Legacy and Veracity of the Fascist-Antifascist Dichotomy:

A Thematic Approach

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I - Introduction

Creating a structure of the historical past based on the pendulum swing of reactions, the most direct examples of which contain anti-constructions, begs the question of origin. While the Cold-War binary had as its basis those competing worldviews which looked forward, toward a good life equivalent to caricatures of Adam Smith or Karl Marx, the fascist-antifascist dichotomy which existed as a meta-narrative within the Cold War looked backward, and was fueled by the singular event of WWII.

It is difficult to pin down the origins of the Cold War binary. Perhaps it is best to begin with Marxism, and the event of the November Revolution as its birth onto the geopolitical stage. The chronological primacy of this ideology had a great effect in the rise to power of the fascists, whose ascent, in Italy, Germany, and elsewhere, was aided by a strongly anti-Marxist or anti-Bolshevik rhetoric. The connections drawn between Bolshevism and European Jews strengthened the anti-Semitism of the fascists in Germany and France. However, Marx had always positioned the proletariat as a response to the bourgeoisie, rather than a comprehensive movement. That the proletariat is the subject, rather than driving class of history is evident both in their rise in response to growing industrial capitalism in Europe, and in response to fascism, and it was defined according to communist criteria as being an essentially bourgeoisie capitalist phenomenon.

For the antifascists states, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the German Democratic Republic, which will be followed in this work, their point of origin is extremely clear. It is the war's end. The identification of this event as the source does not, however, make the foundations of these antifascist states and their ideologies any more clear. History was a necessary tool in creating postwar consensus on the events of the war, and thereby creating a new national identity. The role of the historian in this fascist-antifascist

dichotomy will be shown to have been subordinated to the aims of the state. Furthermore, an orthodox understanding of fascism was necessary, against which to define their decretory antifascism.

The structure provided by the anti-relationships descried in this work is especially useful in making sense of the labeling done on the part of observers and commentators writing afterward. The structure itself is not necessarily consciously shaped by its participants. In some cases states and individuals are aware of their reactionsim, or their positioning of themselves against some other ideology. This process of changing the identity of a state, undertaken consciously, and as a reaction against the previous state, is evidenced by the codification of school books, and by the public display of history in the form of place names, statues of leaders, and days of commemoration. The formation of these symbols, as well as their eventual destruction, will be examined in chapters V and VI, respectively.

SFR Yugoslavia and the German Democratic Republic will be used as the exemplars of 'antifascism turned state ideology'. Other postwar states used the rhetoric of antifascism, and others still had achieved postwar legitimacy based on wartime resistance, such as France and Czechoslovakia. However, Yugoslavia and East Germany stand out, due in part to the power of their wartime experience in shaping the postwar state, as well as their occupation of the extreme ends of antifascism, with Germany's almost entirely manufactured, and Yugoslavia's a genuine popular opposition. And, despite vast dissimilarities, their emergence from communism was more radical than the rest of the Eastern Bloc, with genuine popular uprising in Germany and war in Yugoslavia.[1]

Theirs was also a unique geographic position in terms of the Soviet Bloc, sharing borders with the West, creating a context for comparison to western interpretations of

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1 Romania exists within this category, having experienced popular demonstrations, coup, and violence. These examples, however, are in contrast to the rather quiet transitions in, for instance, Hungary and Poland.

antifascism, especially between the divided Germanys. Both Yugoslavia and East Germany received extensive monetary support from the West, and were within signal range of not merely Radio Free Europe, but West German and Italian television. As of the 1960s, Yugoslavia was essentially open, and provided guest-worker labor in the West. Their important differences, namely their distance from Stalin, and the process which occurred in their formation, division of Germany versus union in Yugoslavia, place state antifascism squarely within the context of the *realpolitik*, the limiting factor of an ideological position such as antifascism.

Due to this work's focus on the antifascist states of East Germany and Yugoslavia, the postwar binary relationship of the Cold War, between communism and democracy, is of great importance. For this reason, the existence of non-communist resistance groups, and their place in what would become communist dominated antifascist states, can highlight the processes which these states underwent in order to produce a positive, total ideology. Selective elevation or acknowledgement of both resistance and victims demonstrate the process undergone in creating a new identity based on communist antifascism.

Though different in their formation, the similarity of their deficiencies in coming to terms with their troubled histories speak to a greater shortcoming of the antifascist myth. And while the rise of right wing politics in post-communist countries has been noted in the 1990s, the antifascism of these countries may elucidate this reactionary process.[2] This investigation will make use of two themes, the distinction between positive and negative ideology, and what that means for the changing position of antifascism, and also the simultaneously unifying and dividing role of antifascism in these states.

While fascism may be aptly termed a positive ideology, or a total ideology in Mannheim's sense, insofar as it has a vision of the 'good' or 'end' in society- antifascism must

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2 see Robert G. Moeller, "War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 101, No. 4 (Oct., 1996): 1008-1048

be described as a negative ideology. It lacks a prescription of the 'end' of society, and rather

seeks to oppose fascism through countering the positive elements of that system. That

antifascism's negative construction, or as a 'particular' ideology in Mannheim, allows for a

wider public support as is particularly relevant to the case of Yugoslavia's partisan

progenitors, which will be detailed below.

II - Literature Review

As no single book or author has addressed the topic which is central to this work, information has been drawn from sources of many disciplines. The methodology of the present work is not unlike the work of Eric Hobsbawm, in that a theme is evident throughout the historical narrative. While Hobsbawm's bias is Marxist, this text uses a view of anti-relationships extending from WWII to today. In this sense, the present work is of the 'broad, sweeping movements" angle of historiography, rather than a social history.

To some extent, the theoretical background for this work is rooted in the Hegelian or Marxist thesis-antithesis relationship. Yet this work will not consider explicitly the arrival of a synthesis based on this relationship. While the theoretical literature on the topic of fascism and antifascism is well developed, most notably by those of the Frankfurt School and Robert O. Paxton, the loose and variable understandings of these terms after WWII make such a technical examination less important than state claims and public understanding. Visions of state antifascism, and hence their definitions of fascism, as compared to current theories and definitions will be compared in order to demonstrate the insufficiency in state theory.

On the issue of ideology, Howard Williams is used particularly for his analysis of fascism in particular in the ideological frameworks of Marx, Mannheim, and Oakeshott, a student of Hegel. Hewett offers a survey of prevailing interpretations of fascism, noting the positions of Lukacs, Horkheimer and Adorno, and the "Liberal, postwar consensus."[3] Paxton is also used as a theoretical background, particularly for his broad definition, which with the notion of "functional equivalence" allows for a more fruitful assessment of neofascism and extreme rightism, in the context of the fascist-antifascist dichotomy of this work.

The longevity of polarized and antagonistic worldviews creates a problematic situation

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3   Andrew Hewett, "Ideological Positions in the Fascism Debate," In *Fascism and Neofascism*, ed. Angelica Fenner and Eric D. Weitz, 19-42. New York: Palgrave, 2004.

in historical research. Though certain facts are unequivocal, such as the starting dates of wars and the personalities involved, politicized historiography has effected the trustworthiness of other 'facts'.

The state antifascism of Yugoslavia and East Germany is one which required a new interpretation of the past. In producing this past, the role of antifascism or wartime resistance has been either inflated or identified selectively. Jarausch adequately portrays the historical profession in East Germany as one limited to local resources and censored politically. Historians are shown to have been corroborating the regime, and consciously modeling the depiction of the Fascist past to conform to the needs of an antifascist regime. Jarausch notes that historians did deviate from this line, and that their work had achieved recognition in western circles, but that political pressure kept this work from reaching the public or influencing politics.[4]

The year and place of publication is especially useful meta-textual information. Yugoslav scholars writing in English during the 1970s are clearly not state ideologues. Yet, they note that their sources are skewed politically, as in the case above. And while the impact of non-communist resistance on the postwar antifascist states is small, work focusing on these groups is central to the analysis of the reappearance of nationalism which corresponds the end of Yugoslavia and East Germany. The Chetniks in particular have been re-evaluated since Tito's death, and several English language books indicate a renewed interest, particularly the work of Jozo Tomasevich.[5] This scholarship is problematic, however, because it is difficult to identify the reason for the reevaluation. It can be attributed either to practical causes, such as the opening of archives, increased mobility of citizens, or the easing of political opposition; or, it may correspond to the nationalist currents which arose during that era.

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[4] See Konrad H. Jarausch, "The Failure of East German Antifascism: Some Ironies of History as Politics," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Feb., 1991): 85-102
[5] See Jozo Tomasevich, *The Chetniks* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975)

In *The Beast Reawakens*, Martin Lee offers a sampling of extreme neo-Nazism and neofascism in Europe, including post-1989 Germany and Yugoslavia. At times, however, this work reads as conspiriological, and contains bold statements, such as the following: "Far Right populists in Eastern Europe were implicitly legitimized by Germany, the strongest country on the Continent, which based its legal system on a racist conception of citizenship."[6] While this book offers useful examples of the recycling of Ustasha symbolism among Croatian units fighting after 1991, and the support given by American and European neo-Nazi organizations to the radical Croatian Defense Force, the extent of this symbolism and support is not backed by data. Its comments on the influence of escaped Nazis in later conflicts and neofacist organizations, and the complicity of the Allies in pardoning Nazi criminals is useful in portraying the exorcism of fascism in Germany and Croatia as a failure.

The historical background of these states is vital to this investigation for several reasons. The narrative of the end of WWII explains both the origins of Yugoslavia and the division of Germany. Additionally, it includes the activities of those resistance fighters and movements which did not produce antifascist states. The numbers of participants, particularly through comparison of competing groups, gives a rough guide to the popular support enjoyed by these movements, which is, in turn, vital to postwar state formation.

For a more general understanding, the end of these antifascist states must at least be mentioned. As it is not the primary focus of this work, these events will be given explained in brief. The reunification of Germany, in particular, is not contentious in of itself, at least with regard to the present work. More problematically, the breakup of Yugoslavia must be explained in order to understand both the role of nationalism, the reincarnation of wartime imagery, and the connections between these occurrences and the idea of anti-antifascism. However, the story is extremely complex, and politicized. So as to avoid claims of blame or

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6 See Martin Lee, *The Beast Reawakens* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1997)

victimhood, the re-telling of this period will proceed in an acknowledgedly simplified manner, and it is understood that sources may be biased.

The contexts of the sources used in this work create two worrisome conditions for bias. First, the censorship and state control of those sources which emerge form the time of communist rule in Yugoslavia and East Germany, and second, those written by exiles or ideological opponents stand to more critically oppose Yugoslav and East German history and ideology.

Finally, information is available on the topic of antifascism in East Germany and Yugoslavia only variably. Antifascism as a state legitimation and the identity created based on victory over fascism has been well discussed since the reunification of Germany, due to the need for a new unified identity. Scholars working in this field include Diner, Probst, Rabinbach and Jarausch. The *New German Critique* is also of particular usefulness for its theme issue, No. 67: 'Legacies of Antifascism.' On the other hand, the breakup of Yugoslavia degenerated into war, which dominates the literature describing this era. Rather than an analysis of the successes and failures of antifascism as a state doctrine, the national question dominates. And while antifascism and nationalism can be seen as two sides of an ideological system which required opposition and enemies, they are not inherently correlative themes. Conversely, the theme of anti-antifascism is mostly limited to discussions of former Yugoslavia, with little contribution from German sources.

Thankfully, the literature dealing with neofascism, both in Western Europe and post-Soviet Eastern Europe, and more specifically Germany and former Yugoslavia, is well developed. From the abundant analyses of post-Soviet rightism and neofascism, elements can be isolated which did or did not affect the East German and Yugoslav states, especially insofar as these maintained a proximity to Moscow's version of communism. The reoccurrence of Ustasha and Chetnik symbols amidst the war in Yugoslavia is well documented, in works on

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neofascism, nationalism in Yugoslavia, and more theoretical works on anti-antifascism. Here too is the problematic case of nationalist antifascism explored.

Where nationalism is discussed, it can be assumed to mean, unless otherwise clarified, to be of the Gellnerian sort, and encompassing both extreme and benign forms. Anthony Smith is also vital to the mythological function of antifascism.[7]

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7 See: Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) and Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983)

III - Antifascism as an Ideology

Binary relationships are an established and useful historical and analytical device: romanticism-rationalism, empire-colony, occidental-oriental, and presently, fascism-antifascism. These relationships provide a framework for the investigation of certain periods of history. Notably, the short twentieth century displays such dichotomies throughout, culminating in the end of one of the most bipolar relationship of all, the Cold War. However, from as early as the 1920s, the fascist-antifascist relationship has existed more subtly, given that its a complex ideological phenomenon, but one which is highlighted by some of the most bloody and oppressive regimes in the history of Europe. The legacy of this relationship remains, after the fall of European communism, an institution to which it owes much. In order to address the intersection of ideology and practice, the nature of antifascism and fascism, as ideologies must first be clarified.

Fascism, and its (nominal) antithesis, antifascism, are best understood as ideologies. However, the term ideology itself is problematic. First, ideology carries the connotation of being contrary to rational thought. Second, it suggests a certain epistemological unity in participants. To what ideal are participants looking, and where does it come from? Fascists and antifascists would characteristically be defined as those who follow fascism and antifascism insofar as these are *ideologies* codified by texts and thinkers.[8] However, the lack of such texts and thinkers does not reduce the solidity of meaning which these terms commonly carry. This results, in part, from the prevalence of self-identification among leaders or participants in these programs. Paxton notes of the fascists:

> "The fascist leaders themselves never stopped saying that they were prophets of
> an idea, unlike the materialist liberals and socialists. Hitler talked ceaselessly of

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8   Howard Williams, *Concepts of Ideology* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1988*), xi*

Weltanschauung, or 'worldview', an uncomely world he successfully forced on the attention of the whole world. Mussolini vaunted the power of the Fascist Creed."[9]

Where these statements of worldview are absent in the case of antifascism, its ideological nature must only be seen as a different, less comprehensive type.

Positively-Negatively Defined Ideology as an Analytical Category

This work proceeds on the premise that antifascism is an ideology which is necessarily defined negatively, that its, in opposition to fascism. Though still an ideology, it is not one which is codified or singular in its goals. Its teleology is limited to the removal of its antithesis, rather than a comprehensive formulation of an ideal society. Positively and negatively defined ideologies, as used here, are roughly correlative with Mannheim's 'total' and 'particular' respectively.[10]

Though fascism itself is difficult to define adequately, antifascism is of a particularly protean nature. It lacks in most cases a particular vision of the good society, and only comes to advance such a vision as a state ideology compounded with communism in East Germany and Yugoslavia after WWII. The particular nature of antifascism is in some respects a continuance of the Popular Front movement, of which "Hobsbawm also recalls that in the memory of those who experienced it, antifascism was usually not perceived as doctrine or ideology but as an ethos, a way of being in the world."[11] The totality of fascism, as compared to antifascism, is reinforced by the 'totalitarianism' toward which fascists aspired.[12] Hannah Aredt's inclusion of communism under the label of totalitarianism is useful to the present work for an understanding of the shift from particular to total ideology in communist-

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9   Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 15.
10 Williams, 23-40.
11 Anson Rabinbach, "Introduction: Legacies of Antifascism" *New German Critique*, No. 67 (Winter, 1996): 7.
12 Paxton, 152.

antifascist states. The transformation of antifascism from a negatively defined to a positively

defined ideology in the form of state communist antifascism allows for the interesting

occurrence of anti-antifascism.

Positioning oneself against fascism is additionally complicated by the multiple

existing fascisms at any time. For the purposes of this paper, with its focus on post-WWII

history, the fascists of Italy, Nazis of Germany, and Ustasha of Croatia will be considered

fascist, as these were the groups against which the postwar antifascist states were positioned.[13]

This is in part to distance wartime and post-war antifascism from the products of the Seventh

Comintern Congress, the events of the Spanish Civil War, and the rise of the Popular Front. It

also allows a closer discussion of the antifascism that was codified as state ideology in

response to the paradigmatic historical cases of German and Italian fascism. The emergence

of neo-fascism at the end of the twentieth century will be examined in relation to the decline

or end of antifascist states and the relationship between these ideologies and anti-antifascism.

It should be understood that in the context of this work, adherence to an ideology must be

undertaken at the level of the individual, and is only evident by an individual's statements or

actions. It is acknowledged that citizens of a fascist or antifascist state are not necessarily

ideologues, and in fact, conflict with state ideology is often the cause of resistance.

Furthermore, beliefs and actions are located both in time and context, and do not

necessarily remain static within a dynamic situation, such as WWII or the breakup of

Yugoslavia. In light of this caveat, the existence of antifascism will be shown to be of an

amorphous character which is only occasionally bound by a formalized ideology. Instead, it

exists in many forms, and can only be assessed as 'real' insofar as its adherents or accusers

understand the phenomenon.

Because fascism is arguably a non-political force, in the sense that it is more of a

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13 See Paxton for the exclusion of Franco, Romania, &c.

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social movement which may or may not be solidified via parliamentary majority, antifascism

also, is a non-political ideology or movement. The criteria which distance fascism from right-

wing authoritarianism are, most strongly, public displays of both symbols of the group, of

violence, and of particular vision of the telos of society. Howard Williams offers the

following;

> Rather than seeing the individual as connected with the nation through his
> exercise of electoral rights and rights of representation, Fascists preferred to see
> the individual connected with his nation through a bond of mystical unity...
> German Fascists saw the reality of the *Volk* as transcending the existence and
> needs of individual Germans.[14]

Opposition to fascism may therefore take political or juridical forms, as it had in Germany in

the approach to the winter of 1932-33. Antifascism is this context is an umbrella term which

encompasses many political and social categories. These include rightist conservatives or the

non-fascist right, liberal democrats, and communists. As Klaus Mann wrote in 1938:

> Fascism - however paradoxical this sounds - makes it easier for us to clarify and
> define the nature and appearance of what we want. Our vision will oppose, point
> for point, the practice of fascism. What the latter destroys, socialist humanism will
> defend; what the latter defends, it will destroy.[15]

This quote reveals both the negatively defined nature of antifascism as well as its vague

politics. Socialist humanism is a competing worldview, not a competing political party. The

more purely social instances of resistance are also evident, as in the culture of 'swing kids', or

degenerate art in the case of Nazi Germany, which opposed the structure and 'morality' of the

Hitler Youth and the wholesomeness of approved Aryan art.

After WWII, fascism as an ideology became associated with the full extent of the

atrocities committed under the jurisdiction of these systems, namely the ethnic cleansing

undertaken under orders of Nazi and Ustasha command, and of the extreme anti-Semitism

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14 Williams, 68.

15 Rabinbach 3, Klaus Mann, "Der Kampf um die Jungen Menschen," Kiirbiskern 2 (1975):
43. Cited in James D. Wilkinson, *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard
UP, 1981) 21.

characteristic of Nazi Germany and Vichy France. More than ever before, antifascism could assume a moral high-ground against fascism. However, the downplay of the racial motivations of Nazism and the late acknowledgement of the holocaust characterize East German antifascism, which exists in contrast to a 'Holocaust identity' prevalent in Western Europe shows that this humanitarian legitimation was secondary to considerations of triumphal communism. This selective engagement with the past, and the discrepancy between especially East and West German interpretations of the Third Reich will be further discussed in chapter V.

While Yugoslavia and East Germany existed as explicitly antifascist states, their decline and democratization has removed formalized antifascism from the political stage. Antifascism now is even less able to form a positive ideology, as the necessary antithesis, fascism, is more difficultly found and labeled. And, despite doubts as to the reality of antifascism, as opposed to a mythological construction, this work upholds that the mythology is in of itself real, as it shaped either public identity or propaganda, and was pursued as a state value to the extent that dictated national heroes, monument construction, and foreign policy.

IV- Historical Background: Wartime Resistance and the Formation of Antifascist States

Resistance in WWII took many forms, both armed and passive, violent and nonviolent, and of various motivations, political, moral, and nationalist. Importantly, however, resistance in general does not necessarily imply a particular ideology such as antifascism. Instead, individuals or groups may mobilize against occupation, against Germans, or against wartime rationing or forced labor. This form of resistance, understood broadly, was the form which was most prevalent during the war.

Resistance groups may be identified as antifascist either by an ideology held at the time of their wartime resistance, or by the label being applied afterward. The elevation of resistance groups to 'antifascist' status will be demonstrated in several contexts below and in VI: Anti-antifascism.

Mobilization and Support in the Context of the Positive-Negative Distinction

Using the negative-positive distinction as an analytical device helps to explain the different degrees of support for different resistance groups. Groups advancing a positively defined ideology are predicted to have received less support due to the specificity of their aims, and the necessity of the coincidence of group ideology and individual interest, while negatively defined ideologies allow for a variety of beliefs so long as a common enemy is recognized. Ideologies termed positive here are those of non-communist, nationalist resistance groups, as their aims are not the resistance of fascism as much as the preservation of a state, or the struggle to reinstitute an exiled government.

Considering the role which resistance had in legitimizing post-war states, it is useful to examine the extent of participation. The numbers of participants in the Chetnik and

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communist partisan movements in Yugoslavia corroborate the theory above as it relates to the rate of participation based on the positive-negative distinction. Resistance in Germany and Poland will be raised as a possible contradiction to this pattern.

Yugoslavia

In April, 1941, Axis forces moved through the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. A collaborationist state was created in Croatia, while Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Serbia were left under nominal Axis control. The swift advance of armor which had forced surrender did not widely engage the infantry of the opposition. Therefore, after defeat, those fighting men, whose country had collapsed, retained their arms and equipment, and returned to their homes. It is in this context which resistance groups emerged. In what would become Yugoslavia, two native groups arose in response to occupation. The Serbian Chetniks, and communist partisans, lead by Josip Broz Tito. The prevalence of resistance in the Balkans has been attributed to the difficulty of the terrain, the legacy of mountain banditry, as well as the particular circumstances of Axis occupation, wherein mechanized troops quickly overtook cities and strongholds, leaving much of the countryside unaffected, and still armed. These two organizations best illustrate the negative-positive distinction, for they were in some instances competing for the loyalty of the same population.

The Chetniks organized by Draža Mihajlović exhibited a nationalist-royalist ideology, aimed at the realization of a greater-Serbia and the reinstallation of the exiled monarch Peter II. In pursuance of this aim, they advocated and enacted the killing of ethnic rivals. This program is codified in the document which was sent by Mihailovic to his commanders in 1941:

> The mission of our units is:
> 1.   The struggle for the freedom of all of our people under the scepter of His

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Majesty, the King Peter II;

2. The creation of Greater Yugoslavia, and within it Greater Serbia, ethnically clean within the borders of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srem, Banat, and Bačka;

3. The struggle for the incorporation into our social structure of those non-liberated Slovenian territories under Italy and Germany (Trieste, Gorizia, Istria, and Carinthia), as well as Bulgaria and northern Albania with Shkodra;

4. The cleansing of all national minorities and anti-state elements from state territory;

5. The creation of direct common borders between Serbia and Montenegro, as well as Serbia and Slovenia by cleansing the Bosniak population from Sandžak, and the Bosniak and Croat populations from Bosnia and Herzegovina;

6. The punishment of all Croats and Bosniaks who have mercilessly destroyed our people in these tragic days;

7. The settlement of the areas cleansed of national minorities and anti-state elements by Serbs and Montenegrins (to be considered are poor, nationally patriotic, and honest families).

There may be no collaboration with the communists as they are fighting against the Dynasty and in favor of socialist revolution. Albanians, Bosniaks, and Ustaše are to be treated in accordance with their merit for the horrendous crimes against our population, i.e. they are to be turned over to the People's Court. The Croats living on the territory under Italian occupation are to be treated based on their disposition at the given moment.[16]

Clearly this constitutes a positive ideology.

Chetnik operations remained limited, due to both limited manpower and for the protection of Serbian civilians against reprisals by German Soldiers. After some early clashes, the Wehrmacht adopted a policy of collective punishment, wherein 100 civilians were to be killed for each German soldier dead, and 50 for each soldier wounded. Draža Mihajlović 's Chetniks are estimated at 10,000 at their peak, with an operating range limited to most of what is today Serbia.

Yet, the Allies recognized Mihajlović and his Chetniks as a valuable asset in combating the Axis in the Balkans. His image appeared, with praise, on the cover of Time Magazine, and was posthumously awarded the Legion of Merit by president Truman for Chetnik efforts in rescuing allied airmen.

16 Draža Mihajlović, "Instructions"

Practical considerations seem to have taken precedent, as American and British command gradually sided with the communist partisans, due to their larger operating capacity.

Communist resistance in Yugoslavia, under the supervision of the Communist party and its head Josip Broz Tito, began the struggle for liberation in June of 1941, only after Operation Barbarossa ended the formal non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union. Tito's partisans numbered over 800,000 and had transformed, over the course of the war, into a formal fighting unit. Partisan efforts had been effective to the extent that Axis powers launched seven antipartisan offensives, between the autumn of 1941 and the spring of 1944, the last of which included an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Tito.

The communist partisans under Tito, by 1942 had coalesced into a formal military body, the People's Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia (NOV i POJ). In addition to their previous guerilla tactics, the Peoples Liberation Army participated in traditional land warfare. Their military successes culminated in the capture of Zagreb and Ljubljana. Fighting continued after the German surrender, the last battle of which, The Battle of Poljana, was concluded May 15, 1945.Of the twelve thousand communist party members who entered the war, merely three thousand survived.

Germany and Elsewhere

Resistance in Germany was comparably non-existent, with the most noteworthy prewar group, *Neu Begginen,* dissolving before the outbreak of hostilities, and the White Rose was limited to a handful of intellectuals. The German communist party, the KPD, was outlawed, and contributed little to wartime resistance, especially after the shocking Nazi-Soviet pact. Liberal resistance, therefore, was small in comparison to conservatives, including the Catholic church. The most decisive actions of resistance originated within

rightist-conservatives circles in the Wehrmacht, with several attempts to assassinate Hitler. In a way, this conservative resistance is an extension of the effort to bolster the right as a bulwark against extremism, both communist and fascist, in the years approaching 1933. The positive ideology, used loosely, of these participants is not the formation of a new state, but rather the reconstruction of pre-war politics, or more extremely, Wilhelmine political order.

The case of the Polish Home Army exists in contrast to the model followed by the Yugoslav cases above. Its resistance was non-communist. Rather it was directed at the reinstallation of the government in exile and the preservation of Polish culture during occupation; essentially nationalistic. In this way, it appears similar to Mihailovic's Chetniks, or even the resistance of conservatives in Germany. However, the Home Army was able to generate large and diverse support, several hundred thousand at its peak in 1943, and was a considerable obstacle both to Germany and the Soviet Union. Yet, Poland did not develop into an explicitly antifascist state, merely a communist one. This suggests the additional components necessary in Germany and in Yugoslavia needed to produce a state so strongly identified as antifascist.

Antifascist states, East Germany & Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia and East Germany, emerged from the war defining themselves as antifascist, yet their doing so had strikingly different consequences and motivations. Nonetheless, both are self-described antifascist communist states, the differences between which evidence the theme of antifascism as the gelling agent of identity in these states.

As Tito's partisans liberated territory, 'Anti-Fascist Councils of National Liberation of Yugoslavia' were set up which were to become the basis for the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Because the partisans had played a major role in the liberation of Yugoslavia, and

due to the military and political power they had acquired in doing so, the resulting state possessed a unique autonomy, namely in comparison to communist postwar states which owed their liberation to Stalin's Red Army.

East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic, having been occupied by the Soviets, more closely mirrored Russian policies. State antifascism in East Germany was constructed in such a way as to oppose those things which they thought had made fascism possible, citing both the historical lesson of communism's triumph over fascism in WWII, and also communism's opposition to capitalism and the petit bourgeoisie, wherein Nazism found much of its support.

The disbanded communist party (KPD) was revived and combined with the remnants of the Social Democrats (SPD) under soviet guidance, forming the Socialist Unity Party (SED). The antifascism of East Germany was solidified in the interest of preventing another fascist state. Communism was claimed to be a consequence, rather than the precipitant of this aim. As an artifact of the preventative nature of East German antifascism, the antifascist protective rampart still stands in some places in Berlin, where it is better known as the Berlin Wall.

Both in Yugoslavia and in East Germany, antifascism was tied to communism. Communism was both the cause and result of these states. Different perspectives will call the formation of these states either liberation or occupation. East Germany was liberated/occupied by the victorious communist Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia was liberated/occupied by the victorious communist partisans. The postwar reality of communist victories was used as proof that the communist system was somehow better, as if the ends had justified the means. The inclusion of the historical event of Soviet triumph, makes this state-antifascism different from the more political and philosophical antifascism circulating, for example, among émigré authors during the 1930s. The degree to which communism broadly,

or Stalinism in particular, shaped these antifascist states will be addressed in their respective

subchapters in the subsequent chapter.

V- Antifascist Identity

In both the German and Yugoslav cases, the original negative ideology of antifascism was transformed into a positive state ideology. This forms one component in each nations' process of nationalist identity formation, or reformation. In each newly formed country, this process occurred somewhat differently, with Yugoslavia an expanded federal state, and East Germany a portion divided from the former German state now occupied by the Western allies. Postwar state formation and corollary identity formation are necessarily driven by practical considerations such as reconstruction, and building a state apparatus. And while at the level of the individual, or of the greater population, a belief in or adherence to antifascism is not necessarily evident, its use as a legitimizing principle by elites plays a strong developmental role.

The transformation of the loose or specious antifascist elements during WWII to the state ideologies which espoused antifascism as their raison d'être is one which required the standardization or homogenization of antifascism and resistance in general.

Yugoslavia

The gelling agent of new nationhood, antifascism, embodied by the communist partisans, was promulgated through public remembrance of antifascist heroes. Ludanyi, writing in 1979 said of this: "Yugoslavia's self-image is based on what I have called the Partisan Myth. Its purpose is twofold. First, it ensures the leading role of the communists. Second, it provides the country's numerous nationalities with historical self-definition and a sense of common destiny."[17] The distinction of myth, as opposed to ideology, is not trivial

17 Andrew Ludanyi, "Titoist Integration of Yugoslavia: The Partisan Myth & the Hungarians

here, and Ludanyi takes care to explain this terminology thusly "A myth is less precise and intellectual than an ideology, but as a consequence has greater emotional appeal. It is based on customs, traditions, folklore, and mores, many of which have a mystical rather than a rational foundation."[18] The mythological as opposed to ideological strength of the movement is equitable with the mass-movement and negatively-defined characteristics of partisanship, meaning that it did not reflect a total ideology, but rather a limited particular. The broad support which had been aroused for the partisans during the war was evident. In addition to the mandate of victory, antifascist partisans were able to gather support both during and immediately after the conflict by promising a federal structure, thereby addressing the desires of those who still held strong national convictions. This federal, democratic approach, rather than a forced communist dictatorship, was to establish the character of Yugoslavia and enshrine its tolerance of nationalism. Sekulic describes the national dimension in postwar elections thusly:

> During postwar elections, the votes for communists expressed national dissatisfaction more than support of the social program of the Community party. The same can be said for the victory in the revolution. Without offering the federal perspective protecting the rights of all non-Serbian nations, while offering the perspective of new Yugoslavia free of Serbian domination, the Partisan movement would not have been successful.[19]

The primary concern of the Yugoslav Communist party being the national question greatly explains the rift which developed between Stalin and Tito, the most cynical view of which would hinge on Tito's independent acquisition of power, as compared to postwar communist leadership in East Germany or Poland, who had been groomed in Moscow. A moderate communism was cultivated in order to preserve the federal system. Sekulic explains this downplay of communist centralism:

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of the Vojvodina, 1945 -1975," *Polity*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Winter, 1979): 283.

18 Ludanyi, 225.

19 Duski Sekulic "Nationalism versus Democracy: Legacies of Marxism," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society,* Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn, 1992):119.

At the same time they were careful enough to push communism as a goal in to the background. The attempts of some local leaders such as Djilas in Montenegro to pursue revolutionary goals was immediately condemned as "left deviations." This policy brought political catastrophe for the movement. It was defeated everywhere where communist.[20]

However, nationalism remained a formal enemy of the new state. Nationalism was thusly vital to the preservation of the state, in the context of federalism, but also as a unifying device through its enemy-status. Due primarily to the violent founding of the state, through partisan combat, formal Yugoslav identity required the cohesion of the state against both external and internal enemies.

Yugoslavia's economy was notably distinct from the centrally planned economies characteristic of the Soviet bloc and its divergences from Stalinist communism is also duly noted. Moorthy, writing before the death of Tito, helps to explain these irregularities:

> The characteristics which mark the Yugoslavs out as so different from the Russians and there allies were evolved after the break with Stalin and not before it. Kardelj improvised his version of Marxist theories – and so also Milovan Djilas – to justify the break, only after Yugoslavia's expulsion from the cominform.[21]

The abandonment of certain Marxist tenets, including internationalism, as evidenced by the independence from the Soviet Union, indicates a certain tolerance of nationalism within the Yugoslav government. And while the central position of the communist leadership was originally planned to overcome the national federal structure, the opposite has shown itself to have been the case as the communist party was federalized. Therefore, the initial tolerance of nationhood or nationalism within the federal structure can be kept in mind as an omen of the eventual dissolution to be discussed in the following chapter.

The role of antifascism as a former of identity in Yugoslavia is largely limited to state legitimation, and the offering of national heroes. While Germany stood strongly behind a Marxist interpretation of antifascism as a method of preventing a reoccurrence of fascism and

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20 Sekulic, 119.
21 Krishna K. Moorthy, "Model Based on Myth." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 6, No. 30/32 Special Number (Jul., 1971): 1535.

therefore war, Yugoslavia instead adopted a federal structure for the purpose of peace. To say the least, gradual privatization of the economy and the openness of borders for private commercial enterprise is inconsistent with the basics of both Stalinism and Marxism. For this reason, as well as the acceptance of distinct national identities rather than cosmopolitanism, antifascism as a vague ideology is strongly ahead of communism in the Yugoslav identity. Federalism made good practical sense in a united land whose underdeveloped infrastructure was additionally damaged by the war, and which included alongside the centers of communist partisanship, the seats of two enemies of the partisans, the Croatian Ustasha, and the Serbian Chetniks.

Unlike in East Germany, the communist partisans of Yugoslavia which constituted the new leadership largely evaded the issue of a guilty past. And while both states were able to identify certain groups as perpetrators, the wide support for and participation in the partisan movement meant a generally less complicit populace. Two groups were condemned as fascist or collaborationist, the Ustasha and Chetniks, and would need to be removed or rehabilitated in the new state. Rather than a guilty past shared by a widely complicit German population, guilt in Yugoslavia was reserved primarily for Croatians.

Yugoslav parallels to de-Nazification include the finalization of partisan hegemony by purging the remnants of the Chetniks, and executing Mihailovic. Mihailovic as leader of the Chetniks and accused collaborationist, was tried for collaboration and crimes against civilians and executed 17 July 1946.

Reincluding Croatia was eased by the flight of many high ranking Ustasha officials. In their place, councils were put into place just as they had been in the rest of what became Yugoslavia. Complicity of the Catholic Church has been attributed to the successful escape of much of the leadership, which embodied right-wing conservatism abroad. Croatia, in a self-stereotyped understanding, was punished for its Ustasha past through the exploitation of its

economic resources, in supporting the less developed south, and subjection to Serbian

hegemony in the form of the new state apparatus. As their wartime state apparatus had been

collaborationist and fascist, Serbian government officials filled the ranks of the new

government. Brkljačić describes the exclusion-as-punishment thusly:

> Croatian intellectuals, the narrative claims, never participated in the communist
> cultural project of their own free will. Perhaps this is why the members of the
> Communist Party of Croatia do not have exact names. They are to a great extent
> anonymous, and we learn their names in special situations: we read, for example, a
> list with names of the Serbian members (!) of the Communist Party of Croatia
> (CPC) when they are put in the context of the 1950 protest in which several
> Serbian CPC members claimed that Serbs in Croatia did not enjoy equal rights
> with the Croats.[22]

Their names only appear in the 1907s when these individuals begin to criticize the system.[23]

Germany

As Germany was divided among the victorious allies after WWII, the emerging

identities of both East and West are strongly shaped by two distinct appraisals of the war and

of Fascism. While East Germany pursued a communist antifascism comparable to Stalinist

convention, the West, and western Europe at large were more struck by the horrors of the

Nazi regime, as opposed to the political or economic components of fascism. Therefore,

rather than perpetuating a dichotomy between antifascism and fascism, the west rather

universally reacted to the horror of the holocaust, and measures were implemented not

necessarily for the prevention of the reoccurrence of political fascism, but rather to prevent

another occurrence of ethnic violence. Lothar Probst's "Founding Myths in Europe and the

Role of the Holocaust" describes the holocaust as the founding act of the 'Europeanness' later

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22 Maja Brkljačić "What Past Is Present?" *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and
  Society*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Fall, 2003): 47.
23 Brkljačić, footnote 55.

utilized by the EU.[24]

As a unifying device in East Germany, state antifascism attempted to both cleanse the populace of Nazi sympathies, and to create a consensus among wartime resistance. While de-Nazification in the Soviet zone has been argued to be more extreme than in the other three occupation zones, this perpetuated a vision of the fascist past in the Soviet zone, and later in East Germany which attributes the ills of that regime to an ideological elite, without acknowledging the complicity of the people. Monteath summarizes this divergence:

> The Nazi past was *internalized*- that is, integrated into the historical experience of the Federal Republic, however awkward and fraught that process might have been. In the German Democratic Republic, by contrast, Nazism was *universalized* as fascism, that is, interpreted not as a distinctively German phenomenon but rather as a product of a set of circumstances liable to arise in a capitalist system.[25]

These circumstances, identified as the role of the small middle class, and the power of industrial capitalism in producing such a militarized state, were, in East German doctrine, necessarily opposed by the leveling effects of Communism. Furthermore, the historical event of Soviet triumph became a legitimizing force, both of communism and of the soviet-style East German state. More theoretically, Diner and Gundermann note:

> From a communist or pro-communist perspective, the victory of Soviet weapons means not only the just outcome of a just war, but also the actual triumph of an obviously superior social formation over one which has become historically obsolete. Therefore, the Soviet Union's victory corroborates both the superiority of the socialist system and the historico-teleological interpretation of reality connected with it.[26]

The historico-teleological interpretation mentioned here refers to the similarity, from the communist perspective, of both WWI and WWII, characterized by imperialist aggression by Germany against Russia. This portrayal positions the Soviet Union as, first, the necessary

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24 See Lothar Probst, "Founding Myths in Europe and the Role of the Holocaust," *New German Critique*, No. 90, Taboo, Trauma, Holocaust (Autumn, 2003): 45-58

25 Peter Monteath, "Narratives of Fascism in the GDR Buchenwald and the 'Myth of Antifascism," *European Legacy*. Vol.4, No.1 (1999): 99.

26 Dan Diner and Christian Gundermann. "On the Ideology of Antifascism," *New German Critique*, No. 67 (Winter, 1996): 126.

product of WWI, and response to imperialism. And second, in WWII, as the necessary response to capitalist imperialism as embodied by Nazi Germany. Within the new state, communism's equalizing effect on individuals was in direct opposition to the hierarchical structure of the Third Reich, based on racial purity, and public ownership stymied the industrial bourgeoisie which had driven militarism and expansionism.

The communist interpretation continued to perceive the Federal Republic as susceptible to a reappearance of fascism, as it still functioned under the capitalist order which had supposedly produced the Nazis. As stated by Dan Diner, "due to this antifascist profession, [East Germany] understood itself to be the antithesis both of Hitler Germany and of the Federal Republic, which was prone to a return of fascist rule because of its capitalist social order."[27] National self-definition in contrast to the 'other Germany' was mutual. Diner continues:

> On the one hand, from the early Federal Republic's perspective, the apex of this development was the comparison - via the theory of totalitarianism - between the GDR and the "Third Reich"; on the other hand, Marxist-Leninist fascism theory situated the Federal Republic in a logical and historical continuity with fascism.[28]

By way of distancing the East German state from the previously unified Germany, and simultaneously from responsibility of nationalism for the Nazi movement, the term 'nation' itself was renounced in the 1974 constitution of the GDR.[29] The end of the unified German nation was seen by the GRD to be a historical necessity in order to ensure peace in Europe.[30] The portrayal of the war by East and West is and was especially evident in monuments. Brian Ladd, focusing on public space, particularly in Berlin where ideologies competed most strongly due to their proximity, shows that the wartime past was shaped by the ideology of the state:

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27 Diner, 127.

28 Diner, 127.

29 Konrad H Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945-*1995. Translation by Brandon Hunziker. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 66.

30 *After Hitler,* 66.

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The west did link its identity to anti-Nazis such as the men of July 20, 1944. But its monuments commemorated them and others as suffering victims, not as conquering heroes. Differences in the iconography of memorial sculpture in East and West reveal a divergence in attitude that goes beyond political programs. West Germany was a land of victims, East Germany a land of heroes.[31]

A victimized self-understanding in the west included, beside the vision of a public living under tyranny, the soldiers who suffered in Soviet POW camps, as well as Germans expelled from Eastern Europe at the war's end. Moeller, shows the extent to which the West German government sponsored this understanding of victimization:

The state's commitment to creating a detailed record of German loss and suffering was also apparent in its sponsorship of two projects that sought to collect the memories of POWs and expellees as sources for writing the "contemporary history" of the postwar period. A systematic effort to document the "expulsion of the Germans from the East" was formally initiated by the Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and War-Damaged shortly after the creation of the office in Adenauer's first government. [32]

In contrast, the heroic self-understanding in East Germany stems from victory achieved by Soviet troops and German resistance over the Nazi regime. However, the issue of German resistance is problematic. In Germany, where there was no mass antifascist movement to speak of, communists persecuted under Nazism were revived and relabeled antifascists. Erich Honecker, general secretary of the SED and leader of the German Democratic Republic from 1971 to 1989, spent the war imprisoned as a communist, and thusly claimed to be (or was labeled by others) a heroic antifascist. The arguably more productive resistance, that of conservative circles within the Wehrmacht responsible for the numerous assassination attempts on Hitler, most notably the 20 July plot, was largely ignored due to their political incompatibility.

The lack of widespread resistance in Germany has been noted, most strikingly by Mary Nolan, whose appraisal accepts even the most broad interpretation of resistance:

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31 Brian Ladd *The Ghosts of Berlin.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 206.
32 Robert G. Moeller, "War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 4 (Oct., 1996): 1023.

The record of resistance, as exiled antifascists were painfully aware, was meager indeed. Even if one extended the term antifascist to all opponents of Hitler, using it as a term of moral approbation rather than of political designation - and that was done by many socialists from the late 1930s on - the numbers raised deeply troubling questions about the German population's ties to the Nazi regime and about their commitment to and readiness for democracy.[33]

While Gestapo reports give exact numbers of punished opponents, with an estimated 150,000 communists imprisoned and 20,000 killed, their affect on the Nazi regime was hardly felt.[34] The reality of such a limited resistance in Germany was the problem addressed by the East German policy of remembrance, with Nazis and collaborationists severely punished, and a public who was trained to believe the victory over fascism, rather than fascism itself, was their heritage. Such was the separation of the Nazi past from the youth of the new state that East German schoolchildren actually believed that their own National People's Army had fought against the Nazis during the war.

Socialization in this new vision of heroic triumph over fascism was undertaken in schools. Wegner, then Blessing have examined the extent of this socialization in schools:

The Ministry for Education described the creation of "anti-fascist and democratic schools" as "a national task and an example for the progressive solution of school problems throughout the country." The Jugendweihe, a special dimension of anti-fascist education marking the passage from youth to adulthood, represented "a strong and essential element in the preparation of young people for life and work in socialist society" in cooperation with the school and local community.[35]

This passage indicates the totality of this operation, through state control of a youth cultivated to be not merely members, but ideologues of the new antifascist state.

On the inverse side of opposition was the official recognition of victims of fascism. In this process, some groups were excluded or differently valued based on their connection to

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33 Mary Nolan, "Antifascism under Fascism: German Visions and Voices," *New German Critique*, No. 67 (Winter, 1996): 41.
34 Nolan, 41.
35 Gregory Wegner, "In the Shadow of the Third Reich: The 'Jugendstunde' and the Legitimation of Anti-Fascist Heroes for East German Youth," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Feb., 1996): 128.

the legitimizing ideology of the state, namely communist antifascism. The national discussion of the Nazi camp Buchenwald, and the changing membership of a postwar victims organization aptly display the narrowing of East German leadership's attitudes toward victims in accordance with their understanding of antifascism, used both as a political tool and one of identity formation.

While Buchenwald is acknowledged by the state, the reasons for doing so include the execution of important communists, including Ernst Thälmann, and the exaggeratedly heroic communist lead resistance therein, as much as for the persecution of Nazi racial enemies. Monteath describes this spurious interpretation as one which "Had much to do with the immediate presence of American troops as they advanced through Thuringia, persuading the guards to flee to safety."[36] Yet in the creation of an antifascist mythology "These events could be stylized into an act of bold self-liberation, in which the central role in overthrowing SS rule was played not by American soldiers but rather by communist-led inmates."[37] The leadership position of communists in this instance, operating within Germany and uniting diverse inmates was drawn upon in order to justify the postwar leadership by communists, more generally, demonstrate communism as the conqueror of fascism.[38] This belies the different value attributed to victims of Nazi terror.

Another illustrative example is the changing membership of the Organization For Those Persecuted by the Nazi Regime *(Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregime)* or VVN, originally formed by the KPD. Monteath states: Whereas in 1946 roughly equal numbers of communists and non-communists served on the VVN's Berlin committee, by 1948 SED members formed a clear majority."[39] Later, "under the influence of a wave of anti-Semitism

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36 Peter Monteath, "Narratives of Fascism in the GDR Buchenwald and the 'Myth of Antifascism,'" *European Legacy*. Vol.4, No.1 (1999): 104.
37 Monteath, 104.
38 Monteath, 104.
39 Monteath, 102.

stemming from the Soviet Union, the relationship worsened in the early 1950s, culminating in the flight from the GDR of most Jewish functionaries in January 1953."[40] Also, Jehovah's Witnesses, persecuted by the Nazis, were also banned in the GDR as of 1949.[41] Such selective acknowledgement of victims is not unique to the East German state. Similar occurrences in the West will be detailed in the section below, Failures of Antifascism. What is important presently is the elevated group- communists, rather than the occurrence of selective elevation in general. The issue of politicized memory is especially evident in the case below.

While members of the the 20 July group had originally occupied three seats of the VVN, their replacement by communists as of 1949 is quite predictable, as the 20 July movement was composed of primarily pre-war conservatives, totally incompatible with state communism. The exclusion of representatives of other victimized groups, such as Jews, homosexuals, and Jehovah's Witnesses does not appear to originate in political incompatibility. Furthermore, their victimhood is not as correlative with wartime resistance as the 20 July group. This distinction makes the resistance-victim relationship in Monteath somewhat problematic, insofar as a connection can be drawn between the validity of resistance and a representation as a victim in the VVN. His work, however, remains useful for displaying the politicizing of victimization and the primacy of communism as a legitimizing factor.

Jarausch suggests that merely half of East Germans identified with the nation, a number greater than in the west, where "only right-wing circles maintained affirmative feelings, while the left distanced itself decidedly from the nation."[42] This observation parallels the themes of identity above, victor vs. victim. Where de-Nazification had been, at least formally, more extreme, East Germans could identify with a purified state distanced from its

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40 Monteath, 102.
41 Monteath, 102.
42 *After Hitler,* 67.

dark past, whereas the West had still to contend with a guilt which drove people from national

pride. The popularity of pride in Germany among the wider population has only recently

emerged, most notably in the context of international sport.

VI- The End of State-Antifascism

While the processes of disintegration for European communism have little or nothing to do with state antifascism, the disappearance of these states has allowed for a reevaluation of both the wartime and antifascist narratives. The central issue is the success or failure of state antifascism. Beyond this, the legacy of the fascist-antifascist dichotomy lives on, pushed by new right-wing politics. The legacy of the terminology itself indicates an inability in the scholarly sphere and in public discourse, to define exactly what is understood by fascism and by antifascism, and whether these ideas are tied to a certain historical situation or temporality. Central to the present examination is the theme of nationalism, positioned as a rough antithesis to communist antifascism, given its necessity in fascism.

Breakup of Yugoslavia

The reactions to antifascism in the context of the breakup of Yugoslavia are generally divisible into two positions: anti-Yugoslavia, where antifascism is equitable with the multinational state; and anticommunism, where antifascism carries the weight of its communist implications. Todor Kuljić assigns the Croatian and Serbian positions these characteristics, respectively.[43] Importantly, and necessarily, both reactions have the ultimate aim of freedom from forces which would prevent the rise of nationalism. The anti-Yugoslav position in Croatia is correlative to the narrative of victims of greater-Serbianism. A perception of humiliation or punishment during the Yugoslav era, and due to the state's implicit tolerance of nationalism, the reassertion of Croatian nationhood can be read with a

43 Todor Kuljić, "Revised Remembrance on Fascism in Serbia and Croatia. Between Decretory Antifascism and Antifascism." http://www.zag-berlin.de/antirassismus/archiv/54kuljicen.html

degree of vindictiveness. Brkljačić offers the following, paraphrasing the 'prevailing narrative:'

> The constructed self-image of the Croatian nation portrays Croats as humiliated and repressed by others throughout the twentieth century. These "others" were basically only one, real/imagined and opposed Other of the Croatian nation-- the Serbs. Humiliation and repression, however, did not weaken the Croatian people but only enhanced their striving toward the ultimate goal of their history-- the nation-state.[44]

As it has been shown in the two cases, East Germany and Yugoslavia, that the monopolization of the past has implications in the understanding of the present. Interestingly, however, the politicized portrayal of the Nazi past in East Germany has been revised since reunification in 1989, while the dissolution of Yugoslavia has created new problems of representing the shared history of antifascism, particularly the role of the communist partisans in national liberation and state formation. In some sense, the differences between reunification and division may explain this phenomenon, insofar as East Germany was able to reconcile its interpretation of the past with western interpretations, while Croatia, Slovenia, or Serbia were without peers in the process. Theirs was a newly individual identity, intentionally distanced from the unified Yugoslav identity, most strikingly evident in the clause of the Croatian constitution which forbid any alliances between former Yugoslav countries and the reformation of any "Great-Yugoslavia."

Reunification of Germany

As referenced in chapter V, the totality of antifascist reeducation in the GRD created great obstacles in reunification. After 1989, the mixed population had no single identity, but moreover, it had no single narrative of the war which had ultimately divided them. The totality of their education in state antifascism is described:

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44 Brkljačić, 48.

The collapse of the East German state in 1989 symbolized the utter failure of an ideology and the system of political socialization organized by the GDR. The concerted efforts of the East German government to frame a program of "state-sanctioned anti-fascism" built on the legacy of the Third Reich became part of an elaborate campaign in history for both adults and children over a period of four decades. Schools in the GDR participated in this process along with the family, public media, an elaborate network of historical memorials, former concentration camps and museums along with youth organizations including, among others, the Ernst Thalmann Pioneers ... and the Free German Youth.[45]

Germany's involvement in the Yugoslav crisis in 1991 and 1992 contains two themes relevant to the present work. First, war guilt was evident as a limiting factor in German use of force in international diplomacy. Libal describes how "This almost visceral aversion to the use of force against the republics seeking independence also sheds a certain light on the issue of German's own potential military role, both in general and with regard to the crisis in Yugoslavia."[46] He continues, "Germany certainly expressed a fundamental unwillingness to consider force a quasi-normal instrument of politics... Government Policy was determined by the rule that the German army should not participate in operations in countries where German soldiers had been present in World War II."[47]

Second, as will be continued in the subsequent chapter on neofascism, a link between neofascist groups in Croatia and Germany propagated the sponsorship by German neofascist groups of the Croatian far right. Martin Lee, who describes this collaboration goes as far as to suggest that German willingness to support, in general, and through money and war materiel, is symptomatic of a continued fascist sympathy in German members of government. The limited scope of such neofascist support should indicate this position to be at least somewhat conspirological, the obvious connection remains as a demonstration of the legacy of such issues as fascism and war guilt in this interaction.

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45 Wegner, 128.

46 Michael Libal, *Limits of Persuasion: Germany and the Yugoslav Crisis, 1991-1992*. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1997), 106.

47 Libal, 106.

Post-Soviet Nationalism

The decline of European communism, evidenced by the breakup of Yugoslavia and the fall of the Berlin Wall has allowed for a resurgence in nationalism, the most extreme forms of which exhibit the racist extremism and even symbols of past fascist regimes. The reasons for this resurgence are many and varied, but Renata Selecl offers a basic framework thusly: The present outbursts of nationalism in post-socialist eastern European countries are a reaction to the long years of Communist Party rule which have destroyed the traditional fabric of society and dismantled most points of social identification. Thus when people now attempt to distance themselves from the official ideological universe, the only positive reference point at their disposal is their national identity.[48]

Suny offers a post-colonial analogy for the former Soviet Union, and Hobsbawm has demonstrated the connection between post-colonialism, anti-imperialism and the climate of postwar antifascism.[49] Whatever the mechanism for this reemergence of nationalism, two components are clear, namely that a new identity is needed for newly emergent nation states which had previously been encompassed within a multinational state such as the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia, and that nationalism or the desire for distinct nationhood was pursued despite the advantages of union, as described by Jarausch. In the countries in focus here, the successors of Yugoslavia and East Germany, the reemergence of nationalism, both benign and extreme, has three important implications for the legacy of antifascism.

First, the continued existence of fascist elements speaks to the failure of the antifascist

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48 Renata Salecl, "Nationalism, Anti-Semitism, and Anti-Feminism in Eastern Europe," *New German Critique*, No. 57 (Autumn, 1992): 51.

49 Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990)

Rondald G Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993)

program, especially de-Nazification. Second, due to the prevalence of antifascism after WWII, nationalist groups have sought to cloak their social and political aims in terms of antifascism, raising the issue of the possibility of nationalist antifascism. Third, and most important to the argument of this work, an interesting anti-relationship is seen to emerge from a dissatisfaction with a state whose legitimacy is so tied to antifascism: anti-antifascism.

Failures of Antifascism

Given the reappearance of extreme rightism and neofascist groups, it could be said that antifascism has failed. But whose antifascism? The vague antifascism of the Popular Front era subsided well before the outbreak of the war, particularly due to the Hitler-Stalin pact. During the war, antifascism was conflated with resistance, anti-occupation and anti-war sentiments, yet there remained a clearly identifiable fascism which to oppose. The question of whether East German of Yugoslav antifascism has failed is tied to the issue of whether there remained a fascism to oppose. In Yugoslavia and East Germany, this equates to an assessment of the success of de-Nazification or dealing with the Ustasha (and perhaps Chetnik), and Nazi pasts, respectively. This is due to the historical occurrence of fascism within these countries, and could be considered generally by including other states whose history includes the transition from fascism to communism, such as Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia. Therefore the danger in a reemergence of fascism or extreme nationalism in these countries, unlike in the former Soviet Union, is that they have direct historical progenitors to draw upon for extremist rhetoric and symbolism. In the most radical, though isolated cases, individuals implicated in fascist regimes have continued their careers in antifascist states.

Even where direct connections are absent, the success of nationalism in politics in Yugoslavia, beginning in the 1980s, illustrates the failure of the SFRY in achieving its goal of

unity and gradual centralization. Based on both the leniency showed toward nationalism at the state level, and the small proportion of individuals identifying as 'Yugoslav', it would be wrong to assert that nationalism had reappeared. Aside from propagandistic claims of unity, and token displays, such as the Yugoslav Olympic team, most citizens of Yugoslavia continued to identify as the nationality of their titular republic, or, where applicable, by religion. The existence of a Yugoslav identity, at least on census forms, did achieve some minor acceptance for its capacity to protect national minorities. Sekulic note: The concept of Yugoslav identity as a defensive strategy for *minority nationalities* is supported by higher rates of Yugoslav identification among those with Croat parents in Bosnia, and most dramatically, Serbia.[50] Serbians, however, even those living outside Serbia, were found to be less likely to identify as Yugoslavs. This can be attributed to the relative position of power which Serbia occupied in Yugoslavia, possessing the greatest land area, and the majority of government functionaries.

The failure of antifascism in East Germany is, in addition to its inability to address the issue of nationalism, can be attributed to its inability to deal with the racial and humanist aspects of fascism and its by-products. Jarausch notes that, due to the totalitarian nature of the state, East Germany accomplished little through their attempt at reforming public identity, as they had "simply substituted new ideological phrases for old cliches."[51] In an earlier article from the same author, the totalitarian thesis provides this criticism: "Fixated upon the Nazi menace in the past, most GDR historians failed to criticize the threat of Erich Honecker's police state in the present."[52]

As introduced earlier, in chapter V, the materialist causes ascribed by the prevailing

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50 Sekulic, Dusko, Garth Massey, and Randy Hodson, "Who Were the Yugoslavs? Failed Sources of a Common Identity in the Former Yugoslavia," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Feb., 1994): 95.

51 *After Hitler,* 57.

52 Konrad Jarausch, "The Failure of East German Antifascism: Some Ironies of History as Politics," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Feb., 1991): 86

Marxist ideology were insensitive to the pernicious racial politics which characterized the Third Reich. East Germany did not widely discuss the Holocaust until the 1980s. Jarausch notes the deficiencies which have resulted from the East German portrayal of fascism:

> In contrast to western tendencies to forget and excuse, the GDR started with a clearer public commitment to anti- Nazi values and practices. But ritualized hommage [sic] to an antifa consensus failed to extirpate the roots of fascistoid behavior in the authoritarian collaboration and racism of the majority of the population.[53]

This quote corroborates not only the distinct western and eastern opinions of the past, but the oversight, on the part of the East German antifascist mechanism, issues which, by their skirting of official doctrine, had gone unaddressed despite the intuitive links between racism and fascism. This argument will be continued in the final chapter's concluding remarks.

Conversely, and as an extension of the 'Holocaust identity' theory advanced by Probst West German avoidance of a number of persecuted social categories, notably the Roma, homosexuals, forced laborers, and those who had undergone forced sterilization, provokes the following from Moeller: "These exclusions revealed a West German tendency to equate racial persecution exclusively with anti-Semitism and to collapse National Socialist atrocities into the mass extermination of the Jews."[54] As the interpretations of the past had become politicized between these eastern and western general types, divergence from the accepted norms of interpretation became a political act. In Western Europe, this theme is evidenced with the following:

> In Western Europe during the late 1960s, neither racism, nor anti-Semitism, nor the extreme right as a political phenomena constituted an organizing force to be reckoned with in discussions about European societies. However, in several European countries, the extreme left, which was very active at the time, considered the existence of extreme-right movements a cause for concern and opposed them politically and even physically (on university campuses).[55]

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53 "The Failure of East German Antifascism", 96.
54 Moeller, 1017.
55 Michel Wieviorka, "Racism, the Extreme Right, and Ideology in Contemporary France:

Clearly the perception of a extremist movements is shaped by the politics of the observer. Thus, both eastern and western tendencies should be seen as biased, and therefore the detection and evaluation of both the fascist past and new incarnations of extreme rightism should be seen as lacking, at least in wider discourse.

Nationalist Antifascism?

Because antifascism had become something of a European identity after the war, whether from the legitimizing principle of national resistance, communist antifascism, or the holocaust identity described above, emerging political movements, most notably in Yugoslavia, adopted the antifascist label. Kuljić warns of this development "However, since antifascism has been recognized as Europe's patriotism, is has to be adjusted to suit national needs. Various nationalistic currents (Chetniks, Domobrans, etc.) are putting on antifascist masks and thus turn antifascism into a relative category."[56]

Elsewhere, neofascist groups have adopted the label, presumably in an effort to gain wider appeal. Lee gives several examples, including a group of Russian ultranationalists-- backed by Boris Mironov, quoted as saying "If Russian nationalism is Fascist, then I'm a fascist,"-- announced the formation of "an Anti-Fascist Patriotic Center" in 1995.[57] Similarly, American extreme-right militias have included Jews and ethnic minorities, and "affected an antifascist stance by claiming that Hitler was a gun-control proponent.[58]

Such an antifascist posturing is clearly false, yet it has, as mentioned above, allowed

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Continuum or Innovation?" In *Fascism and Neofascism*, ed. Angelica Fenner and Eric D. Weitz, (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 219.

56 Kuljić
57 Lee, 390.
58 Lee, 390.

extremist groups to sneak through the outdated definitions of worrisome politics by a manipulation of their own image through terminology. This issue is poignantly stated by Kuljić "Can a nationalist be an antifascist at all? Hardly, if antifascism implies not only armed resistance to occupation forces, but also the fight against all narrow-minded ideologies that deny equality of human beings."[59]

While Yugoslavia's national communism can be criticized on these grounds, such criticisms may indicate the limitation of Yugoslav antifascism to a mere myth, rather than a comprehensive social program. It can be seen as the victor of the intra-Balkan civil war during WWII, wherein the partisans emerged victorious over the more traditional Chetnik and Ustasha nationalisms. The national antifascisms of the popular front era, as described by Hobsbawm do set the stage for national communism in Yugoslavia, yet remain vulnerable to the criticisms offered above by Kuljić.

Anti-antifascism

This curious platform is most evident in the former Yugoslavia, as the antifascist rhetoric in Yugoslavia's founding and legitimacy is most strong. From an ideological perspective, anti-antifascism is more vague even than antifascism, and much more troublesome in its implications. It is important to distinguish that anti-antifascism is not equivalent to pro-fascism, as the former remains a negatively defined, particular ideology. Importantly, as a relationship between ideologies, it is unlikely that participants in nationalist movements were aware of this component or acted consciously with the intent of creating an ideological anti-relationship. However, the practice of directing opposition not against communism or 'the state' as the embodiment of authority, and rather against the idea of

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59 Kuljić

antifascism does underline the similarities between antifascism and anti-antifascism, insofar as neither in practice oppose those ideological systems so much as the effects of these, namely war, occupation, then socialism or federalism (in the case of Yugoslavia) or division (in the case of Germany).

Furthermore, as anti-antifascism remains negatively defined, it would follow from the hypothesis made in chapter IV, that this formation would more readily gather support, rather than a similar platform which identifies itself positively as nationalist or neofascist. Anti-antifascism is not necessarily causal in the reemergence of radical nationalism. Rather, it is construct which can be applied to the events surrounding the collapse of antifascist states and the rebuilding of identity therein.

State revisionism in Serbia has sought to elevate the Chetniks to a position beside the partisans as heroic antifascists. Kuljić describes the profound shift:

> A decretory historical picture has been all of sudden replaced by an even more conspicuous exclusivity: denial of antifascism that implies renouncement of whatever had been rational, historically necessary, progressive, European and enlightening as totalitarian. Cynically, ex-communists - today's new anti-antifascists - are those who orchestrate this changed culture of remembrance. Ex-communists are those who advocate introduction of a Ravna Gora medal of honor and lay a wreath to defeated quislings in Bleighburg.[60]

Yet, there is some disagreement as to whether the current manifestations of ultranationalism and ethnic violence are of the same kind as that which plagued interwar Europe.

Neofascism

The historical similarities between the rise of neofascism after 1989 and the circumstances of fascism's emergence in interwar Europe may give postwar antifascism the connotation of a mere interlude between periods of fascism. After all, fascism has become

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60Kuljić: Ravna Gora: the 'birthplace' of the WWII Chetnik movement, Bleiburg: the location of partisan retaliation against surrendered collaborationists.

the baseline as a positive ideology, after which the reactionary antifascism had prevailed as a consequence of Soviet geopolitics and humanitarian revulsion toward fascism. The end of this problematic antifascist regime in Europe leaves a situation of nationalism unresolved despite years of formal condemnation.

The extreme forms of nationalism which had emerged after the breakup of communist Eastern Europe, and indeed in Western Europe, fit into the fascist-antifascist dichotomy much differently than prewar or wartime fascism. This difference lies primarily in the fact that these newer extreme-right or neofascist movements are in most cases small, fringe groups which do not dominate national politics or shape public or foreign policy. With this caveat, a number of factors position neofascism well within the fascist-antifascist dichotomy.

The continuity of symbols and individuals, as well as the mask of antifascism, in neofascism as stated above, are two identifiable factors in the hidden nature of neofascism. One particularly striking example, that of international neo-Nazi volunteers fighting alongside the radical Croatian Defense Association (HOS) during the 1990s, ties together the themes of nationalist revival, neofascism, and the reuse of symbols. Martin Lee describes these volunteers as "two hundred neo-Nazis from Germany... joined by right-wing extremists from France, Great Britain, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and the United States."[61] And while this number appear small, their Croatian counterparts, the HOS, numbered fifteen thousand.[62] This private militia, "credited with putting up a better fight that Croatia's official combat units," wore high collared black uniforms and black berets of the Ustasha style, their uniform buttons bearing the portrait of Ante Pavelić. This is just one of many examples past fascist symbols being revived during the 1990s in Yugoslavia.[63]

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61 Lee, 297.
62 Lee, 297.
63 For incarnations of Chetnik and Ustasha imagery, see Cathie Carmichael, E*thnic Cleansing in the Balkans : Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002)

Less perceptible are those neofascist groups who do not invoke the symbolism of past

fascist regimes. Martin Lee, convinced of the continuity between interwar fascism and

current manifestations, notes:

> Although there are definite parallels to the interwar years, today's neofascist
> movements have emerged under a unique set of circumstances. Ironically, their
> success hinged to a great extent on their ability to distance themselves from the
> historical image of fascism. While neo-Nazi nostalgics fixated on the swastika,
> the more astute theoreticians of the European New Right understood that efforts to
> justify Hitler and the fascist dictatorships of the past were futile and ill-
> conceived.[64]

And while anti-Semitism remains in some neofascist groups, new policies include the

protection of 'European cultural identity' and economic prosperity through anti-immigrant

measures.

Given the different shape of neofascism and radical rightism, antifascist opposition, if

it exists at all anymore, must take a different form. While territorial expansionism and

chauvinistic militarism have waned as objectives, ethic or racial scapegoating remains a

feature of radical rightist groups, most notably in the form of an anti-immigrant or anti-

immigration sentiment. Paxton raises the issue of 'functional equivalence', thereby bringing

neofascism and extreme right-wing movements back into the fascist-antifascist dichotomy.

Speaking of Milosevic, he notes "While pinning the epithet *fascism* upon the odious

Milosevic adds nothing to an explanation of how his rule was established and maintained, it

seemed appropriate to recognize a functional equivalent when it appears."[65] The rule of

Milosevic, and his Croatian counterpart Tudjman, as well as Haider are among the best

examples of radical nationalism in state control. Paxton indicates their incompatibility with

the Fascist states of pre-WWII, as theirs were not militant parties who later entered into

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For fascist symbols in football hooliganism, see Ivan Ćolović, "Football, Hooligans, and War
  in Ex-Yugoslavia." In *Fascism and Neofascism*, ed. Angelica Fenner and Eric D. Weitz,
  (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 19-42
64 Lee, 389.
65 Paxton, 190.

coalition with majority parties in order to gain control, nor did their parties prevent free elections after their ascendancy. Functionally equivalent fascism simply requires a divorce from the totalitarianism associated with the fascism of Mussolini and Hitler.

While a vibrant democratic culture has presumably shown itself to be a satisfactory limiter of radical politics, the few examples of right-wing electoral success may suggest that a new form of supranational antifascism is needed.

Reluctance to identify extreme right groups as fascist is justified, based on past theoretical definitions. Where 'fascism' does not exist, antifascism too would be absent. This situation contains a hidden benefit, in that the past manifestations of antifascism, in the form of oppressive antifascist states such as East Germany, would create a negative perception of antifascism. As it has been described in the above section, anti-antifascism, besides its stated cognates anti-communism and anti-Yugoslavism, has condemned the past antifascism of Yugoslavia. Even a rephrasing of the need to oppose radical rightist politics and the dangerous existence of xenophobia and racism, may succeed in mobilizing a population disenchanted by the theme of antifascism due to its conflation with a despised political entity.

VII – Conclusion

Within the cold war dichotomy, antifascism is evident as a meta-narrative which is important in understanding, among other issues, state policy on issues such as nationalism, racism, and xenophobia. Most importantly, the long legacy of narrowly defined antifascism, either as a simple founding myth or a negatively defined opposition to imperialist capitalism, had become entrenched to the extent that reappraisals of fascism had not been undertaken. Therefore rightist movements which escaped these narrow definitions were ignored. Using antifascism as a framework in postwar identity formation has shown that this concept is largely incomparable with its prewar theoretical predecessors, as it was at best a negatively defined ideology, and more accurately, a myth, as described above.

One element emerges from the retrospective analysis of the fascist-antifascist relationship, namely that within this binary system, the center ground of even appraisal of the fascist past has been obfuscated by the political maneuvering of each side against the other. That state antifascism coalesced in response not to the roots of extreme nationalism and chauvinism, but to the historical event of wartime fascism, left them in a position wherein they were unable to adapt to new forms of rightism, whether explicitly fascist or not. The politicized past is especially evident between East and West Germany, whose appraisals of the war resulted in a politicized set of victims and heroes. Such politicization of what are essentially humanitarian issues, genocide, treatment of POWs, and state control, in the era of polarized politics, has evidently created obstacles in the forging of a unified German identity, as well as broader European awareness of the humanitarian consequences of the war. Both in public understanding and scholarship, the East German version of antifascism hindered the address of humanitarian issues by stifling democracy, as explained by Jarausch:

> Although antifascism was an admirable reaction to the disasters of the Third Reich, its SED instrumentalization kept it from fostering a democratic morality and an incisive scholarship. Only if generalized against every kind of repression and prejudice can the anti-Nazi imperative once again become an ethical basis of a free

civic culture. The loss of intellectual bearings in East Germany requires honest reflection about the contribution of scholarship to its deformation.[66]

The lasting value of antifascism as a program of action has been damaged by the negative reputation acquired by those outspoken antifascists, Yugoslavia and East Germany. However, a recognition of the continuation not only of 'functionally equivalent' movements in the extreme right, but the longevity of fascism and antifascism as value statements which have been divorced from both their conceptual or ideological meaning as well as their state-forms, demonstrates the need for continued sensitivity and decoding of these terms. Especially considering the mask of antifascism worn by nationalists, as described in the previous chapter, even plain language use of the term has become problematic, not to mention its ideological underpinnings.

Such plain language occurrences of these terms function as value judgments. For instance, fascism as it occurs in 'islamo-fascism', is used pejoratively. Bush, by positioning his administration against such fascists, attempted to reap the moral benefits of 'antifascism'. The fascist-antifascist dichotomy as it exists in the middle eastern theater, has even been invoked in discussions of Israel. While East German relations with Israel could be noted, journalists instead use the loaded-terms as judgments, as had journalist Melanie Phillips, who in March 2009 published an article entitled "The anti-anti-fascist" on British Labour politician Tony Benn's statements on Hamas, stating:

> So Benn endorses an organisation explicitly committed to the destruction of Israel and the killing of every Jew, and wants Israel boycotted altogether for seeking to defend itself against such an organisation by legal and proportionate means... So much for the supposed anti-fascist. Benn is not a national treasure. He is a wicked man.[67]

However, as it has been shown in the case of Yugoslavia's breakup, 'antifascism' has found itself on both sides of the moral coin. No longer can even plain language usage convey

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66 Jarausch, 96.
67 Melanie Phillips, "The Anti-Anti-Fascist,"
  http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/3421586/theantiantifascist.thtml

an single meaning. Add to this the ideological complexities of the fascist-antifascist relationship, and the evolution of this dichotomy, especially after the Cold War, and it seems to have lost all intelligible meaning. The present work has created the pathways for understanding this relationship, and indicated its problems and failures. As an intersection between ideology and public sentiment, the fascist-antifascist dichotomy is central to post WWII historiography.

The manipulation of meaning of these value laden terms is only one dangerous result of a state monopoly on historical representation. Kuljić offers a final warning, "Incumbent authorities, as a rule, filter the past that is useful from the angle of hegemonic ideologies. The one who monopolizes interpretation of the past controls the present and [imposes]the image of the future."[68]

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68 Kuljić

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