

On the contrary the Macedonian side wanted to keep the unitary character of the state where the Macedonian community will be dominant, especially in the public sector. The Macedonian public severely opposed the idea of accept the Albanian as a second official language. So from these facts we can see that before the conflict, the thirds Allport's criteria was not fulfilled as well, which explains and confirm the existing ethnic tensions between the two communities.

Thus, none of the conditions that the Allport Hypothesis holds is necessary for reduction of prejudices and tensions were fulfilled in the case of Macedonia before 2001. However, with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and with the changes made in the Macedonian Constitution, the minorities and especially the Albanians got their status as equal citizens, with the right to education in their own language. Moreover, the Albanian language became the second language in the Parliament and official

⁴³ P. H.Lolita and Cindy R. Jebb. *Mapping Macedonia: Idea and Identity*. Praeger Publishersn2004 p. 69

administrative language in areas where the Albanians made up at least 20 % of the overall population.

So, according to the Allport hypothesis, since the minority groups have an equal status, which is supported by existing laws, there should be a reduction in prejudice and tensions between the two groups after the Ohrid Framework Agreement. However, this is not the current situation in Macedonia. The people from both ethnic communities nowadays are even more separated along ethnic lines, even in the area of the education, where the pupils from both communities study in separate shifts and classrooms.

This is why I chose to examine why, even with the changes made in the 2001 Macedonian Constitution there are still ethnic tensions between the two dominant communities in Macedonia- the Albanian and the Macedonian. So, in the following Chapter, let me describe the research methodology that I used in order to investigate the causes of ethnic segregation and tensions in this case.

Chapter 4: Methods and Research Design

As the previous chapter has showed, there were a lot of changes made in the 2001 Constitution which gave the Albanian population in Macedonia more political and social rights and which were also supported by the existing laws. According to the Allport hypothesis, after the conflict the Albanians groups in Macedonia got its status as an equal group, and more social and political rights. So, according to his famous contact hypothesis, which proposes that prejudices will be reduced if the groups in contact have an equal status and institutionalized laws and policies, why there are still tensions between the two communities

The puzzling fact here is that not even the equal status brought for changes in diminishing the tensions that exist between the two communities and the stereotypical images between them. This is why, I decided to investigate what are the causes, and which factors contribute first of all toward division of the population among ethnic lines and second of all toward tensions between the two communities.

Since Macedonia is a country where minorities represent one- third of the population, it is expected that there are some prejudices between the populations. According to research done by the Center of Ethnic, Social and Political Research, it was discovered that from 1980's onwards the ethnic prejudices between the groups were constantly increasing.⁴⁴ Slowly, theses prejudices paved the way even lead for an armed

⁴⁴ Emilija Simonoska. "Macedonia: a view on the Inter-Ethnic Relations". In *Journal of International Affairs*, June- August 1997 Vol. 2. Online available on: <http://www.sam.gov.tr/volume2b>.

conflict in the country and division between the populations. In the future, if these tensions and prejudices remain unresolved and unchanged, they might lead for outburst of future conflicts.

This is why I decided to undertake a research and the best way of doing it was through getting firsthand information's from the common people on the ground in Macedonia. Moreover, I decided to undertake an informal survey research in which the target group were citizens from the areas where the armed conflict took place, since they were the ones who were directly involved in the ethnic strife and victims in the conflict. Instead of formulating questionnaires and distributing them among the research subjects, I decided to travel to Macedonia and use a qualitative approach in an attempt to understand the problem from the subjects' point of view and to unpack people's experiences.⁴⁵ For that purpose, I chose three villages in Macedonia: Brvenica, Sarakino and Strimnica.

What is interesting about these villages is the fact that they are all in the same region- the Northwestern region of Macedonia, which is a region where the armed conflict took place. All villages are in the municipality of Brvenica, which according to the State Institution for Statistic is 61 percent Albanian and 47.52 percent Macedonian.⁴⁶ Moreover, all villages have approximately the same population and in all villages the main economic activity is agriculture. The only difference between the three villages is the ethnic composition of the population. The first village has the same name as the

⁴⁵ Steinar Kvale. *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage publications. 1996 p.1

⁴⁶ State Official Institution for Statistic. Online available on: http://www.stat.gov.mk/0322WebCensus/appl/parmsPop_mk.html?yn_showdoc=no&lingua=mk&boxversion=mk1&jarver=1&period=a2002&viewparms=mt&yn_alert=no&topic=ethnic&geoparms=mk_m4op96m2&Submit=%CF%EE%ED%E0%F2%E0%EC%F3

municipality to which it belongs, Brvenica. It is an ethnically homogeneous Macedonian village. It has population of 1567 people and the main economic activity of the population is agriculture. The second homogenous village is Strimnica. It is ethnically homogenous Albanian village and it has a population of 1234 citizens. The third village is Sarakino, which is ethnically heterogeneous village composed of both ethnic Albanians and Macedonians and it has a population of 1807 people.⁴⁷

I chose the villages with such an ethnic composition, in order to test the Allport contact hypothesis. The main goal of the research was first of all to investigate whether or not people in the ethnically mixed regions, which have everyday contact with members of the other ethnic group, have fewer prejudices toward the other community than is the case in the homogenous villages, where inter-ethnic contact is minimal. By investigating the relative levels of prejudices across the three villages, I wanted to discover what causes the ethnic tensions between the groups in Macedonia in general. By testing the level of stereotypes and prejudices, I was also testing the attitudes that the people have toward the other community and through open-ended, semi-structured interviews, I examined if the extent of contact between people has an effect on their attitudes toward the other community.

The most appropriate technique for investigating this was through interviews. The way to get the most out of the interviews was by using a semi-structured interview. This type of interview it is conducted with a fairly open framework which allows for a focused two-way conversation. The positive thing about this interview is that it is used for a dual

⁴⁷ Information obtained by the local town halls

purpose: to both give and receive information. Unlike a questionnaire framework where the questions are strictly formulated beforehand, the semi-structure interview starts with more general questions about a topic. Most of the questions come up during the interview itself which allows for both the interviewer and the interviewee to probe for details or discuss issues.

Actually this technique is presented in detail in Beverly Hancock's book "Introduction to Qualitative Research, where she defines the semi-structured interview as a series of open ended questions.⁴⁸ Moreover, this kind of interview offers an opportunity for learning. It not only provides answers to certain questions, but it also reveals the reasons behind the given answers, which was an excellent opportunity for me to discover what causes the ethnic tensions between the people from the two communities. Since these interviews are conducted face to face, and since you start with more general questions, the person who is interviewed feels more comfortable and begins elaborating on the topics discussed. As Hancock has said, this type of interviewing, in contrast to strictly-structured interviews, allows for the topic to be explored in depth.

So, in order to investigate whether or not the increased contact between groups has any effect in bringing down prejudices between people and if the lack of contact causes tensions between the two communities, I decided to conduct interviews, with both parents and children in all three villages. By examining the level of prejudice, through open-ended questions, I wanted to discover what causes the tensions between the two communities. The reason that I also included the children in the research was to double check if the adults have prejudices toward the other community. Children usually learn

⁴⁸ Hancock, Beverly, Elizabeth Ockleford, and Kate Windridge. *Introduction to qualitative Research*, 2007pg. 13 http://www.trentdsu.org.uk/resources_resource_introqual.html

from their parents and community and they are not that skilful in hiding the prejudices if they exist at all.

I conducted my interviews with the help of the local people, and I managed to interview 8 respondents in each village. In terms of gender representation in the ethnically Macedonian village, I had an equal gender representation. However, due to the Muslim tradition in both the mixed village and in the ethnically homogenous Albanian village, I was not able to interview any women. In the villages in Macedonia, the Albanian women are not allowed to have contact with foreigners without permission from their husbands, which was not given in this case. As for the children, I manage to interview 5 children in each village, and in terms of gender representation I got the same story.

I started my interviews first by asking the people to describe the life in their villages before and after the conflict and whether anything had changed in the interethnic relations. What is interesting about the three villages is the fact that they are all close to each other, so people from the villages do get in touch with each other, with the only difference being the type of contact they encounter. I then asked the people questions as to how much contact they have with the members of the other community and under which conditions. I proceeded by asking questions about the language of communication.

As I have mentioned, before the armed conflict, Albanian students were required to learn Macedonian, but not vice versa. Now, with the changes in the Constitution in the areas where the Albanians make up more than 20% of the population, Macedonian children have a chance to take the Albanian language as an elective from seventh grade onwards. I asked both parents and children if they would like to learn the language from

the other ethnic community. With this question, I tried to measure the level of prejudice the people from both communities had toward each other according to, and whether or not the changes made in the Constitution were equally acceptable for both communities.

.In this context, another question that was posed was people's opinion about the separation of the school children into separate shifts. Before the conflict, the children used to study together in the same classroom. However, after the conflict, they were separated into separate classrooms and shifts. This in the future might create problems, since the children even in the ethnically mixed villages do not have frequent contact with the children from the other community. The separation between the children in the future can lead to increase in prejudices, since the children won't be able to learn more about the other community.

Actually, the main focus of the interviews was mainly to get an opinion from the people about the policies of separation between the groups. People from both communities had lived together harmoniously for centuries, but after the conflict there is a separation in every segment of the society. So the main questions had to do with whether or not bilingual education was a good idea, and whether or not the separation of the children is good governmental policy.

I also asked the people to describe whether or not there exist some stereotypical understandings in general in their communities. The purpose of this question was to examine to which extent the interviewee has prejudices toward the other ethnic group. Then I moved my focus, asking what people think about the effectiveness of the political parties, both Albanian and Macedonian. The first question that I asked was whether people will vote for a person belonging to a different political party. The next question

was a question about the effectiveness of the political parties, mainly whether they have improved the life in the former conflict areas. I also asked who can best help the situation in those areas and how the people see their lives in the future.

As for the questions directed toward the children, I asked them whether or not they have friends from the other ethnic community and, if so, what is the language of communication between them. I also asked them if they would like to learn the language of the other community. These questions were also asked in order to investigate if the children are inculcated with prejudices by their community and parents. Based on their answers to these questions, I was able to reveal the truth of what their parents actually think of the other community. This was an easier task since the interviewed children were secondary school pupils. At this age, children tend to be more honest and are less able to hide any prejudices toward the other community. As for the interviews with the Albanian children who were not speaking Macedonian, I managed to make the interviews with the help of the local Albanians, who were kind enough to do the translations for me.

One thing worth noting is that people in these villages are very circumspect in their contact with foreigners, and a majority of them did want to serve as interviewees. However, since I managed to find in advance contact persons in each village, the locals were friendlier towards me and they allowed me to conduct my interviews.

Chapter 5: Empirical Findings- Interpretation of the interviews

In this section I will describe the results that I got from the research that I made. After careful analysis of all the answers, I will present my findings on the causes of the ethnic tensions between the two communities.

As I have mentioned in the research chapter, the first question that I asked the people was to describe the situation in their village before and after the conflict, in order to investigate if there are some changes in the interactions between the two groups. The results that I got from the people in the Macedonian villages were varying. The majority of the people said that there were no some dramatic changes in the way of life, before and after the conflict. Most of the interviewed people said that now they have good relations with the ethnic Albanians from the neighboring villages. Only one interviewee said that the life after the conflict is not the same and that people- the Macedonians-now feel humiliated. The person who said this (an ethnically Macedonian from Brvenica) in addition said that now it is even more difficult for the Macedonians to get employment in the public sector and that the Albanian language is highly desirable if you want to get a job.⁴⁹

The answers in the ethnically homogenous Albanian village of Strimnica, were quite different. The majority of the interviewees said that there are changes in the attitudes people have towards the other community. One of the Albanians said that the people after the conflict are not so close with the Macedonian Community.⁵⁰ Others said

⁴⁹ Respondent 1. Informations obtained in the village of Brvenica. Ethnically homogenous Macedonian village

⁵⁰ Respondent 4. Information's obtained in the village of Strimnica. Ethnically homogenous Albanian village

that after the conflict, people were quite cautious in their relations with each other, but that now things are slowly returning to normal.

In the ethnically mixed village, the answers, as was expected, were brighter. People from both ethnic communities there emphasized that the two groups have lived together long before the conflict. Because people in this village have more frequent everyday contact with members of the other group, they all said that they still have good relations with their neighbors. One of them said: “During the conflict as it used to be before, we were helping each other. This is where we were born and we have to live peacefully and in coexistence.”⁵¹ The answers from this question tend to confirm the Allport hypothesis that people who are in more frequent, intimate everyday contact with members of the other group learn more easily to accept their differences and the level of prejudice between them is much lower compared with the people from the ethnically heterogeneous village.

The next question that I asked the people was how often they have contact with the members from the other community, under which conditions this contact occurs and what kind of contact it is. In the ethnically Macedonian village, the answers varied. Most of the people that I interviewed were either employed in agriculture or they were not employed. These people gave an answer that they do not have frequent contact with the members from the Albanian community, and even if they do have this type of contact, it is more casual contact where people do not have a chance to learn more about the other community.

There were few exceptions. People who were employed in the city were more opened minded. They said that they have a lot of colleagues, from the Albanian

⁵¹ Respondent 7. Informations obtained in the village of Sarakino. Ethnically mixed village

community. One of them who was actually a police officer stressed the fact that during the conflict, he and his Albanian colleagues used to help each other. He also said that he has really good friends from the other community, saying that they were his friends long ago before the tensions erupted into a conflict, and they are still his good friends.⁵²

In the ethnically homogenous Albanian village, the answers were similar with those from the ethnically Macedonian village. People who were working in the city were more open minded, saying that they not only have everyday frequent contact with the members from the other community, but that many of their colleagues are also from the other group. The same could be seen in the Macedonian village. On the contrary people who were unemployed in both villages noted that they only have casual contact with the members of the other community.

In the ethnically mixed village, based on the answers that I got all people said that they have an everyday residential contact. Moreover they also have everyday contact of acquaintance, which helps them learn more about the culture and traditions of their neighbors. Also, most of them are in really good terms with the people from the other community.

The next sets of questions were directed toward the language of communication between the people. Since the municipality of Brevenica has more than 20 percent of its population ethnically Albanian, Albanian in these areas is also used as official language. In the ethnically Macedonian village, all people answered that the language of communication with the other community is Macedonian. There were a couple of respondents who mentioned frustrations, saying that when they go to public institutions,

⁵² Respondent 2 Information's obtained in the village of Brvenica. Ethnically homogenous Macedonian village

some of the Albanians refuse to talk with them in Macedonian. In this village, none of the interviewed adults spoke Albanian except for a few words.

The next question I asked was whether or not they are willing to learn the Albanian language. All of them answered that it is good to learn the Albanian language, at least the basic words, so they can communicate better with the members from the other community, but so far no one has learned it. Then I proceeded to ask their children if they would like to learn the Albanian language. The children in the ethnically Macedonian village have the chance to take Albanian as an elective course from the seventh grade onwards. But when I ask the children this question, all of them said that they are only taking English or German courses, and none of the children chose to learn the Albanian language. I managed to draw this conclusion, because when I asked them if this question they sharply replied no, and when I asked them for the reasons of not taking Albanian language courses all of them refused to answer. The answers that the children gave in some sense contradicted the parents' statements, who were saying that they will allow their children to learn Albanian, if they wanted to do so. This indicated hidden prejudices that at least some of the people have toward the other community.

In the ethnically homogenous Albanian village, I posed the same question. All people there said that the main language of communication with the Macedonians is Macedonian, since most of the Macedonians do not speak Albanian. Moreover, when I asked them if they would like to learn the Macedonian language, all of them replied that it is crucial to know Macedonian. One of them explained that this is Macedonia, and it was therefore necessary to know the Macedonian language.⁵³

⁵³ Respondent 5. Information's obtained in the village of Strimnica. Ethnically homogenous Albanian village

When trying to interview the Albanian children, I had difficulties. Even in the 1990's it was obligatory for the Albanian pupils to learn Macedonian from third grade onwards. However, even though most of the children I interviewed were over this age, they did not speak Macedonian, and for those purposes, I had to use the help of locals to get a translation. All the pupils said that they would like to learn the Macedonian language, but were not speaking or refused to reply to me in Macedonian. This is just another confirmation that the children in these villages are strongly affected by the thinking of their parents and community.

In the ethnically heterogeneous villages, both Albanians and Macedonians said that the language of communication was indeed Macedonian. Only a few of the Macedonian people spoke Albanian, while on the contrary all Albanians knew perfect Macedonian. The Albanians also stressed the importance of the Macedonian language, since they live in Macedonia where the primary language of instruction is Macedonian. As for the children, the results were quite different from the ones in the ethnically homogenous villages. The children openly expressed their will to learn the language from the other community. The Albanians children had a basic understanding of Macedonian and even some of the Macedonian children knew phrases in Albanian.

The next question that was posed to the children was whether or not they had any friends from the other community. In the ethnically homogenous villages, all children clearly said that they do not have any contact with children from the other community and that they do not have friends from the other group. On the contrary, in the ethnically mixed village, there were some friendships between children from the different groups. So in this context, I asked the children what they think about the fact that Albanian and

Macedonian children are separated into different shifts. Before the conflict, pupils from both communities used to study together in same classrooms, but after the changes made in the Macedonian constitution, the children were put into separate classrooms and separate shifts. Moreover, I asked whether each group had teachers from the opposite group. Even in these terms, the communities were separated. In the Albanian community, the Macedonian was taught by Albanian teachers and vice versa.

I asked the parents the same question. In the ethnically homogenous villages even though this policy was not applied, they considered it a good policy. In both villages, people explained that after the conflict, the teachers used to create some tensions between the students, so the students had to be separated. On the contrary, in the mixed village, people said that it was not the choice of the people for students of the two communities to be separated. They said that the government imposed this rule and there was separation even in the teaching staff.

Moreover, I asked both parents and children if their municipality organizes some kind of competition events where children from both communities have the chance to get in contact with each other. They said that only after the conflict was there some programs initiated by international NGO's aimed at reduction of inter-ethnic tensions. Since the conflict, nothing has been done. Even the children in the mixed villages are now separated by ethnicity, and this separation in future might in the future lead to conflict. Since the children are now even more isolated within their own group, the distinction between "us" and "them" is becoming stronger. In the future, if children remain separated, they won't be able to have more contact with the other community, which might reinforce prejudice and stereotypes.

Actually, I managed to confirm this, by asking the question about whether children would like to learn the language from the other community. Although, as I have mentioned it earlier, the parents in the ethnically homogenous villages presented quite opened-minded answers in contrast to the answers of their children, I discovered that they were not that opened-minded and have some prejudices concerning the others group's language. Only one of the interviewed people in the ethnically homogenous Macedonian village, an ethnic Macedonian, openly showed his concern about this problem, saying that in ten years from now, the new Albanian generations won't know any Macedonian.⁵⁴ This, together with the separation of the children in school was identified as major contributors to inter-group prejudice. This governmental policy of segregation between the pupils might cause quite negative effects for the future civic life in the region

Moreover by trying to measure the level of prejudices, I asked the people whether or not there was any prejudice in their villages. Even though the people in all villages said that there was no such thing, through the answers of the children in the ethnically homogenous villages and their unwillingness to learn the language from the other community, I came to a conclusion that there were in fact prejudices between the two communities, but that they are not publicly shown. Only in the mixed village were the answers that I got more sincere. Here, the people tended to hold more favorable opinions about their neighbors.

I continued my research by posing questions about the political parties. I asked the people questions such as whether or not they would vote for a member of the other ethnic community for president and what they thought about the effectiveness of the

⁵⁴ Respondent 3. Information's obtained in the village of Brvenica. Ethnically homogenous Macedonian village

political parties. Through these questions, I managed to get to the bottom of things in terms of what caused the tensions between the two communities. When I start asking questions about the political parties all people in all villages gave rather long and elaborate answers to this. All the answers were more or less similar independent of the ethnic composition of the village.

People in all villages expressed their distaste for the political parties. Most of the people answered that they will not vote for any political party, neither Macedonian nor Albanian. The interesting finding that comes out of this question was the fact that people blamed the political parties for the segregation of the population. The Albanians in both the ethnically mixed and homogenous villages said that they were “betrayed” by their own political parties. Before the conflict, the parties promised them that they would get better rights and employment if they voted for them. “After the conflict they completely forgot about the common people”, one Albanian from the ethnically homogenous Albanian village said.”⁵⁵ Actually, their promises are the reasons for the separation.”⁵⁶ In an informal discussion, with one Albanian in the ethnically homogenous village who refused to give a formal interview, expressed his concern about the separation that existed within the Albanian circles. His reason for not giving the interview was the following: “If my fellow citizens see that I am giving you an interview this might cause me problems. We (meaning here the Albanians) nowadays are separated not among ethnic but political

⁵⁵ Respondent 6. Information’s obtained in the village of Strimnica. Ethnically homogenous Albanian village

⁵⁶ Ibid

lines. If you want to survive and get a job you need to be a member of a certain political party,” he said.⁵⁷

At first, this answer surprised me, but after posing the question among Macedonians, I got the same answer. One of them in the mixed villages said: “They, the politicians, they are the ones who separate us. They just make false promises, and they intoxicated people with politics. Even children from the age of seven are intoxicated with politics and they know what nationalism is.”⁵⁸ When asked whether or not they would vote for president a member from the other ethnic group, all of them expressed their revolt. One woman answered: “If you ask me personally, I would not vote for any political party, but I have no choice. I’ve been unemployed for ten years. If a certain political party employs me, I will even go to war if necessary.”⁵⁹

The above mentioned findings clearly show the causes behind the ethnic segregation. Indeed, the Allport hypothesis is correct, but up to a point. People in the mixed areas, which have more frequent contact, have fewer prejudices toward the other community, compared with the people in the ethnically homogenous areas. However, another significant factor that causes the ethnic tensions appears to be not so much the lack of contact, but the political parties.

After careful examination of this factor, I tried to come up with an appropriate theory that might explain this phenomenon. We can say that it is something similar to the theory of ethnic entrepreneurship, where political elites stir up ethnic fears for private

⁵⁷ Unofficial interview. Information’s obtained in the village of Strimnica. Ethnically homogenous Albanian village

⁵⁸ Respondent 8. Information’s obtained in the village of Sarakino. Ethnically mixed village

⁵⁹ Respondent 9. Information’s obtained in the village of Sarakino. Ethnically mixed village

gain. According to this theory, which is elaborated by Gagnon, the elites are the ones who create the ethnic cleavages in order to create a “domestic political context where ethnicity is the only political reality”.⁶⁰ The elites do this in order to make shifts in the structure of domestic and political powers. “by constructing individual interest in terms of a threat to the group the elites can more easily fend off domestic challengers against the status quo and can better position themselves to deal with future challenges. “

However, the people here are conscious about the actions of the political elites. When I asked the people how this can be changed in future, the people answered that it is their fault, because they still vote for the political parties. They all agree that the best solution to this problem would be if they did not vote at all, but they were all hoping that by affiliating with one or another political party, they could find employment easier.

So to sum up, starting from my main research question of what causes ethnic segregation between the two dominant communities in Macedonia- the Macedonian and Albanian--it turns out that the existing prejudices between them are not so intense that they can account for violent conflict themselves. Rather they are politically controlled and channeled into inter-ethnic strife. At the end, it turned out that the segregation in Macedonia nowadays is not so much along ethnic lines, as along political lines. So, unless this problem is solved in future, it might lead to a complete segregation of the population, which threatens the democratic and civic coexistence of the population in Macedonia.

⁶⁰ V.P.Gagnon, Jr. Winter “Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict, The case of Serbia, “International Security” 16, 3 (1994/1995):132-168 p.132

CHAPTER 6: Conclusion and recommendations

In the pages above I examined and explained my results from my research done on what causes ethnic conflict in Macedonia. Macedonia has always been an ethnically diverse society, but in the last decade the Macedonian society is experiencing segregation of the population among ethnic lines. This segregation was nothing new- it existed since Macedonia gained its independence, but during the last decade and especially after the Framework Agreement, where all nationalities in Macedonia got equal status, on the contrary the segregation of the people among ethnic lines is bigger than ever.

So the reason that I decided to undertake this research was because not so many researchers examined this phenomenon of ethnic segregation from a societal level. Most of the research put the focus on the institutional changes in Macedonia in trying to explain the causes of the segregation.

This is why after testing couples of theories that are used to explain the cause of ethnic tensions I focused my attention on the Allports Contact hypothesis whose main focus is on individual and societal level. Moreover this theory looks at things from different angles and explains the importance of contact in the process of reducing prejudices and stereotypes that separate the ethnic groups. In future unless these prejudices are changed they can easily lead to future conflicts.

As the results above have showed indeed this theory is applicable in the case of Macedonia. People who live in mixed regions have more frequent contact which helps to reduce the stereotypes between the two communities. On the contrary people who live in the ethnically homogenous villages do not have as frequent contact with the other

community. This lack of more intimate and acquaintance contact just increases the level of prejudice and stereotypes that people have toward the other community.

As for the factors which causes ethnic segregation, as my research has shown the ethnic segregation is caused and initiated by the political elites. Indeed after the 2001 Armed Conflict and the changes made in the constitution, the government passed laws that separated the two communities even more. One such policy was to separate the school pupils into separate classrooms and shifts.

These political decisions separated the population even more. Instead of giving people a chance to learn more about each other, the governmental policies helped in increasing the prejudices between the two ethnic communities. In the case of Macedonia even though one of the prerequisites for reducing prejudices was fulfilled- equality of the ethnic groups, other factors were undermined. Instead of trying to bring both communities closer, the governmental policies had a contrary effect. They helped in the segregation of the people and this segregation caused more prejudices between the people.

So unless in future the problem of the segregation between the two communities is solved, the country is threatened by future possible outbreaks of conflicts. Moreover special importance has to be paid to the educational system. In future I would recommend more programs that aim at bringing students from both ethnic communities closer. Indeed there are some projects of this kind in Macedonia, but they should be conducted more often and should include larger samples of school children. I believe that only through more frequent contact, people, and especially children and students from both communities will learn to appreciate the differences of the other community.

In future, not only non- governmental organizations but also the government officials should initiate more policies like this. The government officials and the political parties, in future needs to reexamine their policies. At the moment the policies of the political parties are aimed at using the ethnic card to gain political advantages and power, but in long term the segregation of the people not only along ethnic , but political lines as well might have serious consequences in the Macedonian civic life. This can only lead to destabilization of the country and outbreak of future problems.

Appendix

*I did my research in the following villages. In each village I managed to interview 8 adults and 5 children.

In terms of gender representation, unfortunately I only got answers from females of ethnic Macedonian origin, which made half of the answers in the ethnically homogenous Macedonian villages. However due to the existing practices in the Albanians villages I was not able to interview any Albanian women. In total I am more that satisfied with the number of the interviews

Please find it below, the data of some of the people, which are quoted in the text.

Brvenica- Ethnically Homogenous Macedonian village:

Population: 1567

	ethnicity	age	sex
Respondent 1	Macedonian	41	Male
Respondent 2	Macedonian	38	Female
Respondent 3	Macedonian	36	Male

Strimnica- Ethnically Homogenous Albanian village

Population: 1234

	ethnicity	age	sex
Respondent 4	Albanian	45	Male
Respondent 5	Albanian	50	Male
Respondent 6	Albanian	39	Male

Sarakino- Ethnically Heterogeneous Village:

Population: 1087 (Macedonians: 873; Albanians: 199)

	ethnicity	age	sex
Respondent 7	Macedonian	37	Female
Respondent 8	Macedonian	45	Male
Respondent 9	Macedonian	38	Female

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