Violence and Political Behavior: Exploring the Relationship Between History of Conflict and Non-Nationalist Voting in Bosnia

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ABSTRACT

MEGAN MACDUFFEE METZGER: Violence and Political Behavior: Exploring the Relationship Between History of Conflict and Non-Nationalist Voting in Bosnia
(Under the direction of Graeme Robertson)

The central question of this thesis is whether historical experiences of violence shape the political culture in an area following civil conflict. I specifically consider whether density of violence during conflict affects the development of support for non-nationalist political parties in the medium-term, particularly in consociational systems. Using Bosnia as a case study, I study the relationship between the density of violence at the municipal level during the war, and voting outcomes for non-nationalist political parties in municipal elections. Here, I find that while a relationship exists, it differs in Bosnia's two entities, suggesting that that relationship also depends on other post-war political and social contexts.

Dedicated to my parents, Elizabeth MacDuffee and Richard Metzger, without whose support none of my accomplishments would be possible.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Conflict profoundly restructures societies, and leaves lasting marks on the functioning of political systems and the political culture of the state. Following a brutal civil conflict with widespread ethnic cleansing, like that which occurred in Bosnia in the early 90s, the challenges of moving forward in creating the post-conflict state are even more stark. In these cases, the development of a functioning democratic state is further hindered by the need for the state to represent and include groups which are deeply distrustful of one another, and in the case of Bosnia deeply divided both in terms of interpersonal relations and in terms of physical space.

In such cases, one solution, and the one used in the case studied here, is the construction of a consociational political system in which power is devolved from the federal level, and ethnic groups retain substantial autonomous power. Critics argue that such agreements, however, have the potential over the long-term to entrench the sort of distrust and ethnic tension present in the immediate post-conflict situation, by disincentivizing cooperation across ethnic lines, and (electorally) rewarding extremist expressions of exclusive nationalism. Thus, in such systems the development of multi-ethnic and non-nationalist parties which expressly seek to develop cooperation across the boundaries of ethnicity is both particularly important and particularly challenging.

The central question of this thesis regards the role of violence during civil wars in shaping opportunities for the development of non-nationalist political parties, particularly in consociational systems. These systems are presented as particularly useful in deeply divided

societies, and have been used in post-conflict situations. It is thus critical to understand the role that a history of violence plays in the development of non-nationalist political parties, which can have an important moderating impact on consociational systems. Using Bosnia as a case study, I explore whether there is a relationship between the density of conflict in a given municipality during the war, and the level of support for non-nationalist political parties in recent elections. While the literature on such questions is somewhat conflicting, I hypothesize that areas which experienced higher degrees of violence during the war will have lower levels of support for non-nationalist political parties in recent years.

In exploring these questions I focus on the 2008 Bosnian municipal elections. I draw on data on both conflict incidents and casualties as measures of levels of violence, and account for other factors which have been shown to be relevant to non-nationalist voting in other studies.

This paper begins with a brief theoretical overview of consociational systems, and the important role that non-nationalist, multi-ethnic parties play within them. I then present the Bosnian case study, briefly outlining the history of the conflict, and then describing the structure of the post-conflict state. Next, examine the work to date on factors contributing to support for non-nationalist political parties in the Bosnian case. Having established this theoretical and historical foundation, I then move on to an examination of my methodology, and an exploration of my findings. Here, based on my analysis, I find that conflict incidents in particular have a relationship to non-nationalist voting, but once data on Republika Srpska and the Federation is disaggregated, this relationship only holds within the Federation. Thus, in my final section, I speculate on the meaning of my findings, suggesting that the impact of

political rhetoric on community remembrance of the war contributes to the divergent outcomes I encounter in my research.

This paper contributes to a wider literature on post-conflict politics. By examining whether violence itself reshapes political landscapes, it helps to add an additional layer to discussions which tend to focus on political structure or social cleavages like ethnicity. While some of these issues are embedded in the concept of "level of violence", my findings suggest that even accounting for several other potential explanatory variables, the level of violence in an area in and of itself can have an impact on the political landscape after the violence has ended. This contributes importantly to our understanding of post-conflict societies, and can help to develop more complex approaches to post-conflict state-building

Chapter 2: Consociational Politics Following Ethnic Conflict: Why Non-Nationalist Voting Matters

Societies emerging from divisive civil conflicts are in a particularly tenuous position in terms of building successful, functioning states. In such cases, the project is to build a system which is predicated on the cooperation of groups who were, only days, weeks or months ago engaged in strategic violence against one another. In cases of ethnic civil war, these groups were often actively seeking to exterminate each other, or to completely remove one another from shared territory. Thus, in addition to the always complex and challenging process of state building, these societies are forced to address the issue of how former enemies can govern together.

One approach to the resolution of these conflicts has been the creation of ethnofederal states, including consociational systems like that in Bosnia. Consociationalism is a form of ethnofederalism which calls for power to be shared proportionally amongst members of various ethnic (or occasionally religious) groups. Arend Ljiphart (1977), the most well-known proponent of this system asserts that for such a system to be successful, it must guarantee participation of all represented groups, base political representation on proportionality between ethnic groups, provide a large degree of autonomy and self-government and include a veto option to prevent the subjugation of groups' vital interests by other groups. The hope in these cases is that by granting (usually ethnic) groups emerging from conflict territorial and political autonomy within a central, federal state, these groups will feel less threatened without violating the principle of state sovereignty. In other words,

separatist minorities will be convinced to maintain the integrity of the state, rather than continue to insist on its dissolution (Jenne 2009: 275). The most important proponent of this form of government is Ljiphart who argues that such power-sharing arrangements will eventually promote cooperation across ethnic lines and prevent the dominance of a single ethnic group. (Ljiphart 1977) These systems are designed to prevent the marginalization of minority groups by the majority. In deeply divided societies, particularly post-conflict societies, this approach is appealing because it can often allow governance to resume quickly despite continued mistrust between groups. On the other hand, critics point out that there are limitations to this approach.

One key criticism of such approaches is the potential for ethnic power-sharing agreements, particularly those based on territorial arrangements like the one in Bosnia, to legitimize ethnic divisions created or enhanced by conflict, and therefor to prevent longer term reconciliation, or even encourage the possibility of secession. In addressing these critiques, Horowitz has argued that cooperation comes from a focus on "the specific interests that groups have in the undivided state" (Horowitz, 1985: 628). Conflictingly, however, ethnicized political systems often tend to reproduce exclusivist ethnic concepts of politics, and promote extremism rather than moderation[1]. As Jenne explains, "politicians will compete with one another over who is the strongest champion of the group's national interests" (Jenne 2009: 276) rather than competing with one another over substantive issues which may be relevant across ethnic groups. Gunther and Diamond have argued persuasively that this hinders the process of state development and democratization and is generally destructive.

[1] For a more detailed description of this process, see Horowitz 1985, Shepsle and Rabushka 1972, and Reilly 2008.

(Gunther & Diamond 2001) The outcome of such a situation is that politics becomes focused largely or entirely on the ethnic dimension.

The impact of this ethnicization is twofold. First, reconciliation is hindered, because elites benefit from (over)emphasizing divisions between ethnic groups and from portraying a threat from other groups that they as leaders will help to address. Conversely, they will tend to benefit less from approaches based on reconciliation, as their primary duty is representation of a single group. Secondly, state development is stalled. Competition focuses on ethnicity often at the expense of substantive issues, and cooperation between groups in government, which is necessary for state development, is hindered. These problems tend to exist in post-conflict situations regardless, as Reilly (2006: 812) has argued, but critics argue that consociationalism has the potential to increase such struggles. It is here that non-nationalist and multi-ethnic political parties become important.

In a state which is attempting not only to transition from an authoritarian system and a civil conflict, but also attempting ethnic reconciliation after ethnic cleansing, moderation is an important avenue for helping to redevelop trust and cooperation between groups. Further, there is empirical evidence suggesting that states with highly ethnicized political systems which lack moderating voices are more prone to conflict. (Reilly 2006: 813-14) Non-nationalist political parties, when successful, have the potential to create space for non-ethnicized political debate within highly ethnicized systems. Because they compete for votes across ethnic lines, there is also greater incentive to moderate and cooperate rather than to engage in ethnic attacks or separatist rhetoric. (Reilly 2006) Thus, in cases like the one explored here, non-nationalist parties can play a critical role in post-conflict systems, by providing space for cooperation across ethnic lines.

In the end, Ljiphart asserts that the purpose of consociational political systems is to create opportunities for exactly this sort of cooperation and trust across divisive ethnic lines (Ljiphart 1977). As our case study will illustrate, this is not a clear and given consequence of such a system. Inclusion of cooperative coalitions and explicitly non-nationalist political parties help to provide avenues for such interethnic cooperation.

Chapter 3: Bosnia: History and State Structure

In the preceding section I have outlined the ways in which non-nationalist political parties are important in promoting interethnic cooperation in consociational systems. Given that these systems are put forth as an approach to post-conflict state-building, it is important to understand the impact that conflict has on the development of such political parties. Here, I consider the case of the war in Bosnia in examining whether there is a relationship between levels of violence during the recent conflict, and levels of support for non-nationalist parties in the medium-term post-conflict.

The war in Bosnia occurred as a central component of the disintegration of the federal Yugoslav state. At its most basic level this was a war over territory. The political focus of animosity between the three groups was a disagreement on the boundaries of the new Bosnian state, how it should be governed, and how much autonomy should be given to different ethnic communities. In this struggle, exclusivist nationalist rhetoric was deployed as a key strategy by political elites in order to galvanize the population and to enhance their base of power.

The violence of the war was protracted and brutal. It included large-scale acts of ethnic cleansing, and the displacement and redistribution of populations throughout the country. Although the dominant narrative in the western media has tended to be one of Serb aggression against Croats and Bosniaks, it is important to clarify that while, particularly by the end of the war, a large degree of aggression came from the Serbs who had the full

military backing of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) as well as the Milosevic government in Belgrade, throughout the war all sides were both victims and perpetrators of violence. (Bieber, 2006: 25-27)

This violence was actively ethnicized by the rhetoric leading up to the conflict as well as by the way in which the violence was framed by elites and the media. As the violence became ethnicized, it also became localized. (Toal & Dahlman 2011: 37-38) Gagnon has argued that this strategy of organizing and ethnicizing violence results in the "demobilization" of opposition voices which have the potential to challenge the dominance of elites in unstable, transitional political contexts. (Gagnon 2004: 19) Once these elite forces, however, have shaped violent local narratives of interethnic relations, these narratives become very real motivators for local actors. Thus, elite machinations become instigating factors in more localized, personalized violence, and for the continuation of ethnic war. It is critical to remember, however, that these ethnic divisions are not necessarily, inherent or indigenous to local communities. Historical realities of ethnic tensions exist, but their mobilization into radical, violent conflict is an elite-driven phenomenon.

The war continued despite the attempted interventions of the international community and the European Union. Diplomatic attempts to find a resolution repeatedly failed. Violence only ended following the brutal massacre of Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica. Following the massacre, the US and NATO deployed airstrikes, and this military intervention forced a compromise, in the form of the Dayton Peace Accords. (Bieber, 2006: 27-29)

At the end of the war, Bosnia was a categorically different place than it had been before. Thought never the multi-ethnic utopia sometimes portrayed in the media, Bosnia had once been a relatively heterogeneous area, marked by high levels of interethnic cooperation

and trust. After the war, the population structure was completely redistributed and the demography of the state entirely shifted. Post-war Bosnia is comprised of three main ethnic groups "largely concentrated in three ethnically homogenous areas" (Bieber 2006: 29). Between 100,000 and 300,000 people had been killed and millions more displaced. It is this divided society that the Dayton Peace Accords were meant to govern. (Bieber 2006)

Dayton was an uneasy compromise between the three parties to the conflict, and the result of "heavy American arm-twisting" (Bose 2). The authors of Dayton would argue that the unusual structure created by the agreement was an unavoidable necessity in order to achieve a peaceful solution in 1995. This may be the case. Many have argued that the Serbs largely agreed to the solution because of the guarantee of a large degree of autonomy for Republika Srpska within the state. (Juncos, 2005: 91) Further, at least some of the provisions were designed either explicitly or implicitly to be temporary. (Chandler, 2005) Regardless, this agreement created the institutions and guidelines which continue to structure the Bosnian state today.

The state created by the Dayton Accords is based on a consociational federal system. As discussed above, supporters of consociationalism argue that it helps to create stable systems by acknowledging and accounting for ethnic divisions in the structure of the state. In Bosnia, therefor, it was seen as a way to bring an end to the conflict, while simultaneously maintaining a unitary state.

Bosnia's state structure is incredibly complex. At the federal level, the presidency and most other important positions are either ethnically defined, or proportionally allocated by ethnicity. Additionally, each ethnic community has veto power which is so loosely defined as to arguably be applicable in most situation. The federal government, however, does not have

much centralized capacity. The state is made up of two "entities", Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Federation) each of which has an extraordinary amount of autonomy and self-government capacity. This system creates a highly decentralized state with very little power concentrated at the federal level. Although federal capacity has increased in recent years in a direct response to EU pressure, the two entities continue to function independently to a large degree. Beyond the entity division, power is further devolved to the local level. In the Federation, this includes a set of powers granted to the ten cantons, each of which has its own constitution, government, etc. 8 of the cantons are more or less mono-ethnic, but within the two multi-ethnic cantons, there are further autonomy rules granted to municipalities with a majority that is a minority within the canton. Finally, municipalities have municipal councils which also have a substantial degree of power over local governance. In the RS, the cantonal system does not exist, but municipal councils are still present. (Belloni 2007: 46-49)

In much the way that critics of consociationalism fear, this system incentivizes ethnically based politics. In fact, at times it requires it. For certain positions, citizens have to vote for candidates based on their ethnicity. This is problematic for many reasons, not least because it denies access to certain positions to people who don't identify with one of the three major ethnic groups (such as Jews or Roma). It also serves to reaffirm the ethnic divisions which were created by the war. While ethnic power-sharing itself is a holdover from Yugoslav policies, the emphasis on ethnicity within the current system over-ethnicizes today's politics, and keeps narratives of separatism and nationalism at the forefront of political campaigns. Candidates have no incentive to craft moderate, issue-centered positions, but instead can gain a large measure of success simply by effectively deploying radical

nationalist rhetoric. Thus, calling for the possible independence of the RS, for example, is an effective electoral strategy, rather than a fringe position. (Reilly, 2006)

The effect of such a system has been to create an ongoing sense of unease not only about the political system in general, but also regarding the very viability of the borders of the country. (Juncos, 2005: 90) This environment creates a political culture which breeds distrust, not reconciliation. Elites, particularly those in RS, but also in Herzegovina have little incentive to push for increased cohesion, as they benefit from the ethnic outbidding created by the decentralized, ethnicized state. In this process, it is individual citizens who lose. The Bosnian state in its current form is slow and ineffective. Economic and political development are slowed by elites who gain from hijacking the process.

These factors make Bosnia an ideal initial case study for the examination of the role that history of violence plays in the development of non-nationalist political parties in consociational systems. In many ways, Bosnia has been a test-case for this type of solution to post-conflict state-building. Additionally, the conflict is relatively recent, and there is data available on incidents of violence during the war. Finally, unlike many other potential cases, the war in Bosnia has been over for a significant period of time. Large-scale violence has not occurred in the country since 1995. Further, elections have been so closely overseen by the international community, so more than many other post-conflict states we can be relatively certain that voting procedures were fair, and elections were “clean”.

The next section will focus on research done to date on non-nationalist voting in Bosnia. These previous studies lay the foundation upon which the study conducted here is built. They also help to clarify which variables need to be included in the analysis as control variables.

Chapter 4: Theories of Non-Nationalist Voting and Support in Bosnia

Above, I have outlined why non-nationalist political parties can be important in highly ethnicized political systems, and briefly explained the structure of the Bosnian political system. Here I will look at some of the existing work pointing towards factors which may play a role in promoting or inhibiting the development of such parties. There has been some recent substantive work on non-nationalist voting in particular in Bosnia, but I will also examine work which addresses some of the underlying factors which contribute to separatist sentiment or social distance in the country. While these factors are not direct indicators of non-nationalist voting, they can help us to identify groups which are *unlikely* to support non-nationalist political parties, because of their expressly exclusivist perspectives on communal life in Bosnia.

Pugh and Cobble's work on non-nationalist voting was done relatively early and focused on municipal elections in the late 1990s, as such, we might expect some of their findings to have changed over time. Nonetheless, they identified several major variables which contributed to support for non-nationalist parties in municipal elections. Firstly, ethnicity was found to be a critical factor, where Bosniaks are substantially more willing to vote for non-nationalist parties than other ethnicities. (Pugh and Cobble 2001: 36) This is a finding that essentially all studies of the region make note of, and it is critical to clarify that it does not necessarily imply that Bosniaks are somehow less nationalist. Instead, it should be interpreted as illustrative of the fact that a centralized state is more clearly in line with the

goals of Bosniak politicians than Serb or Croat politicians, both of whom would be sacrificing extraordinary degrees of autonomy for their communities should the state become more centralized. Thus, these communities have a much stronger incentive to engage in exclusivist rhetoric than Bosniak politicians who would lose much less from the centralization of the state. Additionally, and probably because of these factors, the largest non-nationalist party, the SDP, while multi-ethnic, is more influential in Bosniak areas than in other areas of the country.

Population density was also found to be a significant indicator. Here, rural areas were less supportive of non-nationalist votes (Pugh & Cobble 2001: 37). This is one indicator where I suspect there may have been change over time. As non-nationalist political parties have become more well-known and spread more evenly into less densely populated areas, the rural urban divide may be less substantial than it was in 2000. Indeed, my analysis below would seem to indicate some shift in this relationship.

Finally, Pugh & Cobble (2001: 39) found that displaced voters were more nationalist than those voting in their current municipality of residence. This is a factor which we do not have direct data to represent, however, it would seem to potentially be an indicator that personal experiences with violence and ethnic cleansing make individuals less likely to support non-nationalist political parties. As such, it might suggest that casualties would be more impactful than conflict incidents, as higher casualty numbers include higher numbers of displaced persons.

Both Paula Pickering and John Hulsey have done substantially more recent studies examining support for non-nationalist political parties in Bosnia. Pickering finds substantial evidence for values-based factors in contributing to non-nationalist voting. She finds, for

example, that levels of religiosity and participation in civil society organizations are related to lower levels of support for non-nationalist parties. This is a finding that contradicts much of the received wisdom regarding group participation. Pickering argues that because of the fractured nature of post-conflict societies, group activities become centers for intraethnic bonding rather than interethnic cooperation. (Pickering, 2009).

O'Laughlin and Toal's work on separatist sentiment in the Balkans and the North Caucuses comes to a similar conclusion regarding religiosity. They argue along similar lines that religiosity tends to reproduce exclusivist in-group/out-group sentiment that increases separatist sentiment. (O'Laughlin and Toal 2009: 33) Indeed, this work generally seems to concur with Pickering's findings that values-based factors and personal experiences play a critical role in shaping individual's political positions in Bosnia. One particularly interesting finding of this study, however, was that experience with violence did not have a clear effect on support for separatist sentiment. This effect varied widely between ethnic groups with some groups of respondents who had *not* had personal experiences with violence expressing greater separatist sentiment than other groups who *did* have such experiences.

These values-based factors are not represented in this study. The focus of this paper is on the ways in which violence reshape political communities. This is an intimately related, yet separate question from the way in which individual experiences with violence impact individual voting patterns. As such, in this work it is necessary to work with aggregate measures that represent the political community at the municipal level as a whole, and in general value-based measures are not available at that level. Ideally, future work would combine these two separate lines of inquiry in order to get a broader picture of political

culture since the war, but this particular study is limited to questions of municipal, rather than individual level shifts.

Hulsey's work on non-nationalist voting finds that there is an enormous impact of electoral context on the outcome of voting in Bosnian elections, particularly with regards to support for non-nationalist parties. Here, he argues that "mono-ethnic non-competitive" elections such as the cantonal assembly were the most likely to promote support for non-nationalist voting, as there was less pressure to vote for a nationalist candidate in opposition to a nationalist candidate from another ethnicity. He argues that the structure of elections is more important than other factors in contributing to electoral outcomes. (Hulsey 2011) This contextual model is less critical in our current analysis. The question of whether levels of violence impact levels of support for non-nationalist political parties should not seem to vary between different electoral contexts.

This research to date suggests a number of components which influence levels of support for non-nationalist political parties in Bosnia not all of which can be numerically accounted for in this study. When possible, however, these alternate, perhaps more accurately complimentary, explanations have been introduced into the analysis. In general, research to date has focused on comparatively examining contemporary factors which contribute to support for non-nationalist parties. The analysis that follows attempts to compliment these analyses by positing that historical factors continue to impact political behavior, even when accounting for the structural factors typically put forward as explanatory of non-nationalist voting.

I look specifically at the effect that levels of violence in a municipality have on non-nationalist voting in that municipality in the medium-term post-conflict. As mentioned

above, the relationship between historical violence and nationalist/separatist sentiment is somewhat unclear. Here, I hypothesize that there will be a negative relationship between levels of violence during the war, and non-nationalist voting today. That is, municipalities which experienced more conflict will have lower levels of support for non-nationalist agendas.

Chapter 5: Data and Methodology

There are two available sets of data which encapsulate in some measure the concept of density of violence during the Bosnian civil war. The first is data collected by the ACLED project. This data is mostly gleaned from media data sources, and secondarily from NGOs and intelligence services (including the CIA). It attempts to document individual incidents of violence during the war, categorizing these based on the type of engagement, the parties to the incident, casualty data when available, and precise geographic location recorded by longitude and latitude. This data contains 543 observations of conflict incidents between the years of 1991 and 1995. The problem with this data is that owing to the manner of collection, it clearly is incomplete, something which is acknowledged by the researchers who created it. Additionally, it is likely that the data that is available is skewed towards urban areas and front lines where there would be more likely to have been substantial media coverage. It is also likely to be skewed towards more important events and events with higher casualty outcomes. As has been noted, much of the violence that occurs during civil wars is small-scale and localized[2]. These events underlay the major encounters which are covered by the media, but are crucial to the way in which civil conflict reshapes societies. Thus, while this data represents the best available resource for mapping the shape of the Bosnian conflict, and creates a useful overview of the density of conflict incidents during the war, it is important to acknowledge its limitations and to attempt to account for them.

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[2] See for example Kalyvas 2006, Kalyvas 2004

In this analysis I have attempted to try to partially account for the deficiencies of this first set of data, by incorporating a second measure: casualty data. The Research and Documentation Center in Sarajevo has as its primary goal the documentation of the Bosnian war. Through extensive research, they have created an exhaustive list of the dead and missing. I use casualties as determined by this organization as a second measure of density of conflict. Using the raw numbers combined with population data from 1991, my analysis is based on casualties per 100 occupants. While some analyses utilize only data on the dead, I have chosen to include both the dead and missing in my analysis. Displacement was a critical component of the Bosnian war, and violence did not only result in large numbers of death, but also the displacement of thousands of people from their homes. In this way, the missing are just as reflective of density of violence as the dead, because if these individuals are still alive they almost certainly represent individuals who have been displaced as a result of the war.

In analyzing voting patterns, I used the 2008 municipal elections, and focused on the rates of non-nationalist voting. Municipal elections serve to elect local governments, which in most cases play the most important role in the day to day life of Bosnian citizens. As such, I chose these elections as a barometer of the types of parties Bosnians view as the most well-suited to address the concerns of their day to day lives. Additionally, these municipal leaders have no direct ability to impact the shape of the state itself, and as such it seemed likely that non-nationalist voting might be higher in this context, as the outcome of supporting such a party was less immediately structurally impactful.

As briefly discussed above, focusing on ethnonationalist parties makes sense in more normalized political environments where nationalist parties make up one component of a

competitive system populated by parties focused on a range of issues. Given the over-ethnicized structure of political competition in Bosnia, however, voting for parties which compete largely on the ethnic dimension is the default. Thus, it is more interesting to focus on the parties which try to counteract this trend by competing on actively integrationist, multi-ethnic platforms. People who vote for nationalist parties are not necessarily expressing an active sense of exclusivist nationalism. Those who vote for non-nationalist parties, however, are actively expressing dissatisfaction with the prevailing nationalist narrative. (Pugh & Cobble 2001: 33)

I focused on the electoral outcomes for four parties which are explicitly non-nationalist: SDP, NSRzB, LDS and NS. I chose these four parties because of their actively integrationist, anti-nationalist positions. These four parties allow me to examine the proportion of the population who are willing to throw their electoral support behind parties which actively seek to undermine the dominant ethno-nationalist rhetoric of the major parties.

I hypothesized that the density of violence during the course of the conflict, as measured by both loss of life and the number of conflict incidents would have a relationship to the level of non-nationalist voting in municipalities in the medium-term post-conflict. My expectation was that higher levels of conflict would tend to lead to greater polarization of ethnic relations, and make the development of support for integrationist, non-nationalist political sentiment more challenging. Therefor, I expect there to be a negative correlation between support for non-nationalist political parties and both conflict incidents and casualties.

Drawing on previous research on non-nationalist voting in Bosnia, I attempted to introduce control variables to account for other known explanations for increased support for integrationist political parties. Data on the Bosnian war is notoriously unevenly available and unevenly reliable. Thus, in approaching my questions I was limited to some degree by the availability of information. One key problem for researchers working in this area is that there has been no census since 1991. As a result, both population estimates and, more importantly for this study, information on ethnic distributions among municipalities are outdated. For some studies it is appropriate to use the ethnic estimates from the 1991 census, but because I am particularly looking at recent voting patterns that measure is inappropriate for my study. Thus, I am unable to account for ethnicity as such in my model.

It is universally recognized that Bosniaks are substantially more supportive of non-nationalist parties than either Croats or Serbs in Bosnia. I would therefor expect that because my analysis lacks a variable for ethnicity, even a relatively strong model will be unable to account for a substantial portion of variance in non-nationalist voting which might otherwise be accounted for by ethnicity. What we do have information on is the majority ethnic group in each canton. We also know that most cantons are largely monoethnic, with the majority ethnic group constituting a very large majority. Finally, we know that Republika Srpska is largely homogenously Serb. By introducing dummy variables for Republika Srpska, and then for each of the 10 cantons into my regression model, I am able to partially account for the impact of ethnicity on my model. This is an imperfect solution, but given the availability of data this was an attempt to account for an important variable to the largest degree possible.

Further, I introduce variables for GDP per-capita, population density, and presence of a major metropolitan area in the municipality (defined as one of the 10 largest cities in the

country), as well as a dummy variable for municipalities split by the Interethnic Boundary Line, in order to account for factors found to be meaningful in previous studies. This allows us to more clearly see the impact of the history of violence even given the influence of structural factors.

I begin with simple OLS regressions to test the basic relationships between my variables of interest and non-nationalist voting. Having examined this simple relationship, I then introduce my control variables. Finally, I separate the cases from Republika Srpska from those in the Federation and examine the relationship between conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting in each entity separately.

Chapter 6: Findings

First, I ran a simple OLS regression on each of my indicators of conflict density, to see whether there was an initial relationship between these variables and rates of non-nationalist voting. Table 1 shows the outcome of these regressions.

Table 1: Simple OLS Regressions for Conflict Incidents and Casualties

Measure of Violence	Std. Error	Beta	R^2
Conflict Incidents***	.001	.315	.099
Casualties*	.015	-.160	.026

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

What we can see here is that there is clearly a strong linear relationship between each of our measures of conflict density and non-nationalist voting. In neither case is the R^2 particularly encouraging, however it is important to note that a very high R^2 was also not anticipated, given the necessary exclusion of several key control variables. Additionally, my hypothesis did not necessarily anticipate that violence would explain the majority of variance in non-nationalist voting, only that it was a factor which had not yet been considered.

What is interesting about these numbers is that they have a reversed directionality, with casualties bearing the expected negative relationship and conflict incidents unexpectedly bearing a positive relationship to non-nationalist voting. This was puzzling. However, as I moved forward with the analysis, it becomes clear that casualties are not actually a

statistically significant predictor once control variables are introduced.

In moving forward with my analysis, I next introduced control variables selected based on previou

s research into a multiple OLS regression model in order to understand significance of the relationship between these measures of conflict and non-nationalist voting patterns with more nuance. The outcome of these regressions can be seen in tables 2 and 3 below. Please note that population density is included, but the dummy variable for metropolitan municipalities is not. These two variables were highly correlated, and had a similar impact on the outcome of the regression, thus I chose to exclude the dummy variables. I felt population density over all was a better expression of urbanity than the metro dummy variable.

Table 2: Multiple OLS Regression on the Relationship Between Conflict Incidents and Non-Nationalist Voting

Variable	Std. Error	Beta
Conflict Incidents**	.001	.170
GDP per capita	.000	.084
Population Density	.000	.113
Dayton Municipalities	.017	-.084
Republika Srpska***	.018	-.548

* p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Adjusted R^2 = .407

Table 3: Multiple OLS Regression on the Relationship Between Conflict Incidents and Non-Nationalist Voting

Variable	Std. Error	Beta
Casualties per 100	.004	-.017
GDP per capita	.000	.066
Population Density***	.000	.222
Dayton Municipalities	.018	-.106
Republika Srpska***	.019	-.541

* p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Adjusted R^2 = .386

In the first regression, looking at the relationship between conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting we find that even after the control variables are introduced, there is still a relatively strong, statistically significant relationship between number of conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting. The relationship is positive meaning that higher levels of conflict are related to stronger support for non-nationalist political parties. Additionally, there are several important findings in this analysis. First is that neither population density nor GDP per capita have a significant relationship to non-nationalist voting. This is somewhat unexpected given previous research, however given the increasingly visible profile of political parties in Bosnia, it is perhaps not shocking that these factors are less important than they have been in the past. Several of our control variables, however, were important. When we ran the regression using the data on urban municipalities in place of population density, we did find these municipalities to be more supportive of non-nationalist voting, as anticipated. The most important predictor, however, is the dummy variable for municipalities in Republika Srpska. These municipalities are much less supportive of non-nationalist political parties than those in the Federation. This was also anticipated based on previous research.

In the second regression we can see that once control variables are introduced, casualties per 100 inhabitants is no longer a statistically significant predictor of non-nationalist voting. This may be explained by the fact that the Pearson Correlation Coefficient between this casualty measure and the location of the municipality in Republika Srpska is .24, and is significant at the .01 level. Thus, it is likely that much of the variance which seemed to be explained by the casualty number alone is actually situated in the locational

variable for Republika Srpska. This makes some sense given that we know that ethnic cleansing was more severe in Republika Srpska. Additionally, it would help to explain why in the initial simple regressions, the directionality for casualties was negative as opposed to that for conflict incidents which was positive.

In order to dig somewhat deeper into the impact of geographic variables on the outcome of the analysis, I then ran a regression model including all statistically significant variables (conflict incidents, casualties per incident, and metropolitan location) except the Republika Srpska dummy variable, but running the model separately for Republika Srpska and the Federation. Table 4 shows the outcome of the model for the Federation and Table 5 shows the outcome for Republika Srpksa.

Table 4: Multiple OLS Regression on the Relationship Between Conflict Incidents and Non-Nationalist Voting in the Federation

Variable	Std. Error	Beta	p-value
Conflict Incidents*	.002	.264	.057
GDP per capita***	.000	.358	.005
Population Density	.000	-.043	.785
Dayton Municipalities	.027	-.064	.541

* p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Adjusted R^2 = .192

Table 5: Multiple OLS Regression on the Relationship Between Conflict Incidents and Non-Nationalist Voting in Republika Srpska

Variable	Std. Error	Beta	p-value
Conflict Incidents	.002	.144	.287
GDP per capita	.000	-.112	.399
Population Density	.000	.150	.254
Dayton Municipalities	.020	-.063	.641

* p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .01
Adjusted R^2 = .002

What these regressions show is that the relationship between conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting differs between the Federation and Republika Srpska. In the Federation, we find the relationship to be strong and statistically significant. While the adjusted r-squared is relatively low, showing that only about 20% of variance is explained by the model, this is not completely surprising, as we knew from previous research that there were significant predictors which we were unable to introduce into our analysis. This regression nonetheless suggests that in the Federation the level of conflict during the war bears a relationship to the level of support for non-nationalist voting today.

In Republika Srpska the findings are quite different. Once it is separated from the Federation in the analysis, we find that there is no significant relationship between the level of conflict in Republika Srpska during the war and the support for non-nationalist political parties today.

In order to partially account for the lack of an ethnicity variable, I ran a final regression on only the cases in the Federation, introducing dummy variables for the cantons. Canton 5 was excluded as it has the smallest population, but excluding other single cantons did not alter the results of the regression. These results are reported in Table 6.

Table 6: Multiple OLS Regression on the Relationship Between Conflict Incidents and Non-Nationalist Voting in the Federation Including Dummies for the Cantons

Variable	Std. Error	Beta	p-value
Conflict Incidents**	.002	.352	.011
GDP Per Capita**	.000	.421	.001
Population Density	.000	-.101	.498
Dayton Municipalities	.027	-.125	.238
Canton 1	.063	-.007	.963
Canton 2	.079	-.093	.440
Canton 3	.062	.286	.118
Canton 4	.063	.010	.955
Canton 6	.063	-.225	.214
Canton 7	.063	-.259	.104
Canton 8	.077	-.026	.848
Canton 9	.066	-.148	.374
Canton 10	.069	-.132	.363

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$
Adjusted $R^2 = .374$

What we can see here, is that none of the dummy variables for the cantons are statistically significant. The significance of the relationship between conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting, however, is strengthened. The R^2 is also dramatically improved. There is also no discernable difference between the multi-ethnic cantons (Cantons 6 and 7) and the mono-ethnic cantons. The improvement of the R^2 suggests that ethnicity (at least as represented by the makeup of the cantons) accounts for a substantial portion of variance in non-nationalist voting, but there is nonetheless a relationship between violence and non-nationalist voting within the Federation.

In the next section, I will offer some tentative explanations for the variant outcomes between the Federation and Republika Srpska, and discuss ways in which future research might dig deeper in understanding the impact of conflict on ethnic politics post-conflict.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Early in this paper I hypothesized that higher levels of conflict would have a relationship with lower levels of non-nationalist voting. The outcome of my analysis finds that this relationship is both directionally different than expected, and also not uniform across the country.

Firstly, once other potential factors are accounted for, there is no relationship between casualties per 100 inhabitants and non-nationalist voting. On the other hand, there is a relatively strong, statistically significant relationship between conflict incidents and non-nationalist voting, but this relationship varies by geographic location, with no relationship present in Republika Srpska once the two entities are disaggregated.

This outcome is interesting in two ways. First, it indicates that there does seem to be, in the Federation at least, some relationship between the level of conflict during the war and non-nationalist voting in recent years. Interestingly, this relationship is opposite in terms of directionality from our expectations. While this is surprising, it is not entirely in conflict with existing literature. As discussed briefly above, research into the impact of violence on nationalist sentiment has had mixed outcomes. This outcome would seem to indicate that areas which had higher levels of violence during the war are more likely to have stronger support for non-nationalist political parties than those with less violence. Initially, I wondered if the directionality could be related to the higher instance of violence in more urban, densely populated areas, but neither accounting for population density nor for urbanity

of municipalities changes the significance or the directionality of the model. Instead, it would seem that higher levels of violence have some real connection to higher levels of support for non-nationalist political parties. Further, the level of casualties is not significant. This suggests that it is incidents of violence, rather the deadliness of that violence, which is significant. How can we interpret this outcome?

First, it can be useful to consider the structure of the variable itself. As noted above, the variable that is available to measure conflict incidents is largely skewed towards larger-scale violent incidents such as shelling, army offensives, and well-documented cases of ethnic cleansing. It excludes much of the small-scale violence that marks civil wars. Thus when we are looking at the relationship between incidents of violence and non-nationalist voting, what we are largely examining in reality is the relationship between larger-scale well-documented violence and non-nationalist voting in an area. Thus, what we find is that areas that were exposed to more highly visible violence now tend to have political cultures which are more supportive of non-nationalist political parties. In this study, we can only theorize as to the reasons behind this finding. One possible explanation is that high levels of conflict restructure society demographically in an important way. For example, that communities with higher levels of violence are more mono-ethnic at the end of the war, or that there are demographic similarities among these areas that are not reflected in this study because we lack accurate, up to date census information. Accurate data on ethnicity could potentially usefully expand our understanding of this outcome.

This finding also brings up an interesting puzzle for future research. If this study shows the impact of mostly large-scale violence, how does this differ from, or combine with the impact of smaller scale, more personalized violence? Kalyvas (2004) has argued that

much of the violence in civil wars happens at the individual level, and is highly personalized. Does this sort of violence, poorly reflected in the data available here, have a different impact on the way political cultures shift after violent conflict? The current study suggests, for example, that a community which saw high levels of shelling and army offensives, would be likely to have a higher level of support for non-nationalist political parties. Would a community with higher levels of interpersonal, small-scale violence, such as neighbors forcing neighbors out of their homes, or individual murders and rapes, show a similar relationship? Are these communities the same, or did small-scale violence occur in areas where large-scale violence may have been less present? A finer grained look at the way in which different forms of violence impact political culture in the medium term could provide useful information on the factors shaping political competition in post-conflict societies.

The second interesting outcome of this study is the finding that our results are drastically different in Republika Srpska versus the Federation. This finding confirms, and expands on some existing understandings of political culture in Bosnia. Several scholars have argued that the Bosnian political system really functions as 2 or 3 separate political systems, where competition is within these ethnicized groups rather than between parties from all three[3]. Republika Srpska's political culture is particularly exclusivist.

The political culture in Republika Srpska is unique because of the way secessionist rhetoric is ubiquitous in political competition. Some recent research has suggested that certain politicians have an incredible level of influence over the media, and this is particularly true in the case of Milorad Dodik, president of Republika Srpska and leader of the SNSD (Marko 2011: 177-179). Dodik consistently emphasizes the option of secession,

[3] See Hulsey 2011 and Bochsler 2006

and promotes an exclusivist nationalism in Republika Srpksa. Part of this rhetoric includes the notion that a multi-ethnic Bosnia following the war is impossible, and an imposed, mistaken creation of the West. (Toal and Maksic 2011: 283) Some public opinion polls show more than half of Bosnian Serbs supporting Republika Srpska's separation from the state, and only 13% supporting a strong common state. In contrast, even among Croats who might also have an interest in independence for their entity, levels of support for secession are substantially lower. These levels of support are not inevitable. They grow out of a political culture in Republika Srpska which continues to embed fear and exclusivity, and where much of the media is controlled by elites with a vested interest in maintaining tension. For elites in Republika Srpska a stronger Bosnia means loss of power and autonomy. There is no incentive to promote integration. In the Federation, in contrast, even for Bosniak nationalists, preserving a centralized state is an advantage, because they represent the majority. This means that within the Federation, divergent views are aired and expressed more readily, and the history of war is not constantly used as a weapon to promote desire for separation.

While further study will be necessary to conclusively demonstrate why this study's outcomes are as they are, we can begin to tentatively posit explanations for these results. I speculate that these divergent political cultures shape the way that individual memories of the war and the experiences of communities during the war are remembered, and that this in turn impacts the way that non-nationalist parties are able to develop support. In Republika Srpska, the dominant rhetoric creates a culture where war memories are always present, and those memories are used to create a sense of threat. The outcome that we see in Republika Srpska is a greater homogenization of collective memory, whereby there is a single dominant discourse on the war. This necessarily creates little space for the development of divergent,

competing memories of conflict, and individual experiences have the potential to be subsumed within this dominant narrative. Thus, in this context, a community's unique experience with violence is not a factor in the way that political culture develops following conflict. Instead, where variance might have occurred based on such community experiences, this variance is overcome by the dominant political narratives.

On the other hand, in the Federation there is a greater diversity of views present in the dominant discourse. Political rhetoric in this context is necessarily shaped by the fact that the common state meets the needs of political elites, and therefor is not demonized. Where elites are not threatened by the creation of a centralized state, elites supporting multi-ethnic, non-nationalist agendas have a greater incentive, because there are sources of power available through adopting these perspectives. Additionally, where there is a greater diversity of views within the dominant political discourse, moderate perspective are able to move away from strictly "moderate nationalism" and support for non-nationalist parties becomes more accessible. This results in a less homogenizing political rhetoric, which I theorize allows the experiences of individual citizens and individual communities to more naturally impact the political culture. The outcome, then, in these cases is that experiences during the war factor into the way that communities respond to non-nationalist political parties. Unique community experiences with violence become a component in decision-making processes, and in the types of political competition which are successful.

For now, we can only speculate on these issues, but future research should seek to understand the impact of unique political contexts on the long-term effects of violence on political culture. The role of political rhetoric in shaping the impact of war memories on

political outcomes is an aspect of post-conflict transitions which has not been sufficiently explored.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This paper has explored the medium term impact of civil war violence on support for non-nationalist political parties in Bosnia. The statistical analysis found that there is a relationship between level of conflict during the war and levels of support for non-nationalist political parties, but this relationship is only present in the Federation and not in Republika Srpska. I have speculated that these divergent outcomes are related to differing political discourses in the two entities. On the one hand, the dominant discourse in Republika Srpska is monolithic, and conceptualizes the memory of the war in a single way, using that memory as a tool to create fear and anxiety and promote exclusivist sentiments which benefit political elites. In the Federation, on the other hand, while extremist politics are certainly still extremely important, there are multiple narratives which are a part of dominant political discourse. Here, both memories of the war, and narratives of interethnic relations are not unitary. I theorize that in Republika Srpska where one narrative is dominant, individual community experiences with violence are over shadowed by this hegemonic societal story, and thus community experiences become less important to voting outcomes. In the Federation, however, where narratives are more diverse, community experiences remain an important predictor of support for non-nationalist political parties.

This paper suggests multiple important avenues for further research. First, the structure of data on conflict incidents limits the scope of this study to the impact of mostly large-scale or well-documented violence. This presents the question of whether the impact of

small-scale, localized violence which is chronically underrepresented in research on civil conflict has the same impact as large-scale violence on the development of political culture following the end of the war. Here, newly emerging data from the Research and Documentation Center which attempts to catalogue violence during the war, and which includes many smaller-scale incidents, could be useful in future projects which seek to explore the impact of small-scale violence in particular on post-conflict politics.

Secondly, further research should be done on the role of political rhetoric in shaping narratives of war, and the way that war remembrance relates to political behavior. Here I have speculated some relationships between hegemonic political discourses and the homogenization of war memory, but certainly detailed research should be conducted in-country in order to test this speculation and to understand more clearly the way in which these phenomenon effect the development of political systems in post-conflict societies.

Finally, this research has suggested that violence has the potential, in and of itself, to impact voting behavior following conflict, but it is only based on a single case study. Comparative research from other post-conflict societies both in the post-communist world as well as in other regions will better broaden our understanding of the way violence effects political behavior and political culture.

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