

**21st Century Partitioning**  
**Applying Ethnic Partition Theory to Kosovo and the Preševo Valley**

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## Abstract

Recently, talks of partitioning the Balkans have reentered public discourse. This time it doesn't come from foreign powers, but from the respective leaders of Serbia and Kosovo. For this thesis, I applied Kaufmann's ethnic partition theory to the state of Kosovo and the Preševo Valley in an effort to determine how feasible a "land-swap" would be in reducing ethnic tension in the region and normalizing relations between the two states. My findings indicated that ethnic partition would not achieve these goals, as rates of ethnic violence are lower in mixed municipalities, and the "security dilemma" is not determining inter-ethnic relations as Kaufmann predicts. To explain this, I applied Jenne's nested security theory, which posits ethnic conflict within a state is not contingent on insecurity and fear, but rather based on the regional and global political environment. Applying this theory, I find that it is the elite policymakers in Belgrade and Pristina who have the most influence over tensions in Kosovo and the Preševo Valley. Using a short history section, I confirm this finding through the precedent of previous ethnic partitions in the Balkans. Based on my conclusion, I recommend the land-swap be disregarded as a means to normalize relations, and that the European Union discourage the idea while continuing the condition European integration on the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Conflict, Kosovo, Serbia, Nested Security, Land-swap, Population Exchange, Balkans

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# Table of Contents

## Contents

21st Century Partitioning .....	i
Abstract .....	i
Acknowledgement .....	ii
Table of Contents .....	iii
List Figures .....	v
Introduction .....	1
1 Chapter 1 .....	4
1.1 Research Question .....	4
1.2 Background/Lit Review .....	5
1.2.1 Crisis in Northern Kosovo .....	8
2 Chapter 2 .....	9
2.1 Ethnic vs. Ideological Conflicts .....	10
2.2 Ethnic Security Dilemma .....	13
2.3 Ethnic Partition Theory .....	17
2.4 Top Down Approach .....	19
3 Chapter 3 .....	21
3.1 Demographics .....	21
3.2 Kaufmanns Three Main Points .....	26

3.2.1	There will be more conflict in mixed areas .....	26
3.2.2	Stranded enclaves encourage kin-states to intervene.....	32
3.2.3	Ethnic Groups will Strike First out of Fear caused by the security Dilemma .....	38
3.3	Reflection .....	43
3.4	An Alternative Take: The Top-Down Approach .....	43
3.4.1	Nested Security in Kosovo.....	44
4	Chapter 4: The Failed History of Ethnic Partition .....	48
4.1.1	Bulgaria and Greece.....	48
4.1.2	Greece and Turkey .....	51
	Conclusion .....	54
	Bibliography .....	57

## List Figures

Figure 1 Ethnic Populations per Municipality in Kosovo .....	25
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## Introduction

The status of Kosovo remains one of the most contentious frozen conflicts in Europe, having been heavily debated by the international community since the end of hostilities in 1999 and reemerging into public discourse with intermittent regularity. Since declaring independence in 2008, roughly 110 states have recognized Kosovo as an independent state, though confused reports from Serbia claim 10 states have withdrawn recognition.<sup>1</sup> The crux of Kosovo's legitimacy issue is the staunch refusal of Serbia to recognize the nation. Officially, Belgrade maintains that Kosovo is an integral part of the Serbian state and has generally refused to budge on the matter, even going so far as to maintain a parallel state institution structure in the predominantly Serbian enclaves in the north and south of the territory.<sup>2</sup>

Despite a hardline narrative, policymakers in Belgrade have shown some willingness to normalize relations with Kosovo in recent years. In 2013, in the wake of violence in northern Kosovo, the Brussels Agreement was agreed to by both Serbia and Kosovo.<sup>3</sup> Mediated by the European Union and intended to further the peace process, the agreement was somewhat successful in delineating the lines of authority for Pristina, Belgrade, and the Serbian minorities in Kosovo. Despite this, tensions flared again in 2018. Pristina blames its trouble gaining recognition

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<sup>1</sup> Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dačić has been lobbying hard for countries to withdraw their recognition of Kosovo. He continues to report 10 nations have done so, but such news has been denied by Pristina. Tanjug Beta, "Confirmed: 10th country revokes recognition of Kosovo," *B92 News*, November 7, 2018, [https://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2018&mm=11&dd=07&nav\\_id=105462](https://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2018&mm=11&dd=07&nav_id=105462); Elis Gjevori, "Is the EU and Serbia Isolating Kosovo on the International Stage?" *TRTWorld*, November 23, 2018, <https://www.trtworld.com/europe/is-the-eu-and-serbia-isolating-kosovo-on-the-international-stage-21905>.

<sup>2</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free: Remaining Challenges* (ICG Europe Report N 218, September 10, 2012), i. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/kosovo/setting-kosovo-free-remaining-challenges>.

<sup>3</sup> Aleksandar Vasovic and Justyna Pawlak, EU Brokers Historic Kosovo Deal, Door Opens to Serbia Accession," *Reuters*, April 19, 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-serbia-kosovo-eu/eu-brokers-historic-kosovo-deal-door-opens-to-serbia-accession-idUSBRE93I0IB20130419>.

on diplomatic efforts by Belgrade to delegitimize the fledgling state.<sup>4</sup> This, coupled with Kosovo's failed bid to join Interpol, have led to what Kosovo regards as retaliatory measures. Massive tariffs have been leveled against Serbian imports, reducing the capacity for economic cooperation and dealing harm to the economies of both states.<sup>5</sup>

As tensions continue, an old solution to an ongoing dilemma has emerged. President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and President of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi have openly commented on the potential for a territorial exchange in order to increase the ethnic homogeneity of both states.<sup>6</sup> The idea is that reducing the minority population in both states will reduce ethnic tensions between the groups and thus assist in normalizing relations. This would be achieved by exchanging the Serb dominated northern Kosovo for the Albanian majority Preševo Valley; both states would receive the territory that matches their majority ethnic group. Though the plan thus far is simply talk, EU Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini has defended the feasibility of such a solution and other powerful states have promised to allow such a scheme if it is conducted to the satisfaction of both parties.<sup>7</sup> The plan is far from unanimously accepted and has drawn the attention of many detractors, most notably Germany, but the positive reception internationally has been enough to garner some legitimacy to the proposal.<sup>8</sup>

Suddenly, it seems partitions and population exchanges are back on the table as legitimate conflict solutions, strategies not employed since the end of WWII and heavily criticized in the

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<sup>4</sup> Filip Rudic and Die Morina, "Kosovo Accuses Serbia of Bribing Countries with Arms," *Balkan Insight*, July 23, 2018, <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/07/23/kosovo-says-serbia-bribing-countries-with-arms-07-23-2018/>.

<sup>5</sup> RFE/RL's Balkan Service, "U.S. Envoy Urges Kosovo to Lift 100 Percent Tariff on Serbian Goods," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, March 10, 2019, <https://www.rferl.org/a/us-envoy-hale-urges-kosovo-lift-tariffs-serbia/29812929.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Jacopo Barigazzi, "Mogherini Defends Kosovo Border Change Talks," *Politico*, April 19, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/federica-mogherini-kosovo-serbia-defends-border-change-talks/>.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*



contemporary international system. Such solutions have been labeled by their critics and advocates as inhumane, risky, and morally questionable. The United Nations and the international norms it presides over dictate that the status quo be maintained wherever possible, and in times of conflict the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) follows a policy of, “bringing safety to people, not people to safety.”<sup>9</sup> Despite these misgivings, scholarly work does exist that supports partition theory, and historical precedent is often used to justify it as a viable solution to reduce ethnic conflict and encourage peace.

The works of Chaim Kaufmann on ethnic population transfers and partition, built on Barry Posen’s application of the security dilemma to ethnic conflict, are particularly relevant to these events in the Balkans. When the Yugoslav Wars began in the early 90’s, Posen was the first to employ the security dilemma as a method of explaining and understanding the rise of ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia in 1993.<sup>10</sup> A few years later in 1996, Kaufmann was the first significant intellectual advocate for the application of partition and population exchange theories as a means to resolve Posen’s security dilemma and bring peace to the region.<sup>11</sup> Contrary to Kaufmann, some have attempted to explain the causes of ethnic violence through an instrumentalist elite-based account. Such theories, like those proposed by Erin Jenne’s nested security theory or Stuart Kaufman’s elite-led approach, would attribute ethnic tensions to outside actors and opportunistic elites rather than the results of a security dilemma faced by the masses.<sup>12</sup> These theories, if

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<sup>9</sup> Chaim D. Kaufmann, “When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century,” *International Security* 23, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 123.

<sup>10</sup> Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Chaim D. Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” *International Security* 20, no. 4 (Spring 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Erin K. Jenne, *Nested Security, Lessons in Conflict Management from the League of Nations and the European Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

applicable to Kosovo, would not be compatible with partition theory, thus dooming the project to failure even if executed perfectly according to ethnic partition theory.

While Kaufmann's theory was not employed in the final resolution of the Yugoslav wars, it is worth returning to in the context of the incomplete peace in Kosovo. Is the continued conflict between Kosovo and Serbia, and within Kosovo itself, a result of incomplete partition? Or does an elite-led approach serve better for explaining why ethnic tensions emerge and how we can combat them? By determining what theory best explains the continued tensions between Kosovo and Serbia, we can determine how feasible a land swap may be for normalizing relations and bringing peace to the two countries.

# **1 Chapter 1**

## **1.1 Research Question**

The question this paper will attempt to answer is whether ethnic partition and population exchange are appropriate solutions to ethnic conflict. To test this theory, the basic principles of ethnic partition theory will be applied to Kosovo and the Preševo Valley as a case study. If the situation in Kosovo and the Preševo Valley does not match the prediction of ethnic partition theory, then an institutional elite-led approach will be applied instead. Based upon which theory proves more viable for explaining the situation in Kosovo, a policy suggestion will be made that either supports or denies the effectiveness of the proposed land-swap. The arguments made in this paper will be supported by a look at the historical precedent of land-swaps and population exchanges in the region. This will be done to determine the historic effectiveness of the policy in order to determine if ethnic partition theory has successfully maintained peace in past instances of its application.

## 1.2 Background/Lit Review

When war overshadowed Yugoslavia in the early 1990's, it looked like Kosovo would be the flashpoint. In 1989 President of Serbia Slobodan Milošević had given his infamous Gazimestan speech, the zenith of an all-day event marking the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo.<sup>13</sup> The speech was held in Kosovo Polje, the field where in 1389 the Serbian army had suffered a massive defeat at the hands of the Ottomans, an event that resulted in the eventual annexation of the Serbian people into Ottoman administration. The event and day associated with it are of immense value to the Serbian people, constituting a founding myth of the nation-state.<sup>14</sup> Capitalizing on this history, Milošević employed a nationalistic speech referencing the potential for armed struggle in Serbia's immediate future as a developing nation-state.<sup>15</sup> The speech came at a point in-time when tensions between Kosovo's Albanian and Serbian populations were at a boiling point. Kosovo had existed as a semi-autonomous territory within the Serbian Republic of the Yugoslav State but had recently lost its autonomy to a constitutional change.<sup>16</sup> Though the region appeared on the brink in 1989, it reached a period of relative calm under the philosophy of passive resistance practiced by its first president Ibrahim Rugova. As the country descended into war Kosovo remained, for a time, peaceful.

As the wars in Bosnia and Croatia reached their climax in 1995 and finally concluded with the Dayton Accords, the situation in Kosovo began to destabilize. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began to grow in strength out of a dissatisfaction with the slow progress of Rugova's non-

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<sup>13</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politic of Ethnic War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001): 181.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 171.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 181.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 181.

violent movement and the failure to include Kosovo in the Dayton peace process.<sup>17</sup> The group was a proponent of Albanian nationalism, sought an independent Kosovo through violent revolution, and included elements that pushed for the creation of a Greater Albania through union of Kosovo, Albania, and territories in Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece.<sup>18</sup> The group was likely responsible for several attacks on Serbian police and institutions through 1995, but first claimed responsibility for attacks on police stations in 1996.<sup>19</sup> The KLA justified their violent actions as a self-defense response to what they described as an ethnic cleansing campaign against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

The situation in Kosovo deteriorated in the late 90's, turning into a low-intensity conflict between the KLA and Yugoslav (now a rump state consisting of Serbia and Montenegro only) security forces. Late 1997 marked the transition from insurgency to war as the KLA increased the intensity of its attacks and security forces responded with violent crackdowns.<sup>20</sup> The conflict was characterized by a series of war crimes and massacres committed by combatants from both sides. Human Rights Watch provides a brief, non-exhaustive outline of major war crimes committed in Kosovo from 1998-1999.<sup>21</sup> Of the seven massacres documented in 1998, 4 were estimated to have been committed by Serbian special police and 3 by the KLA. In 1999, all five documented massacres of Albanian civilians are attributed to Serbian Special Police by Human Rights Watch.<sup>22</sup> The campaign against the KLA resulted in approximately 260,000 internally displaced Kosovar

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<sup>17</sup> Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned* (New York: Oxford University Press, 200), 58-60.

<sup>18</sup> Jelle Janssens, *State-Building in Kosovo: A Plural Policing Perspective* (Antwerpen, Belgium: Maklu Publishers, 2015), 53.

<sup>19</sup> Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report*, 51

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 52.

<sup>21</sup> "Kosovo War Crimes Chronology," Human Rights Watch.

<https://www.hrw.org/legacy/campaigns/kosovo98/timeline.shtml>

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

civilians, 200,000 outside of Kosovo, the destruction of settlements and communities, arbitrary arrests, executions, and eventually accusations of ethnic cleansing.<sup>23</sup> The Račak massacre of 45 Albanian civilians by Serbian security forces proved to be a step too far for Western Observers of the conflict.<sup>24</sup> After the failure of the Rambouillet Conference from January through March of 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) took military steps to end the conflict and respond to what they interpreted as a systemic campaign of ethnic cleansing.<sup>25</sup> This was done without UN Security Council approval, and its legality under international law continues to be debated to this this day.<sup>26</sup> The NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia lasted for 78 days and was characterized as a humanitarian intervention by member states. It concluded with the Kumanovo Agreement and UN Resolution 1244. Serbia was required to withdraw its security forces from Kosovo while the KLA was directed to disarm. Kosovo came under United Nations temporary administration, and an international peacekeeping force (Kosovo Force – KFOR) took over security operations in the territory.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the resolution of the conflict, the status of Kosovo was far from determined. Under Resolution 1244, Kosovo officially remained a province of Serbia though now under UN administration. In 2008, the Assembly of Kosovo declared independence from Serbia, a move met with official recognition from the US, Germany, and several other major States.<sup>28</sup> Since independence, Kosovo has undergone several periods of unrest as its significant Serbian minority continue to feel oppressed, under-represented, and cut-off from the support of their ethnic

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<sup>23</sup> Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report*, 75.

<sup>24</sup> Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report*, 81.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 82-83.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 163.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 99-101.

<sup>28</sup> Dan Bilefsky, "Kosovo Declares Independence from Serbia," *The New York Times*, February 18, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/18/world/europe/18kosovo.html>.

homeland.<sup>29</sup> Aside from violent and often deadly confrontations between Albanian and Serbian ethnic groups, the governments of Serbia and Kosovo face the added pressure of European integration. The European Union has made it clear to both countries that their entrance into the Union is contingent on their normalization of relations.<sup>30</sup>

### 1.2.1 Crisis in Northern Kosovo

As it stands, Kosovo is 92.9% Albanian and 1.5% Serbian according to a 2011 census conducted by the Kosovo government, but heavily underrepresents Serbian population numbers due to the exclusion of the Serbian dominated north of the country and the boycott of the census by Serb minorities in the south of the country.<sup>31</sup> The Serbian population is likely something akin to 5% according to OSCE reports in 2017.<sup>32</sup> The Serbian minority is heavily concentrated to the north of the River Ibar, a region in the North of Kosovo near the city of Mitrovica that runs along the Serbian border. The region was rocked by violence in 2011 when Kosovo police attempted to enter the enclave and re-exert control under central administration. The move was condemned by both the EU and KFOR and eventually resulted in the 2013 Brussels Agreement which agreed for Kosovo and Serbia to work towards normalizing relations.

Despite the Brussels Agreement, relations between Kosovo and Serbia continue to be in a frequent deadlock and often marked with hostility. In response to Serbian efforts to block states from recognizing Kosovo and to prevent the state from joining INTERPOL, the government in Pristina imposed 100% tariffs on Serbian goods.<sup>33</sup> In an effort to break the deadlock and resolve

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<sup>29</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*.

<sup>30</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 153.

<sup>31</sup> “Kosovo: Minorities and Indigenous Peoples,” Minority Rights Group International, <https://minorityrights.org/country/kosovo/>

<sup>32</sup> Data gathered and synthesized from: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Municipal Profiles 2018* (Mission in Kosovo, 2018), <https://www.osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/municipal-profiles>.

<sup>33</sup> RFE/RL’s Balkan Service, “U.S. Envoy Urges Kosovo to Lift 100 Percent Tariff on Serbian Goods.”

tensions between Serbian and Albanian ethnic groups, President of Kosovo Hashim Thaci and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic have publicly discussed the potential for a land swap to reduce tensions and cement the ethnic homogeneity of both countries. In the deal, Serbia would receive the Serb-majority region around Mitrovica while ceding the Albanian majority Preševo Valley.<sup>34</sup>

## 2 Chapter 2

Ethnic partition and population exchange are methods that have fallen out of favor in the contemporary international system, having last been employed extensively in the inter-war period by the League of Nations and then again in the wake of WWII to resettle the German diaspora into the new borders of East and West Germany.<sup>35</sup> Since then, international law and norms have come to reject partition theory as immoral, inhumane, and counterproductive. The United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees pursues a policy of bringing “safety to people, not people to safety” and international law favors the maintenance of existing borders over the creation of new ones.<sup>36</sup> Despite this consensus, there are still scholars who question the validity of these norms and are willing to entertain the prospect of ethnic partition as a viable solution to ethnic conflict.

This paper will look at essential arguments of ethnic partition theory as proposed by Chaim Kaufmann in his 1996 article *Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil War* and later expanded on in his 1998 article *When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers in the Twentieth Century*. As the genesis of Kaufmann’s work, Berry Posen’s *The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict* will also be considered. In his works, Kaufmann outlines what makes an ethnic war

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<sup>34</sup>Guy Delauney, “Kosovo-Serbia Talks: Why Land Swap Could Bridge Divide,” *BBC News*, September 6, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45423835>

<sup>35</sup> Erin K. Jenne, “Ethnic Partition Under the League of Nations: The Cases of Population Exchanges in the Interwar Balkans,” in *Rethinking Violence*, ed. Erica Chenoweth and Adria Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2010), 121-122.

<sup>36</sup> Chaim D. Kaufmann, “When All Else Fails,” 123.

different from ideological wars within states and why these conflicts can only be solved through ethnic partition and population exchange. This paper will analyze the key points made by Kaufmann in his argument for partition theory and will apply them to situation in contemporary Kosovo to determine if the logic of his theory applies. If it does not, this paper will then apply a top-down, elite-led approach to determine if other factors are instead at play stoking ethnic tensions in Kosovo.

## 2.1 Ethnic vs. Ideological Conflicts

The argument outlined in *Possible and Impossible Solution to Ethnic Civil War* is that ethnic civil wars are driven by the security dilemma operating within the state due to a failure of the government to provide adequate security for either the majority ethnic group, minority ethnic group, or both. Kaufmann asserts that once ethnic tensions have reach a certain level of intensity, the process cannot be reversed, and the preservation of a multi-ethnic state becomes impossible.<sup>37</sup>

Kaufmann draws a strict distinction between ethnic conflicts and ideological civil wars. Ideological wars are contests between members of the same community to determine how the community should be governed.<sup>38</sup> In these types of civil wars, the combatants share a common understanding about the nature of the state they are contesting. They agree on the existence of the state as a political unit within previously delineated borders, they share a general view on who qualifies for community membership in the state, and they share the belief that a single state under a unitary government must result from the conflict. Individual loyalties are flexible in ideological conflicts, so contesting groups are able to vie for the loyalty of the state's whole population, thus drawing from the same labor pool for the purpose of mobilization. As Kaufmann puts it, "winning

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<sup>37</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions," 137.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 138.



the ‘hearts and minds’ of the population is both possible and necessary for victory.<sup>39</sup> The dynamics for victory in an ideologic conflict are centered on garnering support and maintaining access to a larger contingent of the population than one’s opponent. This means military suppression is not enough for victory; political, economic, and social reforms to address local grievances such as poverty, equality, corruption, and physical security are necessary to achieve victory through popular support.<sup>40</sup> After victory, the winning side is able to assimilate the whole population of the state without the need for expulsion or mass killings.

Ethnic civil wars are quite different in their nature and prospects for resolution. Ethnic identities are fixed and cannot be altered or changed. While it can be argued that ethnic identities are more malleable than a primordialism theorist would have it, Kaufmann makes the point that divisive rhetoric and the horrors of war harden ethnic identities to the point that they become inflexible.<sup>41</sup> Even individuals who may not have identified with their ethnic origins soon become permanently labelled by both their ethnic kin and ethnic opposition as the line between the groups hardens. Extremists in ethnic communities are likely to sanction individuals who do not support the cause, and conciliation may be decried as dangerous to group security or even traitorous.<sup>42</sup> Identity may also be imposed by the opposing group, who care little for self-identity. The fear of genocide can also act as the ultimate eliminator of individual choice. Threats of genocide and instances of actual massacres are virtually certain to convince entire ethnic groups that armed defense is the only option.<sup>43</sup> This ensures that ethnic group membership, regardless of theoretical

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 139.

<sup>40</sup> Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions,” 139.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 137.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 143

**1   <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 144.**

conceptualization, becomes an impermeable category that exists regardless of how members might choose the self-identify.

Because ethnic groups are both “rigid and transparent” the available population for mobilization is also rigid, as both groups are limited to recruiting from their respective communities. Opposed to civil wars driven by ideology, ethnic civil wars have no competition for individual loyalties.<sup>44</sup> Group mobilization is limited to ethnic kin within the territories it controls. The result is that ethnic wars become primarily military struggles for physical control over territory. There are few appeals for defection from opposing ethnic groups because support rarely crosses ethnic lines.<sup>45</sup> These limitations on recruitment incentivize the seizure of territory containing co-ethnics, while also incentivizing the removal of opposing ethnic groups through expulsion or massacre. While in ideologically driven warfare combatants may avoid conflict in civilian areas due to the risk of losing popular support or delay battle in order to engage at a more advantageous time, belligerents in ethnic wars are pressured to trivialize these concerns.<sup>46</sup> A delay in battle may give time for territory to be ethnically cleansed, severely reducing the value of the land and the potential mobilization pool. Combat in civilian areas also carries less risk for popular support within the group, as there is no need to vie for support outside of the ethnic group. Civilian casualties against an opposing ethnic group do not detract from support or the available mobilization pool, while instances of friendly fire are awkward but do little to erode support.<sup>47</sup> These factors push ethnic groups for offensive action. Attrition is key to winning, and every battle

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<sup>44</sup> Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions,” 140.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, 140.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 146-147.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 147.

for land is decisive for increasing the mobilization pool for one group while reducing it for another.<sup>48</sup>

## 2.2 Ethnic Security Dilemma

Once ethnic identities have been hardened, Kaufmann posits that the security dilemma dictates the logic of ethnic violence. In international relations, the security dilemma is a result of an international system where states are the highest authority. Since there is no overarching government structure to provide security for the world as a whole, the world exists in a perpetual state of anarchy where each nation is responsible for its own security and self-preservation. This means that when a state takes measures to defend itself, other states may react in a way that reduces the security of the initial state.<sup>49</sup> According to Hertz, this creates a situation where nations are inclined towards “self-help” wherein they take extensive action to ensure their own survival.<sup>50</sup> The security dilemma is defined by Booth and Wheeler as consisting of two distinct dilemmas. The first is a “dilemma of interpretation;” this is the choice of how a state will choose to understand the military development of a rival state. In an anarchic system, states are pushed to build up their military for security reasons, but this buildup can be interpreted as being for either offensive or defensive purposes.<sup>51</sup> Since military weaponry like tanks can be used for either, a state faces the dilemma of interpreting the intentions of a rival; are they for greater defensive capabilities or greater offensive capabilities?<sup>52</sup> The second is a “dilemma of response.” Once a state has decided on an interpretation of a rival, it must decide how it will react. A state can choose to signal its

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 147.

<sup>49</sup> Posen, “The Security Dilemma,” 27-28.

<sup>50</sup> John H. Herz, “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (January 1950), 57-58.

<sup>51</sup> Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics*, (Houndmills, Basingstone, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 4.

<sup>52</sup> Paul Roe, “The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a ‘Tragedy’?” *Journal of Peace and Research* 36, no. 2 (March 1999), 184.

intent to respond in-kind to aggressive actions, or it can choose to signal reassurance in an attempt to calm tensions.<sup>53</sup> When states resolve their dilemma by engaging in an arms races that reinforces mutual insecurity, a security paradox develops as each state continues to enhance its military buildup as a response to the other.<sup>54</sup>

The stakes of interstate relations are high. A choice of actions can mean the difference between survival and subjection, which leads states to assume mistrust as the most prudent way to view rival state's actions.<sup>55</sup> While Booth and Wheeler argue the security dilemma can result in positive outcomes, such as the detente between the Reagan administration and Mikhail Gorbachev, they acknowledge it is often a choice between two negative outcomes.<sup>56</sup> Most neorealist proponents interpret security dilemma as a structural problem. The "self-help" nature of the international system forces states to assume the worse-case scenario, so the dilemma will be resolved through the assumption of threat and the preparation for conflict.<sup>57</sup> This is what Herz called the great tragedy of the security dilemma, that the effort to prevent war through security maximization could inevitably lead to it.<sup>58</sup>

Kaufmann takes the logic of the security dilemma as it applies to the international system and employs it as a second point of explanation for ethnic conflict and their intractable nature. This is not without precedent, as Booth and Wheeler intentionally phrased their definition to apply to intrastate conflicts and Herz outlined an evolution of the security dilemma from its origins as a dilemma between individual, tribes, and increasingly larger communal groups before the advent

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<sup>53</sup> Booth and Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma*, 4-5.

<sup>54</sup> Booth and Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Booth and Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma*, 5.

<sup>56</sup> Booth and Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma*, 6-7.

<sup>57</sup> Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma," 185.

<sup>58</sup> Roe, "The Intrastate Security Dilemma," 183.

of states.<sup>59</sup> While normally the state would exist as an arbitrator to provide mutual security for ethnic groups within its territory, the destruction of a governments legitimacy or functional capacity to police can lead to a situation of anarchy. Much like states in the international system, ethnic groups may become the highest community units within their state and become responsible for their own security.

Under anarchy, each group's mobilization constitutes a threat to the security of others.<sup>60</sup> Kaufmann gives two reasons for this. The first is that the nationalist rhetoric used for mobilization often uses language referencing offensive intent and, even without specific calls for aggression, is easily interpreted as antagonistic. Nationalist slogans and aggressive discourse can lead other groups to view the group identity itself as a threat to their safety.<sup>61</sup> The second is a principle of traditional security dilemma theory. As ethnic groups begin to mobilize military capacity, weapons and soldiers acquired for defense are indistinguishable from those used for offense.<sup>62</sup> Both of these factors result in the dilemma of interpretation, where ethnic groups must determine the intention behind another ethnic group's mobilization. Further complicating this question is the fact that offense has an advantage over defense in ethnic conflicts where groups are intermingled. The group that goes on the offensive first has a higher chance to consolidate its territory into defensible enclaves.<sup>63</sup> The dilemma of response is thus complicated, because hesitance to mobilize or attack pre-emptively may result in ethnic expulsion and less defensible territorial positioning.

The security dilemma is further modified by the levels of ethnic intermixing. Kaufmann posits that the more mixed opposing ethnic groups are in their geographic distribution, the stronger

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<sup>59</sup> Herz, "Idealist Internationalism," 57-58.

<sup>60</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions," 147.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 147.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 147.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

the security dilemma is, while the more separate the groups are the weaker the security dilemma will be.<sup>64</sup> While in interstate wars the initial frontline is relatively fixed, being in-line with existing borders, this is not the case in ethnic civil wars. When communities are heavily intermixed, there is no initial frontline meaning both sides are extremely vulnerable to attack with few defensive options. The situations can be further inflamed when non-military forces, such as militias and gangs begin raiding settlements.<sup>65</sup> Mutual insecurity incentivizes first strikes. Expelling or killing the rival ethnic group will allow for the creation of homogenous territories which are more defensible against military and paramilitary attacks.<sup>66</sup> Both sides realize that offense is the best form of defense in these situations, which pushes both sides to assume the worst and mutually enforces the escalation of tensions.

Ethnic enclaves are another factor that can affect the security dilemma and strategies of ethnic conflict. Well-defined ethnic enclaves can exist as islands surrounded by rival ethnic communities. These enclaves, while more defensible than intermixed communities, represent a security threat for both groups.<sup>67</sup> For the ethnic group they are stranded amongst, enclaves represent possible bases for fifth columnists or guerilla action. This increases the incentive for the enclave to be eliminated as quickly as possible to deny the ethnic group the ability to attack from behind the front-lines. In turn, the threat of expulsion and death incentivizes ethnic groups to launch attacks in support of their enclaves as quickly as possible, so as to gain access to the population for mobilization and to prevent ethnic cleansing.<sup>68</sup> Enclaves thus increase the threat of

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 149.

<sup>65</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions," 148.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

conflict as both ethnic groups have strong pressures to intervene militarily for either their salvation or destruction.

To build on the points made by Kaufmann, Posen argues that ethnic enclaves may warrant the intervention of powerful kin-states to intervene on their behalf.<sup>69</sup> The logic of Kaufmann and Posen's ethnic security dilemma argues that kin-states intervene with the express intention of saving members of their own ethnic group, even when that intervention may result in a war between, "the homeland state and the minorities' host government."<sup>70</sup> This logic assumes that kin-states are primarily interested in the security of their ethnic community, rather the state itself. Posen further suggests that a "window of opportunity" may present itself prior to conflict. For instance, an enclave may be indefensible in the long-term but detect immediate weakness in the surrounding ethnic group, thus pressuring the enclave or supporting kin-states to launch offensive actions before the balance of power shifts.<sup>71</sup>

### **2.3 Ethnic Partition Theory**

So, what can be done to resolve the security dilemma and resolve the conflict? According to Kaufmann, once enough blood has been shed ethnic identity will have irreversibly hardened, making ethnic cooperation on a large scale impossible.<sup>72</sup> Once the security dilemma has occurred, a multi-ethnic state becomes an impossible solution. Instead, it is necessary to resolve the dilemma of insecurity by providing defensible, ethnically homogenous regions for each side to reside in.<sup>73</sup> This means that population exchanges and border adjustments are necessary to ensure there is as little mixing of ethnic groups as possible, since the greater the mixing the greater the security

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<sup>69</sup> Posen, "The Security Dilemma," 32.

<sup>70</sup> Jenne, "Ethnic Partition" in *Rethinking Violence*, 123.

<sup>71</sup> Posen, "The Security Dilemma," 33.

<sup>72</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions," 137.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 150.

dilemma. Once ethnic separation has been achieved, and a balance of defensibility has been reached, the incentives for offensive actions dissipate. Peace is not perpetually guaranteed by ethnic separation, but it permanently alters the prospects for war.<sup>74</sup> There are no cleansing or rescue imperatives since there are no significant ethnic members outside of their allotted territory, so there is not pressuring to act offensively to prevent or engage in ethnic cleansing. Any offensive will mirror conventional warfare, in that its aims and objectives of victory will be similar to that of interstate wars.<sup>75</sup> While war is possible, it will be of a different kind.

Given the above explanation, the foundational claims of ethnic partition theory can be summarized in the following points:

1. Nationalist slogans and security mobilization can be used defensively and offensively, so there is strong incentive for ethnic groups to strike first out of fear.
2. There will be more conflict in mixed areas and around enclaves, since the situation of insecurity increases fear that the opposing group will strike first.
3. Stranded enclaves should encourage kin-states and ethnic groups to strike out to rescue them from majority discrimination, expulsion, or death.

It follows that all three of these factors should be present in Kosovo and in regions of southern Serbia with a high concentration of Albanian minorities. The success of the proposed land swap is contingent on the accuracy of ethnic partition theories logic. If these theories do not hold, then there is another which may prove more accurate in explaining the ethnic tensions in Serbia and Kosovo.

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<sup>74</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions," 150.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 150.



## 2.4 Top Down Approach

Ethnic partition theory employs a bottom-up approach to explain the origins of ethnic conflict. But in relying on the security dilemma and fear as the primary motivations for conflict, Kaufmann's theory assumes conflicts originate from the common masses on the ground. As the population of an ethnic group grows more fearful, their leaders and elite classes respond. Contrary to this logic is another, that ethnic tensions do not originate amongst the masses but are instead incited by elites and the actions by external powers within the local or global international environment. This is a top-down approach to ethnic conflict and may help to more accurately explain the ebb and flow of tensions throughout Kosovo and southern Serbia.

According to Stuart Kaufman (not to be confused with Chaim Kaufmann from before) elite-led violence is when, "extremist elites come to power when ethnic tensions are low, then turn the preconditions for mass hostility into active hostility."<sup>76</sup> These elites use their political power to provoke conflicts and enable the security dilemma but can also use their influence to calm tensions and reduce violence when it is politically convenient. Kaufman claims these elites can be motivated by ethno-nationalist zeal but may also desire the personal accumulation of power.<sup>77</sup> The elites of an ethnic kin-state can also be responsible for the stoking of tensions. By supporting local elites and supplying material/ideological support, states can act as foreign patrons to enable ethnic groups and increase tensions to the point of conflict.<sup>78</sup> The capacity and willingness of foreign states to intervene in ethnic conflicts is expanded on through the nested security theory presented by Jenne.

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<sup>76</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, "Spiraling Ethnic War: Elites, Masses and Moscow in Moldova's Civil War," *International Security* 21, no 2 (Fall 1996), 116.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 117.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 118.

Nested security argues that ethnic and ideological conflicts are rarely entirely internal, and that they are symptoms of larger regional and international struggles.<sup>79</sup> For instance, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of the early 90's was not just a conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijani's in Nagorno Karabakh but was a piece of a larger struggle between Armenia and Azerbaijan proper, which was in-turn an example of the larger regional struggle between Turkey and Russia.<sup>80</sup> As Both Armenia and Azerbaijan supported their ethnic kin in the disputed territory, Russia and Turkey supported their chosen client states. States encourage ethnic divisions when it is advantageous to their geopolitical goals but will quell violence when it becomes counterproductive. The security dilemma does not play a major role in facilitating or encouraging conflict in a top-down approach. Most ethnic conflicts are the result of, "externally backed separatist movements staking claims over a particular territory, while the host state attempts to cleanse the territory of alien groups to establish counterclaims of territorial sovereignty."<sup>81</sup> States will only launch "rescue operations" for stranded ethnic kin if it is conducive to geopolitical motives but will not engage in such behavior for its own sake.<sup>82</sup>

Top-down, elite led theories hold that the key to understanding ethnic tensions within single territories is not to analyze the region exclusively, but to contextualize them within the larger scope of regional rivalries. If correct, a top-down elite led theory will reflect the following activity on the ground:

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<sup>79</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 30-31.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 31.

<sup>81</sup> Jenne, "Ethnic Partition," in *Rethinking Violence*, 125.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, 125.

1. Ethnic tensions are the result of political maneuverings on the part of an ethnic group's elite to maintain or increase power but will reduce when contrary to the elite's geopolitical concern.
2. Kin-states and ethnic groups will not risk offensive action to rescue stranded kin unless it is in service of the elite's political objectives.
3. Nested security theory will show that regional and international activities in the region will have a significant effect on the level of ethnic tension.

If all three of these factors accurately describe the history of ethnic tension on Kosovo and southern Serbia, then a top-down approach will be the best manner to explain the viability of a land-swap as a solution to regional tensions.

### **3 Chapter 3**

This section will look at the key assumptions made by ethnic partition theory and apply them to the reality on the ground in Kosovo. By using official reports and gathered data, it can be determined if the situation in Kosovo matches the predictions made by Kaufmann's partition theory. Does Posen's ethnic security dilemma dictate ethnic relations, or is there peace to be found in areas where ethnic Serbs and Albanians live together?

#### **3.1 Demographics**

The key to understanding Kosovo through the lens of ethnic partition theory is to look at the demographic distribution of ethnic groups. By determining where the Serbian minority is distributed and in what concentration, we can make predictions about how the security dilemma should play out on the ground and where tensions should run highest. By comparing these

predictions to the reality of what has occurred in Serbian ethnic enclaves, a clear picture will be constructed of how feasible ethnic partition might be as a solution.

Demographics in Kosovo are somewhat difficult to determine with absolute certainty, so a caveat is necessary before proceeding. The 1991 Yugoslav census was boycotted by many ethnic Albanians, leading to its rejection by Kosovo Albanians as illegitimate. A similar situation arose during the most recent census in 2011. The Serbs of northern Kosovo boycotted Pristina's census almost entirely, while Serb and Roma populations in southern Kosovo participated in a partial boycott.<sup>83</sup> Due to this reality, demographic information must be understood to be incomplete or an approximation in some cases. Despite these shortcomings, the data does speak accurately to relevant trends and the overarching reality of ethnic distributions. While the population numbers are estimates, the data provided by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a logical approximation using information acquired from local representatives in northern Kosovo and UNHCR reports on IDP distribution and returns. For these reasons, the 2018 OSCE Municipal Profiles will be used as the primary source for demographic data in Kosovo, as it is the most exhaustive study on the population of Kosovo at a municipal level to date.<sup>84</sup>

The total population of Kosovo according to OSCE estimates in October 2018 is roughly 1,819,917 and consists of 1,623,839 Albanians, 95,962 Serbians, and 101,116 others who are primarily Roma, Bosniak, Kosovo Turks, assorted other ethnicities, and those who chose not to identify. The 1981 census placed the population at 1,584,000 with 77% of that Albanian, 13%

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<sup>83</sup> "Kosovo," The World Factbook, United States Central Intelligence, "[https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print\\_kv.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_kv.html)

<sup>84</sup> Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Municipal Profiles 2018* (Mission in Kosovo, 2018), <https://www.osce.org/mission-in-kosovo/municipal-profiles>.

Serbian, and 10% others.<sup>85</sup> The 1991 census showed population growth up to 1, 956, 000 with 82% Albanian, 10% Serbian, and 8% other, though this census is considered to be very questionable in its validity.<sup>86</sup> The OSCE figures points to a present population of roughly 89% Albanian, 5% Serbian, and 6% others. These statistics are best understood in the context of ethnic partition theory when examined at the municipal level.

Kosovo is divided into 38 municipalities. Of those municipalities, 27 are majority Albanian, 1 is majority Turkish, 9 are majority Serbian, and 3 exist with Serbs and Albanians in about equal numbers according to OSCE estimates.<sup>87</sup> The 10 municipalities with significant Serbian populations were agreed to be organized into the Community of Serb Municipalities as self-governing association under the 2013 Brussels Agreement, but the realization of such an organization has been deadlocked by sustained tensions in the region.<sup>88</sup> There is also a strong distinction between the 10 Serb majority municipalities. The four municipalities of Leposavić/Leposavić, Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North, Zubin Potok, and Zvečan/Zveçan are separated from Kosovo proper by the Ibar river, share a border with Serbia, and represent the majority of Kosovo's Serbian population.<sup>89</sup> At the time of the Kosovo war, 2/3 of Serbs living in the region were across the Ibar river, in communities scattered across southern Kosovo. The remaining 1/3 lived north of the Ibar river in Northern Kosovo. By 2012 the distribution of ethnic Serbs had reached roughly parity.<sup>90</sup> As of 2018, OSCE estimates show that roughly 73% of ethnic Serbia live in northern

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<sup>85</sup> United Nations Provisional Institute of Self-Government, *Kosovo and its Population*, (Ministry of Public Services, Statistical Office of Kosovo, 2003), 3.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>87</sup> Other ethnic groups were not separated for this study, but OSCE estimates support the presence of a Turkish majority municipality.

<sup>88</sup> Cristina Abellan Matamoros, "Will Pristina and Belgrade be able to Break the Impasse to Normalizing Relations?" *Euronews*, April 30, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/04/27/will-pristina-and-belgrade-be-able-to-break-the-impasse-to-normalising-relations>

<sup>89</sup> Municipal are labelled using Serbian and Albanian names according the OSCE precedent.

<sup>90</sup> International Crisis Group, *Remaining Challenges*, i.

Kosovo. The municipalities of Klokot/Kllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh, Ranilug/Ranillug, Štrpce/Shtërpca, and Gračanica/Graçanicë are located in southern Kosovo, are more sparsely populated, rural, and share no borders with the municipalities in the north.

The Preševo Valley is a geographic region comprising the Serbian municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac. The demographics of this region are again complicated by a boycott of the official census in 2011. The official population of Preševo is 2,294 Serbs and 416 Albanian with a total of 3,080 including others.<sup>91</sup> For Bujanovac, the official census shows 12,989 Serbs, 244 Albanians, and a total population of 18,067.<sup>92</sup> The census conducted in 2002 is likely the most accurate source available on the Albanian population of the region, showing 31,098 Albanian residents in Preševo and 23,681 in Bujanovac.<sup>93</sup> Assuming these figures have remained relatively stable, the present population of Preševo is roughly 92% Albanian and 7% Serbian while the population in Bujanovac is 57% Albanian and 31% Serbian.

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<sup>91</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, *2011 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Serbia*, by Prof. Dragan Vukmirović, PhD, Director (2011), 86. <http://www.stat.gov.rs/en-us/oblasti/popis/>

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, 86.

<sup>93</sup> Републички завод за статистику, *Попис становништва, станова и станова у 2002. години* (2002), 204, 196.

Municipality	Albanian Population	Serbian Population	Other Population	All Populations
FERIZAJ/UROŠEVAC	104152	32	4426	
GJILAN/GNJILANE	87,814	624	1740	
HANI I ELEZIT/ELEZ HAN	9357	0	46	
KAÇANIK/KAČANIK	33,362	1	46	
KAMENICË/KAMENICA	34,186	1,554	345	
KLOKOT/KLLOKOT**	1,362	1,177	17	
NOVO BRDO/NOVOBËRDË**	3,524	3,122	83	
PARTEŠ/PARTESH*	0	1,785	2	
RANILUG/RANILLUG*	164	3692	10	
ŠTRPCE/SHTËRPÇË**	3,757	3,148	44	
VITI/VITINA	46,669	113	205	
GLLOGOC/GLOGOVAC	58,445	2	84	
LEPOSAVIĆ/LEPOSAVIQ	270	18,000	362	
MITROVICA/MITROVICË NORTH	4,900	22,530	2030	
MITROVICË/MITROVICA SOUTH	69,497	14	2398	
PODUJEVË/PODUJEVO	87,523	12	964	
SKENDERAJ/SRBICA	50,685	50	123	
VUSHTRRI/VUÇITRN	68,840	384	646	
ZUBIN POTOK	1,300	13,900	0	
ZVEÇAN/ZVEÇAN	500	16,000	300	
DEÇAN/DEÇANE	39,402	3	614	
GJAKOVË/ ĐAKOVICA	87,672	17	6867	
ISTOG/ISTOK	36,154	194	2941	
JUNIK	6,069	0	15	
KLINË/KLINA	37,216	98	1182	
PEJË/PEÇ	87,975	332	8143	
FUSHË KOSOVË/KOSOVO POLJE	30,275	321	4231	
GRAČANICA/GRAÇANICË*	2,474	7,209	992	
LIPJAN/LIPLJAN	54,467	513	2625	
OBILIQ/OBILIĆ	19,854	276	1419	
PRISHTINË/PRIŠTINA	194,452	430	4015	
SHTIME/ŠTIMLJE	26,447	49	828	
DRAGASH/DRAGAŠ	20,287	7	13703	
MALISHEVË/MALIŠEVO	54,501	0	112	
MAMUŠA/MAMUSHË/MAMUŠA	327	0	5180	
PRIZREN	145,718	237	31826	
RAHOVEC/ORAHOVAC	55,166	134	908	
SUHAREKË/SUVA REKA	59,076	2	644	
Total Population	1,623,839	95962	100116	1,819,917
Total Population North Kosovo	6,970	70,430	2692	80,092

Figure 1 Ethnic Populations per Municipality in Kosovo. Based on OSCE Municipal Estimates, 2018 Report

## 3.2 Kaufmanns Three Main Points

### 3.2.1 There will be more conflict in mixed areas

Ethnic partition theory assumes ethnic tensions will increase in areas of greater ethnic intermixing due to Posen's assessment of the security dilemma in ethnic conflict. Given this assertion, evidence should show instances of ethnic tension and violence to be most prevalent in the municipalities that are either enclaves or ethnically mixed. In Kosovo, this means Klokot/Klllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, and, Štrpce/Shtërpca should suffer from the most ethnic tensions due to relatively equal number of Serbs and Albanians. Posen's ethnic security dilemma would predict that the difficulty in defending these territories would push residents to take an offensive posture out of fear. By looking at the above three municipalities, we can see if this prediction holds true. In particular, the instances of civil unrest in 2004 should provide insight into where violence and tensions were most localized at the municipal level.

With the end of NATO bombings in 1999 and the cessation of hostilities that same year, Kosovo was brought under United Nations temporary administration under UN Resolution 1244. Between the deployment of NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) peacekeeping operations and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Kosovo entered a period of relative stability as the international community took over security and management. This cooling-off period was brief. Through 2003 and into 2004 extremists continued to target the Kosovo Serb community ever few months, despite declining rates of inter-ethnic crimes overall.<sup>94</sup> UNMIK failed to take these scattered instances of violence seriously and continued the process of "normalizing security" by handing responsibilities to the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Force

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<sup>94</sup> International Crisis Group, *Collapse in Kosovo* (ICG Europe Report N 155, April 22, 2004), 10.



(KPF).<sup>95</sup> This process left KFOR and UNMIK unprepared for the March 2004 unrest in Kosovo, a situation described in an International Crisis Group (ICG) report as a near total “collapse” of international institutions and security in Kosovo. By the end of the two-day riots, nineteen people were dead, roughly 900 injured, around 30 churches and monasteries were destroyed, and roughly 4,500 people were displaced.<sup>96</sup>

While the 2004 unrest was predicated on a slow burn of sporadic ethnically motivated crimes, two instances would push tensions to the boiling point. The first was the shooting of a Kosovo Serb teenager on the evening of 15 March. He claimed to have been wounded by a drive-by shooter in the Serb village of Caglavica in Pristina municipality.<sup>97</sup> This instance led to clashes between Serbian and Albanian villages, as Serbs in Caglavica constructed roadblocks impeding access to Pristina city, and Albanian villagers attempted to break through them. In the town itself, a KPF car was set ablaze by a Serb crowd, and to KFOR soldiers had to fire warning shots to prevent an Albanian house from being attacked.<sup>98</sup> In the context of these events and on 16 March, Kosovo’s public television channel began airing a storing that accused Serbian youths of driving four Albanian teenagers into the Ibar river, resulting in the drowning of three (two bodies were recovered).<sup>99</sup>

The ensuing violence would extend over two days, from 17 March to 18 March. While riots were mostly concentrated in the city of Mitrovica and the town of Caglavica, news reports showed that protests and riots had sprung up across the territory. By examining the chronology of events as provided by ICG reporting in April 2004, a list of affected municipalities was

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, i.

<sup>97</sup> International Crisis Group, *Collapse in Kosovo*, 13.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, 13-14.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

collected.<sup>100</sup> In total, 16 municipalities were afflicted by anti-Serb riots and protests. Of those, 14 were overwhelmingly majority Albanian. One, Lipjan/Lipljan is as of 2018 overwhelmingly Albanian, but the exact demographics of the time are unknown. A UN Provisional Institutions of Self Government report from 2003 predicted the Serbian population may be as high as 9,713 based on census data from 1991 making it roughly 14% of the total municipal population; but this data fails to account for the significant demographic changes resulting from the Kosovo war and makes no mention of migration patterns, so the numbers are questionable at best.<sup>101</sup> The other outlying municipality is Novo Nrdë/Novobërdë given its relatively equal number of Serbian and Albanian residents. The events here were outliers as well however. No major protests or riots were reported, though an explosive was thrown at the local municipals building and at the home of the Serbian municipal president, both in the town of Bostane.<sup>102</sup>

Given the distribution of violence and riots in Kosovo in 2004, it appears that most violence was relegated to two regions, the border city of Mitrovica and in overwhelmingly Albanian municipalities that turned their rage against the small numbers of Serbian minorities that remained. This assessment is further supported by the pattern of Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries damaged or destroyed in the violence. While several numbers have been put forward to quantify the churches and monasteries destroyed in those two days in 2004, the most comprehensive list was provided by Serbian news organization b92.<sup>103</sup> This list details 30 churches and monasteries damaged or destroyed across nine municipalities. Of those, all nine were located in overwhelmingly Albanian municipalities; 14 in Prizren, 7 in Peja/Peć, and the rest scattered

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<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, 44-51.

<sup>101</sup> Provisional Institution of Self Government, *Kosovo and its Population*, 9.

<sup>102</sup> International Crisis Group, *Collapse in Kosovo*, 48.

<sup>103</sup> ERP KiM Info-Service, "Nasilje na Kosovu," *B92 News*, April 26, 2004, <http://www.b92.net/specijal/kosovo2004/unisteneckrke.php>

throughout Kosovo. One St. Sava church is listed as being burned in Kosovska Mitrovica, but this was before the creation of Mitrovica North as a distinct municipality and the church now exists in the Albanian dominated Mitrovicë South.

These findings indicate ethnic violence in March 2004 was relegated to areas which had already been effectively ethnically homogenized in the years prior to the unrest and were overwhelmingly Albanian in their demographic composition. The next test for ethnic tensions would come in 2008 with the Kosovo government's unilateral declaration of independence. This declaration was met with extensive Serbian protests in Northern Kosovo. Along the northern border with Serbia, upwards of 2,000 Serbian protesters attacked UN manned border posts, destroying them with bulldozers and fire.<sup>104</sup> In the section of Kosovska Mitrovica municipality that would later become the Serb-dominated North Mitrovica a UN courthouse was seized and occupied by Serbian protestors. A combination of UN and NATO forces were forced to storm the courthouse, and traded gunfire with protestors who confronted them outside the building.<sup>105</sup> Ethnic Serbian officers in the KPS refused to take orders from the Kosovo government as a sign of protest encouraged by Belgrade, reporting instead to UNMIK. These protests occurred in northern Kosovo, but cases were reported in Gjilan municipality and the Serbian Mayor of Štrpce/ openly expressed his support.<sup>106</sup> As a result of these protests participating officers were suspended with pay by the Kosovo government, impacting central and eastern Kosovo the most. Many of these

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<sup>104</sup> Peter Finn, "Serbs in Kosovo Set 2 Border Posts Afire," *Washington Post*, February 20, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/19/AR2008021902585.html?hpid=sec-world>

<sup>105</sup> Paul Radovanovic, "Peacekeepers Battle Serbs in Kosovo," *Associated Press*, March 17, 2004, [https://web.archive.org/web/20080322011032/http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080317/ap\\_on\\_re\\_eu/kosovo\\_serbs](https://web.archive.org/web/20080322011032/http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080317/ap_on_re_eu/kosovo_serbs)

<sup>106</sup> Matt Robinson, "Serb Police in Kosovo Reject Albanian Command," Reuters, February 29, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL29409743>

officers would return to their jobs by the next year as Belgrade failed to provide salaries that had been promised in lieu of those from the Kosovo government.<sup>107</sup>

The most serious and extensive resurgence of violence and instability in Kosovo since 2008 occurred between 2011 and 2013, coming to be known as the North Kosovo Crisis. On 25 July Kosovo special police crossed into northern Kosovo in order to take control of two disputed border posts. These officers were forced to retreat and came under fire from Serb protestors, resulting in one death. The situation devolved from there as roadblocks sprung-up across northern Kosovo, blocking Kosovo authorities from entering the regions and inhibiting traffic.<sup>108</sup> KFOR and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) intervened in the crisis, escorting Kosovo officers to border points and contesting the use of barricades. Their presence in the region led to repeated and violent clashes with Serb protestors.<sup>109</sup> The situation was eventually defused through negotiations mediated by the EU that resulted in the Brussels Agreement, an arrangement between Kosovo and Serbia that promised a normalization of relations.<sup>110</sup>

While partition-theory dictates that areas of greater ethnic-mixing will result in greater tensions, the opposite seems to be the case for Kosovo in all three major instances of open hostilities. In 2004, during the worst of civil unrest, the hotspots where violence and property destruction was reported were almost exclusively in municipalities with an overwhelmingly Albanian majority. The municipalities of Klokot/Killokot and Štrpce/Shtërpca, with their diverse

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<sup>107</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration in Kosovo: Taking the Plunge* (ICG Europe Report N 200, May 12 2009), 14. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/kosovo/serb-integration-kosovo-taking-plunge>

<sup>108</sup> Marko Prelec, "North Kosovo Meltdown," *International Crisis Group*, September 6, 2011, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/kosovo/north-kosovo-meltdown>

<sup>109</sup> Andrea Capussela, "The EU Must Confront the North Kosovo Crisis," *The Guardian*, December 20, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/dec/01/eu-north-kosovo>

<sup>110</sup> Aleksandar Vasovic and Justyna Pawlak, "EU Brokers Historic Kosovo Deal, Door Opens to Serbia Accession," *Reuters*, April 19, 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-serbia-kosovo-eu/eu-brokers-historic-kosovo-deal-door-opens-to-serbia-accession-idUSBRE93I0IB20130419>

mix of significant Serb and Albanian residents, were untouched by violence, despite ethnic partition theory predicting these to be the hotbed of tensions. The third mixed enclave, Novo Brdo/Novobërda had two outlier instances of bombing on public buildings/figures, aside from these incidents there were no widespread public gatherings, riots, or larger organized violence to indicate the ethnic groups of the municipality were ready for war.

By looking over the three major periods of conflict in Kosovo, it appears that the opposite of Kaufmann's assessment may be true. During the 2004 unrest, ethnically motivated violence was contained almost entirely to Albanian majority municipalities. During the 2008 and 2011 periods of unrest, the violence and tensions occurred for the most part in the Serb majority north. This is particularly interesting since northern Kosovo shares a border with Serbia proper and is physically separated from Kosovo proper by the Ibar river. It seems then that regions where a strong ethnic division occurs have historically been subject to the most tensions. Mitrovica serves as a particular example of where repeated violence has broken out. Violence appears to be more likely along the borders of ethnically homogenous territories, rather than from within ethnically diverse municipalities.

These findings are further supported by events, or lack thereof, in Preševo Valley. While the region was the site of an intense insurgency from 1999 to 2001, the region has generally cooled to a calm. A 2007 ICG report described the region as a success story of the former-Yugoslavia and described an incident-free record stretching back three years.<sup>111</sup> The situation has remained largely the same in the valley. While the region still boasts a diverse and intermixed population, both Serbs

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<sup>111</sup> "Serbia: Maintaining Peace in the Presevo Valley," *International Crisis Group*, October 16, 2007, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/serbia/serbia-maintaining-peace-presevo-valley>

and Albanians of the valley suffer from the same economic neglect from Belgrade.<sup>112</sup> While both groups continue to struggle against poverty, neither have engaged in significant instances of ethnic tension or violence that might indicate a brewing conflict.

### **3.2.2 Stranded enclaves encourage kin-states to intervene**

Partition theory dictates that separation is necessary because large kin-states will always be compelled to assist stranded ethnic enclaves, through forceful means if necessary. In the case of Kosovo, this would mean the Serbian state will use all means necessary to maintain control over Serbian enclaves in Kosovo, and to provide institutional and material assistance beyond the point which might be detrimental to Serbian domestic or foreign policy. The logic also follows that ethnic Serbs within the enclaves will be receptive to this assistance, preferring to work with their kin-state over any Kosovo based institutions. This situation does not appear to be happening on the ground.

Since the end of hostilities, the Serbian government's influence in Kosovo has been greatly reduced, as has its direct control over the Serbian minorities there. To combat this, Belgrade began running parallel institutions in Serb dominated enclaves. These parallel institutions are strongest in northern Kosovo where the Serbian government holds elections, provides salaries for school teachers, runs medical facilities, and issue official documents.<sup>113</sup> In the four Serbian municipalities of northern Kosovo, the Kosovo government has been almost entirely absent. While there were attempts to wrestle control in 2011, the Brussels agreement brought this period to a close and promised stronger, devolved powers to Serbian majority municipalities.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> "Life's too Harsh in Presevo to Worry about Serb-Kosovo Border," *France 24*, September 24, 2018, <https://www.france24.com/en/20180924-lifes-harsh-presevo-worry-about-serb-kosovo-border>

<sup>113</sup> International Crisis Group, "Taking the plunge," 9.

<sup>114</sup> Vasovic and Pawlak, "EU Brokers Historic Kosovo Deal."

The situation in Serbian municipalities south of the Ibar river is remarkably different than those in the north. Efforts to construct functional and legitimate institutional alternative to those provided by the Kosovo government have been met with lackluster results. While representatives are appointed to manage key utilities such as water and transportation, these individuals rarely have the ability or funding to fulfill their functions in areas far from the urban centers they are meant to represent.<sup>115</sup> In Novo Brdo/Novobërda for instance, the Serbian parallel municipality has little power beyond paying its staff and distributing welfare. The situation is similar in the other Serbian enclaves, who are all unnamable to collect their own taxes for revenue (with the exception of Štrpce/Shtërpca as of 2009). Underfunding has relegated these institutions to the role of liaisons to Belgrade, doing little more than paying salaries to staff and managing Serbian schools and hospitals.<sup>116</sup> Reports from the ICG in 2009 and 2012 show that public support for parallel Serbian institutions, as well as official support from Belgrade, are dramatically decreasing as capacity decreases and corruption grows.<sup>117</sup>

The failure of Belgrade to provide sustainable institutions on Serb enclaves in Kosovo has been compounded by its failure to realize promises of support. In 2008, Belgrade promised financial compensation to those KPS officers who would resign from the force as a protest against independence. The funds never materialized, and many officers returned to work after a year.<sup>118</sup> Similar promises were made more broadly to those Serbs employed by Kosovo's institutions. Comparable jobs on Serbia's payroll was offered to those who left their current employment, and a 200 Euro monthly allotment was planned for some 25,000 Serbs if they agreed to stay in Kosovo.

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<sup>115</sup> International Crisis Group, "Taking the plunge," 9.

<sup>116</sup> International Crisis Group, *Remaining Challenges*, 13.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>118</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 10-11.

The government in Belgrade failed to agree on a method of funding these expenses, and neither plan was followed through.<sup>119</sup>

The failure of Belgrade to establish strong institutions in the Serb enclaves of southern Kosovo has been compounded by repeated instances of Belgrade's liaisons to the region engaging in corrupt schemes to build personal wealth and influence. The initial government that replaced the Milošević, the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), placed little importance or money towards the situation in Kosovo, preferring instead to focus on domestic issues within Serbia proper.<sup>120</sup> A Kosovar Serb named Momčilo Trajković was placed in charge of the Yugoslav Committee for Kosovo and Metohija and operated on a budget of 15,000 euros. Trajković placed his headquarters in his home villages and faced extensive accusation of corruption and nepotism from Serbian organization in Kosovo who questioned if his policies were those of Belgrade or simply reflected self-interest.<sup>121</sup>

In 2001 the Coordination Centre for Kosovo and Metohija (CCK) was established by the DOS government to signal increased engagement with Kosovo. Headed by Deputy Prime Minister Nebojša Čović, the organization took a more conciliatory tone with Kosovo. During his time with the organization, Čović used the CCK as an extension of his own political party, government funds to cement a network of patronage in Kosovo and build support for his party to counter its weakness in Serbia proper. Party loyalty determined who received the funds destined for the Kosovo Serbs, and as Čović's influence grew his rhetoric took a more populist, hardline stance.<sup>122</sup> He was eventually removed in 2005 to be replaced by figures from the now ruling Democratic Party of

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>121</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 3.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 5.



Serbia (DSS). These new officials simply adopted the patronage network used by their predecessor and faced similar accusations by hardline Serbs in Kosovo.<sup>123</sup> Serbian parliamentary elections in 2007 resulted in a coalition between the DSS and the Democratic Party (DS). DS heavily criticized the DSS for channeling money for Kosovo exclusively to its members and sympathizers, but soon adopted a similar strategy for building its own client network in Kosovo. During this period Serbia failed to develop a coherent strategy in Kosovo, the government instead devolving into infighting as the DS and DSS competed for influence, and Serbs in Kosovo rushed to join political parties in the hopes of benefiting economically. South of the Ibar river, Serbs continued to complain that northern Serbia was receiving a disproportionate amount of funds and government attention.<sup>124</sup>

The clientelist approach began to change after elections in 2008. The DS-led For a European Serbia (ZES) coalition won, and with its attention turned to European integration opted for a more hands-off, disinterested policy in Kosovo.<sup>125</sup> Control of the CCK was handed off to Kosovo Serbs, and institutional responsibilities were slowly handed over to local municipal governments. Despite this, in 2009 reports of competition amongst coalition members for patronage in Kosovo continued, and CCK head Zvonimir Stević has been accused of using the organization as a means to revive the Serbian Socialist Party (SRS) in Kosovo.<sup>126</sup>

These shortcomings highlight a critical shortcoming in how officials in Belgrade choose to engage with Kosovo. While partition theory dictates kin-states will intervene to assist stranded co-ethnics in enclaves, that doesn't seem to be the case here. Repeatedly the government in Belgrade has neglected the Kosovo issue in favor of larger national concerns such as nation building after

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>125</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 7.

<sup>126</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 8.

the fall of Milošević or European integration. When it has engaged, it has done so with mixed results, choosing to focus on the secure municipalities of northern Kosovo and never diverting the resources necessary to maintain proper parallel institutions in southern Kosovo. Those individuals in the Serbian government with the power to dictate engagement with Kosovo have repeatedly chosen to squander what resources they are provided on personal enrichment and political gains. These actions have repeatedly come at the expense of those Serbs in enclaves. If Serbia was driven to rescue its stranded co-ethnics as Posen's security dilemma dictates, surely forming a cohesive policy towards Kosovo would have been prioritized over political infighting and individual enrichment.

Perhaps the greatest sign that Serbia has little interest in rescuing Serbs in the south of Kosovo is their relative absence from public references to the proposed partition. President Vučić has made it clear that stability in the region is his highest priority, justifying the idea of a land-swap by arguing stability will allow Serbia and Kosovo to normalize their relations.<sup>127</sup> His few statements on the matter have emphasized his agreement to conduct a partition in Kosovo along ethnic lines, but have made no reference to the Serbs south of the Ibar river.<sup>128</sup> While the Brussels Agreement ensures greater autonomy for Serb majority municipalities in Serbia regardless of whether or not a partition happens, partition theory would predict that the geographic separation of these enclaves from Serbia proper would continue to be a vital point of contention.

The Preševo Valley insurgency provides another example of how geopolitical concerns can supersede concerns for ethnic kin. During the low intensity conflict that characterized the region

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<sup>127</sup> Valerie Hopkins, "Serbia's Aleksandar Vucic Pledges to Stay on Reform Path," *Financial Times*, January 9, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/73cebe4e-133f-11e9-a581-4ff78404524e>

<sup>128</sup> Gordana Filipovic, "Serb Leader Floats a Kosovo Partition, Triggering Alarm," *Bloomberg*, August 9, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-09/serbian-president-vucic-says-he-favors-partitioning-kosovo>

for roughly a year and a half, Albanian combatants did not receive any significant support from institutions in Kosovo. Open hostilities were brought to a close in 2001 through a peace deal brokered by international actors and the Serbian government.<sup>129</sup> The Čović plan which ended hostilities promised to redress ethnic grievances and build good-faith between ethnic Albanians and the Serbian government through a process of economic development and the integration of Albanians into local politics.<sup>130</sup> Some instances of violence continued into 2003, orchestrated by the Albanian National Army (AKSH), a pan-Albanian terrorist organization operating in southern Serbia and Macedonia. Though links certainly exist between former Kosovo fighters and the AKSH, the Kosovo government has attempted to distance itself from the organization, demanding that all members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (A legitimate organization in Kosovo formed from former UCK fighters and monitors by UNMIK and KFOR) with ties to the AKSH to leave the Corps; 70 left and sixteen were recommended for dismissal.<sup>131</sup> Former UCK commanders in Kosovo have likewise refused requests for arms by Albanian militants in North Macedonia.<sup>132</sup>

Politically, Kosovo has little will to encourage separatism in the Preševo Valley. While some politicians in Kosovo appeared in the media to consider the prospects of a unification between the Preševo Valley and Kosovo in the early 2000's, ICG interviews with Preševo Valley politicians revealed that Kosovo politicians take a much more pragmatic approach in private.<sup>133</sup> The government in Kosovo is committed to its own survival, telling Albanians in the valley to accept their Serbian citizenship and do nothing that may negatively impact Kosovo's

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<sup>129</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia: In Kosovo's Shadow* (ICG Europe Briefing N 43, June 27, 2006), 1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/serbia/southern-serbia-kosovo-s-shadow>

<sup>130</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia's Fragile Peace* (ICG Europe Report N 152, December 9, 2009), 17. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/serbia/southern-serbias-fragile-peace>

<sup>131</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia's Fragile Peace*, 8.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

independence.<sup>134</sup> In total, the Kosovo government has been unwilling to offer the Preševo Valley any sort of military or political aid that might direct the region towards rebellion. Kosovo is happy to leave its ethnic kin in Serbia so long as it is beneficial to Kosovo's own status.

### **3.2.3 Ethnic Groups will Strike First out of Fear caused by the security Dilemma**

According to Kaufmann and Posen, ethnic groups that are not properly partitioned are likely to be driven by fear of expulsion or annihilation. This means that ethnic groups whose geographic position is insecure will strike out against ethnic rivals in an attempt to quickly form more defensible borders and shore up claims to territories through ethnic expulsion. Despite this prediction, this has not been the case in Kosovo or the Preševo Valley.

Despite the aforementioned attempts by the Serbian government to run parallel institutions in Serbian enclaves in Kosovo, the Serbs in these regions have not accepted the influence of Belgrade as readily as one might expect from ethnic-kin. Since the creation of the Ahtisaari plan, parallel institutions south of the Ibar river have slowly relinquished responsibility to the Serb controlled legitimate institutions that now fall under the decentralized Kosovo government.<sup>135</sup> Ethnic Serbs in these regions have begun taking a pragmatic approach to their engagement with the Kosovo state. Serbs now rely on Kosovo institutions for basic services, applying for official Kosovo documents, and accepting salaries from employment with the Kosovo state.<sup>136</sup> Serbs in these areas have recognized that they cannot exist in a bubble by denying Kosovo's existence, and so many have responded with steps towards integration rather than fear or rejection. Serbs have begun registering their vehicles with local municipalities, and even carrying official Kosovo

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<sup>134</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia*, 8.

<sup>135</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 13.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

passports.<sup>137</sup> Still, Serb residents do continue to hedge their bets, often drawing salaries from Kosovo and Serbian institutions.<sup>138</sup>

The boundaries between Serbian and Kosovo institutions have also begun to blur as Serbs come to accept the necessity of engaging with Pristina's institutions. In some municipalities, informal deals exist between the members of both institutions to mutually support and cooperate on projects.<sup>139</sup> In some instances, Serbs work for both institutions. ICG reported example of candidates and members of the Kosovo Assembly also working for Serbian health and postal services.<sup>140</sup> In 2012, the chief of the Serbian municipality of Novo Brdo/Novobërdë also sat on the on the same municipalities Kosovo assembly. The brother of this chief ran for Serbian municipal elections in 2008 before winning a seat in the Kosovo Assembly in 2010. In another instance, a husband and wife were principles of the same school, on within the Serbian system and another in Kosovo's.<sup>141</sup> In Gračanica/Gračanicë a division of labor has been created, where Kosovo officials perform local government functions and Serbian officials manage schools and hospitals.<sup>142</sup> While Serbs have continued to receive pressure from Belgrade to restrain from voting, this trend began to reverse in 2010 when 24,000 Serbs voted in Kosovo's elections.<sup>143</sup> Serbs in Kosovo still fear their participation may provide legitimacy for Kosovo's independence, but voter participation

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<sup>137</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration in Kosovo*, 11.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, 11-12.

<sup>139</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 2.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>141</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 2.

<sup>142</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 14.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

continues to rise. In 2014 elections, the Kosovo Serb political party Serb List received a total of 38,199 votes.<sup>144</sup> The same party received 44,499 votes in 2017.<sup>145</sup>

On top of the growing reliance of enclave Serbs on official Kosovo institutions, for a time political infighting grew to characterize parallel Serbian election in southern municipalities. The two political parties operating in southern Kosovo, the Independent Liberal Party (SLS) and Belgrade connected United Serb List (JSL, not to be confused with Serb List) were at odds with each other over relations to the Kosovo state. The SLS took a reconciler tone, pushing for greater emphasis on the immediate concerns of the Serb community over broader questions of Kosovo's status. This led to Belgrade labeling SLS members as traitors and pushing for a stronger JSL presence. SLS performed well in 2009 local elections, but tensions continued. In 2010 SLS general secretary Petar Miletić was shot in both legs in Mitrovica North. In Štrpce/Shtërpca, physical altercation broke out between SLS and JSL members during the elections.<sup>146</sup> By the close of elections in 2010, the JSL failed to perform well, leading to significant questions regarding Belgrade's influence in Serb enclaves.<sup>147</sup> Both parties continued to quarrel into 2012, accusing each other of corruption and cronyism, leading to public disillusionment with both parties.<sup>148</sup>

Throughout the post-conflict period in Kosovo, the municipality of Štrpce/Shtërpca has continually served as the model of the peaceful coexistence possible between ethnic groups in the region. A 2009 report by the ICG described Štrpce/Shtërpca as an example of good Serb-Albanian

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<sup>144</sup> European Union Election Observation Mission, *Kosovo Legislative Elections 8 June 2014 Final Report* (July 7, 2014), 34.

<sup>145</sup> European Union Election Observation Mission, *Kosovo Legislative Election 11 June 2017 Final Report*, (September 9, 2017), 42.

<sup>146</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 15.

<sup>147</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 8.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

relations.<sup>149</sup> According to the same source, inter-ethnic relations survived the war intact, despite violence in the area. Very few Serbs left the region during the conflict, and many of those that did chose to return. Many Albanians fled the region, but returns are high. In fact, in 2009 it boasted the highest degree of refugee returns in Kosovo.<sup>150</sup> Ethnic stereotypes also appear absent from Štrpce/Shtërpca. While accusations by Serbs that their Albanian neighbors are foreigners coming over from Albania or Drenica, Serb residents view their neighbors as indigenous to the regions with a historic right to reside there. While hundreds of Albanian houses were burned during the conflict, local Serbs attribute these crimes to outsiders, most likely paramilitary thieves from Serbia.<sup>151</sup> For the Albanians, they do not seem to object to the Serbs' taking strong leadership roles in the municipality.<sup>152</sup>

For a time, the mayor of Štrpce/Shtërpca Sladjan Ilić had a calming role on the municipality. He followed a policy of cross-ethnic cooperation and facilitated the proper conditions for ethnic Albanians to return. Property was given back to those who returned, and his initiative to build inclusive institutions resulted in one of the only municipalities in Kosovo where Serb and Albanian healthcare clinics operated out of the same building.<sup>153</sup> The 2004 unrest resulted in a period of mistrust between Serbs and Albanians, and the Belgrade supported institutions received an increase in support as Serbs mistrusted those of the Kosovo government.<sup>154</sup> Despite this, a 2012 report by ICG described the governing SLS and Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) coalition as bringing stability to inter-ethnic relations.<sup>155</sup> The only tensions described in the municipal building

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<sup>149</sup> International Crisis Group, *Kosovo: Štrpce, a Model Serb Enclave?* (ICG Europe Briefing N 56, October 15, 2009), 1.

<sup>150</sup> International Crisis Group, *Kosovo: Štrpce*, 2.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>153</sup> International Crisis Group, *Kosovo: Štrpce*, 4.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>155</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 15.

were those between the older, more experienced Albanian officials and their younger, more inexperienced Serb colleagues.<sup>156</sup> While the existence of parallel Serb institutions continues to frustrate the Kosovo government, the multi-ethnic municipal government supported by Kosovo has been successful in implementing the language law. Official paperwork is bi-lingual, Serbs and Albanians share offices, and Albanians are learning Serbian to better communicate with the Serbian population.<sup>157</sup> These successes are examples of how mixed municipalities have successfully fostered multi-ethnic spaces, despite undergoing a traumatic recent history of ethnic violence.

Albanian residents of the Preševo Valley have undergone a similar realization as the Serbs south of the Ibar river. Without support from Kosovo and little hope of joining their kin there, Albanians in southern Serbia have begun to accept their position and integrate into Serbian society there.<sup>158</sup> Since 2003, ethnic Albanian politicians have been moderate, condemning violence and seeking to focus on economic development. They encourage change in the valley, but through the mechanism of Albanian involvement in the federal government.<sup>159</sup> Generally, they are willing to work with the Čović plan.<sup>160</sup> In light of the progress made in the region and Kosovo's disinterest, ethnic Albanians have developed their own distinct identity in the valley separate from that of Kosovo Albanians and are finding ways to cohabitate with Serbs as fellow citizens of the Serbian state.<sup>161</sup> Generally ethnic Albanians have little interest in candidates who espouse irredentist rhetoric of greater Albania, and the residents of southern Serbia are no exception. Despite electing a representative who openly supported the creation of a greater Albania in 2004, interviews

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<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>158</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia*, 1.

<sup>159</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia's Fragile Peace*, 23.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>161</sup> International Crisis Group, *Southern Serbia*, 1.



conducted by ICG showed that most Albanians were disturbed by this rhetoric and had voted out of a sense of dissatisfaction with the incumbent rather than out of conviction.<sup>162</sup> Most Albanians in the Preševo Valley would prefer union with Kosovo, but the reality of the situation is clear and most have resigned themselves to a pragmatic approach of limited autonomy within the Serbian state.<sup>163</sup>

### 3.3 Reflection

After looking at the situation in Kosovo over the past 19 years through the lens of its municipalities, it is apparent that Kaufmann's ethnic partition theory does not predict the state of ethnic relations in Kosovo, as Posen's security dilemma is not at work. While there is certainly a degree of fear present in how both ethnic groups interact, the situation in Kosovo is not defined by it. Municipalities with diverse populations suffer from lower rates of ethnic violence than homogenous ones. Violence is typically relegated to the Serb dominated north, or to majority Albanian municipalities. Even during the heaviest unrest in 2004, Serb enclaves were not targeted. Similarly, the Preševo Valley appears to be a model for post-conflict ethnic reintegration. Despite prediction that fear will determine ethnic relations in these regions, that does not appear to be the case.

### 3.4 An Alternative Take: The Top-Down Approach

Instead of using the logic of Kaufmann's ethnic partition theory to predict inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo based on the application of Posen's security dilemma, it is possible to explain the situation on the ground and its development through a top-down approach. An "elite-led" model provides a much more intricate and accurate explanation of how ethnic tensions are sparked and subdued in

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid*, 9

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

Kosovo. While ethnic partition fails to explain the relative calm of mixed communities in Kosovo, a top-down approach employing the theory of nested security shows how external actors and elites dictate what the reality is on the ground.

### 3.4.1 Nested Security in Kosovo

Since the end of hostilities in Kosovo in 1999, tensions in the region have been heavily influenced by policymakers in Pristina and Belgrade. The first post-Milošević government in Yugoslavia took a more compromising tone in dealing the Kosovo. The new government was a massive break from the previous one, prioritizing EU integration and even eventual NATO membership.<sup>164</sup> Under Yugoslav President Vojislav Koštunica and deputy Prime Minister Nebojša Čović the Serbs of Kosovo were encouraged to participated in the 2001 elections for Kosovo's Provisional Institute of Self-government (PISG).<sup>165</sup> This period of Serb integration was short lived. Koštunica's government was heavily criticized in Serbia as too conciliatory with the west. In response to growing domestic unpopularity, Koštunica and Čović began to adopt hardline nationalist policies towards Kosovo in order to shore-up their own political support at home.<sup>166</sup>

As Serbian domestic politics took a nationalist turn, the governments new policy directions had a significant impact on ethnic relations in Kosovo. It was at this time Belgrade began significant support for parallel institutions in Kosovo, with particular priority given to northern Kosovo. The Interior Ministry also supported a paramilitary formation called the Bridgewatchers, a group who patrolled north Mitrovica to prevent Albanians crossing to the Serb majority side of the river.<sup>167</sup> Belgrade's influence in the region resulted in a heightened situation of insecurity and

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<sup>164</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 149.

<sup>165</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 4.

<sup>166</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 149.

<sup>167</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 150.

tensions between Serbs and Albanians along the Ibar river divide, as well as attacks on UNMIK and KFOR members. Copycat instances were reported in some southern Serb enclaves as well.<sup>168</sup> Serbia's support for its institutions in Kosovo resulted in boycotts of Kosovo elections, and widespread hesitation for Serbs to engage with Kosovo's legitimate institutions.

Koštunica became Serbian Prime Minister from 2004-2008, and the issue of Kosovo became the central issue of his mandate, even at the expense of EU integration.<sup>169</sup> Under his government, the UN attempted and failed to negotiate a final status for Kosovo. UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari offered a draft resolution that permitted Kosovo to join international organizations and form a national security force, in exchange Serb municipalities would be given a greater range of autonomy within the Kosovo system.<sup>170</sup> The government in Belgrade not only rejected this plan, but in order to further its bargaining power during negotiations ordered Serbs in Kosovo to boycott the 2007 elections and to stop accepting money from Kosovo institutions.<sup>171</sup> Serbia continued to interfere in Kosovo, and in 2008 when Pristina declared independence it had a hand in organizing Serb actions during the March riots in north Mitrovica.<sup>172</sup>

Despite the 2008 clashes, that year marked a turning-point in Serbia's policy towards Kosovo. In a rejection of Koštunica's politics, the pro-European Union party For a European Serbia won in a landslide victory, and the elections was seen as, "a mandate for Serbian leaders to continue negotiations over EU integration." With EU membership the new priority in Belgrade, a softer approach to Kosovo was adopted. The EU initiated a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with Serbia as a concession to strengthen moderate elements in Serbia and to

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<sup>168</sup> *Ibid*, 150.

<sup>169</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 5.

<sup>170</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 151

<sup>171</sup> International Crisis Group, *Serb Integration*, 7.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid*, 5-6.

pressure Belgrade to accept recognize Kosovo.<sup>173</sup> The international community also pressured Pristina to support minority empowerment and devolution in Serb-majority municipalities. As a result, Kosovo Serbs have a guaranteed 20 seats in Parliament, a minority veto, and minority quotas in the police and courts.<sup>174</sup> The change in Belgrade was almost immediately reflected in Kosovo. Large numbers of Serbs voted in Kosovo's 2009 local elections and the 2010 general elections.<sup>175</sup>

Kosovo and Serbia share a mutual strong desire to join the European Union in the future, and the EU has not hesitated to use this to its advantage. For Serbia, its SAA agreement was conditional on its complete withdrawal from Kosovo. Due to these measures, Belgrade eventually relented to implicate recognition of Kosovo as an independent country. A final agreement was reached that, "provided for the integration of northern Kosovo into the Kosovo state."<sup>176</sup> Elites in Belgrade recognized their bargaining position was weak, and the benefits of EU membership outweighed their continued support for northern Serbia.<sup>177</sup> Pristina underwent similar pressures, being pushed by the EU to normalize relations with Belgrade as a condition of membership.<sup>178</sup>

The interests of Serbia have repeatedly defined the levels of ethnic tensions in Kosovo. While relations were relatively workable at the start of 2000, they worsened as Serbian politicians used nationalist rhetoric to increase their domestic support. Likewise, when European Union membership became the primary priority, Serbian lawmakers were much more willing to compromise to Kosovo in-order to further accession talks. As a result, tensions in Kosovo decreased and Serbs were more likely to integrate. The effect of Serbia's influence is further

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<sup>173</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 151.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid*, 151.

<sup>175</sup> International Crisis Group, *Setting Kosovo Free*, 4.

<sup>176</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 152

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*, 152-153.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, 152.

exemplified by a point made in Jenne's book *Nested Security* regarding the vastly different levels of tensions in northern Kosovo verses the enclaves of the south.

“Domestic-level explanations such as fears or grievances cannot readily explain the geographical variation in ethnic tensions. To illustrate, *nearly all* Serbs in Kosovo harbor ethnic grievances from the wars, fears of discrimination, and desires for self-determination. However, the Serbs in the north were far more radical than those in the south. This difference is best explained in the fact that ethnic relations in the south were nested in a more stable bilateral relationship, allowing the Serbs there to take advantage of benefits of devolution provided by the Kosovo constitution. By contrast, the north remained conflict-prone because Serbia maintained its support for parallel structures there.”<sup>179</sup>

Tensions in Kosovo are determined in large-part by the state of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. Where Serbia is most present, tensions are worse. Where Serbia holds the weakest presence, ethnic tensions are low and Serbs are much more willing to engage with Kosovo's institutions and work within the state's constitutional framework. It seems then, that it is the leaders and elites in each state's respective capitals that hold the greatest sway over ethnic tensions in Kosovo. Where ethnic groups are most intermixed, tensions are lowest. Where ethnic groups are homogenized, and each state holds the strongest influence, conflict continues to break along boundary lines whenever it is beneficial to policymakers in Belgrade and Pristina.

The state of the Preševo Valley appears to validate this theory as well. Tensions have been relatively low since the end of hostilities in 2001. This can be attributed to the significant absence of the Kosovo government as an influence in the region, and the hand-off approach of Belgrade.

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<sup>179</sup> Jenne, *Nested Security*, 153.

Just as the turbulent nature of Pristina and Belgrade's relationship sends ripples through Kosovo, the relative stability and absence of both Pristina and Belgrade in the Valley has allowed for residence to integrate themselves into local institutions, and for Albanians to enjoy limited autonomy through engagement with Serbian institutions. The Čović was a success in that it allowed the region enough self-management that local solutions could be found without local grievances. Similarly, Kosovo's disinterest has allowed Albanians to accept their future in the Serbian system, and to chart their own path beside Serbian neighbors.

## **4 Chapter 4: The Failed History of Ethnic Partition**

In both of his paper, Kaufmann argues that historical precedent supports his argument for ethnic partition. While it is not within the purview of this paper, there is a rich history of ethnic partition and population exchange in the Balkans which serve as an example of how these methods have failed to prevent conflict. In particular, the case of Bulgaria and Greece, as well as the case of Turkey and Greece, serve as the most commonly cited examples of why ethnic partition theory work. For this reason, this chapter will look at how population exchanges were conducted in both cases and show why in both cases ethnic partition did not effectively prevent conflict in the region.

### **4.1.1 Bulgaria and Greece**

In 1919 the Treaty of Neuilly established that the populations opposing populations of Greece and Turkey should be exchanged in order to reduce ethnic tensions and reasons for conflict. WWI had just ended, and Bulgaria was forced to cede western Thrace back to Greece, resulting in a significant loss of territory and the exile of 16 percent of its population to the other side of its

border.<sup>180</sup> The League of Nations hoped that by removing Bulgarian minorities from the land it had lost, the Bulgarian state would have no claims in which to rest future irredentism. With the land now properly Greek, Bulgaria would have no right or interest in claiming it.<sup>181</sup> The exchange took thirteen years and saw 92,000 Bulgarians from Greece migrating to replace 46,000 Greeks from Bulgaria who would fill their absence. Upon arrival, these masses were often left without adequate housing or financial support, living for years without either. The “homeland” governments tended to see their recently arrive ethnic kin as burdens on their resources, rather than family to be welcomed home.<sup>182</sup>

A basic premise of the exchange was that it would be voluntary, any residents who wished to move would do-so on their own initiative without the use of force by either national government or the League of Nations. It was assumed minorities, unable or willing to live together due to sectarian warfare, would choose to leave willingly out of a desire to live in their kin-state. Despite League oversight and hopes, neither of these assumptions proved to be the case. Both Greeks and Bulgarians overwhelmingly chose to remain in their mixed communities.<sup>183</sup> Few families applied for the exchange program. This changed in 1923 when Greek-Turkish population exchange began. The Greeks pursued a policy of settling Greeks from Anatolia in the homes and communities of Bulgarians.<sup>184</sup> This was an intentional ploy to pressure the minority to leave, and it was successful in pushing thousands to do-so. In Bulgaria, these new arrives were settled in Greek homes and communities in a manner much the same as what was done in Greece. Again, this policy resulted in a large number of Bulgarian Greeks moving to Greece.<sup>185</sup> Both the Bulgarian and Greek

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<sup>180</sup> Jenne, “Ethnic Partition” in *Rethinking Violence*, 128.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*, 128.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid*, 134.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid*, 133.

<sup>184</sup> Jenne, “Ethnic Partition” in *Rethinking Violence*, 133.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, 133.

governments pursued this population exchange not in the hopes of reducing ethnic tensions and preventing claims, but rather as a means to solidify their borders along ethnic lines and ensure neighbors could not push territorial claims on ethnic grounds.<sup>186</sup> The minority populations of both countries actively resisted the exchange, preferring instead to remain in their historic homes amongst ethnically dissimilar neighbors.

Despite the great efforts by the League of Nations to facilitate the population exchange, it failed miserably at its goal to reduce irredentism. Through the 20's and 30's the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization operated as a militarized proponent of Bulgarian nationalism, launching raids into Yugoslav Macedonia and calling for the annexation of the territory.<sup>187</sup> Similar organizations operated with the goals of reclaiming western Thrace. These organizations were a source of tensions in the region, resulting in political tensions amongst the regions nations. It is even argued that relations between Greece and Turkey were partially normalized due to Bulgarian irredentism, and the Balkan Entente (a treaty between Greece, Turkey, Romania, and Serbia) was created to counter any threat of Bulgarian expansion.<sup>188</sup>

As a result of the irredentist claims fostered in Bulgaria through the interwar period, Bulgaria came to engage in a “passive alliance” with Germany during WWII. Western Thrace and eastern Macedonia were occupied and annexed into the Bulgarian state, thus fulfilling the long-awaited ambitions of the nation's irredentists. These lands had long sense been cleansed of Bulgarians due to the population exchange, so the government pursued a policy of “Bulgarization.” Greek schools and institutions were close, and roughly 200,000 ethnic Greeks were removed. The land was being prepared for repopulation by ethnic Bulgarians, a new population which likely had

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<sup>186</sup>*Ibid*, 133.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid*, 134.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid*, 134.



little connection to the regions outside of Bulgarian claims under the long defunct 1871 Treaty of San Stefano.<sup>189</sup>

The Bulgarian annexations in WWII are indicative of the flaws in partition theory logic. Kaufmann's theory assumes that ethnic loyalty and bonds are the driving force between ethnic conflict. The logic follows then that without ethnic kin to save, nation-states become disinterested in the territory they once occupied. This was the same assumption made by the League. The occupation and subsequent re-population shows that Bulgaria's primary interest in the territories was their strategic value, in particular the access it provided to the Aegean Sea.<sup>190</sup> The "Bulgarization" was simply a method to enhance the claims Bulgaria made on the territories, a claim primarily based on a short-lived period where the territories had been ceded to Bulgaria under the San Stefano Treaty of 1878 which lasted no more than a year.<sup>191</sup> Ethnic partition did nothing to stop conflict, because Bulgaria was driven by the desire to enhance its territory through strategically valuable land, not through some urge to protect its diaspora.

#### **4.1.2 Greece and Turkey**

The population exchange between Greece and Turkey was initiated not long after the one between Greece and Bulgaria, and was begun as the result of the 1922 Greco-Turkish war. At the behest of the victorious Allied powers in the wake of WWI, Greece had initiated a foolhardy campaign against the newly formed Turkish state with the goal of seizing portions of western Anatolia. The campaign ultimately failed, the Greek army retreated across the Aegean, and the Turkish counter-offensive resulted in the mass expulsion of ethnic Greeks from Anatolia.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Jenne, "Ethnic Partition" in *Rethinking Violence*, 134.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid*, 134.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid*, 134.

<sup>192</sup> Jenne, "Ethnic Partition" in *Rethinking Violence*, 135.

After the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia, Turkish troops began expelling ethnic Greeks from the region, despite them being citizens of Turkey. This was done as a means to consolidate Turkish control over the region and ensure Greece could not make further claims to the land based on ethnicity. The process of exchanging minority populations was formalized with the Treaty of Lausanne, a League of Nations brokered deal where Greece was to take in 1.2 million ethnic Greeks from Anatolia, and Turkey would take roughly 350,000-500,000 Muslims. The deal was compulsory, as Greece insisted it needed the homes of Greek Muslims to house the newly arrived Greek refugees.<sup>193</sup> Likewise Turkish authorities insisted that there should be no right to return for families who had already left. This was done to ensure Anatolia would not be repopulated by ethnic Greeks in the future.<sup>194</sup> Though 90% of those Greeks arriving from Anatolia did so before the signing of the treaty, and despite tens of thousands dying during their flight, many Greeks and Turks continued to resist the partition, wishing to remain in their homes amongst the ethnic group they were supposed to fear, rather than living in their kin-state.<sup>195</sup>

The humanitarian and economic cost of this exchange was immense. Though much of the fallout from the exchange can be blamed on the ethnic cleansing campaign conducted by the Turkish military and the informal refugee flow that resulted from it, even the exchange conducted after the Treaty of Lausanne was problematic. Greek resources were strained to meet the demands of so many new arrivals, and what housing they did provide was often ill-suited for the skills of their new occupants. The majority of the arriving Greeks were from urban areas and had skills to match, but the Muslim homes they were being resettled in were overwhelmingly rural. This meant that the skills new residents brought with them did not translate to the agrarian lifestyle they were

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibid*, 129.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*, 136.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid*, 135-136.

now forced into.<sup>196</sup> Turkey had a similar problem. While it received less new residents in the exchange than it gave and so had no significant issues with housing, the exodus of wealthy urban Greeks had a substantial effect on the Turkish economy that the new arrives, thinly dispersed through the country, could do little to reverse.<sup>197</sup>

Despite the harsh relations of the 1920's, Turkey and Greece entered a period of cooled relations through the 30's and 40's as they mutually faced the threat of Bulgaria. Even into the 1950's relations continued to be amicable, and Greek and Turkish minorities enjoyed extensive rights and protections in each other's countries.<sup>198</sup> This period came to a drastic close however in the mid 1950's through the 1960's. The issue of Cyprus became a divisive issue between the two countries, as did the right-wing government that took hold in Greece. Under these conditions, the treatment of minorities worsened in both Greece and Turkey. In Greece, it was made harder for ethnic Turks to gain citizenship, and the word Turkish was banned from use in minority associations. In Turkey the right of Greeks to remain in Istanbul was revoked, they were expelled and their assets frozen. Teaching in the Greek language was also banned in Greek inhabited islands, resulting in many of them leaving the country.<sup>199</sup>

In the case of the population exchange, it can be said that the process was brutal, and the results unsatisfactory. Despite extensive changes in demographics, the two countries enjoyed warm relations only so long as they faced a common threat. With the end of WWII and the beginning of the Cyprus issue, both Turkey and Greece were quick to pullback on minority rights and protections. It seems then that the population exchange was little more than an excuse to claim

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<sup>196</sup> Jenne, "Ethnic Partition" in *Rethinking Violence*, 130.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid*, 129

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*, 136-137.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, 137.

rights over territory, the same logic that underpinned “Bulgarization” and the Leagues exchanges between Greece and Bulgaria. As Jenne points out. The flow of Greek-Turkish ethnic relations in both countries seems to be influenced not by the security dilemma but by, “exogeneous changes in interstate relations or government policies.”<sup>200</sup> Again Kaufmann’s theory fails to account for renewed ethnic tensions, but the theory of nested security does.

## Conclusion

Neither historical precedent nor the present situation in Kosovo and Serbia points to a potential partition assisting the situation. Ethnic partition is, at its core, founded on the principle that fear dictates inter-ethnic relations once tensions have reached a boiling point. There is no way back once this has happened, the pandora’s box has been opened and the only solution is either a bloody fight to the death or the complete separation of both groups into homogenous, defensible enclaves. This is the situation a land-swap between Kosovo and Serbia would aim to fix, but no such situation exists. While Kaufmann predicts the more mixed a community, the more fear will reign, the opposite appears to be the case. In Kosovo, the municipalities with the most equal populations of Serbs and Albanians are some of the most peaceful. Serb enclaves as well, potential fifth columns that the Albanians should fear may attack from behind, have proven to be benign. No major attack from or towards these enclaves have been recorded during the greatest periods of unrest. And even when there was violence or elevate fear of it, kin-states have done little to assist their brethren.

The top-down theory of nested security is the most logical alternative for analyzing the events in Kosovo and the Preševo Valley. The rise and fall of ethnic tensions are the result not of

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<sup>200</sup> Jenne, “Ethnic Partition” in *Rethinking Violence*, 138.

the people inhabiting Kosovo, but of the wider political desires of elite policymakers in Pristina and Belgrade. Just as the Preševo Valley has benefitted from a neglect by both parties on the international stage, Kosovo has suffered from the needs of policymakers who use the region as a tool for geopolitics. Serbia's attempts to support its ethnic kin across the Ibar river has consistently been halfhearted, ineffective, and corrupt as officials prioritize their own political ascension over meeting the needs of their ethnic kin. Similarly, Pristina has been happy to let the Albanians of the Preševo Valley remain in Serbia so long as assisting them would endanger their own claims to statehood. It is the needs of the state that dictates the animosity and violence of Kosovo, something that is transplanted to the region and impressed upon it.

With the presence of the EU and the prospect of European integration for both Serbia and Kosovo, there is finally a mutual goal shared by the two states. The European Union has employed the right approach, making membership conditioned on the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia has provided a strong incentive for them to do so. EU accession as strong domestic support and is monumental in fostering domestic support for policymakers in both states. By linking membership and normalized relations, both Pristina and Belgrade have massive incentives to encourage and maintain cool relations. Since 2013, the tensions in Kosovo have been relatively calm with no major instances of violence between ethnic groups.

It is because of the success of the Brussels Agreement that a partition would be a poor policy choice for both Kosovo and Serbia. At minimum it would do little to normalized relations. As shown, ethnic relations are based on the wider concerns of policymakers, not by the close proximity of different groups within the same borders. As shown by the 2004 and 2008 unrest, violence tends to occur where two homogenous ethnic regions meet, rather than where they intermingle. Subsuming north Kosovo into the Serbian state would only make an existing dividing

line a wall, providing a permanent flashpoint for future policymakers to take advantage of. History also shows that partition does little to prevent conflict over land. As it stands, Serbia is making claims to all of Kosovo while Kosovo has little interest in territorial expansion. By transferring northern Kosovo to Serbia, there is the change of a future Kosovo making irredentist claims on the region, just as Serbia may reassert its claims on Kosovo. The presence (or lack thereof) of ethnic Albanians or Serbs in either region makes no difference. Just as Bulgaria continued to push its irredentist claims on land free of Bulgarians, so can Serbia and Kosovo.

The best prospect for the future is to put aside ethnic partition theory as a failed relic of the past. The future of Kosovo and Serbia will best be charted as multi-ethnic states, where peace comes through cooperation and not expulsion. As both nations turn their eyes to European integration, it is important for EU officials to realize the role they play in the region. As the largest actor in the region with the most influence, nested security theory dictates the EU holds its own sway over ethnic relations in the region. It is important that this soft-power is used to encourage both states to continue on their current paths and remember that accession is conditional on normalized relations both between Serbia and Kosovo, but also between Serbs and Albanians within both states.

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