

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO  
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PH.D. DISSERTATION

**POLITICAL COMPETITION AND REJECTION OF  
NATIONALISM IN WARTIME YUGOSLAVIA**

**THE CASE OF TUZLA (1990-1995)**

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TUTOR:

PROF. ANDREA CARATI

DIRECTOR:

PROF. FRANCESCO ZUCCHINI

PH.D. CANDIDATE:

GORAN FILIC

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## ***DEDICATION***

This research is dedicated to my future family and my other half Ana to serve as a reminder of previous struggles and a reminder for capacity to persevere with resilience and embrace life to always go forward, higher and to continually better themselves first and then those around them second and lastly to maintain the unrivaled will, spirit and resolved determination much like Spartans and Texans: *‘μολὼν λαβέ’* — *‘come and take it’ ! Always.* To the Government of United States and Texas that took me in, shaped me into who I am today and gave me an opportunity for a new life that enabled me to attain the highest echelons of academic studies. To all those who have perished in the senseless wars and to the new generations of Yugoslavs so that they make better choices from those of 1990.

- Goran Filic

## ***PERSONAL NOTE***

As a refugee during the 1990s from the Yugoslav wars who endured everything that the war had to offer, my multiethnic family, experienced all, from property looting, prisoners of war, refugee camps and frontlines deaths. I have been incorporated into the Yugoslav tragedy since I was ten years old when the Yugoslav violent collapse unfolded in front of my eyes. When the city of Vares fell, my father was taken as prisoner of war (POW), my uncle lost his life fighting in the frontlines, my two brothers also ended up in the trenches but miraculously remained unscathed, while mom and I were transported to the refugee camp deprived of most basic human needs for months. All these events have pushed me to fully understand the Yugoslav tragedy. It did not make a lot of sense that such violent outburst of violence occurred in such short period, especially after nearly five decades of peace. Now, almost twenty five years since, my family and I have made Dallas, Texas our new home and while Yugoslav war memories have become bleak, they have not been entirely forgotten. In the meantime, driven by the past experiences, I am now a scholar of political science, analyzing root causes of violence but more importantly, addressing instances where peace prevailed in a country that no longer exists, yet it still remains a socio-political phenomena. Because I was directly impacted by Yugoslav violent disintegration and was never fully satisfied with how the Yugoslav conflict, ethnic identities and nationalism particularly in Bosnia were addressed, after quarter of a decade in United States with a journey from a refugee camp in central Bosnia to the library halls of Southern Methodist and Columbia Universities now a doctoral student at the University of Milan, I want to offer my view of the conflict, but not only conflict, rather instance where peace won and nationalism was defeated. I hope that my view based on my

experiences and years spent in the region researching and working is more reflective of the realities on the ground. My interest in the city of Tuzla, was a continual process of questioning the practices and representations that often are subsumed under the rubric of nationalism, particularly cases of Serbian and Croatian radical nationalism and its subsequent violent outcome, not to exclude all other -isms, Bosnian Muslim, Slovenian, Albanian, Macedonian and Montenegrin. They all had their part in dismantling Yugoslavia. In this thesis, I explore the counter-intuitive phenomena of peace during the war in Bosnia, where the working class of a mining city defeated virulent nationalism, territorial partition, rejected all types of ethnic, national and religious oppressions and successfully maintained the rule of law in the city. Tuzla's wartime leadership opted to mobilize citizens around the civic values, which better reflected the preferences of Tuzla's citizens as they were never inclined towards ethno-national or religious divisions, which reasserted the particularity of their undivided city. How and why Tuzlan's were able to accomplish this, will be discussed in the next six chapters.

## *LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS*

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DPA	Dayton Peace Accords
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	High Representative
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Union
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IMF	Monetary Fund
JNA	Yugoslav People Army
KPJ	Communist Party of Yugoslavia
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDH	Independent State of Croatia
RS	Republika Srpska
SDA	Party of Democratic Action
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SDS	Serbian Democratic Party
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SKJ	League of Communists of Yugoslavia
TO	Territorial Defense
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization



# MAP OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA



Map No. 3689 Rev. 12 UNITED NATIONS  
June 2007

Department of Peacekeeping Operations  
Cartographic Section

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## ***CHAPTER ONE: Introduction***

### **1. Tuzla: The case for keeping the peace within a civil war**

Since the end of the Cold War a large body of academic work was generated on the subject of ethnic, civil and intra-state conflict. While the balance of powers between East and West kept small regional and ethno-national conflicts at bay (Woodward 1995), when the USSR and the Eastern bloc collapsed we witnessed a proliferation of intra-state, ethnic conflicts. When the Cold War ended, the West consolidated its power through NATO's enlargement and European Integration (Wagner 1993). While East, on the other hand, in particular multiethnic states of former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia went through the series of violent ethnic and civil conflicts. The former Yugoslavia experienced the explosion of ethnic wars surfaced to describe the kind of violence witnessed, such as ethnic cleansing, and successive list of conflicts resulting in disintegration of the larger state into a smaller inefficient ones, a term came to be known as 'balkanization'.

The majority of academic literature provides a comprehensive list of why and how conflict in Yugoslavia developed, but very few studies discuss about instances where rejection of violence and radical

nationalism did not materialize and where peace prevailed. Even fewer can offer an explanation how a particular community, city or a region managed peace when it was surrounded by armed conflict. It is true that the wars in Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo and in particular Bosnia were extremely vicious and Europe has not seen such level of violent crimes conducted against the civilian population since the world war two, but it is also true that ethnic hatred, elite instrumentalization and deconstruction and construction of new ethno-national identities did not succeed in all parts of former Yugoslavia.

One community which reflects the resistance to violence (i.e., which managed to reject nationalists antagonisms, partition of the ethnic bonds, and successfully organize anti-nationalist resistance) is the city of Tuzla, located in the North-East part of Bosnia. While just a typical former Yugoslav urban city much like most of other cities of its size, similar ethnic mix, socialist economic and urban structures, similar historic paths, Tuzla on the other hand, successfully fended off radical nationalism and actively protected all ethnic groups. Tuzla's outcome was at extreme odds with wartime Bosnia, perhaps even with the entire former Yugoslavia. In other words, the circumstances by which Tuzla was able to manage peace, save and nourish anti-

nationalist politics presents a *puz̄z̄le*, a counter intuitive outcome in wartime Bosnia.

However, despite incredibly successful accomplishment and against all odds to maintain its anti-nationalist political narrative and ethnic peace the city of Tuzla has not been properly analyzed but only through handful of news articles commending its success story and with two recent published academic papers (Armakolas 2011; Calori 2015). The main academic literature on Yugoslav dissolution and war that broke out in Bosnia largely circumvents case of Tuzla (Woodward 1995; Little and Sillber 1996; Burg 1997). The case of Tuzla, its civil society and wartime political leadership has been described as exceptional or paradoxical and does not fit in the landscape of nationalist discourse across former Yugoslavia. Therefore, it has been often discredited<sup>1</sup> as presumably having some peculiar characteristics that are responsible for ethnic cohesion and anti-nationalist stand. Because of this, no elaborate investigation of this city has been conducted. Case of Tuzla fell under the academic radar and hence no lessons from its civil society, wartime processes and political leadership had been assessed and acquired. Tuzla does not have unique structural characteristics. In fact, Tuzla's population structure,

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<sup>1</sup> In the recent book by the international scholars' initiative on the Yugoslav controversies (Ingrao & Emmert 2009) a special chapter is dedicated for the safe areas established in 1993 under UNSC - Resolution 836, giving the analysis of the five safe areas (Sarajevo, Gorazde, Bihac, Srebrenica and Zepa) but only light reference to the 6th safe area - Tuzla.



socialist infrastructure urban planning, historical trajectory and cultural and ideological traits as well as the recent wartime military and socio-political dynamics, are comparable to most other Bosnian urban centers, like Sarajevo, Mostar, Zenica, Banja Luka and other cities. Hence far from being exceptional by default, Tuzla went through same type of experiences and socio-political dynamics as the rest of Bosnia but through different processes. And precisely for this reason this research of the case of Tuzla has the potential to provide an alternative to ethnic violence and shed light on the complexities of the Bosnian violent nationalist strategies.

## **2. Primordialism vs. Instrumentalism: Two ways to grasp the Ethnic Conflict in former Yugoslavia**

The present research also addresses two major theoretical approaches, primordialism and instrumentalism, which were tasked to produce explanation for the fall of the Yugoslav project, however in doing so primordialism proved to be nearly negligent by attempting to garrison the premodern and innate hatreds between Southern Slavs [Yugoslav] ethnic groups, while instrumentalist approach tends to bundle up wars in Yugoslavia, in particular war in Bosnia as one [*macro*] unitary elite driven war, positing overreaching assumptions regarding the elite's supposed unchecked capacity and ability to manipulate whomever,

whenever. In terms of the presumed macro war, there were however host of series of [*micro*] fractionalized but amalgamated conflicts, only giving an impression that it was a one clearly, ethnically and territorially well delineated war. On the contrary however, the war in Bosnia was riddled with host of formed and broken alliances [stop-go-wars], list of proclaimed ‘autonomous republics’ and blurred lines among the ‘enemies’ throughout the conflict including places where conflict was absent or where peace was managed. Thus, these processes have two implications which were missed by both instrumentalism and primordialism in respect to case of Tuzla and wars in Bosnia.

For instrumentalism, the implication shows that elites were not omni-manipulative and successful to instigate conflict everywhere. Conversely, if a city managed to maintain peace and reject ethnic violence, then that possibly meant that there is something other than elites or [in combination with] who is/are to be credited with rejection of violence and managing inter-ethnic peace. Thus, instrumentalism appears to fail because of its overreaching omni-manipulative assumptions on the part of the elites without the possibility of looking into the anatomy of the civil society as the possible answer for absence of conflict / instance of peace, in other words failing to observe instances of peace.

Secondly, the implication for the primordialism is the list of the notoriously ‘team switching’ or inter-ethnic military alliance formations and blurred lines among so called ‘ethnic enemies’ with fractionalized conflicts in Bosnia, including the sheer fact of peace in Tuzla in the midst of the ‘ethnic war’, simply contribute more arguments to the list of criticisms that wars among ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, were not caused by primordial ethnic antagonisms. Thus, in terms of the Yugoslav wars, academic literature provides explanations using two major prisms.

Firstly, primordialist explanation for an ethnic conflict leans on old ethnic hatreds and grievances coming to the surface (Kaplan 1994; Van Evera 1996; Geertz 1997; Petrovic 2000; Oberschall 2000) in the absence of the central authority. An approach that posits hatred and resentment against members of the ‘other’ ethnic groups, citing fixed ethnic identities, ancient discontent and bitterness that is rooted deeply in the very root of the ‘ethno’, in this case against other South Slav tribes. The approach claims that Yugoslav society was no exception and these ethnic antagonisms hidden below the surface, as state collapsed suddenly erupted and unleashed the violence. There has been also recent reformulations of the ‘ancient hatred’ concept on part of some primordialist, such as Peterson (2012), who instead of focusing on the ‘ancient hatreds’ hypothesis, focuses more on the role

of 'human nature' and posits that ethnic animosities do not have to be rooted in history for it to play a role in shaping human behavior and actions.

Secondly, the instrumentalist framework focuses on the political elites and their desire for either economic and political gain. In other words, deliberate manipulation by elites to gain economic and political power by rational decision to incite ethnic violence between different ethnic groups (Gurr 1993; Posen 1993; Collier 1998; Varshney 2009). Thus instrumentalists posit that Yugoslav wars were intent of the ethnic elites who, in opportune time of East European democratic liberalization during the 1990s, coupled with internal political and economic crisis, seized an opportunity and manipulated ethnic cleavages of the Yugoslav ethnic groups with an intent to incite hostile acts against each other in order to consolidate or attain political or economic riches. Bianchini and Forage (2004) put it in this way: "ethnic cleansing and calculated war crimes were necessary to build powerful walls between peoples quickly, to establish clear borders and a collective sense of belonging based on separation from 'other' [...] war was a preferred instrument for achieving their goals."

### 3. The Research Aim: Reformulating the Instrumentalist Approach

Main research goal of the thesis is to answer the puzzle of *why and how* the counterintuitive case of Tuzla succeeded in maintaining the inter-ethnic peace. The thesis will attempt to construct a causal mechanism responsible for Tuzla's success. The subgoal of the thesis is to add nuanced inquiry to the instrumentalist approach by positing that instrumentalist approach is partial because firstly, it fails to address *micro* conflicts or absences of conflict within the *macro* war, such as the counterintuitive case of Tuzla. This is to say that thesis will question whether the instrumentalism is able to address in-depth and all intricacies of ethnic conflicts. While war in Bosnia gives an illusion that it was one macro war with explicitly defined consistent and consensual combat sides, when in fact it were rather the host of fractionalized, amalgamated, often changing 'ethnic' alliances, driven conflicts. In this case then, thesis questions consistency of instrumentalist assumptions regarding the elites addressing the assumption of; do all elites operate under the same formidable instrumentalist assumptions? Secondly and more crucially, while attributing all elites with presumed unchecked capacity to instrumentalize the masses, it inadvertently fails to consider the capacity and anatomy of the civil society and its ability to defend from

the elite manipulation i.e., formation, motivation and composition of the society's identity. Therefore, assumption within instrumentalist approach appear automated by which it compartmentalizes civil society as someone or something to be manipulated without a question in hand. Lastly, in this process, it [instrumentalism] consequently brands all elites with the negative connotative attributes which may not always be the case. Therefore, the thesis posits that instrumentalist appears to have some inflexibility in regards to its assumptions on the part of the elites. Thus, crucially to the thesis, because of the above mentioned inconsistencies, cases like Tuzla may go unnoticed [pass under radar] in lieu of either not assessing in-depth conflicts or indolently bundling them up. This kind of approach, gives appearance of a war(s), which may be very different from the realities on the ground. Hence, problem with this perception, once the conflict is defined strictly in 'ethnic' terms it then gives the precedence for others to use the same analytical framework which may not be reflective of the truths on the ground.

In line of the same thinking, while we have learned immensely from the current literature, there are study areas of Yugoslav conflict that have been slightly overlooked. The academic literature concentrated so much on explaining the 'conflict' that in the hindsight, inadvertently abandoned to observe and thus research, instances of

social phenomena where ethnic antagonism did not succeed, where ethnic groups managed to reject all types of nationalist attempts to create differences, reject ethnic partition of their civil society, maintain peace by sustaining moderate political option and organize militarily to defend and preserve their ethnic bonds forged over the centuries and their democratically elected political choice.

This thesis is both empirically and theory driven. In terms of empirical part, thesis constructed a causal mechanism to explain Tuzla's success. Tuzla's causal mechanism was constructed in two phases: phase one as processes of formation of Tuzla's identity and phase two as wartime strategies of defending that identity. Phase one is consisted of three processes which thesis defined as: *bonding, forging and cementing* [identity formation], during three time periods in Tuzla's history, resulting in an identity being a multi-national, strong working class, anti-fascist and anti-nationalist focused. Phase two is defined in terms of three stages, as implementation of the wartime military strategies, maintaining strong rule of law by the wartime leadership and organization of the civil society all converging together in successfully rejecting radical nationalist forces. Thesis also posits that Tuzla's causal mechanism is path dependent. Thus, given Tuzla's initial political choice and subsequent anti-nationalist brand of reaction, thesis hypotheses put Tuzla's civil society in the center of its

ability to reject inter-ethnic violence and nationalism. Elites reflected the demands and voices of the masses and simply had executed their demands. Thesis also posits that elites do not have the unlimited manipulative powers as assumed by instrumentalists.

Thesis is theoretically driven by attempting to address potential flaws in instrumentalist approach as well as critically addressing old and new formulations of primordialism. What this means more specifically, is that instrumentalists assumptions regarding the unchecked powers of the elites, may be too rigid, thus thesis questions the explanatory power of instrumentalism or rather its flexibility to look into the micro intricacies on the ground of the supposed macro war. Likewise, if older formulation of primordialism assumes that premodern ethnic hatred was the culprit for the ethnic and not the elites, or new formulation which focuses on the emotive side of the 'human nature' then what can we say about the peaceful wartime ethnic coexistence in Tuzla and its ability to formulate moderate political platform and mobilize to counter radical nationalism to reject nationalism and ethnic violence. Starting point for the assessment will be the first multiparty<sup>2</sup> municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina where

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<sup>2</sup> First multiparty municipal elections in Socialist Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina, were held in November of 1990 where only three municipalities elected non-ethnic party, Tuzla, Vares and East Sarajevo. Vares and East Sarajevo, later succumbed under nationalist pressures, de facto leaving only Tuzla as the only municipality that successfully elected and defended non-nationalist political option even to this day. For further details see official results of the elections at: [BiH Elections Archives](#) \_weblink accessed on February 26th 2015.



Tuzla was the only municipality in Bosnia to elect non-ethnic party. Thesis proposes contribution to an existing debate in the area of conflict theories in particular assessing counter conflict mobilization through the analysis of the formation of the civil society and its interplay with wartime leadership. Research ultimately intends to ascertain why Tuzla's civil society stands out from all other civil societies in Bosnia given the large similar urban attributes, compositions and structures. In other words, why is Tuzla different from the rest of the Bosnia ? What accounts for elite's actions and need to reflect the wider civil society attitudes ? Finally, how does counterintuitive case such as Tuzla contribute to the overall instrumentalist approach and explanation of Yugoslav disintegration and where does instrumentalism falter.

#### **4. Tuzla: The Case Study, Methodology and Data**

The methodical approach adopted in this thesis will rely on case study. In general, a case study is an empirical inquiry which: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. This thesis is part explorative case study, which commonly deals with 'what' questions, and also part explanatory, which deals with 'why' and 'how' questions.

(Dahl 1960; Allen 1965; Lijphart 1968; Van Evera 1997; Hancke 2009). The analysis of the Tuzla case is derived from the qualitative data collected during researcher's field work from 2015-2016 in Tuzla. This research also benefits from researcher's academic and professional work in former Yugoslavia in the period of 2009 to 2016. Thesis primary source of data are forty three semi-structured interviews conducted during the field work in 2015. Interviewees were mostly Tuzla's political and wartime elites, some Yugoslav political elites, Tuzla's security and military apparatus, business sector, public administrators, war veterans, academics, several clergy from the Tuzla's religious community and lastly international development organizations. Most interviewees were in some way involved in local developments in the period under the investigation. Participants were mainly from the city of Tuzla, although several were from the capital Sarajevo and some were from other cities. To help select the candidates, snowball sampling technique was employed. In order to try to maintain as representative sample, special attention was paid to balance the ethnic mix, professions and wartime experiences of the interview candidates. The thesis also relied on the secondary sources of official documents, scientific research as well as local archival material and local media reporting. For the interpretation and collection of data related Yugoslav conflicts, the qualitative case study

was the most appropriate research design to be applied with this research question. Some research questions regarding break up of Yugoslavia of economic or financial nature, where reliable quantitative data exists which can be then used with statistical software to build models to test hypotheses and reach certain conclusions. However, since Yugoslav ethnic wars have some but not entirely in common with economic well being of the Yugoslav pre-war economy, and in order to answer questions concerning concepts such as nationalism, ethnicity, identity formation, structure and formation of the civil society, social mobilization or demobilization, pre-conflict and conflict elite decision making, qualitative case study is considered to be the most appropriate method. According to (Stake 1995; Searle 1995; Yin 2003; Baxter 2006) a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

## **5. Organization of the Dissertation**

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II is background and puzzle is presented with hypotheses. Chapter also presents the

background to the historical aspects of Yugoslav ethnic groups. Next, Yugoslav dissolution is addressed, in particular Bosnian *macro* war in terms *micro*, fractionalized but amalgamated conflicts which thesis defines as *macro-micro* war dimension. Issues with ethnicity, nationalism and creation of ethnic myths as part of nationalist agenda is also discussed in relation to the wars in Yugoslavia. Chapter also introduces and addresses the counterintuitive case of Tuzla and asks the question why and how Tuzla was able to reject ethnic violence unlike any other city in Bosnia. Chapter posits that the anatomy of Tuzla's civil society was the main mechanism for its success together with wartime leadership. Rather than falling under the pressures of ethnic nationalism Tuzla demonstrated that political moderation is not impossible to accomplish and sustain even if strongly challenged by radical forces. Chapter also posits that causal mechanism of Tuzla's success is path dependent. This section also briefly advances primordialism and instrumentalism as two major frameworks in relation to Yugoslav wars and inconsistencies with both frameworks, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter III presents the instrumentalist and primordialist theoretical frameworks relative to the ethnic conflicts in the area of international relations within political science scholarship. Chapter three also critically assess why old and reformulated primordialist explanations

fall short in assessing Yugoslav disintegration, while addressing instrumentalist failure via automated and overreaching assumptions defining elites as omni-manipulative inadvertently failing to offer appropriate credit to the anatomy of the civil societies which may in many instances defeat top-down approach with an aim to instigate conflicts, with its bottom-up approach with an aim to instigate peace.

Chapter IV is research design and methodology. Case study approach was selected because it best suits puzzle pertaining Tuzla in the context of Yugoslav demise. The methodical approach adopted in this thesis will rely on *case study*. In general, a case study is an empirical inquiry which: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

Chapter V is the presentation of the results. Chapter presents the construction of the causal mechanism through two phases. Phase one as processes of Tuzla's identity formation. Phase two as wartime stages of mustering military, political and civil defenses in order to defend that identity. Presentation is divided by three themes or processes of identity formation and phase two as three stages. Thesis defined three process of the formation of Tuzla's identity as: *bonding, forging and cementing*. Phase two is defined as: wartime military

strategy, rule of law management and organization of the civil society. What research was able to conclude is that Tuzla's identity was constructed through three processes, during three time periods reflecting approximately 100 years, which thesis defines as processes of: *bonding* of European nationalities and local ethnicities during Austro-Hungarian industrialization of the extensive mining industry in Tuzla; *forging* of the multinational and strong working class in the period between WW I and WW II through class and workers struggles, labor movements, union organizations in particular with strong anti-fascist presence during world war two; lastly, *cementing* of the Tuzla's identity during socialist Yugoslavia underpinned with strong socio-economic and cultural expansion making Tuzla one of the largest and important Yugoslav industrial centers, encompassing urban, but crucially, also rural population in its labor force. Thus, when an outside body i.e., anti-body [ethnic divisions and nationalism] attacked the healthy organism [Tuzla's identity], Tuzla simply reacted with what is normal to her, the white blood cells rushed [automatic defense mechanism] and rejected the 'foreign body intrusion' [nationalism, ethnic divisions and ethnic violence]. Tuzla simply found anti-bodies not natural to her environment [organisms]. This is what Tuzla had done in the past many times and, 1990s were not going to be any different. Thus, thesis posits that Tuzla's success

is path dependent. The civil society stood up again, elected non-ethnic political party, organized itself and then defended its identity. I am in no doubt that Tuzla would do this again if needed. Chapter will be presented by using selected list of interviewee answers in terms of quotations, followed by a brief synthesis and conclusion of that particular quote or section.

Chapter VI is conclusion and discussion of the broader empirical and theoretical implications. Chapter will also address limitation of the study and will offer suggestions for future research including policy recommendation section. Chapter will rethink the broader instrumentalist theoretical perspective through discussion and implication of the empirical data. Tuzla's civil society, exemplified strong working class with high solidarity and socialist collective regardless of the ethnic or national identity and stood against the violence and oppression of its citizens as they have done many times before. The phase two, wartime military strategy mounted was resolute and tactical by quick and efficiently organizing strong military defenses. Resolute management of rule of law in the city and in coordination with civil society further protected Tuzla's way of life from outside (militarily) and from within (politically). In terms of two theoretical frameworks often dealing with Yugoslav wars, thesis posits that primordialists rushed to explain Yugoslav disintegration which

three decades on its 'ancient hatred' concept still resonates with many regional ethno-national elites and it has set back the reconciliation process as well. Thus, I believe this misconception of supposed ancient ethnic hatred among former Yugoslavs, should not only be left to the elements of time, but should be continued to be pushed aside. Primordialist formulation has problems explaining periods of peace but also difficulty explaining how ancient are ethnic hatreds, or how much hate is enough for an armed conflict or ethnic war to commence. More importantly, thesis also posits that the instrumentalist approach contains inflexible assumptions in relation to the elites while not considering the formation, composition and structures of the civil society, which may oppose the elite instrumentalization or work together to manage peace. With these assumptions it simultaneously approaches the war in *macro* terms, assuming a clearly defined and well delineated combat groups led by omni-manipulative elites, rather than giving the possibility of [macro] war being the series of *micro*, fractionalized but amalgamated localized conflicts. This approach would give Yugoslav wars in particular Bosnian war, different dimension and framework that could see this conflict less about ethnic antagonism, consistent and consensual ethnic combat groups and more about local, regional, territorial, economic and political opportunisms.



## CHAPTER TWO: Background, The Puzzle and Hypotheses

### 1. Brief historical background of the Western Balkans

In the discussion that follows, the thesis will provide brief historical context which will offer the reader a framework for interpreting some of the results of my study. Today, despite twenty seven years since the wars in Yugoslavia, those affected continue to struggle to come to terms with the violent collapse of their nation. Lingering ethnic antagonism, particularly in the aftermath of the 1992 - 1995 war in Bosnia, has especially hindered cooperation among the three main ethnic groups, Croats, Serbs and Bosnian Muslims. Bosnia remains a frozen conflict almost three decades after brokered Dayton Peace agreement in 1995 and nationalist euphoria continues to linger. I will describe the evolution of the ethno-national identities in Bosnia and use this thread of history to introduce the counter-intuitive case of Tuzla.

#### *Evolution of national identities in the Western Balkans*

Former Yugoslavia with Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>3</sup> found itself in the centerfold of the ‘fault line’ of the Balkan peninsula with a different

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<sup>3</sup> Also Bosnia. For the purposes of streamlined writing, thesis will sometimes refer to Bosnia and Herzegovina as simply Bosnia.

ethnic groups and religions crossing and mixing from the times as early as Roman conquest. First documented tribes by the Romans on the territories of former Yugoslavia, were Illyrians, who spoke the language similar to modern Albanian. When the Romans conquered the region and crushed all tribal rebellions in AD 9, Romans noted other tribes living there mainly, Thracians and Dacians (Katz 1955; Malcom 1996). With the fall of Rome, German Visgots, Asiatic Huns, Iranian Arans and others settled in the Balkans and coexisted. As early as 5th century Slav tribes from the southern flanks of what today is Belorussia and northern Ukraine, started to migrate into the Balkan peninsula. These southern Slav tribes were principally Croats, Serbs and Slovenians who started to mix and coexist with the local autochthonous Balkan inhabitants Illyrians and Thracians. Croats and Serbs and Slovenes primarily migrated into the territory what today roughly comprises former Yugoslavia.

The Southern Slavs were originally pagans with their own polytheistic religion which they brought with them. Croats and Serbs took Christianity in the period between 6th and 7th century under the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (Malcom 1996). It was during the middle ages when first Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian kingdoms were incepted. As kingdoms changed in territories, inhabitants would also migrate and mix with each other. Generally, Croatian rulers occupied

territories of approximately the area of today's Croatia including some western parts of Bosnia, Serbian kingdom at some point reached south as far as mainland Greece, while Bosnian kingdom occupied parts of today's Bosnia, some parts of Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia (Malcom 1996). Throughout this time, these groups mixed and blended, thus a claim of ethnically pure origins of these southern Slavs after two thousand years of mixing with each other made by some nationalist historians<sup>4</sup> flies straight into their faces. These southern slav kingdoms lasted until the onset of the bigger empires contesting their lands, principally Ottoman conquest of the Balkans in the 14th century, reaching as far as the gates of Vienna. In 1389, Ottomans defeated Serbian armies in Kosovo Polje, in 1463, conquered Bosnia and in 1493 conquered large parts of Croatian lands.

Ottomans controlled the Balkans for over four centuries. Conversion of Bosnian christians [Serbs and Croats] to Islam gradually occurred over the period of one hundred and fifty years (Malcom 1996). Serbs and Croats [Christians] were prosecuted heavily by the Ottomans and so conversion was the easiest way to avoid prosecutions. Early records show approximately 300 Muslim households in 1468, but by the early seventeenth century, Muslims had become the most

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<sup>4</sup> Some Croat nationalist theorists have said that Croats alone had Iranian ancestry, especially during the Nazi regime when Nazis held Iranians as purer race than Slavs (Malcom 1996)

populous group within the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Malcom 1996). With the decline of the Ottoman Empire, towards end of the 19th century and simultaneous emergence of the Austro-Hungarian expansion into the Balkans, the two empires clashed for the contested area. Croatian territories were already conquered in the 16th century by Austrian and Hungarian rulers on occasions giving Croats limited sovereignty and Bosnia officially fell under the Habsburg rule in 1878, while other Balkan states, Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, were going through series of the Balkan Wars from 1912-1913 collectively declaring independence from the Ottoman rule. It was in this period, late 19th, early 20th century that many Balkan national identities, aching for recognition and independence from Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian rule that started to take place (Zovko 2007). The Illyrian, Pan-Slav, South Slav [Yugoslav] causes all oriented towards the integration of the South Slav nation. In many ways this movement also reflected on the fundamental ideas and the endeavors of the Italian Risorgimento. However, in the opposition of the overall south slav consolidation, there were also some explicit national elements calling for separate Croatian, Serbian or Bosniac independence (Velikonja 2003). When one of these movements [Yugoslav] culminated in the assassination of the Habsburg Prince in Sarajevo in June of 1914 by then Yugoslav patriot Gavrilo Princip, the

act essentially precipitated WW I. When the war ended in 1918 and with that end of the Austro-Hungarian empire, for the first time since south slav migration into the Balkans, they created their own nation, the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, later renamed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This was the first attempt at the consolidated state. However, their state was short lived. In 1941 world war two began and German Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia took place occupying majority of its territories while in other parts created quisling puppet regimes, mainly NDH<sup>5</sup>.

### ***World War Two***

There were three major actors on the occupied Yugoslav territories. The resistance, known as Partisan, led by communist leader and Partisan commander Josip Broz Tito. Croatian Ustasa regime, led by Ante Pavelic, supported by Hitler and Musolini and Serbian nationalists known as Cetniks, led by royalist Draza Mihajlovic. Some Slovenians, Bosniac and Albanian nationalists would play part on the side of the Ustase regime as well. Ustase wanted ethnically clean Croatia (Catholic) nation-state, based on the fascist/nazi demagogy meaning, cleansing the “Croatian lands” of Jews, Romas, Serbs,

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<sup>5</sup> NDH, was WW II puppet state of Germany and Italy. Established in parts of occupied Yugoslavia, after invasion of Axis powers. During its entire existence, the state was governed by fascist Ustase movement. Regime dogma was based on nazi ideology, targeting Jews, Romas, Serbs and dissident Croats including Muslims using concentration camps to fulfill exterminations. For further information see, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005449>

Muslims, Croatian dissidents, all against whom they [Ustase] committed strategic Nazi-type cleansing resulting in dozens of concentration camps across NDH territory. This event, de facto pinned the southern slav tribes against each other for the first time in their history (Glenny 1992). Official numbers of the atrocities committed by Ustase vary, but large number of official sources agree that; NDH regime exterminated approximately 40,000 Jews, 25,000 Romas and 15,000 political opponents among which were mostly Croats (Malcom 1996). Moreover, the official numbers by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. sets number of Serbs killed at approximately 390,000. Total number of all Yugoslav casualties, regardless of nationality who died during the WW II was approximated at 1.7 million.<sup>6</sup>

Simultaneously, Serbian nationalist movement took place, the followers “Chetniks” however, did not have as clear strategic and institutional organization like Ustase. Nevertheless, they operated as guerrilla forces, collaborating with nazi and fascists forces fighting mostly against Partisans. Their aim, much like Ustasa’s was for a pure Serbian nation-state, with a goal for restitution of the Serbian monarchy and the Serbian King. Chetniks committed vicious crimes

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<sup>6</sup> Edmond, Paris (1966)., *Genocide in Satellite Croatia, 1941-1945: A Record of Racial and Religious Persecutions and Massacres.*, American Institute for Balkan Affairs. See also, *Jasenovac and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia* in Barry M. Lituchy (2006), Published, Jasenovac Research Institute

against principally Partisans, Croats and even Serbs who refused to join their movement<sup>7</sup>.

In this hot pot of slavic tribes pinned against each other by principally German nazis and Mussolini fascists, exacerbated ethnic relations between Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims on one side and on the other those who did not favor the Partisan resistance and the communists. This brotherly blood shed incited by foreign occupation and a three way civil war on the territories of Yugoslavia, left deep ethno-national scars. These wounds however needed to be healed and the wining side Tito's Partisans and the Yugoslav Communist Party, attempted to ameliorate these wounds for the next 50 years, and largely it was a successful project and it gave southern slavs for the first time an independent, modern progressive nation that put Yugoslavia and Yugoslavs on the world's stage, politically, economically and culturally.

### ***Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)***

After gaining US and British recognition as a viable, strict and highly organized force in fighting nazis and de facto opening the 'southern front' in Europe, British government officially decided in 1943 to give military support to Tito and Yugoslav Partisans. With official

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<sup>7</sup> As a writer of thesis, I'm proud to say that my Serbian grandmother Ljubica (Janjilovic) Mihajlovski and her Macedonian husband my grandfather Boris Mihajlovski were Partisans, while her brother Vladimir Janjilovic and her father also Partisans were murdered by Cetniks in the northern Bosnia, village of Pojezna.

recognition and military support, Yugoslavs liberated large parts of Yugoslav territories rendering useless all quislings [Chetnik and Ustase] forces and regaining all Yugoslav territories lost in the period between two world wars.

The Yugoslav Communist party led by Josip Broz Tito, took power in 1945 and set up the federal system of six republics with strong centralized Yugoslav state, where ethnic identities and choice of religion were only a personal issue hence irrelevant in political and economic life of its citizens (Hodson, Sekulic and Massey 1994; Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004). Bratstvo and Jedinstvo [Brotherhood and Unity] was Tito's slogan and official Yugoslav motto that reflected the Yugoslav national aims to heal the world war two wounds. To help ameliorate and unite different nationalities and ethnicities from the horrors of the two wars in particular WW II, Marxist ideology was put in the centerfold of the Yugoslav national ideology, which asserted that "ethnic nationalism was a form of false consciousness; and that ethnic loyalties would be superseded, in this instance by supernational identity in this case, a Yugoslav identity" (Malcom 1996). The new, national institutions, education, military mobility and economy were placed in the centerfold of a Yugoslav project as tools to weaken the appeal to ethnocentrism. This proved to be successful as numbers of



interethnic marriages<sup>8</sup> and those who identified as Yugoslavs were steadily on the rise<sup>9</sup> in particularly in the large urban centers, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Zagreb etc. By the 1960s, central power started to devolve to the six<sup>10</sup> republics and two Serbian autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina) with each republic acquiring veto powers over federal legislation (Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004). During this time, any type of ethnic nationalism or ethnic irredentism was heavily handled. Nationalist groups were allowed to pursue limited goals, but were not able to ally themselves with the Communist party in each of the six republics (Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004). Those that stepped out of these rules and voiced nationalist ideology, were handed sentences to ‘reform’ along the Yugoslav socialist project. Such was the case of Franjo Tudjman and Alija Izetbegovic for example, both who would later propagate nationalist politics and violently lead Croatia and Bosnia out of Yugoslav federation relying precisely on their

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<sup>8</sup> For further details, please see V.P. Gagnon., (2004). “The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s“. “At least some of this Yugoslav sentiment was due to the fact that in 1981 15.8 percent of children listed in the census of Bosnia-Herzegovina had parents of different nationalities. That same year 16.8 percent of all marriages in the republic were mixed marriages; one demographer notes that this means that, given the average household size in the republic, “at least one half of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina has interethnic family relations.”

<sup>9</sup> V.P. Gagnon., (2004). “The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s. “where poll undertaken in January 1990, in which 25 percent of respondents in Bosnia-Herzegovina gave their nationality as “Yugoslav.” Even more striking is that, in a different poll, 33 “percent of young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina declared themselves Yugoslav, representing an equal proportion from each of the three main national groupings in the republic, while 81.6 percent agreed with the statement that “I am Yugoslav and cannot give priority to feeling of some other belonging.”

<sup>10</sup> SFRJ was consisted of: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro.

nationalist views for which they were sentenced in the first place (Sekulic and Massey 1994; Jovic 2002). Among these, Slovenian nationalists were also problematic and were handed sentences, mainly Janez Jansa, who later became Prime Minister of Slovenia. In the 1980s, with global economic downturn, Yugoslavia was not spared of the exogenous shocks and experienced a decline in standard of living and increase in unemployment (Hodson, Sekulic and Massey 1994).

### *The break up of Yugoslavia and spiral into a war(s)*

Yugoslav disintegration is not easy to explain. The academic literature of Yugoslav disintegration is extensive and well researched. In very broad terms most literature agrees that it were the Croatian and Serbian long standing nationalist goals for independent national states, (being that they were also the two largest ethnic groups in Yugoslavia) pulled Yugoslavia in opposing directions destructively tearing it apart as well as the failure in the process of liberalization from socialist economy to a free market economy, whereby then Prime Minister's Ante Markovic reforms played an important role but were undermined by then Serbian and Croatian Presidents, Milosevic and Tudjman respectively. Both feared the economic stabilization of Yugoslavia, for they would lose their politically charged ethno-national appeal as their only political tool. Their aim was simple, to tear Yugoslavia apart by shifting the focus from the critically national

economic priorities led by Markovic, to the political ethno-nationalist issues, which were then largely irrelevant to the most citizens. (Glenny 1992; Todorova 1995; Woodward 1995; Gligorov 1997; Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004; Caplan 2005).

In this line of thinking, there is not one particular event, time, individual or political group that can be blamed for the Yugoslav collapse and the ethnic wars that ensued. Rather, the collapse of Yugoslavia is symptomatic of the decline of [some] historic ancient empire. Instead of one specific event, it is rather a period [leading up to the war] of internal political and economic crises and callous nationalist leadership who had own personal agendas. This internal crisis created by mostly inept bureaucrats and self serving nationalist elites, went in hand with external wave of democratic liberal movements across Eastern Europe of the 1990s, but also with 1980s economic crisis known as “Savings and Loan Crises” often referred to as the severe global economic recession impacting much of the developed world in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with high unemployment effects on OECD nations with a long-term impacts of the recession contributed to the Latin American debt crisis, the savings and loans crisis in Yugoslavia and United States, and a general adoption of neoliberal economic policies throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Joyanna 1985; Sachs 2005). With such internal crisis coupled

with cataclysmic changes on the outside, Yugoslavia stood little chance. As such, in-depth assessment of the collapse of the Yugoslav project is outside of the scope of this thesis the following assessment is not intended to be an all-encompassing review, rather the aim of this section is to provide the reader a brief review of what can be construed as a sequence of political manipulations by Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian and Bosnian nationalist elites as well as their ineptness to find common solution for the Yugoslav political and economic crisis.

The root causes for Yugoslav wars can be traced as early as 1960s with first inter-party conflict between those that wanted tighter centralized government and those of more liberal ambitions who wanted to devolve more power to the federal units (Gagnon 2004). With global economic downturn, Yugoslavia started to experience economic crisis, paralleled with crisis within the political institutions and the League of Communists. At the political level, the conflict unfolded over the degree of independence from the federation that each republic was advocating. The Slovenian and Croatian leaderships became increasingly vocal in demanding full independence. This was in contrast particularly with the Serbian leadership which wanted a stronger, centralized federation (Woodward 1995; Todorova 1995; Jovic 2002) The vacuum created by the absence of strong and

charismatic leader, Josip Broz Tito, the ethno-centric nationalists were able to tap into and exploit the collective memories, myths and beliefs, principally from the horrors of the WW II; which the Yugoslav leadership since the end of war worked tirelessly to ameliorate and move away from (Jedlicki 1999; Gagnon 2004; Markovina 2014).

These collective memories and myths were strong triggers mainly for two reasons: First, historical events turn places and dates into powerful symbols, easily manipulated by nationalist political elites to forge unity and senses of their ethno-national identity (Anderson 1983; Hobsbawn 1983). Secondly, memories of injustices were used to inflict conflict by creating resentments and a desire for historical ‘compensations’ recklessly digging up past as far as the 14th century during the Ottoman rule. Then, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic was a master of these type of emotive manipulations, which would later come to play the crucial role in his politics of creating ethnic fear and antagonism in Yugoslavia (Todorova 1995; Jovic 2002; Caplan 2005; Cohen 2007).

Long list of what can best be defined as political dealings, alliances and inciting ethnic antagonisms in the period of 1986 to 1990 can be defined as the ‘Downfall of Yugoslavia’. Slobodan Milosevic deserves a special mention in this process, along with his counterpart, Croatian president Franjo Tudjman as the most callous and the most

responsible actors for the Yugoslav violent disintegration, especially since they were the political leaders of the two largest ethnic groups in Yugoslavia and with the largest nationalist appetites.

As mentioned, Milosevic knew the power of collective memories and was a skillful political manipulator (Todorova 1995). He used both attributes to further his nationalist aims, under the presumed auspice of 'saving Yugoslavia'. Tudjman, although one of Tito's generals during WW II, turned nationalist for which he served two year sentence in 1972 in lieu of his subversive activities during the Croatian Spring<sup>11</sup>. Under the auspices of 'saving Yugoslavia', Milosevic including other nationalist leaders, saw the opportune time for realization of his [their] hunger for power via 'balkanization' of what Milosevic, Tudjman and others envisioned, to what should be the ethno-lands across the territories of Yugoslavia. There were however many actors in the circles of Yugoslav elites who fundamentally rejected ethno-national politics, mainly Kiro Gligorov, Ante Markovic, Raif Dizaderivc, Ivan Stamoblic and many others who unfortunately succumbed to Milosevic political and physical threats.

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<sup>11</sup> For detailed analysis of the Croatian Spring, please see: Matkovic, Hrvoje (December 2008). "Memoarska literatura o hrvatskome nacionalnom pokretu 1971. godine" [Memoirs on Croatian national movement of 1971] (PDF). *Journal of Contemporary History* (in Croatian). Zagreb: Croatian Institute of History. 40 (3): 1143–1153, as well as, Petricusic, Antonija; Zagar, Mitja (March 2007). "Ethnic Mobilization in Croatia".

To incite violent clashes and ethnic antagonisms in order to implement his territorial and political appetites across Yugoslavia, Milosevic needed to pin the ethnic groups against each other. No better republic [autonomous at that time] to help him realize this goal, was better than Kosovo. Indeed, the easiest way to employ this strategy was to incite conflict in ethnically heterogeneous areas, mainly in Kosovo which was ripe with years of economic neglect and highest unemployment rates in Yugoslavia. Aim was to incite fear and antagonism between the largest groups in Kosovo, the ethnic Albanians and the second largest group the Serbs, (who were however the majority in Serbia), and since Kosovo was still an autonomous province of Serbia, as was Vojvodina, naturally Serbs saw Kosovo as part of Serbia. Manifestly, Kosovo is considered to be the cradle of Serbian nation. This is where the most Serbian monasteries are located and where the Battle of Kosovo<sup>12</sup> occurred. Other place ripe to incite ethnic antagonisms in former Yugoslavia was Croatian Krajina in the heterogeneous Serbian and Croatian communities (Gagnon 2004). Krajina much like Kosovo also had historical meaning to Serbs, as this was the ‘military frontier’<sup>13</sup> against the Ottomans, comprised mostly of Serbs who left Serbian lands during the Ottoman

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<sup>12</sup> Nationalist Mobilization and Stories of Serb Suffering The Kosovo myth from 600th anniversary to the present Florian Bieber <http://www.policy.hu/bieber/Publications/bieberkosovo.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> The Krajina Project: Exploring the Ottoman-Habsburg Borderland By R. J. Carlton and A Rushworth. <http://www.archaeologicalpractice.co.uk/pdfs/OttConfArticle2.pdf>

expansion. Thus, in many ways Kosovo had all the right ingredients for Milosevic to start and incite the ethnic hostilities and he certainly did. Bosnia in terms of ethnic mix was often referred to as ‘mini Yugoslavia’ and ethnic conflict did not need special strategy as it did in case of Croatia and Kosovo. For Bosnia to get polarized, first multiethnic elections in 1990 were sufficient, whose election outcome played well into the [ethno-nationalist] elites hands (Todorova 1995; Woodward 1995; Caplan 2005).

During this time, Serbian Academy of Arts and Science leaked a memorandum<sup>14</sup> which discussed the Status of Serbia and “Serb “Nation” within Yugoslav borders, [at that time almost unprecedented] to discuss ethno-national issues in this capacity and using the kind of rhetoric that was in the memorandum, precisely because Yugoslav elites opted to move away from these ethnic debates and flammable rhetoric and opted to replace these trivial nationalist dialogues with socialist working class and Yugoslav ideology. Tito and his circles knew that these type of ethnic debates as espoused by SANU memorandum or Alija Izetbegovic’s islamic declaration<sup>15</sup> for example etc., would lead nowhere except something deconstructive,

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<sup>14</sup> <https://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/674> Infamous Memorandum by SANU. Weblink accessed on October 20th, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> The Islamic Declaration (Islamska Deklaracija), is a manifesto written by Alija Izetbegovic, originally published in 1970 and banned but re-published in 1990 in Sarajevo



which came to be true in the end. Whether the Yugoslav elites thought that it was early to open the question of ethno-national debates or whether they truly hoped that Yugoslav identity would supersede the ethno identities, is still a question to be properly answered. Nonetheless, nationalist leaders saw it as an opportunity and they took it.

In 1989 skillful political maneuvering resulted in Milosevic abolishing autonomies of Kosovo and Vojvodina. However, since Albanians were the majority in Kosovo and as such, politically inclined to gain the status of a 7th republic within Yugoslavia; now having their autonomy abolished by Milosevic, was not received well by an Albanian majority. Although in 1981 Albanian student riots called for renewal of Kosovo's status within Yugoslavia, the new Albanian riots exploded across Kosovo in response to Milosevic decision; naturally these riots had a much stronger, contextualizing and destabilizing factor for the entire Yugoslavia. Milosevic knew that inciting clashes, the 'ethnic tensions' will reverberate across then peaceful Yugoslavia. Indeed, Milosevic's calculations were correct. Kosovo riots were the beginning of the major destabilization in the country (Todorova 1995; Gagnon 2004). These riots opened the Pandora's box and it sent the message of fear, instability and ethnic tensions, across the country, which were until that point unknown to most Yugoslavs. But, Milosevic strategy

of destabilizing Yugoslavia based on ethnic cleavages, worked. More importantly however, with this move, Milosevic tactically and strategically pinned Serbs against Albanians and sent a strong menacing message to Croatia and Slovenia of his suppressive and nationalistic appetites for what he deemed to be the 'Serb lands' (Woodward 1995; Todorova 1995; Gagnon 2004; Caplan 2005). Kosovo would not come to international attention until much later [until 1999] and after the wars in Croatia and Bosnia ended, but it served the purpose for Milosevic, which was to ignite the ethnic question in Yugoslavia and set the precedent to what was going to come. Milosevic succeeded in this aspect.

As expected, he did not stop at just destabilizing Kosovo and he moved on to do the same and in a similar fashion in Croatian Krajina. Problem with Croatia which he did not have in Kosovo however was a sheer fact that Croatia was not an autonomous province of Serbia, that Serbs were the 'minority' in Croatia, and that Tudjman had his own agenda, which however did not stop Milosevic's gross appetites. With Croatia instead of riots like in Kosovo, he relied on media as his instigating tool. Belgrade based media ran propaganda stories detailing the Serb massacres of the World War II, by the Ustasa regime implicitly linking HDZ and authorities in Zagreb (Hayden 1993). In May of 1990 during multiparty elections in Croatia, only a small

minority of Croatian Serbs had supported<sup>16</sup> the Serbian nationalist party, (SDS). In July 1990, Belgrade's allies took over the SDS in Krajina and in this capacity (SDS) under Milosevic tutelage rejected all compromises with Zagreb; it propagated mass nationalist rallies and erected barricades in the regions of Croatia that they deemed as "Serb lands". Local hardline Serbs threatened and intimidated moderate Serbs and non-SDS members who refused to go along with the Milosevic's confrontational strategy. Serb nationalists, under Belgrade protection provoked armed incidents with Croatian police and stormed villages with Serbian and Croatian inhabitants. (Cohen 1992; Gagnon 2004). From this point on all conciliatory moves by moderates in the Croatian ruling party (HDZ) were rejected, while moderate Serbs who disagreed with Belgrade's hostile strategy were branded as traitors.

Additionally, in June 1990, HDZ offered moderate SDS leader Jovan Raskovic a position as vice president of the Croatian parliament; Belgrade's pressure on Raskovic and other SDS member led him to reject the offer and walk out of the assembly and to end negotiations with Zagreb on Serbs status in Croatia (Cohen 1992). In

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<sup>16</sup> In the 1990's elections, most of Croatia's Serbs, especially those who lived in ethnically mixed and more economically developed parts of the republic, rejected the nationalism of the SDS and had voted instead for multi ethnic parties. Twenty three percent of Croatia's Serbs preferred the SDS, 46 percent preferred the reform communists, and 16 percent preferred the Coalition of National Reconciliation, both of the latter advocated harmonious interethnic relation and improved material well being; and rejected Milosevic's strategy of violence. See Ivan Siber, "The Impact of Nationalism, Values, and Ideological Orientations on Multi-Party Elections in Croatia," in *Tragedy of Yugoslavia*, ed. Seroka.

October 1991, moderate SDS representatives from areas outside of Krajina, (Slavonia, Baranja, Kordun, Istira) in negotiations with Zagreb, received official recognition of SDS as the legitimate representative of Croatia's Serbian population and the promise (later confirmed) that the draft of Croatian constitution would not include the description of the republic as the "national state of the Croatian people," which was one of the main complaints by local Serbs. Moderates in HDZ ranks also promised to resolve all other disputed and questions quickly. During the referendum of Croatian sovereignty in August of 1991, though condemned the voting, Croatian police made no move to stop it or to remove the barricades that Serbian forces had thrown up around is Serb-land territory (Cohen 1992). Indeed, outside observers note that despite Serbia's accusations of genocidal regime, Zagreb continued to "moderate its rhetoric and act with restrain."<sup>17</sup> SDS hard-liners from Knin, however, denounced the moderate Serbs as traitors.<sup>18</sup> In the end, the campaign rhetoric and the actions of Croatian hard-liners in Zagreb under Tudjman, played well into Milosevic hands, thus HDZ hardliners with similar goals as the SPS hardliners were in many ways just as responsible for the beginning of the violence in Croatian Krajina (Gagnon 2004).

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<sup>17</sup> Helsinki Watch, "Human Rights in a Dissolving Yugoslavia," January 9, 1991, 7.

<sup>18</sup> "Miloš Vasić, "Labudova pesma dr Milana Babića," Vreme, February 10, 1992.

On the other hand, Milosevic regime worked tirelessly to exacerbate the Croatian Serbs concerns, rather than foster negotiation and compromise with Zagreb. This was done strategically to create fear among ethnic groups in heterogeneous communities in Croatia by bringing back the collective memories of Ustasa crimes against their Serbian neighbors, while simultaneously portraying Serbs as innocent and oppressed. Naturally, Milosevic moves, played well into Tudjman's hands who had his own nationalist aspirations and induced his own HDZ hardliner policies<sup>19</sup> against the local Serb populations that did not necessarily have anything to do with SDS. With Milosevic pinning Serbs against Albanians in Kosovo, and inciting Croat-Serbs clashes in Croatia, first Milosevic, and then Tudjman second, destabilized Yugoslavia. As armed skirmishes increased and Yugoslav political stalemate deepened Slovenia and Croatia were more and more inclined towards full declaration of independence from Yugoslavia. Indeed, in 1991 first Slovenia after the seven day war with JNA, declared independence, and then Croatia. With this act, Tito's Yugoslavia was extinguished. Naturally, these declarations allowed Milosevic to send,

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<sup>19</sup> "local HDZ conservatives was to enforce policies that were either subtly or blatantly anti-Serb: removing Serbs from jobs, requiring loyalty oaths, sending in new poorly trained Croatian police officers to patrol Serb-majority regions, demanding that Serb police officers wear the *sahovnica* — an old Croatian symbol that had been used prominently by the Ustasa during World War II but that had been revived by the HDZ—on their caps. These policies were aimed to a large extent against non-political people, Serbs who did not necessarily have any ties to the SDS but were targets merely because they were Serbs, and they lent credence to the SDS right's claims that Serbs in Croatia were threatened by the HDZ." V. P. Gagnon Jr. (2004) "The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s."

what was increasingly becoming<sup>20</sup> the Serbian led Yugoslav Army (JNA), troops first into Slovenia and then into Croatia under the auspices of ‘defending Yugoslavia’ from the “irredentists and secessionists”. Armed conflicts ensued soon after between JNA and Slovenian TO, and later between Serbian led JNA, Serbian paramilitaries and Croatian army. With this act, Yugoslavia was engulfed in what would be the long, series of ethnic and civil wars, and thus the end of Yugoslavia. There was however one crucial and very positive element to the Yugoslav crisis and it deserves short assessment. Despite all the economic and political instability in Yugoslavia, then Prime Minister Ante Markovic, almost succeeded in taking Yugoslavia out of the political and economic crises which would have likely avoided the violent break up, had it not been for Milosevic and Tudjman to undermine his reforms.

Ante Markovic became the prime minister in March of 1989 and was the last Prime Minister of Yugoslavia. He was fundamentally anti-nationalist, pro-liberal and forward looking economist who ultimately aimed at positioning Yugoslavia as the next state to join the EC (Gligorov 1997; Gagnon 2004). Markovic was an economist and was tasked to bail Yugoslavia out of economic crisis via market-oriented

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<sup>20</sup> Milosevic also strategically maneuvered the structure of high ranking officer within the JNA, especially those that were inclined to his views. At the same time, when the conflict started in 1990s, many Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian, Albanian conscripts were leaving the Army, de facto living JNA with ethnic Serbs and Montenegrins.

reforms. He launched ambitious program of unprecedented economic reforms, including stabilization of currency and privatization, as well as the program of limited trade liberalization (Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004). The result of his monetary reform was to stop rampant inflation, which lead to recovering of Yugoslav standard of living<sup>21</sup>. However, the short-term impact of Markovic's reforms also led to the decline in Yugoslavia's industrial sector, because many state firms went bankrupt, struggling to compete in a new free market environment. By 1990, the annual rate of growth in GDP had declined to nearly eight percent. In 1991, industrial output decreased by twenty one percent. This was naturally exploited by his opponents, mainly nationalist leaders Milosevic and Tudjman vis-a-vis their ethno-national rhetoric (Gagnon 2004).

Markovic popularity was partly due to his image as a new, modern 'western-styled' politician. He gained popularity among those who wanted Yugoslavia to be transformed into a modern, democratic federation. Markovic also maintained popularity by staying out of virulent quarrels within the leadership of Communist League of Yugoslavia or trying to act as mediator between various republics who propagated nationalist politics. When the LCY broke up in January 1990, at the 14th Extraordinary Congress of the League of

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<sup>21</sup> "Kako je Ante Markovic oziveo SFRJ", [http://www.b92.net/biz/vesti/srbija.php?yyyy=2011&mm=11&dd=28&nav\\_id=561275](http://www.b92.net/biz/vesti/srbija.php?yyyy=2011&mm=11&dd=28&nav_id=561275) weblink accessed March, 5th 2016

Communists of Yugoslavia, and with that end of it [LCY], Markovic formed his own political party, the Union of Reform Forces (Savez Reformskih Snaga), a political party supporting the reformed Yugoslav federation. With Markovic's reforms undergoing success and gaining popularity among Yugoslav citizens, including securing the IMF and EC loans which would further cement Yugoslav stabilization, to Milosevic regret, it also warranted subsequent reforms in Serbia, which would have de facto sealed Milosevic's plans of dictatorial intentions (Woodward 1995). Thus, Milosevic's repressive regime did not have many choices; either relinquish the power to [then] most popular Yugoslav leader, Prime Minister Ante Markovic and his Party of Reformed Forces, or shift the Yugoslav crises to ethno-national issues to help create ethnic antagonisms. Milosevic picked the latter. He perceived Markovic as an enemy, someone who can pull Yugoslavia out of political and economic crises [for which Milosevic was largely responsible in the first place] and thereby shelf his ambitious plans of dictatorial intentions. Needless to say, Milosevic regime in Belgrade and his apparatchiks tirelessly worked to discredit Markovic and his reforms. Borisav Jovic, then the President of Yugoslavia and close confidante of Milosevic, commented "*The general conclusion is that Ante Markovic is no longer acceptable or reliable to us. No one has any doubts in their mind any longer that he's the extended arm of the United States in terms of overthrowing anyone who ever thinks of*



*socialism, and it is through our votes that we appointed him Prime Minister in the Assembly. He is playing the most dangerous game of treason.*"<sup>22</sup> To support this strategy on the ground, Milosevic maneuvered JNA military structures to his side by re-organizing JNA internal structures with Serb majority high ranking officers (Glaurdic 2011). Borisav Jovic notes in his conversation with then Defense Minister Kadijevic: *"I would most happily through the use of force throw (Slovenia and Croatia) out of Yugoslavia"*<sup>23</sup> thereby ensuring Milosevic and his allies a majority of the votes in the Yugoslav federation which would exclude Slovenia and Croatia (Jovic 1995). With Slovenia and Croatia conducting first multi party elections appealing to and mobilizing wider populations coupled with high approval of Markovic economic and political reforms Milosevic and his autocratic and oppressing regime decided that strategy of ethnic violence was the only solution to his perseverance of power structure. In the end, Markovic's program was directly sabotaged by Slobodan Milosevic who secretly signed on for an illegal loan worth \$1.7 billion from Serbia's main bank in order to ease his reelection that month (Carole 1998). The loan undermined Markovic's economic austerity program, undoing the progress that

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<sup>22</sup> The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY); transcript, Borisav Jovic during The Trial of Slobodan Milosevic (IT-02-54). [http://www.icty.org/x/cases/slobodan\\_milosevic/trans/en/031120IT.htm](http://www.icty.org/x/cases/slobodan_milosevic/trans/en/031120IT.htm) weblink accessed March, 20th 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Jovic, Borisav, close ally to Milosevic in "Poslednji dani SFRJ: Izvodi iz dnevnika (Belgrade: Politika, 1995), 159-161. Jovic proposed to Veljko Kadijevic, who was a federal defense minister at that time, "that I would most happily through the use of force throw (Slovenia and Croatia) out of Yugoslavia". Next day he proposed the same thing to Milosevic.

had been made toward stabilizing the rampant inflation rate, virtually sealing Markovic's reforms by December 1990.

In the last months of his tenure Markovic tried to find compromise between secessionists and those demanding that Yugoslavia remain a single entity. His efforts, although favored by new democratic governments in Bosnia and Macedonia, ultimately failed, because the army which should have served the interests of top level governance - sided with Milosevic. In September 1991, Markovic had obtained a wiretap (Tim 1997; Carole 1998) noting that the communication line had been established [between the Serbian government, the army and Serb politicians in Bosnia]. Markovic noted: *“I know because I heard Milosevic give the order to Karadzic to get in contact with General Uzelac and to order, following the decisions of the meeting of the military hierarchy, that arms should be distributed and that the TO of Krajina and Bosnia be armed<sup>24</sup> and utilized in the realization of the RAM<sup>25</sup> plan”*. Prof. Jeffrey Sachs from Columbia University notes: *“Yugoslavia would have succeeded in reforms, had it not been for Milosevic’s nationalist propaganda .. alas, Yugoslavia was not so fortunate. At the time that I was*

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<sup>24</sup> Vecernji List, “Odlazak Markovica; Bio je uvjeren da ce dogovorima sacuvati SFRJ”. <https://www.vecernji.hr/vijesti/odlazak-markovica-bio-uvjeren-da-ce-dogovorima-sacuvati-sfrj-350744> weblink accessed on May, 28, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> The RAM Plan, also known as Operation RAM, Brana Plan, or Rampart-91, was a military plan developed over the course of 1990 and finalized in Belgrade, Serbia during a military strategy meeting in August 1991 by a group of senior Serb officers of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and experts from the JNA's Psychological Operations Department. Its purpose was organizing Serbs outside Serbia, consolidating control of the Serbian Democratic Parties (SDS), and preparing arms and ammunition in an effort of establishing a country where "all Serbs with their territories would live together in the same state." A separate group of undercover operatives and military officers was charged with the implementation of the plan. These people then undertook numerous actions during the Yugoslav Wars that were later described as ethnic cleansing and genocide.

*advising Poland, I was also asked to help Yugoslavia escape from a similar spiral of hyperinflation, excessive foreign debt, and socialist collapse. The last prime minister of federal Yugoslavia, Ante Markovic, launched a stabilization plan in January 1990 that I had helped to devise. That plan got off to a wonderful start and could actually have worked, but for Slobodan Milosevic's deliberate and disastrously successful moves to undermine the federal government and its economic program. Markovic needed bolstering in his struggle with Milosevic, who was at that point head of Serbia .. postponement of [Yugoslav debt] would have given financial breathing room and political prestige to Markovic, both of which would have strengthened the stabilization plan, whose success would have further strengthened [Markovic] him” (Sachs 2005).*

In March 1991, Milosevic secretly met with Croatian President Tudjman to agree on a division of Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>26</sup> The two leaders also agreed to remove Ante Markovic as a political factor and popular political leader whose reform policies were threatening the interests of both. In this period, Belgrade exerted growing pressure on moderate Serb leaders in Croatia's ethnically mixed Slavonia region (where Serbs were not in the majority) to accept its confrontational strategy. On the other hand, Zagreb started circulating claims that Serbs were over-represented in key sectors of government and thus

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<sup>26</sup> See reports of the testimony of Stipe Mesic at the International Criminal Tribunal at the Hague on October 1, 2002 in the “The Courtroom Summit, “ Tribunal Update of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting 283 (October 9, 2002). <http://www.icty.org/en/content/stjepan-mesic> (accessed April 27, 2016). See also report on the testimony of former Primer Minister Ante Markovic, “Plan to Divide Bosnia Revealed,” Tribunal Update 330 (October 24, 2003). <http://www.icty.org/en/content/ante-markovic> (accessed April 27, 2016)

were oppressors, while Croats were portrayed as innocent victims of Serbian conspiracy. As armed clashes between Serb paramilitaries and Croatian polices broke out in Pakrac, western Slavonia, Lika region, Croatian Serbs were increasingly pressured to join the SDS, while Croats were harassed and forced to leave. The strategy of violence worked. Violence levels picked up, which then spread to Slavonia and at this point Croatia was drawn into the civil war. Once Croatia was drawn into an all out armed conflict with Serb paramilitary forces and Serbian led JNA, this was the end of the Markovic's reforms, which finally paved the way for nationalists on both sides to destroy Yugoslavia. Prime Minster Ante Markovic remained in office even little longer, only to resign in December 1991. He was politically sidelined and undermined by Milosevic and Tudjman's strategies. He appeared as a witness at the Slobodan Milosevic trial at the ICTY in 2003 which was after nearly twelve years of silence. After he had testified in Hague, he gave an interview to news magazine<sup>27</sup> stating that Milosevic was obviously striving to create a Greater Serbia. He also revealed that both Milosevic and Tudjman confirmed to him that in March 1991 in Karadjordjevo they made an agreement to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina between themselves.

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<sup>27</sup> Prime Minster Ante Markovic testimony on 23 October 2003 at the trial of Slobodan Milosevic in The Hague, at ICTY, at which he was appearing as a witness for the prosecution. [http://www.bosnia.org.uk/bosrep/report\\_format.cfm?articleid=1020&reportid=162](http://www.bosnia.org.uk/bosrep/report_format.cfm?articleid=1020&reportid=162) weblink accessed on March 18th, 2016

## **2. Bosnian War: A series of intricate conflicts**

Unlike Croatia and Serbia, Bosnia was much more ethnically mixed republic. However, after the first multiparty municipal elections in 1990, where ethnic parties won in all municipalities, with an exception of cities of Tuzla, Vares and a district of Sarajevo, the country became exceptionally ethnically polarized. During this time, Bosnia also held a referendum (boycotted by the Serb population), which ratified its secession from the Yugoslav Federation. In April 1992, Serbian paramilitary forces along with now remnant and Serbian led-JNA began an assault to carve out Serb-lands in Bosnia (Todorova 1995; Jovic 2002; Gagnon 2004; Caplan 2005). In the next four years, Bosnia would experience an incredibly violent conflict, characterized by largely a war conducted against the civilian population and civilian targets which manifested itself through ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and genocides. The BiH federal government was not prepared to fight the Serb forces equipped with JNA military. A long bloodbath ensued, resulting in over 200,000 casualties and 2 million refugees (Hodson, Sekulic and Massey 1994). Fighting took place between all ethnic groups often changing alliances throughout the war, which make this war and analysis that much more complex. The war had all the horrors of a civil and ethnic war with house to house fighting and neighbors turning on each other. The Dayton Peace

Agreement signed in 1995 has de facto sanctioned the wartime front-lines into territorial division of Bosnia across ethnic lines.

Sequence of starting armed clashes in most Bosnian cities were very similar which was in retrospective, done very haphazardly and foolishly. Meaning, when Bosnian government negotiated with former JNA to withdraw its forces (military equipment, personnel etc.) to Serbia, this process became the way of starting clashes. The deadline set for former JNA to leave the barracks was set for May 15th 1992. Because most former military bases were located in the city centers, municipalities where Croats and Muslims were majority, meant that JNA will leave and municipalities where Serbs were majority, JNA would stay or very little would be 'shipped' to Serbia. Given the fact that Milosevic and Serb authorities in Bosnia already worked out RAM plan, JNA now mostly Serb -JNA would withdraw in such way that it would leave the particular town or city but only to the already planned 'ethnic front-lines', for Bosnia (as it is relatively hilly geographically) this meant higher grounds above the city. Soon after, sieges of Bihac, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Mostar ensued. Serb positions would fortify in the hills above, from which positions Serb forces would shell with heavy artillery and so on. This was a standard withdrawal strategy of Serb forces taking JNA military with them. In April 1992, Serb paramilitary forces using JNA military from above Sarajevo started shooting

civilians in the city (sometimes even Serbian Sarajevans). Sarajevo siege lasted from 1992 to the end of the war in 1995. Tuzla's siege lasted 10 months.

*macro-micro war dimension*

More importantly however, within what at first glance appeared a unitary or singular war in case of Bosnia, there were in fact many regional, fractionalized conflicts with different alliances at different times. One of the reasons for this fractionalization of the 'front-lines' was due to the territorial ethnic mix Bosnia had enjoyed prior to the war and secondly the inconsistent, sloppy conducted Serb-JNA withdrawal, which left Bosnia interlaced with territorially neighboring municipalities militarily pinned against each other. These disconnected isolated blocks of combat-ready ethnic territories, naturally leave room for all sorts of temporary alliances and team switching, which were the common<sup>28</sup> occurrence during the war. The evident implication of these events is that the war in Bosnia was supposed to be 'ethnic' but with so many inter-ethnic military alliances and team switching, word ethnic can be easily replaced with opportunistic.

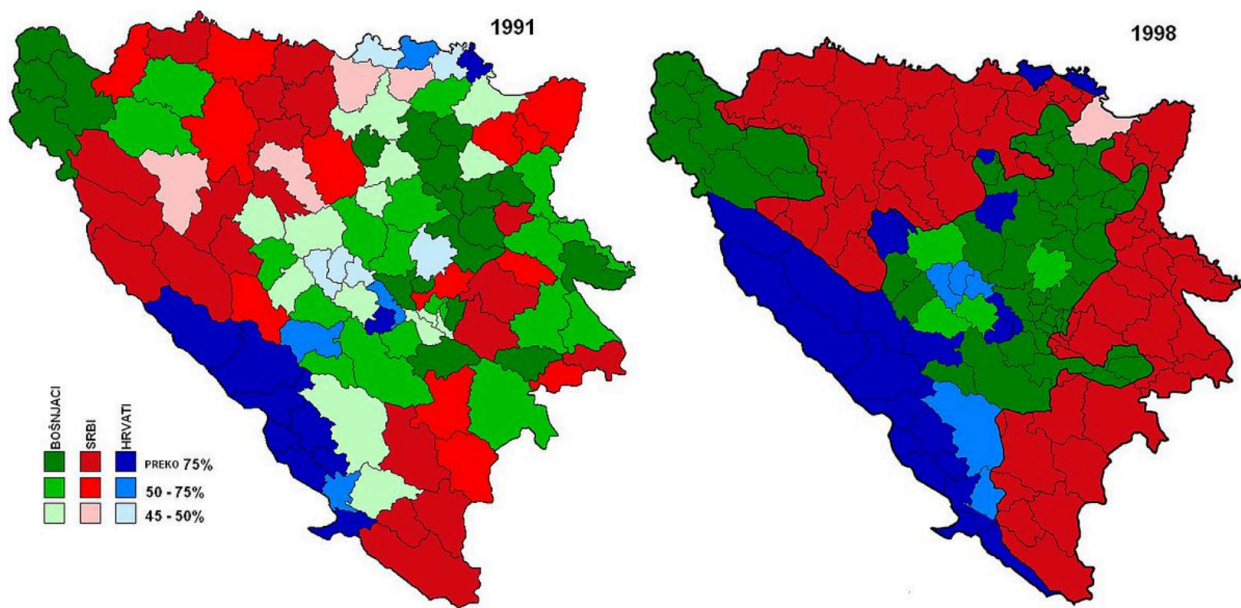
Thus, in Bosnia, unlike in Slovenia and Croatia where there were only two sides, since Bosnia was much more ethnically and geographically

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<sup>28</sup> Shrader, R. Charles (2003). *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia A Military History, 1992–1994*. Texas A&M University Press.

mixed, the conflict became fractionalized and isolated from each other partitioned by different front-lines, which in sum gave an illusion to be one well defined and territorially delineated war. Map bellow shows

**Ethnic Make up of BiH, before and after the War**



BiH's ethnic and geographical make up before and after the war. In fact with these scattered front-lines, combat sides were often changing sides and thus the conflict was continuously metamorphosing into different intra-ethnic military alliances or 'team switching'. In case of Bosnia, this change of war teams and evolution of rival alliances is startling. Bosnian regional and localized conflicts, paint a exceptionally confusing picture to an outsider wanting to grasp of who was fighting



whom, whose city, region, or territory belonged to which army, what were the official armies, who or how many paramilitary units were there<sup>29</sup> and who was the victim, who were the perpetrators.

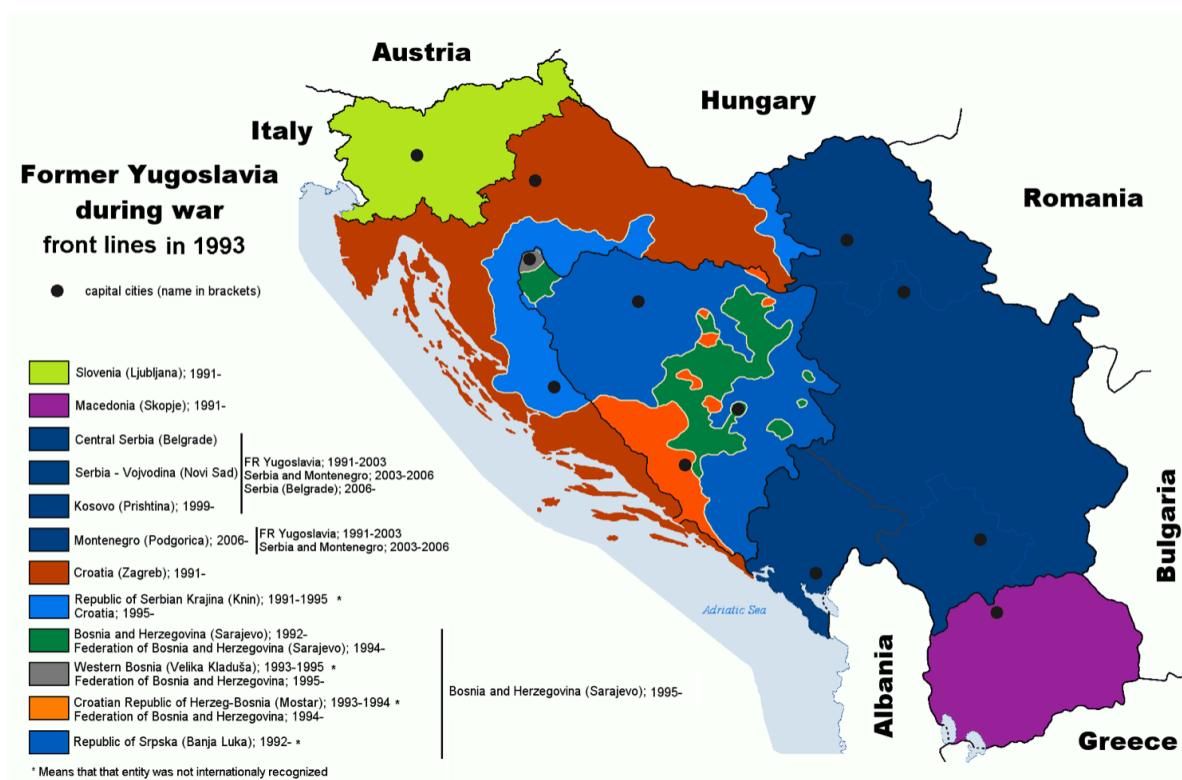
One of the central intricacies of these wars were indeed the alliances and number of secessionist or autonomous 'republics' proclaimed throughout the war in Bosnia. There were four autonomous republics or 'regional proclamations' in Bosnia in the period of just three years. Everyone seemed to want a piece of land for themselves. There were self proclaimed: 1) Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosna with a capital in Mostar, 2) Republic of Srpska with a capital in Banja Luka, 3) Republic of Western Bosnia with a capital of Velika Kladusa and 4) Federation of BiH with a capital in Sarajevo. Moreover, throughout the war, there were four (4) armed conflicts and three (3) military alliances. These conflicts were: Croats vs. Serbs, Muslims vs. Serbs, Croats vs. Muslims, Muslims vs. Muslims and when the alliances were formed there were: Croats and Serbs vs. Muslims, Serbs and Muslims vs. Muslims, and Croats and Muslims vs. Serbs.

To go into all the intricacies and details of these alliances and local conflicts is outside of the scope of this research, but all these

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<sup>29</sup> Serbs, Croats and Muslim during wartime in Bosnia, changed sides as larger politics changed around them. For example, in city of Mostar, in the beginning of war, Muslim and Croatian army units fought against Serbs, but as time progressed, Croats and Muslims turned against each other, splitting the city which still de facto represents the how the front lines were set up during war time. See also, cities of Vares, Bihac etc.

Map of fractionalized armed conflicts and list of proclaimed autonomous republics in 1993



alliances and conflicts occurred on the territory of Bosnia in the period of 1992 - 1995, in the cities: of Bosanski Brod, Mostar, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Vares, Kakanj, Banjaluka, Bihac to name the few. More specifically, the war between Croats and Muslims is formally known as as Croat-Bosnjak War<sup>30</sup>, which was the war between Republic BiH and self-proclaimed Croatian Republic of Herceg-Bosna, along the same time while the ‘main’ war in Bosnia was underway.

<sup>30</sup> The Croat–Bosniak War was a conflict between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the self-proclaimed Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, supported by Croatia, that lasted from 18 October 1992 to 23 February 1994. It is often referred to as a "war within a war" because it was part of the larger Bosnian War. For further details on this war please see: Shradler, Charles R. (2003). *The Muslim-Croat Civil War in Central Bosnia: A Military History, 1992–1994*. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press.

Some of the war veterans who were interviewed<sup>31</sup> during the field work have fought for three armies, which meant that at some point during the war, they fought against their own ‘ethnic’ group, starting first with (Yugoslav Peoples Army) JNA (as young conscripts), after leaving JNA, they would have joined their regional-home TO (Territorial Defense), once TO dissolved, they would then join their respective ‘ethnic’ military, either HVO, Serbian Army or Bosnian Army. A paradox for many young Yugoslavs who fought all three sides in short period of time, which not only speaks about the complexity but also about the absurdity of these wars.

Indeed, it would be naive to assume that there was only one principal war in Bosnia. However, these wartime ethnic front-lines that divided Bosnia cities such as Brcko, Sarajevo, Mostar just to name the few, did not occur in the city of Tuzla despite being caught in the same general war. It is precisely this paradox and instance of peace that has not been properly addressed in the literature. There is no sufficient research on Tuzla, which elected non-ethnic leadership which managed peace during the war. From the above review if the elites inflicted ethnic antagonisms in Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia, how did some communities manage to reject this attack on ethnic cleavages and strategic ethnic mobilization ? This begs the counterfactual

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<sup>31</sup> A.F. (Informant 1) (2016) Interview with the author, Dallas 25th January [A.F was a soldier in the JNA, TO and HVO forces in the period between 1991 and 1994].

question, if political elites did not drive the conflict in some communities, such as city of Tuzla, what was then the driver of ethnic peace ? How did Tuzla manage to reject ethnic manipulation ? Or, were there even any attempts by elites to manipulate ethnic cleavages in the first place ? Would this mean that instead of top-down strategy to instigate the conflict, rather bottom-up actions prevailed in instigating peace ? If so, what could be inside of Tuzla's civil society and why did only this city manage inter-ethnic peace ?

Lastly, in these wars all three sides [Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims] consider themselves as victims and see others as perpetrators or aggressors. Each denies the former, and identifies with the latter. This is to say that each of the three ethnic groups hold belief that they are the victims and the other two groups are perpetrators. Thereby, according to each ethnic group, they [themselves] are the *only* victim, which begs the question, if there are only the victims in these wars, who are the perpetrators then ? This confusion is important to clarify in order to deal with the post-war reconstruction but what it provides another implication relevant to this thesis, it gives the insight of the wartime and post-war political climates of the ethnic groups in former Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav state was violently demolished in leu of the inter-ethnic fighting, yet there appears to be no perpetrators — only victims.

The academic literature in Yugoslav disintegration is complex, but also extensive and well researched, however there are still areas that have not been addressed properly, such as instances where inter-ethnic conflict was rejected, which is the centerpiece of this thesis. In this line of thinking, Feron and Latin (1996) note, “it is not sufficient nor adequate and perhaps in this time in age can also be counterproductive to merely ask why conflicts happen, rather how do we explain the times and instances of peace in multiethnic societies, the peace which is more common and continual than war”.<sup>32</sup> Instead of engaging in violence ethnic groups manage and live in peace, and indeed in former Yugoslavia in particular Bosnia, there are communities who were able to reject the virulent nationalism and ethnic violence; and precisely, this thesis aims to address this type of instances and will attempt to explain why and how some communities managed peace, despite being surrounded by ethnic conflict.

### **3. The Puzzle: Counterintuitive Case of Tuzla**

This thesis undertakes the analysis of the wartime city of Tuzla, during the wars in former Yugoslavia. The study examines the

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<sup>32</sup> In order not to make any universalistic claims Fearon and Laitin laid out limits of their theory: “We should emphasize .. that we are not offering a full causal theory of either ethnic peace or ethnic violence. We specify what we believe are important causal mechanisms that appear to have been systematically neglected.. But we do not pretend that our formulation or .. mechanisms we identify tell the whole causal story. A richer story would surely include..narratives of interethnic injury. It might also include the motivations stemming from indignities suffered by peoples who are considered of lower rank and who seek to overturn a rigid social ordering.” (Fearon and Laitin 1996)

anatomy of Tuzla's civil society, its formation, structure and composition. City of Tuzla was the only large city [issues with other two municipalities who also elected non-ethnic parties are addressed below] in Bosnia who elected non-ethnic party in the first multiethnic municipal elections in Yugoslavia in 1990. Thesis also examines wartime processes and how the wartime leadership mounted anti-nationalist political option and military defenses. Tuzla is a political paradox a counterintuitive case in wartime Bosnia, and it does not fit either instrumentalist or primordialist approaches. Theoretical framework in chapter three will further elaborate on this point.

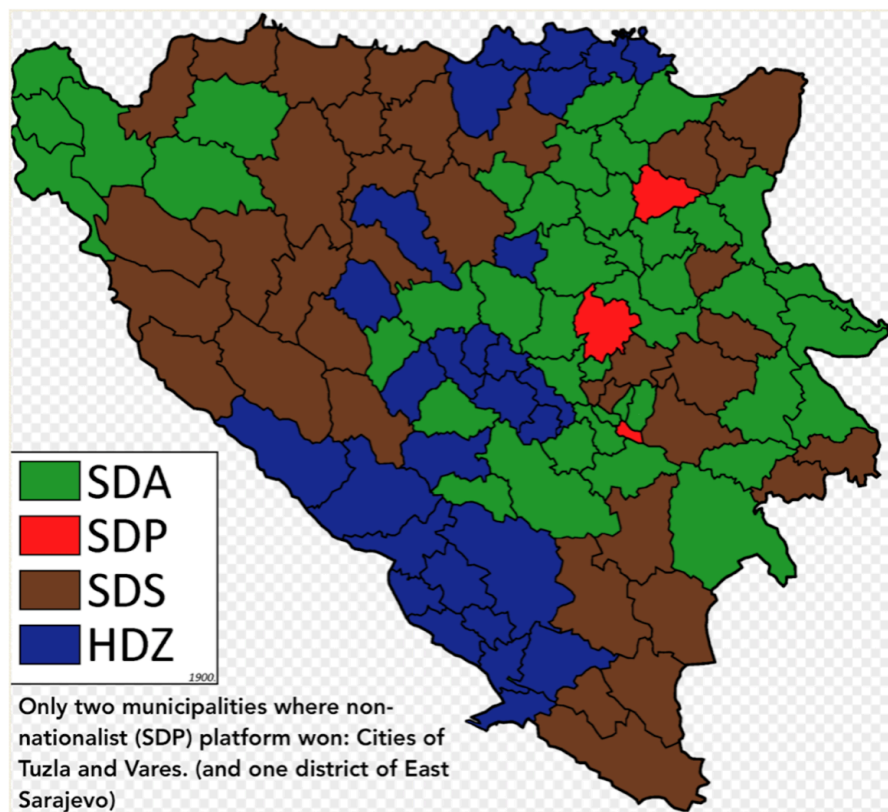
Tuzla is one of the only instances of ethnic peace in wartime Bosnia that managed to reject nationalist politics which presented itself in the form of: genocides, massacres, concentration camps, civilian expulsions, population transfers to name the few. Alternatively the city can be considered as the essence for moderate political option on the political, civil and religious levels. The time period of the research spans from 1990 to 1995. Population of Tuzla is approximately 130,700. According to the census in 1991, (last census before the war), Tuzla had approximately 48% Bosniaks, (Bosnian Muslims), 17% of Yugoslavs, 15% Croats, 15% Serbs and 5% Others<sup>33</sup>. Most recent census was conducted in 2013, and the ethnic mix reflects that of

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<sup>33</sup> Federalni Zavod za Statistiku Jugoslavije. Last census before the War conducted in March 1991 in BiH.

ethnic conflict throughout the region which resulted in ethnic compartmentalization, including voluntary and forced ethnic populations transfers throughout Bosnia. According to the last census of 2013, Tuzla's ethnic mix indeed reflects the consequences of the above instances and so city's fabric is currently made of 72% Bosniaks, 15% Croats, 2% Serbs, 7% Others, and 2% rejected<sup>34</sup> to pick an ethnic group.

**First Multiparty Municipal elections in SR. BiH in 1990**



Map above illustrates that ethno-nationalist parties won in all

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<sup>34</sup> Interestingly, 17% of Yugoslavs from the previous census disappeared — they did not disappear in fact, mostly likely they opted for their other 'post war' ethnic identity. But this is an important insight in how identities change — which goes very well against the Primordialist argument.

municipalities in Bosnia, except Tuzla (North East), Vares (Central) and district of East Sarajevo (smallest red area). However, in the city of Vares in 1993, ethnic Croatian military faction Croatian Council of Defense (HVO) and HDZ, illegitimately seized power from the non-nationalist party Social Democrats (SDP) and installed HDZ leadership. Likewise, small district of Sarajevo by 1992 was eliminated by Sarajevo siege and the city was de facto divided between Muslims and Serbs, thus leaving city of Tuzla the only municipality which elected non-nationalist platform, but crucially important it was also the city that successfully defended that anti-nationalist path unlike city of Vares. This is not to say that Tuzla was isolated from the pressures of radical nationalism. Serbian forces besieged the city for ten months, shelling it mercilessly daily, with shortages of food supply and incoming 80,000 refugees from eastern parts of Bosnia, but Tuzla was able to defend itself militarily from outside and defend itself politically within, from the radical Muslim factions who continuously tried to undermine the wartime leadership and wartime Mayor Beslagic, and replace them with Izetbegovic sympathizers from Sarajevo (Armakolas 2011). The wartime leadership also managed to retain ethnic Croats who wanted to collectively leave. Additionally, some former communist elites split with Tuzla's wartime leadership and joined nationalist camps, but the city managed to legitimately hold



on to power and in time managed to completely render useless all radical influence. It was for these reasons that city of Tuzla during the war captured some international attention.<sup>35</sup> Tuzla's defense forces included all three ethnic groups, which was unordinary of that time in Bosnia. Likes of cities of Mostar, Sarajevo, Banja Luka etc., where Muslims, Croats and Serbs would divide the city and commit war atrocities against each other (Markovina 2014). Tuzla, on the other hand, provided a distinct and counter-intuitive political behavior and in spite of all administrative and logistical setbacks, Tuzla and its leadership survived politically, and was able to retain the nucleus of its elite leadership and later even grew in numbers. However, regardless of Tuzla's success in Bosnian conflict, the city was never regarded as model city of peace.

#### **4. Tuzla's absence from academic research**

The academic literature on case of Tuzla is largely nonexistent. The city is marginalized on the foundations that its wartime politics are portrayed as extraordinary, however it is not clear what is mean by this exceptionality about Tuzla. On occasions the city is assigned

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<sup>35</sup> Much of western press celebrated Tuzla: An 'exception' (AFP, 11 May 1992), 'a bastion of harmony' (Washington Post, 21 November 1993), 'a rare oasis' (Alternative Information Network, 12 November 1994), 'a last bastion of ethnic tolerance' (Transition, 9 June 1995), and 'a last redoubt of Bosnian tolerance' (The Economist, 26 April 1997). As I will discuss in my chapter on Tuzla, these views were shared by policy makers and international organizations as well.

presumably special characteristics of geographical and sometimes of economic facets. What is important to understand is that this 'branding' of Tuzla is not without political dogma of interethnic Bosnian politics. Bosnia remains staunchly divided state. Three major ethnic parties in Bosnia have divided the political market share, and dividends of this agreement transpose into economic and political benefits. Prime examples are cities of Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Mostar. Mostar continues to be exceptionally divided and has not been able to vote in city council since 2012<sup>36</sup>. The city has not hold municipal elections because two major ethnic parties [HDZ and SDA] can not agree of which ethnicity mayor should be, Croatian or Muslim while a person of [Serbian ethnicity] is not even considered in the discussion what so ever.

Any instance where the ethnic groups collaborate, coexists and work in a non-nationalist modus, it is a direct attack on current Bosnian ethnic elite monopoly and strategies of maintaining strict ethnic divisions among Bosnian citizens. Clear ethnic camps, ensure elites electoral power base. Thus, cases like Tuzla pose direct threat to their existing political structures and their dividing strategies. In other words Tuzla opposed and continues to oppose Bosnian ethnic elitist political landscape and therefore it is perceived as a danger and it gets

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<sup>36</sup> Balkan Insight, weblink accessed on May 16th, 2016. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-parliament-to-vote-on-mostar-s-last-chance-04-13-2016>

labeled as exceptional or an outlier case as presumably not representative of Bosnia, thus it gets discounted and politically marginalized. Accordingly, no elaborate socio-political academic studies or inquiries has been undertaken and so no political lessons from its civil society and wartime policies have been acquired.

However, a closer look into Tuzla's characteristics, will reveal that these presumably special features are not special at all. Tuzla, is as any other city in Bosnia with similar historic legacy, similar Yugoslav economic structures, similar ethnic population mix, socialist urban planning, Yugoslav ideological and cultural features and same wartime military and socio-political dynamics. Tuzla is no different than any Bosnian urban center. Hence, far from what may commonly be referred to Tuzla's exceptionality, that is simply not the case. Tuzla in its core structure and composition of being a city in former Yugoslavia, is as most urban centers across former Yugoslavia and not fundamentally different from Sisak in Croatia, Mostar in Bosnia, Maribor in Slovenia or Kragujevac in Serbia to name the few. All these cities, had approximately same characteristics in the socialist Yugoslavia. Tuzla experienced the same socio-political dynamics as the rest of the wartime Bosnia, but how Tuzla took this dynamics and transformed it into peace and moderate political option rather than war and radical nationalism, is what sets Tuzla apart from the entire

country. The *puzzle* of why Tuzla was the only community that managed to do what no other city in Bosnia could, remains largely un-researched phenomena. By answering why and how this happened, we can then add nuanced understanding to the instrumentalist framework which would inadvertently improve our ability in the future to observe either smaller fractionalized conflicts or more importantly instances where peace may prevail and thus, act beforehand to support those structures. What this essentially implies, is that it is rather beneficial to prevent future conflicts than treat their outcomes. “War is about killing people and breaking things. It is thus unsurprising that civil wars entail significant economic costs” (Costalli, Moretti & Pischedda 2017). In other words, war outcomes are expensive, materialistically and non-materialistically, and if it can be prevented then the opportunity to do so should be materialized.

## **5. Research Question**

To examine the case of Tuzla and absence of ethnic conflict the thesis proposes a key question:

– *In the context of Yugoslav wars, what explains the counterintuitive case of Tuzla and its capacity to reject inter-ethnic conflict, radical ethno-nationalism and how the city was able to organize anti-nationalist movement*

*militarily, socially and politically to successfully maintain its legacy of ethnic peace and coexistence.*

Research question arise from the difficulty in understanding complexities of the Yugoslav disintegration in particular Bosnian war. In addressing, the question, the thesis seeks to advance contemporary understanding of pre-war and wartime anti-nationalist political formations and processes in city of Tuzla; intervene in regional debates over alternatives to ethnic conflict and contribute to research on Yugoslav wars. Equally important thesis seeks to reflect critically on the instrumentalist approach as one of the main broad theoretical frameworks utilized to explain Yugoslav disintegration. Lastly, the thesis looks to critically assess new and old formulations of primordialism in regards to the ‘ethnic’ wars in Yugoslavia.

## **6. Hypotheses**

Thesis main assumption is that Tuzla’s capacity to protect its multiethnic way of life is principally due to its rooted historical identity formation and wartime processes. City’s ability to reject nationalism and ethnic violence is embedded in Tuzla’s internationalization of different European nationalities in late 19th century, which marks the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia. From the

various parts of the empire migrant workers flocked to Tuzla as skilled labour force was needed to work in the Tuzla's expanding mining industry. These bonded international and local multicultural communities, were later further forged through various experiences of labour force movements vis-a-vis organizing strong unions, syndicates even occasional mass revolts, which culminated into creating a formidable anti-fascist resistance force during the world war two. Finally, building on top of these workers' solidarities [by now also well bonded multinational and multi-ethnic society], ethnic bonds and forged revolutionary working class were further cemented during the Socialist Yugoslavia era under the tutelage of "Brotherhood and Unity", while the city underwent strong economic, cultural and educational boom. This also pushed urban expansion from the rural suburbia needed to fill in the jobs in the mining sector which then further helped to glue the already robust Tuzla's congenial multiethnic civil society while including population from rural areas as well which was an important factor in construction of the overall working class society. The case of Tuzla is an example where the civil society came on top against the virulent nationalism. Tuzla's citizens were able to muster anti-nationalist movement by electing the appropriate political leadership and impel their elites to safeguard Tuzla from radical aggression. Thus, thesis basic underlying hypotheses are:

*H1. Tuzla's capacity to reject ethnic violence and counter mobilize against nationalism is due to a) early Austro-Hungarian industrialization and migration of workers to Tuzla b) formation of strong working class society and anti-fascist movement with miners as a leading force c) economic, cultural and educational boom during socialist Yugoslavia.*

*H1.1. Tuzla's ability to defeat nationalism operationally during wartime can be explained by the early and resolute control over arms depots, control of police units, strong civil society organization and ability to maintain day to day life norms and competencies*

*H2. Tuzla's ability to reject inter-ethnic violence and all types of ethnic, national or religious oppressions and counter mobilize to defend this choice is path-dependent.*

Alternatively, Tuzla's causal mechanism, i.e., strong aptness for multiethnic society and resistance against ethnic, national or religious oppression, was constructed principally through three specific processes during three time periods of Tuzla's history: a) Austro-Hungarian industrialization mainly of the mining sector, represented the first process, **bonding** of Tuzla's multiethnic and multinational workers society; b) second, strong solidarity among the workers class embracing socialist revolutionary principles **forging** formidable city's anti-fascist and resistance identity during the WW II; and c) thirdly,

*cementing* of the post WW II, Socialist Yugoslav brotherhood and unity ethnic bonds vis-a-vis city's social and economic prosperity.

The next chapter will introduce a theoretical framework. Chapter will address two major theoretical frameworks, instrumentalism and primordialism utilized in explaining Yugoslav disintegration and 'ethnic' wars in Bosnia. Furthermore, chapter will address the underlining concepts of ethnicity, nationalism and invention of myths, in relationship with how the elites manipulated these concepts in order to stir up the ethno-nationalist antagonisms.

Chapter will also address the structural failure of instrumentalism which encapsulated but also amalgamated host of fractionalized, distinct local conflicts in Bosnia into one unitary conflict, giving an appearance that war in Bosnia was one unitary well delineated war which offers two repercussions for both frameworks where by: primordialist tend to be definite in their thesis assuming 'ancient hatred' among Yugoslav ethnic groups as the principle cause of conflict, while instrumentalism would provide that elites were nearly unchecked in their ability to instrumentilize the masses across the nation regardless of its [civil society] formation, structure or composition, by simply attributing the elites with robust capacity to instrumentilize whomever and whenever, thus implicating both frameworks with two structural implications.



Implication for primordialism is the fact that it cannot address for those ‘ethnic’ alliances where presumably ethnic hatred is ascriptive and fixed. The micro conflicts and alliance switching or rather “start-and-pause” wars, go against biological [primordial] innate hatred assumptions.

While, instrumentalism rushes to assume that elites were omnimaniplative, which is not the case for two reasons. First, in order for instrumentalism to be largely correct on Yugoslav wars in particular on Bosnian war, taking in consideration its basic assumptions that it was an ‘elite driven war’ as discussed in earlier sections; it would mean that: a) no peaceful community or city existed in Yugoslavia, that managed to reject conflict, which is not the case and b) given that there is a city which managed peace, then instrumentalism assumption on elites are overreaching and somewhat inflexible. In other words, not all elites are ominous, more importantly, if elites are not responsible for the conflict in Tuzla, who, what and how then managed the peace? Chapter will also situate the study within the larger framework of studies concerning the relationship between civil society and ethnic mobilization and how restraint in ethnic mobilization but also active counter mobilization to violence, can emerge as a positive outcome, in other words, ethnic polarization and ethnic violence would not be ineluctable.

## CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical Framework

### 1. Introduction

There are two overall goals of this chapter, first is to present the relevance of two theoretical approaches in international relations within the realm of political science by which Yugoslav disintegration and in particular ‘ethnic’ war in Bosnia is explained, namely instrumentalism and primordialism. Thesis will first present the frameworks then it will critically engage both. Second goal is to situate the case study of Tuzla within these frameworks in relation to the ethno-national wars and how the absence of ethnic conflict in Tuzla empirically shows that primordialist thesis on ancient and ethnic hatred continues to be irrelevant as cause to the Yugoslav collapse. More importantly case of Tuzla will show that instrumentalist approach presumes war in Bosnia, as unitary [*macro*] war with clear ethno-national and territorially delineated combat sides, rather than being a series of amalgamated [*micro*] but disconnected, fractionalized and alliance driven local conflicts. With the former view of the war, instrumentalists tend to bundle all elites together and conclude that all elites operate under the same instrumentalist assumptions but more importantly through this macro assumptions, it fails to notice micro

conflicts or absence of conflicts and/or instances of peace. Broader implication of this failure is that instrumentalism by failing to observe micro level conflicts, inadvertently fails to consider the anatomy of the local and regional civil society who may be the drivers of peace by rejecting the formidable elite intentions. In line with above logic and central to this thesis is that case of Tuzla is in nuanced contradiction to the instrumentalist assumption that all wars in Yugoslavia in particular in Bosnia, were unquestioningly and exclusively elite driven and therefore, inadvertently failed to observe instances where conflict may have been absent, where elites did not manage to manipulate the ethnic cleavages or where they rejected to act under instrumentalist assumptions, where certain city or town rejected elite induced nationalism and ethnic antagonisms in so far that it [instrumentalist approach] failed to give credit to formation, structure and composition of a specific local or regional Yugoslav in particular Bosnian civil society thus indirectly labeling it as unconditionally irrelevant.

Case of Tuzla will show that primordialism was irrelevant when it was most popular framework to explain “balkan tribes fighting again” but it also continues to be irrelevant as Tuzla remains undoubtedly most ethnically united and peaceful city. It will also re-question instrumentalist inquiry in terms of its capacity to look into micro

conflicts within the macro war, which can provide newly set of alternate or interspersed ethnic group motivations, elite capacity, elite greed and their need to instrumentalize, ultimately giving new dimension to the *macro* war. In sum, this chapter will critically assess both frameworks, whereby primordialism approach vis-a-vis ancient ethnic hatred thesis is to be rejected as irrelevant framework conversely, certain elements of instrumentalism will be criticized, while some nuanced understanding will be offered instead. Thus, thesis aims for two contributions, first and the centerpiece of the thesis, is to explain the counterintuitive case of peaceful city of Tuzla during the war in Bosnia, and secondly equally important, to add nuanced inquiry in relation to the [lack of] instrumentalist assumptions in relation to the anatomy of the civil society and also [overreaching] assumptions vis-a-vis elites.

In the first section, chapter will introduce and address the common denominator of both frameworks; the concept of ethnicity and identity. This section will discuss some important facets of ethnicity and nationalism including ‘inventing of traditions’ and concept of myth utilization in times of wars. Some common questions will be addressed: What is the meaning the ethno ? How is ethnicity constructed ? What is the relationship between nationalism and ethnicity ? Why are myths invented ? Impact of myths on ones ethnic

identity in relation to the ethnic violence. Next, the section will assess instrumentalism and how wars in Yugoslavia tend to be seen through this prism in particular, the chapter will focus on the underlining concepts of greed and elite ability to manipulate and why do masses [or not] follow the elites. Section will also offer limits of the approach in particular predisposition to cluster micro fractionalized or distinct conflicts into one macro unitary conflict. The localized micro conflicts in combination with 'switching of teams' [forging of alliances] within the macro war sometimes go unnoticed or presumably get deemed as irrelevant localized alliances, however they may show different realities on the ground as it was the case of Yugoslavia in particular during Bosnian wars. This is in particularly relevant because this idea questions true motivations and root causes of the conflict in so far whether to validate the thesis of 'premodern hate' or 'instrumentalization by elites" but more importantly this type of inquiry will allow to address instances where peace was protected. Implications of this kind of approach is that these variations in micro conflicts, within one larger macro war can give illusion that there is only one well defined macro war, which may be misleading and instead, there may exist important phenomena of micro instances of either different alliances, smaller conflict but more importantly instances of peace; as it was the case of Tuzla. Thus, war in Bosnia

was looked through the general prisms of primordialism and instrumentalist, both falling to notice most crucial occurrences in the entire conflict — an instance of peace. Therefore, it is in this context that this thesis aims to add a nuanced inquiry. Along the similar lines, and the centrality of this thesis, section will assess instrumentalist failure to take in consideration the capacity of the civil society, which thesis sees as the main driver of the sustained peace in Tuzla during the war. Lastly, strong and overreaching assumptions in regards to the aptness and motivations of all elites do not need to be so rigid. Not all elites have the same attributions nor do all elites act under those same forbidding instrumentalist assumptions, as it was the case with Tuzla.

Primordialism will be assessed next, particularly chapter will address old and new formulations of the approach. Chapter will address fundamental primordialist assumption in defining ethnicity as ascriptive concepts and how primordialism keeps reinventing itself. This section will also address underpinning emotive drivers of primordialist ethnic antagonism which are fear and anger but also fundamental cultural concepts that tie the ‘ethno’ together. Next, section will address limits of primordialism, expounding ideas of intervals of peace, timing of eruption of conflicts, transitive properties as in diaspora, and thesis own nuanced addition of

primordialist critical assessment is, accumulation and sustainability of hate including ‘validity of temporal-switch’ of identities during a war. Ethnic conflicts are often more complex and intricate and must be given in depth assessment without rushing to offer explanations as it was the case with Yugoslavia and primordialism. Primordialist explanation to Yugoslav conflict, initially set the trend of presumed long standing ethnic hate among Yugoslav ethnic groups, disseminated through various channels only to be rebuffed years later, but not after the damage was done. Hasty assessments may cost years in reconciliation efforts after the conflict, therefore my effort in terms of primordialism in addition to add few additional criticism is also to continue to keep pushing primordialism aside because primordialism when misused can leave long negative consequences on the society attempting to reconcile. Last section will summarize the chapters main points.

## **2. Ethnicity: features and politicization**

Ethnicity is a state [feeling] of belonging to a specific [ethnic] group (Kellas 1998). An “ethnic group” is defined as a group of individuals who distinguish themselves and/or others as a distinct group characterized with social or cultural attributes (Farley 1998). Aguirre (1998) posits, when a subpopulation of individuals disclose shared

historical experiences and/or unique behavioral and cultural traits, it [group] exhibits ethnicity. According to this definition, Smith (1991) refers to six main characteristics to define 'ethno'; a collective proper name, myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, common culture (or one or more differentiating elements of) an association with 'specific' territory [homeland] and a 'sense' of solidarity for 'significant' part of the population. Thus, all the above-mentioned ethnic facets provide each group with a set of distinct traits which distinguish it from other(s) and so in this sense, ethnicity may be considered as a synonym to the feeling of "identity" or as Cornell (1998) posits, "identity is that sense of ethnic distinctiveness". This relationship between ethnicity and identity is voiced explicitly by Horowitz's (1985) definition of the former: "ethnicity is a highly inclusive group identity based on some notion of common origin, recruited primarily through kinship and typically manifesting some measure of cultural distinctiveness". Eriksen (2001) goes little further and separates ethnicity and culture, "while ethnic identity should be taken to refer to a notion of shared ancestry, culture refers to the shared representations, norms and practices". In other words, "one can have deep ethnic differences without correspondingly important cultural differences [as in Yugoslavia] and one can have cultural variation without ethnic boundaries [English of the middle class and



the English of the working class]”.

Lastly, currently exists a debate on how ethnicity should be defined for research purposes. Some argue for ‘quantoid’ and others for ‘interpretivist’ definitions (Fearon & Laitin 2000). Interpretivist<sup>37</sup> approach is situational and case based which would make ethnicity more flexible and adaptive for particular research, while quantoid<sup>38</sup> approach would attempt to precisely define ethnicity, no matter what the purpose and usage is for in order to clearly have universal benchmark to allow more precise comparative studies.<sup>39</sup> For the purposes of this research, this thesis applies interpretivist approach to ethnicity.

### *ethnicity, nationalism and myths as mechanism for manipulation*

Relationship between ethnicity, nationalism and creation of ethno-national myths plays crucial role in ethnic conflicts. This section is not intended to be in-depth study of nationalism as study of nationalism is deservedly elaborate and intricate area of study however, few

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<sup>37</sup> Smith (1998) and Wallerstein (1987) claim that ethnicity must be viewed as a plastic and malleable social construction, deriving its meanings from the particular situations of those who invoke it — “ethnicity has no essence or center, no underlying features or common denominator”.

<sup>38</sup> Barresi (2003) notes “this type of lexical confusion means that, as scholars cannot achieve a basic level of agreement on the terms by which we analyze the social world, agreement on conclusions is impossible”.

<sup>39</sup> For further discussion on quantoid or interpretivist debate please see (Fearon and Laitin 2000) [http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/PS439G/readings/fearon\\_laitin\\_2003.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/PS439G/readings/fearon_laitin_2003.pdf) accessed 5th October 2015

general definitions and assessments for the clarity of the thesis are in order. Generally, *nationalism* has been perceived as: “the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority, and in some cases the totality, of the population [...] it is the establishment of an anonymous impersonal society, with mutually sustainable atomized individuals, held together above all by a shared culture of this kind, in place of the previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by folk cultures reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves” (Gellner 1983); “[nationalism] rarely reflecting a long-term tradition or a coherent way of life. Nor is it necessarily founded on a common language, or religion, or ethnicity, or historical experience. All these are more often the result of sovereignty than its reason: they are social artifacts, political constructions. The nation is an imagined (and, what is more, a newly imagined) community” (Hobsbawm 1990); an “imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 1991); “process to establish the ideological justification of the state” (Eriksen 1993). In terms of parallel between ethnicity and nationalism Cornell (1998) posits that, nationalism is based on real or assumed ethnic ties. However, concept of nationalism has slightly more ideological and political dimensions because it refers to the

expressed desire of people to establish and maintain self-governed political entity (Cornel 1998; Kellas 1998). Explicit implication for this thesis is the relationship when “ethno” becomes “nationalistic”, the result of emergence of “ethno-nationalism”, which in turn can prove threatening for the existence of the state and lead to ethnic conflict with other groups. Problem is not with the fundamental definition behind national self-determination defined as “moral agency and political authority [...] holding that nations are entitled to govern their own affairs and, in particular, to form their own states” (Brubaker 1998), the problem becomes however when one group’s ethno-nationalist ‘goals’ and ‘determinations’ become exclusive and/or aggressive *vis-a-vis* other ethnic group. This is to say, maintaining the principle “whereby asserting that state and nation should be congruent; thereby providing powerful lever for evaluating and redrawing state boundaries for legitimating or delegitimizing political frontiers according to a kind of correspondence theory of justice” (ibid. p. 274). The term “ethnic conflict” therefore, arises when “one ethnic group vis-a-vis another ethnic group defines its goals in ‘ethnic’ terms i.e., claims that its distinct ethnic identity and the lack of opportunity to preserve, express and develop it [identity], is the reason that its members do not have the same rights, and cannot realize their interests (Roessingh 1996). What this thesis tries to be

cognizant of are then, the motivations behind setting goals by one ethnic group in respect to another. It is “important to recognize exactly when nationalism turns into chauvinism and under what conditions — so that we can try to avoid the transition or reverse it” (Hobsbawn 1990). In terms of former Yugoslavia towards late 1980s, principally, Serbs, Croats and Slovenians all began to inaugurating their own ethnic goals, including Muslims<sup>40</sup> (Bosnjaks), which were in return, threatening in nature to other ethnic groups in particular Serbian ‘ethnic-goals’<sup>41</sup> in Kosovo, Croatian Krajina and Slavonia and Bosnia, and in due course Croatian<sup>42</sup> ‘ethnic-goals’, in heterogeneous communities of Krajina and Slavonia with large Serbian population. Both ethnic groups used “social engineering” (Markovina 2014) of historical myths<sup>43</sup> which provided intense power capable of arising deep passions and nationalistic feelings which thereof were used for pursuing territorial aims and political power (Gagnon 2004).

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<sup>40</sup> Izetbegovic, Alija. (1990). *The Islamic Declaration: A Programme for the Islamization of Muslims and the Muslim People*, Sarajevo, Bosnia, 1990.

<sup>41</sup> Memorandum by Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences <https://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/674> Infamous Memorandum by SANU. Weblink accessed on October 20th, 2015.

<sup>42</sup> Franjo Tuđman, *Bespuća povijesne zbiljnosti, Rasprava o povijesti i filozofiji zlosilja*, Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, Izabrana djela Franje Tuđmana, Zagreb, 1990.

<sup>43</sup> Hall, John A. (1998). *The state of the nation : Ernest Gellner and the theory of nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moreover, the concept of national identity is inescapably connected with national myths. Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983) coined the term ‘invention of traditions’, which explains that nationalist elites invent myths closely connected to the newly established state and its new concepts of: nationalism, nation-state, national symbols, history etc. Shnirelman (1995) reflects on nationalist myths as being diffused among East Slav (ethnic Russians, Belorussians, Ukrainians) people whereby myths are being created by national intellectuals and proliferated by the ethno political elites with the goal of using these myths as an instrument for ethno-political mobilization and inter-ethnic conflict. Kaufman (2001), refers to [national] myths as existing at the core of every nationalism, “the core of the ethnic identity is the “myth-symbol complex” ... “the combination of myths, memories, values and symbols that defines not only who is a member of the group but what it means to be a member. National elites create nationalist identities, using ethnic symbols to mimic the cues that originally invoked a genuine kinship/group-defense response-hence the “motherland” and “fatherland” and various symbolisms and ‘inventing traditions’ commonly used by nationalist to combine the notions of home territory and family” (ibid. p. 25).

In the next two sections, two approaches, instrumentalism and primordialism will be presented and assessed. In the above section,

relationship between ethnicity, nationalism and invention of myths in relation to ethnic conflicts was briefly discussed in respect to the case of Tuzla, which will show how restraint in one of these inventions of myths, nationalist rhetoric and ethno-national political mobilization of ethnicity can emerge as an outcome in other words, polarization and conflicts would not be, ineluctable. Unlike the case of Milosevic who awakened and tirelessly worked on sustaining the Serbian myths, stirring up the ethnic antagonisms between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, Serbs and Croats in Croatia, likewise Tudjman's repressive and violent nationalism in Croatian Krajina of a similar approach, Tuzla however, choose to go in the opposite direction.

### **3. Instrumentalism: Ontology**

#### *elite greed and instrumentalization of the "ethno"*

Instrumentalism within international relations field of study is essentially two fold framework. First, it argues that ethnic conflicts emerge from the elite desires and needs for economic or political gains (Gellner 1983; Gurr 1993; Collier & Hoeffler 2004). Secondly, those desires and needs are precipitated by inciting ethnic conflict vis-a-vis rational [intentional] manipulation of the ethno part of the society (Banton 1983; Hechter 1986). As such, multiethnic societies

tend to be predisposed to ethnic instrumentalization (Horowitz 1985; Varshney 2002). Fenton (2002) in analyzing the instrumentalism notes, “if behavior in terms of ethnic associations could be seen to be serving some individual or collective political or economic ends, then the ethnic action could be reinterpreted as instrumental”. Instrumentalism does not prescribe to postulation that ethnic wars are ancient or embedded in the human subconsciousness rather, ethnic conflicts arise when ethnic identities are politicized or manipulated to generate political and socio-economic advantages for an ethnic group at the cost of depriving or neglecting other ethnicities (Posen 1993; Collier & Hoeffler 1998; Ruane & Todd 2004; Chandra 2004). In addition to ethnicity instrumentalism advance few other different models in addition to greed and grievance to explain ethnic conflicts. One of those models which to some extent contributed to the overall rise in ethnic tensions is ‘security dilemma’ postulate: referring to a situation in which actions by one state or [ethnic group] intended to heighten its security, such as proliferation of its military strength, reordering of its territorial military presence or making alliances, can lead other state or [ethnic group(s)] to respond with similar measures, producing increased tensions that can lead to an armed conflict, even when no side really desires it (Jarvis 1978; Posen 1993).

This is particularly relevant when considering from the last chapter

how Milosevic sprang up ethnic tensions in Kosovo between Serbs and Albanians as well as in Croatia between Serbs and Croats ‘in cahoots’ with Tudjman. When two approaches are combined; elite greed and instrumentalization of ethnic grievances with security dilemma, it is not difficult to imagine that Prime Minister Ante Markovic and reformist forces of Yugoslavia, did not come ‘prepared for the fight’. On the contrary, and despite all the signs and predispositions that war would have nearly be inevitable, when there is an absence of both of approaches, in addition to counter mobilization from the bottom, the outcome may result in the absence of conflict and/or instance of peace, as in case of Tuzla.

Some instrumentalists, however do not deny the ethnic sentiments to which primordialists subscribe, however they do distance themselves from the ascriptive [inherent] facets of ethnicity and contest that ethnicity is an instrument for ethnic mobilization used by the elites (Glazer & Moynihan 1975). Accordingly, for Varshney (2009) ethnicity is neither inherent nor intrinsically valuable, rather “it [ethnicity] masks deeper fundamental economic and political interests. Moreover, concept of *greed* underpins elite motivations and is essentially seen as the main driver of ethnic conflict. This is because the ethnic conflicts occur in relation to either economic opportunities or political predation thus, the ‘ethno’ in relation to greed, is perceived as rational



strategy whose goal is to restrict large share of the economic and political resources, particularly to small circles of elites (Collier & Sambanis 2002). Hence, ethnicity can also be viewed as the means to gain political power in order to obtain the resources from the state. As such, instrumentalists argue that ethnic conflicts develop among 'rational agents' (Chandra 2004) over scarce resources and is constructed by political entrepreneurs to obtain economic or political gains. Therefore, the ethnic conflict, is the result of actor's rational activity of widespread interests for power and security as Williams (2015) posits, "deliberate manipulation based on a rational decision to incite or encourage ethnic violence". Along the same lines, Bates (1974), Rabushka and Shepsle (1972), assert that ethnic wars are incited and encouraged by the political elites derived from their economic and political aspirations.

### *why masses follow: collective action and coordination*

One of the central concerns of instrumentalism, deals with a question of: Why should masses follow the elites in their quest for power through means of ethnic war? This question can also be posed as: why some ethnic communities choose to cooperate rather than to fight? In relative terms to the thesis topic, why did Serbs and Croats follow Milosevic and Tudjman for example? One answer that

instrumentalism provides is the concept of *opportunity cost* for *collective action*. Instrumentalists put forward an argument which explain that cooperation versus fight depends on the cost-benefit analysis that ethnic groups make when faced with this decision. When the cost for cooperation is more than perceived benefits, ethnic conflict tends to be unavoidable (Walter 1997). Collier and Hoeffler (1998) define these benefits as *lootable commodity* and participation in irredentist movements is calculated on the basis that cost in participating in the irredentism is low, while share of the loot is substantial. In addition to collective action instrumentalists also prescribe that some will take part in ethnic violence even when they are not personally convinced but will follow the crowd anyway. In line of this thinking Harding (1995), argues that central strategic issue in ethnic mobilization is rather issue of *coordination*, and not the issue of collective action because in collective action, it is rational to free ride but in coordination it is rational to cooperate as long as others are cooperating. An example by Schelling (1963), where the couple separated at the department store will most likely without any prior understanding, find the common or obvious place to meet. The idea that both will seek the *focal point*, translates in more general terms in relation to ethnic mobilization — hence he argues that ‘prominence’ or ‘uniqueness’ of the ethnicity will serve as a focal point to

coordinate the ethnic mobilization, alluding that ethnic mobilization is only a coordination problem, however it does not explain risks associated with ethnic mobilizations. Lastly, in the analysis of instrumentalism, Varshney (2009) asserts “can one really explain ethnic preferences in an entirely instrumental way, or is recourse to the psychological or cultural foundations of ethnicity necessary” ? Hence, inadvertently instrumentalism continues to use some aspects of primordialism. The elites in their drive for power, instrumentilize the ‘ethno’ grievances in the society to stir up the antagonisms. Hence, some primordialist assumptions still appear to be relevant in so far that instrumentalism continues to use the ‘ethno’ grievances for expounding conflicts.

#### **4. Limits of the instrumentalism**

##### *issues with collective mobilization and coordination*

Firstly, Varshney (2002) and Horowitz (1985), question the part of collective mobilization, in particular how the elites are able to mass mobilize and or achieve collective mass response. Furthermore, they ask why would ethnic collective action not be crippled by free rider (bandwagoning) problem if the masses are instrumental (Varshney 2002). For Varshney, it is somewhat understandable as to why would

one mobilize [join the movement] when he or she is close to acquiring the economic riches or political power, but what about others who do not have direct benefits ? To help answer this, Olson (1965) provides concepts of *selective incentives* and Sen (1973) employs concept of *commitment* to help explain why others would join. This is to say that, leaders will *incentivize* membership through appropriate monetary or material benefits, while *commitment* to the group is mandated by fear of being ostracized from the group. However, if one knows that the odds are high that ethnic mobilization would lead to violence or to some kind of punitive action by the state authorities why would anyone then participate at all ? Varshney, as Olson content that certain aspects of *coercion* can possibly explain part of the mobilization, but they both agree that it would be over simplistic to think that coercion can explain complete or long term mobilization (Olson 1965; Varshney 2002). The idea that coercion is not powerful enough to drive the collective mobilization for long periods of time translates in more general terms considering the war in Bosnia which appeared to be macro war when in fact was fractionalized territorially and often alliance driven, with many local conflicts and alliances being changed throughout the war, show that coercion indeed has limited impact. An example where collective mobilization, coordination and coercion did not last was when HVO collaborated with Muslim forces in the city of

Vares in the early stages of the conflict to fight the Serbian forces in the surrounding villages, while during the same war in Bosnia HVO and Muslim forces fought viciously in the city of Mostar, Kiseljak, Kresevo etc. Both collective action and coordination faltered as alliances were forming across the wartime Bosnia. When it was time to change alliances again, Serbs and Croats in the city of Vares, allied in 1993 again to fight Muslims, while understandably [Croats and Muslims] broke off their alliance. It can also be argued that instrumentalism appears to bundle up *micro* distinct conflicts within a *macro* war in its approach to explain the elite driven war. Therefore, when explaining overall war in Bosnia for example, asserting that political elites on the national level instrumentalized their respective ethnic groups to fight other ethnic group, one would expect a one, singular unitary well delineated ethnic conflict across the nation, which clearly was not the case in Bosnia. Instrumentalist assumption in this respect fail to observe or overreach the *macro-micro* relationship.

On the other hand, Varshney (2002) asserts, why 'ethnic' based mobilization is related to coordination game but 'class' based mobilization and is riddled with *free-rider* [bandwagoning] problem. Additionally, he asks, why does ethnicity provide some kind of 'epistemological comfort of home' but does not have the same effect on class or party ? After all, Varshney notes, "communist party leaders

believed that there would be a new socialist man, replacing ethnicity or nationhood” (Varshney 2002). In line of this thinking, he also notes that elites in multiethnic societies will choose ethnicity rather than economic or ideological programs as means to their power. I however must disagree with this assumption because it is somewhat overreaching and rigid. While it is true that elites will grab on the ethnic cleavages in order to instrumentilize the ethno of a society, it is not however a consistent modus operandi. What I mean by this, is that Varshney’s assumption would mean for example that the elites in Tuzla, mobilized the citizens by their ethnic affiliation, which is not the case. In fact, the civil society in Tuzla counter-mobilized based precisely on ideological and civic values. Furthermore, without going too deep into the histories of Soviet Union, former Yugoslavia, Italy or France, Partisans and fascist resistance in WW II in these states were mobilized not based on ethnic cleavages rather on ideological.

### *issues with cost-benefit analysis*

Finally, instrumentalist assumption that one group will only choose an identity on the basis of cost-benefit analysis and as such would make one to be a rational actor. In other words, one chooses to be Bosnian (Muslim) in Bosnia because benefits of being ethnic Bosnian (Muslim) in Bosnia outweighs the costs of not being one. Assuming that

conflicts must involve at least two sides, this means that at least two identities will be 'chosen' to identify themselves. However, there is a problem with this assumption as well.

Firstly, instrumentalists, assume that one's ethno-national identification is based on the rational calculation of costs and benefits for being associated with an identity preference (Oliver & Marwell 1988, Yang 2000). In other words, ethnic identity is a cost-benefit rationale and it is an option, where an individual based on cost-benefit analysis, will choose one ethnic identity, alternatively avoid association [with it] if the cost is high. Thus, a person or [groups] will favor an affiliation, because of perceived benefits, while other(s) will hide or reject their ethnic identity because of potential social, political, economical etc. hindrance (Yang 2000). The issue with this line of thinking is this: must there be a cost-benefit analysis in the first place? This is to say, are individuals allowed to choose an identity as a free choice without cost benefit paradigm and if so, will they be labeled as irrational then ? What this translates to, since wars and ethnic conflicts are almost inescapable occurrences in our times, that would for example mean: those citizen in Croatia that chose an identity of "ethnic Croat" in 1991 when Croatian government declared that "Croatia is a nation of Croats", to be a rational actor, while those who chose to identify as Serb or Yugoslav would then automatically be

labeled as irrational. Furthermore, often those ‘irrationals’ are perceived as potential rouses for the future ethnic hostility, because when there are rational and irrational groups, fingers are often first pointed towards the irrational side. Clearly, why would anyone declare himself/herself not a Croat in a Croat-nation state during the ethnic conflict ? This is rather somewhat rigid outlook of instrumentalism and cost-benefit analysis. The question I must pose then, how then rational were the Partisans across the European continent during the WW II ? It would appear then that anti-fascist conviction via cost-benefit analysis is irrational versus being rational in choosing to identify with the ‘rational’ side, which were at that time nazis and fascists. By this formulation, the anti-fascist resistance across Europe in WW II were just a band of irrational bandits. In fact, Tuzla’s anti-nationalist movement and preservation of peace by this formulation also appears to be irrational.

Lastly, the cost benefit analysis assumes that one simply chooses ‘only one’ identity over the other, this is to say for example: that in 1990, in Croatia one could not have simply been a Croat and Serb at the same time. One could have only been either, a Croat and as such rational actor as she would have been maximizing her benefits of being a Croat in Croatian-nation or be a Serb and as such irrational as she would obviously not be maximizing her benefits as she would end up



being a minority in the Croatia-for-Croats nation. The implication is this: in times of ethnic conflict it appears that one can only pick one identity and be rational and selecting more than one is either not acceptable or it is irrational. In other words, one cannot be European and French, she can only be either European or either French. Which brings me to my second point; the validity of temporal identity switching, as someone choosing an identity in times of ethnic conflict and instrumentalist's capacity to address in-depth, these micro intricate realities on the ground.

Assuming that an individual is rational in calculating to maximize her benefit over the cost — does not necessarily translate into the fact that she will truthfully [ethically and morally] accept it as her true identity. This is to say that switching or accepting some new identity in the midst of the ethnic war may appear to be more opportunistic, [hence the name cost-benefit analysis] — which should not be automatically taken as real ethnic representation on the ground. Choosing to identify as a Croat in Croatia during secession from Yugoslavia [even though one may be a Serb] could be defined as rational indeed, but also skews the realities on the ground, simply because that 'temporal' Croat may switch back to his original identity when peace arrives. What this translates in more general terms is this: switching an identity or alliances from being a Yugoslav in 1990 to

being a Serb or Croat, or when Croats in Bosnia allied with Serbs or Muslims, does not necessarily reflect that these were truly ethnic divisions or ethnic antagonisms. Understanding this in hindsight then represents a different picture of the war. The war in Yugoslavia then takes a new definition, which could be defined as ‘opportunistic war’ rather than ‘ethnic or civil’. This then becomes another framework and another issue altogether.

One of the reasons why war in Bosnia had many micro wars with host of alliances is because this ‘ethnic identity’ was not hardened. And it was not hardened because of fifty years of Yugoslav socialist coexistence, whereby the ‘ethno’ part of the society was truly placed in the background and was even on the way to become completely irrelevant. (Gagnon 2004). This assumed ‘rational’ ethnic identification during the war, was in many cases shallow, opportunistic and temporal. How otherwise can one explain forging of ethnic military alliances among “ethnic enemies” in one period only to be erased in another and so on cyclically throughout the conflict. Croats and Muslims created alliances to fight Serbs, likewise, Serbs and Croats created alliances to fight Muslims and in some instances like city of Bihac, Croats and Serbs simply stood on the side and let Muslim factions fight each other.

This is how instrumentalism bundled a war in Bosnia; as one macro unitary conflict and it is somewhat hasty definition and approach to this war. More importantly however, simplifying ethnic conflict may result misinterpreting root causes or realities on the ground during the conflict which may paint a different picture about the ethnic groups there, their motivations or elite aptness and capacity to either incite war or manage peace. Hence, war in Bosnia may have taken a different dimension if focus on the conflict was more on ‘team changing’ paradox among the combat sides, rather than impulsively defining it in definite ethnic terms, when it was not so clear to be the war of ‘one side against the other’ rather it could have been defined as “multiple sides versus multiple other sides and depending on what month it is”. When we take in consideration the above paradox, the war in Bosnia as unfortunate as it was, resembled more a sand playground of indecisive elites, rather than a conflict of the ‘ethno’.

Finally, instrumentalism did not properly address that there were those who simply rejected to change their identities at all and/or allow elites to instrumentalize their ethnicity as it was seen in Tuzla. Tuzla for example is one of those rare cities in the region where identity being Yugoslav increased from the last poll conducted in 1990<sup>44</sup>. Many changes in identities [national and ethnic] during Yugoslav wars were

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<sup>44</sup> Konacni rezultati Popisa 2013 – Federalni zavod za statistiku. [www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvolzdanje.pdf](http://www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvolzdanje.pdf) . weblink accessed September 20th 2016

largely opportunistic and can be understood simply as means of survival during a conflict. Also, elites cannot always manipulate the ethnic cleavages as citizens are not necessarily irrational for not changing their identities when it would appear to be ‘rational’ to do so. More importantly, instrumentalist vis-a-vis its overreaching assumptions on elites, also failed to address the anatomy of the civil society. Some societies have something in their anatomies that is more robust than elites’s aptness to instrumentilize group’s ‘ethno’. Lastly, in lieu of the above mentioned, instrumentalism should not be so hasty and compartmentalize local fractionalized conflicts into one. Realities on the ground may depict very different picture, as it was the case with war in Bosnia.

## **5. Primordialism: Ontology**

The roots of primordialist approach are embedded with German romanticist philosophers like Herder and Fichte but the paradigm has been since advanced and its strongest proponents Geertz (1963), Van Evera (2001) and Shils (1995) posit that: ethnic ties are inherent in humans and as such have deep natural connection that connects people of the same ethnic identity which subsequently produce natural divisions with others. Primordialism, is the oldest tradition of enquiry in the subfield of ethnicity. Primordialists posit that the

“ethno” is ascriptive primordial attribute in humans and fear hatred and anger can stem from the group differences and these division can be differences in language, territory, race, ethnicity, religion etc. (Isajiw, 1993). Because primordialist claim that ethnic identity is ascriptive and inherent, general assumption therefore is that ethnic group membership is fixed [hardened] and passed down intact across generations (Isajiw, 1993; Chandra 2012). For Poata-Smith (2013), ethnic identity is singular, timeless and fixed with distinct social boundaries”. Esteban (2012), takes a bit firmer stance and asserts that ethnic differences are perceived as “ancestral, deep and irreconcilable”. For Shils (1957) and Gertz (1963) ethnic identity is eternal and inflexible, and ontological given. In terms of ethnic conflict, Weir (2012) asserts since these differences are ancestral and irreconcilable, as such, ethnic conflict stems naturally and inevitably from ancient hatreds between ethnic groups. Some primordialist go as far as to say differences lay beyond human ancestors, “the urge to define and reject the other goes back to our remotest human ancestors and indeed beyond them to our animal predecessors” (Lewis 1992). According to this view, “tendencies toward xenophobia and intolerance are more natural to human societies, than liberal politics of interest” (Crawford 2001).

Essentially, primordialism aims to explain the fear of domination,

expulsion or even extinction that lies at the base of most ethnic conflicts (Glazer 1986). In doing so, the approach exposes the bond to particular set of beliefs which evoke strong emotions often of negative attributes, hate anger and fear that can be claimed as culprit of violent atrocities. Thus, for supporters of this approach the unspeakable acts during ethnic conflicts as in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Democratic Republic of Congo, passion or emotionally driven behavior stems from fear, hatred and anger (Connor 1994). Primordialist tap into role of emotions to help explain ethnic conflicts, however while emotions appear to be primordial they are as Suny (2002) notes, “socially and politically constructed reality drawn from the historical memories of past injustices and grievances .. national identities are saturated with emotions that have been created through teaching, repetition and daily reproduction until they become common sense, these tropes; betrayal, treachery, threats from others and survival are embedded in familiar emotions, anxiety, fear, insecurity and pride”. Van Evera (2001), does not shun of this view either, in fact he instills that ethnic identities are socially constructed and that we should not take ethnic identities as fixed only to make things easier for the purpose of political analysis, however he still defends his original position arguing that “ethno” is not fixed but hard to reconstruct once it is formed, he notes: “ethnic identities,

while constructed, are hard to reconstruct once they form”. Along the same lines, he questions: “should we take ethnic groups as fixed for the purpose of political analysis ? — the constructivist claims that ethnic identities are socially constructed are clearly correct” . Reconstruction can occur but the “conditions needed for reconstruction are quite rare, especially in modern times and especially among ethnic groups in conflict” (Van Evera 2001).

### *primordialism redefined*

Primordialism did not completely disappear as it was predicted and expected. To say that ones cultural identity, religion, customs, language are nonexistent or that these elements do not serve at all as a marker to which an individual associates with would be empirically incorrect. Primordialism is often attacked however, Van Evera and like proponents keep reinventing new ways to defend primordialist approach. There have been more pronounced claims on ethnic identities in attempts to give primordialism a second look. Some of these claims are that ethnic identities harden when mass literacy is achieved, Van Evera (2001) notes, “ethnic identities are hardened by violent conflict with others and idea that ethnic identities can be transformed into benign and efforts in this direction can bolster peace. Customs, languages, religion are undeniable properties of our

societies, they may be created, instrumentalized and whether they are primordial is certainly debatable and for most part rejected however, they do exist and they induce influence and that should be acknowledged”. Since primordialism explicitly relies on emotional aspects of an individual or group identity, Peterson’s model of emotive affirmation requires appropriate mention. Accepting the primordialist inadequacies, Petersen (2002) redefined primordialism with more nuanced assumption in relation to the emotive affirmations. He notes: “most academics dismiss the ancient hatreds argument. They show how violent interethnic histories are often fabrications, inventions that serve interests of rabble-rousing elites. If ‘ancient hatreds’ mean a hatred that has produced uninterrupted ethnic warfare, or an obsessive hatred consuming the daily thoughts of great masses of people, then the ‘ancient hatred’ argument deserves to be readily dismissed. However, if hatred is conceived as a historically formed “schema” that guides action in some situations, then the conception should be taken more seriously”.

The idea behind Peterson’s argument is that the existence of hatred does not require ancient proof. However, even if hatred had non-ancient origin, it still substantially impacts human conduct because humans are quite capable in conducting and expressing hatred. In what might be called a neo-primordialist endeavor, Petersen turned an



argument about primordial hatred into an argument about human nature. “the motivation to participate in or support ethnic violence and discrimination [is] inherent in human nature. Until we realize that the capacity to commit ethnic violence lies within all of us we are in danger of constantly being surprised at the emergence of forces from the dark ages” (ibid., pg. 7). Petersen created a model based on four different types of emotions: fear, hatred, resentment and rage. He argued that fear is an emotion which directs individuals in times of security threats, an argument that coincides well with international relations theory on “security dilemma”<sup>45</sup>; hatred he believed becomes prominent in conditions of historical grievance; resentment becomes noticeable in settings of status discrepancies; and rage simply expresses a desire to ‘lash out’ due to accumulated emotions, but without a specific target (Peterson 2002).

However this thesis deservingly posits some arguments against the reformulation of the primordialism. Despite the reformulation and compartmentalization of these human sensations that drive the primordial argument Peterson fails to define what I describe as ‘accumulation of hate’ in other words how are these emotive concepts: of hate, rage, fear accumulated and sustained ? Furthermore at what point this fear becomes unbearable so that groups start

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<sup>45</sup> see, Posen. B. ‘The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict’ pp.27-47 Survival Vol.35, No.1, Spring 1993

lashing out ? Peterson does not answer this nor does primordialism, however centrality of the framework is ancient hate, yet there is no benchmark of when or at what level this hate becomes violent. Primordialist speak of ancient hate but cannot provide time-intensity levels either. Is it possible that all humans have same emotive increments ? I think this is important to clarify because if we can tell different levels of these emotive feelings then we can know how to manage potential conflict before it escalates into an armed violence. I fundamentally do not have a problem with using emotive indicator to help measure these primordialist claims, but it would be helpful if it can be objectively benchmarked or measured. To say that Serbs and Croats had WW II grievances is same as to say Germans and Polish had WW II grievances, yet do we expect the two EU member states to fight an ethnic conflict because Germany obliterated Poland in WW II far more and far worst than what Serbs and Croats did to each other in some parts of Croatia and Bosnia in WW II. Needless to say, it is highly inconceivable that Germany and Poland will start an ethnic war anytime soon because of their WW II grievances.

## **6. Limits of the primordialism**

Strengths of the primordialist approach are also its weaknesses and the reason why it has been so widely attacked. There are generally

three major fallacies in the literature with this approach. First, since the approach focuses on ‘irrationality’ of ethnic violence it is then contingent up on idea of ‘primordial’ or ‘genetics’ or ‘hatred before human predecessors’ (Turton 1997; Besteman 2013). This projects the notion of ultimate hopelessness and defines ethnic conflict as ‘perpetual, permanent and ineradicable’ (Laitin and Sunny 1999). In this sense, it avoids to deal or rather ignores structural, political and economic processes within which these conflicts occur and implies that in ethnically heterogeneous societies there will naturally and inevitably be violent ethnic conflicts (McKay 2001). However, problem with this notion is that there are many examples of ethnically heterogeneous countries [Botswana which compared to many African countries], ethnicities peacefully coexisted for a longer periods or still maintain peace (Holm and Molutsi 1992). The coexistence in Botswana is constitutionally grounded in differentiations — meaning differences are constitutional — we can interpret this almost as if differences are given a legal statue and thus indirectly pulls the rug under those who may have intentions manipulating differences in any way. Yugoslavia is another example of constitutional grounded ethnic differences. Under its 1974 constitution amendments, Yugoslavia, provided for equality of the constituent peoples and minorities de

facto declaring that there were no majorities or minorities (Glenny 1992; Gagnon 2004)

Secondly, as Varshney (2009) and Wilkinson (2001) point out, there are concerns with the *time variance*. If ethnic hatred has such deep bonds and is deeply rooted why does ethnic violence diminish and increase at different time periods ? In other words primordialism approach poorly explains existence of peace in heterogeneous states prior to the conflict, like in Yugoslavia. Why did Yugoslavs for example coexist for nearly five decades in peace, if ethnic Yugoslav tribes inherently held high contempt for each other. The country may have diminished violently but there were more and longer periods of peace. Additionally, on the subject of timing, primordialism poorly explains the timing of the violent outbreak in so far to explain why ethnic conflicts happen when they do, which implicates the argumentation of causality (Jackson 2002). This is to say, in terms of Yugoslavia primordialism poorly explains causal mechanism whether, the ethnic hatred escalated due to the state collapse — or — that ethnic hatred caused the state collapse.

Additional limit by primordialism as raised by Varshney (2009), is what he refers to as *inter-spatial variance*, he asks how and why some ethnic groups live peacefully during conflicts in the same geographical areas (cities or small towns), but not in others ? This question is

reflective of this thesis question as well, because city of Tuzla managed peace and ethnic cohesion while being surrounded by ethnic violence and radical nationalism. Varshney gives an example of Hindu-Muslim violence analyzing the conflict which often flares up in certain parts of India but not in other parts of India and provides an answer relying on local business and associational networks (Varshney 2009).

In line of this thinking, primordialism also poorly explains transitivity and question of diaspora. In other words primordialism poorly explains transitivity of its emotive concepts. For example, why does diaspora often peacefully interact and coexist ? This is to say: ethnic groups that were in conflict in home country, like Yugoslavia, peacefully coexist wherever they immigrate to, such as Yugoslav refugees in United States, Germany, Canada, Sweden etc. Primordialism fails to explain why supposedly this presumably fixed and inherent deeply rooted ethnic hatred makes Serbs, Muslims and Croats coexist in peace again in Milan Italy, but not in Mostar.

Thus, in addition to my accumulation of hate argument against primordialism, is also that idea of ancient hate does not appear to be *transitive*. In other words, these deeply rooted emotions [hate, anger, fear] should have transitive and uniformed properties. This is to say, why an individual or [group] express ethnic antagonism towards

another [group] in Mostar for example, but not in New York ? If ancient animosities are rooted biologically, deep in individuals psyche and supported historically, then change of geography should not alter this emotion. Consequentially, diaspora studies agree that ethnic antagonisms halt when refugees immigrate. This is true with many Yugoslav refugees abroad, especially in countries like Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Germany, US and Canada and in many instances there were even war veteran<sup>46</sup> who fought on different sides during the war, but after arriving to their new ‘home’, they started coexisting in peace again almost as if war never happened (Dahinden 2009; Baubock and Faist 2009). In line of this thinking, one must ask, if emotive concepts of primordialism halt when ethnic groups immigrate, does that mean that only ‘land’ has some type of ascriptive attributes ? And if so, does that mean that ancient biological and innate hatred become irrelevant concepts, while ones strong sentiments for her land or territory takes focus of the primordialism approach ?

## **7. Concluding remarks on two frameworks**

Despite structural deficiencies, primordialism can be useful in explaining some emotive dimension of ethnic conflicts and offer

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<sup>46</sup> This is true for most refugees in Dallas for example. I have personally witnessed and can attest to were at some social family gathering some identified as soldiers of opposing sides fighting at the same front-lines hence against each other, yet they were sitting at the table for a social gathering and coexisting.

some insight into the sentimentality of ethnic groups. Some of the cultural elements that comprise ethnic identity, such as religion, national sentiments are more often than not simply inner passionate beliefs and euphoria. Thus precisely, the power of ethnicity lies in its capacity to arouse this human irrational ecstasy and commitment (Cornell and Hartman 1998) and if this potentially fable human weakness, is taken advantage of, which quite often is the case — it frequently leads to conflicts. Conflicts, between Punjabis and Sikhs in 1971, Rwanda in 1994, former Yugoslavia in 1991, all could be assessed as the cases of irrational euphoric passions in times of national economic or political crises but to say that ancient animosities have exclusive rights on the causes of these conflicts, would be impulsive. Primordialist concept that ‘man is national’ not ‘rational animal’ and that at the core of nationalism lay the notion of ‘shared blood’ or ‘shared ancestry’ Connor (1994) came under heavy attack. Particularly instrumentalists claimed that modernity introduced diverse groups into the ‘same frame’ of human consciousness and modernity changed the meaning of ethnicity which led to the nationhood, thus to speak of primordial ethnic or national antagonisms would be historically false (Kaplan 2003). Essentially, primordialism, the genetically based argument cannot adequately tackle conflicts as seen in Yugoslavia.

On the other hand instrumentalism, adequately sees ethnicity as an instrument or tool instrumentalized by political entrepreneurs, likes of Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman to name the few in former Yugoslavia, who polarized and subsequently manipulated the ethno part of the society inciting conflict between the ethnic groups. In this sense, the underlying driver of the political entrepreneurs is *capacity*, *greed* and *need* to acquire economic and political richness and this is one of the areas where instrumentalist inquiry is not without the perils. Fundamentally, instrumentalism is constructed in relation to the: a) the capacity and need to manipulate someone or something: b) to manipulate with a purpose to incite conflict among different ethnic groups with an ultimate goal to gain political or economic riches and c) those who are manipulated [or to be manipulated] having the ability (or not), to resist the manipulations. Naturally, from the above assumptions instrumentalism is predisposed to bundle up the *macro* wars such was war in Bosnia, and offer elite type of assumptions, inadvertently failing to two address two nuances which are: failure to look deeper into the conflict to uncover possible smaller fractionalized conflicts and alliances with time and territorial variations, but more importantly this *macro-micro* approach can help to observe the instances of peace in some communities and show that maybe ethnic antagonism on the micro level are not what they appear



to be on the national level. And secondly, by overreaching assumptions in relation to the elites on the macro level, inadvertently failing to address the anatomy of the civil society on the micro level where bottom-up approach to incite peace succeeded and instance of peace occurred and thus also in hindsight unnecessarily brand all elites to be operating under the [current] instrumentalist assumptions.

Additionally, instrumentalist inquiry does poorly on clarifying where do elites get this need to engage in manipulation and whether all elites have the same levels of greed and need to manipulate. Subsequently, it fails to address who is less or more predisposed to greed in respect to material, ideological or some of combination of both ? In line of this thinking, is [elite] greed definite, in other words does it have an end ? And lastly, if greed is perpetual without an ending point, are we to assume then that conflicts are perpetual where ethnic groups coexist, conversely, is conflict indefinitely embedded in human nature ? The instrumentalist concept of greed is not an ascriptive term, it is an idea, and thus we only have an indefinite understanding of what greed is. Therefore, question arises of whether we know how each individual measures and understands greed. Greed has prescriptive rather than ascriptive properties and as such has a different and nuanced meanings. For instrumentalism it is important to understand

the absence of clarity of such concept as greed in particular when used to underpin theoretical frameworks.

## CHAPTER FOUR: Research Design and Methodology

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand how city of Tuzla despite all odds during the war in Bosnia was able to reject inter-ethnic violence, all types of national, religious or ethnic oppressions while successfully organizing multi-ethnic military defense and maintaining the rule of law. Tuzla is the counter intuitive case in the nationalist turmoil during the wars in former Yugoslavia. The study seeks to construct the causal mechanism through two phases of Tuzla's success, whose reaction to nationalism appears to be path-dependent. Through the field work, thesis constructed three pre-war historical processes during three time periods by which Tuzla's identity was formed [bonding, forging and cementing] and second phase of the causal mechanism, thesis will address how the process during wartime leadership through strategic actions led by civil society demands and norms rejected radical attempts to topple Tuzla's government, partition its territory and incite inter-ethnic violence. In other words, causal mechanism will address *why* and *how* Tuzla won against the violent nationalism.

Broader implication of the study is resistance to ethnic mobilization in times of elite instrumentalization of ethnic cleavages during ethnic conflict. Moreover, thesis will aim to show that two approaches one

of which is instrumentalism with its overreaching assumptions on elites, espousing the [*macro*] conflict in Bosnia, inadvertently failing to examine the [*micro*] conflicts within the ‘main’ war in Bosnia, which provide two implications for the instrumentalist approach. First, macro view assumes all elites acted under the same instrumentalist assumptions, which is not true thus, omittedly, seeing war in Bosnia as singular war, failing to address host of amalgamated, fractionalized conflicts with alliance switching throughout the war and hence failing to observe smaller regionalized and localized conflicts, but more importantly instances where peace was managed.

Secondly, by giving the elites overreaching assumptions to instrumentilize whomever and whenever, inadvertently failing to credit the anatomy of the civil society that could successfully manage to reject ethnic violence. Subsequently, this approach gives insight into the elites that do not fit the instrumentalist overall assumptions. Other implication is with primordialism, which will confirm once more that ancient ethnic antagonisms continue to be irrelevant in particular to wars in Bosnia. The study chose city of Tuzla because it is a rare example where peace prevailed during the violent conflict in former Yugoslavia. Lastly, western Balkans despite almost three decades since the end of the war, continue to suffer from lack of reconciliation. This chapter describes the research design and methodology and validity issues are continuously discussed throughout the chapter.

## 2. Design of the Study

The methodical approach adopted in this thesis will rely on the *case study*. In general, a case study is an empirical inquiry which: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. Case studies are preferred when a) “how” or “why” questions are being posed, b) the investigator has little control over events, and c) the focus is on contemporary phenomena within a real-life context (Lijphart 1971; Van Evera 1997; Yin 2009). Case studies are limited by time and place (Creswell 1998), and wartime city of Tuzla is a bounded unit. By designing the study within the bounded unit researchers are allowed to analyze concepts and processes while also being able to focus on host of other impact factors such as economic, political, social or historical. Since, concepts such as ethnicity, nationalism, civil society, elite motivations or historical factors, are considered to be contextually impacted phenomenas focusing on a particular regional and local setting, namely Yugoslav conflict and in particular counter intuitive case such as Tuzla, can yield meaningful and significant insights. In case of Tuzla, these insights are absence of conflict, absence of mobilization based on ethnic or national identity, in other words prevention of radical nationalism which can lead to

ethnic, national or religious oppressions and lastly management of peace.

In terms of defined area, the municipality of Tuzla is well defined within the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. City of Tuzla is situated in the Tuzla Canton, in one of the thirteen cantons of the Federation. Bosnia has two entities Federation of BiH and Republic of Srpska. Time framework selected for the case is from the first multiparty municipal election in Bosnia in 1990, seen as first stages of the ethnic polarization of the Bosnian society as all municipalities in Bosnia elected ethnic parties, except Tuzla, Vares and East Sarajevo<sup>47</sup> to the end of the war in 1995, more specifically signing of Dayton Peace agreement in December of 1995. Historical process for the construction of the causal mechanism of Tuzla's identity starts with Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia in 1887.

The case of Tuzla was selected because it represents the counter-intuitive case to the radical nationalism at the time of Yugoslav disintegration and subsequent and ethnic, national and religious oppression and violence during the wars in Bosnia. Tuzla's capacity to successfully create and strengthen the unique anti-nationalist, moderate political platform is at odds with an entire conflict. The city

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<sup>47</sup> First multiparty municipal elections in Socialist Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina, were held in November of 1990 where only three municipalities elected non-ethnic party, Tuzla, Vares and East Sarajevo. Vares and East Sarajevo, later succumbed under nationalist pressures, de facto leaving only Tuzla as the only municipality that successfully elected and defended non-nationalist political option even to this day. For further details see official results of the elections at: [BiH Elections Archives](#) \_weblink accessed on February 26th 2015.

managed to mobilize behind anti-nationalist political option, relying on its historical backdrop, pre-war institutions and networks to distance itself from the nationalism. Rather than falling under the pressures of ethnic nationalism Tuzla demonstrated that political moderation is not impossible to accomplish and sustain even if strongly challenged by radical forces. Tuzla can also aid to re-address some instrumentalist and primordialist's assumptions in relation to Yugoslav wars, in particular instrumentalist assumptions in regards to elites unchecked capacity and ability to instrumentilize whomever and whenever, inadvertently and more importantly, Tuzla will give insight on the structure of the civil society that managed to reject ethnic violence during ethnic violence in Bosnia. Starting point for the construction of the Tuzla's anti-nationalist identity is Austro-Hungarian industrialization of Tuzla for the phase one, and for the phase two assessment will start at the first multiparty municipal elections in Yugoslavia in 1990, where Tuzla was the only<sup>48</sup> municipality in Bosnia to elect the non-ethnic party. Importantly, unlike city of Vares, it was also successful in protecting politically and militarily the choice of the people even though nationalist forces continually acted to destabilize the city with a goal to topple the wartime Mayor and the city leadership. However, despite these continual nationalist attempts, nationalist forces never succeed to take over or exacerbate the undivided city.

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<sup>48</sup> please refer to the footnote 47 above.

Former Yugoslavia, in particular Bosnia was selected because it suffered one of the worst armed conflicts on the European soil since the World War II. The war left catastrophic repercussions and the consequences continue to shape socio-political and geopolitical conditions in the region. The war took toll of more than 250,000 dead, two million refugees [out of four and a half million total population], of which one million were externally displaced between Western Europe and North America and the other one million were internally displaced<sup>49</sup>. Despite EU's heavy presence in the Western Balkans since the war, Bosnia continues to emit instability and continues to be considered as a frozen conflict<sup>50</sup>. Additionally, Bosnia continues to espouse decay of vertical trust, defined as trust between civil society and institutions. Moreover, supervised by the international community for years now and hampered by complexities of Dayton agreement, the state inadvertently carved itself politically and geographically based on ethnic dimensions wartime front-lines. Those responsible for this outcome are ethnic parties and the elites who collude to keep Bosnia in a status quo state. These two stakeholders maintain power through the means of divisive ethnic politics. This process is accomplished through ongoing revitalization of war traumas and politicization of the ethno which in turn is not

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<sup>49</sup> Refugees and displaced people from the former Yugoslavia since 1991, using The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees database. Website link accessed on October 25, 2016: [http://www.grida.no/graphicslib/detail/refugees-and-displaced-people-from-the-former-yugoslavia-since-1991\\_0c5a](http://www.grida.no/graphicslib/detail/refugees-and-displaced-people-from-the-former-yugoslavia-since-1991_0c5a)

<sup>50</sup> Bosnia mired in ethnic politics and frustration. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33739300> link accessed October 20th 2016



helping the wider society to heal the war wounds and to fully reconcile. All three sides continue to place blame on each other in a game of ‘ping-pong politics’. For the last twenty years the steps the state of Bosnia has made towards reconciliation are minimal if not stagnate<sup>51</sup>. These conditions [sadly] in Bosnia and across former Yugoslavia, render this region as an interesting and an appropriate case to investigate.

Moreover, Bosnia is geographically wedged between Croatia and Serbia while Kosovo and Macedonia are in near proximity where actors continue to contest and politicize territorial, historical and ethno-national issues. While EU aspires that these uneasy regional relationships heal soon it did place however a palatable offer on the table for the EU membership. However, just as easy these highly flammable ethno-national tensions can always flare up again and be transferred from one state to another as seen in 1990. This is in particular important in current state of European populist movement on the rise, with EU being concerned with its own issues and in doing so could turn momentarily to its own problems, leaving Western Balkans to resolve own problems which would likely result in exacerbating tensions given the post war outlook. Thus, rejection of conflict and management of peace in particular during the war in the Balkans is a rare instance in this region and as such can provide

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<sup>51</sup> Foreign Policy Article: Is War About the Break Out in the Balkans by James Lyon. article accessed on October 20, 2016, weblink: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/10/26/war-break-out-balkans-bosnia-republika-srpska-dayton/>

knowledge on how peace was accomplished and perhaps serve as an example for the other ethno-national contested region.

### **3. Methods**

In order to collect the empirical data on city of Tuzla, qualitative method was employed. A case study design is well suited for the 'how and why' research questions (Van Evera 1997, Yin 2009) as well as type of cases wartime municipality. Quantitative method may not be the appropriate method for this type of research question, especially in places where statistical data other than economic output do not exist or is not qualifiable as academic research material. In fact quantitative approach may not be sufficient to answer some types of questions when it comes to disintegration of Yugoslavia. This is because very little if any quantifiable, reliable and verifiable statistical data exists on former Yugoslavia in so far that is not related to the economic affairs prior to the break up. Thus unless, the researcher seeks to answer questions of economic matters, employing statistical softwares such as SPSS, STATA etc., to disseminate data, relying on quantitative material for questions looking into political processes, would likely be ineffective, in particular when it comes to instances such as Tuzla, where there was an interplay between the civil society and elites and the policies that resulted from this combined effort. Thus, after studying and researching qualitative methods to find the best fitting method to apply towards this study and aid in answering the research

question at hand the case study (Lijphart 1971; Van Evera 1997; Marshall 1989; Gerring 2004; Yin 2009) in particular ‘deviant’ type case study was deemed to be the most appropriate method for this study. Additionally, the author took in consideration type of question and the realities of the available and reliable research material in regards to the city of Tuzla in the period leading up to the war and throughout the armed conflict.

This study draws on qualitative data collected locally in the period of author’s stay in the region from 2011 to 2016, in particular specific thesis related in depth collection of data was conducted during the research field work in Bosnia and city of Tuzla in the period from July 2015 to July 2016 and in subsequent post visits to the region. Thesis primary source of data are forty three semi-structured interviews conducted during the field work in 2015. Interviewees were mostly Tuzla’s political and wartime elites, some Yugoslav political elites, Tuzla’s security and military apparatus, business sector, public administrators, war veterans, academics, religious clergy and lastly international development organizations. The study also includes data such as: local official documents, archival materials, media reporting.

In regards to interviews, forty three semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals from all main ethnic groups and different professional and social echelons. Participants included wartime political elites and security apparatus in city of Tuzla, municipal administration of decision making elites, the media directors, civil

society organizers and leaders, war veterans and academic professionals. Most participants were personally involved in important local (city of Tuzla) developments in the period under research, while some were involved in wider war time and post conflict Bosnian missions. The interviews contributed to answering the research question that inquired about why and how Tuzla formulated the non-nationalist identity that helped maintain inter-ethnic unity and solidarity in formal institutions and in civil society, while simultaneously rejecting division of its territory and institutions across the ethno-national lines in so far: a) investigated formation of Tuzla's identity; b) ability and capacity of early re-organization of the efficient defense forces to defend from outside and within; c) lastly also examining if there could have been another city similar to Tuzla during the war ? - if not, inquiry was made to provide possible information as to why other cities did not [could not] follow Tuzla's path.

Individual interviews were chosen as opposed to group interviews because: firstly, the wartime civil society, veterans and local elites are difficult to get access to and secondly, interviews contained potentially sensitive information. The participants were requested to sign the confidentiality form prior to the interview as to avoid the possibility that the interviewee might not feel as comfortable with providing potentially sensitive and private information. In addition, most participants were currently employed in almost the same

capacity as during the war. These individuals were and still remain the members of city council, mayor, mayor's office, local media directors, citizen forum directors, leading professors, security apparatus and local religious representatives. Thus, confidentiality was mandatory to put the participants at ease with privacy issues with the information they provided in order to avoid any potential inconveniences, especially since Bosnia continues to be politically charged place where political, economic and even judicial favors [for better or worst] could be 'misused'.

Moreover, despite nearly three decades since the Dayton peace agreement<sup>52</sup>, I found myself in a very negatively ethno-politically charged place. Country, that is still trying to heal its wounds from the war. I needed to be prepared for the social desirability and biased data during my research and have prepared for possible divergence in my findings from the participants, especially coming from motive driven political elites as well as those who have chosen to be explicitly and publicly affiliated with a specific ethnic identity and lastly those who have had various war experiences. However, although initially a nuisance, such divergence does not necessarily invalidate one's study, in fact divergence can be an occasion for further understanding of the topic under examination. Related to this matter, Jick (1979), notes: "in seeking explanation for divergent results, the researcher may uncover unexpected results or unseen contextual factors .. where

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<sup>52</sup> Dayton Peace Agreement, ended the fighting in Bosnia in 1995. Peace agreement also serves as de facto Bosnia's constitution. For detail information on Dayton Peace Agreement see., OSCE link: <http://www.osce.org/bih/126173>

divergent results emerge, alternative, and likely more complex explanations are generated”. This thesis has reflected upon this concern during collection and analysis of the data collected .

#### **4. Sample Selection**

Converging with official documents, archival materials, media reports, interviews were selected by two different sampling methods. Efforts were made to increase the response rate so as to maximize the variations within the sample population in terms of the degrees of autonomy and the ethno-national composition of the interviewees. Both criterion and random sampling methods were deployed in order to identify and select potential interviews. Study also utilized the snowball technique in particular to recruit political and economic elites. Obviously, recruiting the local elites where ethnic identity continues to be contested, for academic studies can be difficult and at times impossible, in particular in post war countries with high levels of corruption and politicization.

The criterion method was used because the author needed to get access to the specific group of Tuzla’s wartime leadership. Criterion sampling involves selecting cases that meet predetermined criterion of importance (Patton 2001), while the random sampling method was employed to reduce bias in participant selection. In addition to Tuzla’s group of interviewees, others were selected from various parts of

Bosnia to ensure the ethno-political and regional representation. The author also relied on snowball recruiting technique to easily and efficiently acquire contact information of potentially new candidates to select for an interview, otherwise probably not possible to acquire without relying on this technique. This is because Bosnia is a relatively small country, with small communities where people ‘know each other’ and in my case the news spread quickly of a ‘foreign student’ who speaks the local language and is researching Tuzla. In this sense, a critical note that, being fluent in the local language made it easy to recruit participants since the large portion of the target group generation needed for the interviews, seldom if at all, speak English on the level needed for the doctoral thesis investigation, hence interviews were conducted in Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian language par few interviews with foreign nationals which were conducted in English. The profile of some of the interview participants is documented in a table bellow.

The selection protocol was as follows: First I made a contact with what is seemed to be the neutral side in Bosnia — The office for European Integration for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo and the U.S. Embassy. After interviewing a director<sup>53</sup> for EU Integration based in Banja Luka, I was then given contact information of a Bosnian journalist and an activist in Sarajevo who was also one of the

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<sup>53</sup> Interviewer M.H. Finish citizen, currently living and working in Belgrade

organizers<sup>54</sup> of the Forum of Citizens in Tuzla, whom I also interviewed. At this point, I was given personal contact information of large number of former and current leadership of city of Tuzla. From there, I was given more contact information of security apparatus, religious leadership, civil society leadership, media personnel, academia professionals and war veterans. In addition, during my field work, I was randomly selecting individuals that I deemed would be appropriate for the thesis to help reduce potential selection bias. Thirty seven individuals came from the city of Tuzla and Tuzla canton, others were outside of Tuzla. Every time the author was provided with new contact information, that individual was contacted to determine their profile and willingness for an interview and availability. I was provided dozens more contacts who potentially would be appropriate candidates, but after certain cycle of interviews, data started to crystallize and at some point I chose to wind down contact and give more time and closer attention to the contacts I already had. I also needed to leave some time to revisit some participants if further clarifications needed.

## **5. Interview Protocol**

In order to ensure consistency in interview process, a semi-structured interview protocol was created. Information collected was triangulated with the official documents, war time archives, media

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<sup>54</sup> Interviewer D.S. Bosnian citizen living in Sarajevo.



## Partial Profile of Participants

Mr. Beslagic, Selim	Wartime Mayor and Nobel Peace Prize Nominee for his efforts in Tuzla.
Mr. Imamovic, Jasmin	Current Mayor of Tuzla. Assumed office in 2002.
Dr. Prof. Mladina, Nada	President of Tuzla's Municipal Council and Wartime Doctor at Tuzla's main Hospital.
Mrs. Jahic, Mersija	Deputy Minister for Education, Science and Culture of Tuzla Canton
Dr. Prof. Stahov, Jugoslav	Professor Emeritus of Physics at University of Tuzla and Active Member of Citizens Forum
Dr. Prof. Knezicek, Tihomir	Professor Emeritus of Mining and war veteran. President of Italian Minority in Tuzla and National Minorities in BiH.
Dr. Prof. Dejan Jovic	Professor of Political Science at University of Zagreb and former First Advisor to former President of Croatia.
Dr. Prof. Snjezana Vasiljevic	Professor of European Law at University of Zagreb.
Mr. Vehid Sehic	President of the Forum of Citizens of Tuzla
Mrs. Jasna Kapetanovic	Director of Radio & Television Station in Tuzla RTV7
Mrs. Sabina Nadzakovic	National Program Officer for Education in Tuzla, OSCE
Mr. Damir Sehanovic	Journalist and Local Activist, Radio and TV Tuzla
Mr. Raif Dizdarevic	Former President of Yugoslavia 1989
Mrs. Benedin Pejic	Institute for Geology and war veteran
Mr. Vlatko Rosic	Principal of Catholic Elementary and High School in Tuzla
Mr. Mikko Vernon	EU Director of European Integration in Banja Luka

reporting and journal articles (Jick 1979; Van Evera 1979; Yin 2009; Van Evera ). Additionally, the protocol included type of questions designed to extract not only the information, but more importantly the reasoning behind decisions made which set Tuzla apart from the rest of the country. In addition to drilling down on — how — events

unfolded in Tuzla, equally important was to find out — why — Tuzla’s citizens intently rejected nationalism keeping in mind that Tuzla is the single counter intuitive case in wartime Bosnia. “The ability to pose and ask good questions is a prerequisite for case study investigators. The desired result is for the investigator to create a rich dialogue with the evidence, an activity that encompasses: a) pondering the possibilities gained from deep familiarity with some aspect of the world, b) systematizing those ideas in relation to kinds of information one might gather, c) checking the ideas in the light of that information, d) dealing with inevitable discrepancies between what was expected and what was found by rethinking the possibilities of getting more data, and so on” (Becker, 1998, p. 66). Furthermore, as Yin (2009, p. 264) suggests, “one insight into asking good questions is to understand that research is about questions and not necessarily about answers. If you are the type of person for whom one tentative answer immediately leads to a whole host of new questions, and if these questions eventually aggregate to some significant inquiry about how or why the world works as it does, you are likely to be a good asker of questions”. At this point, it is noteworthy to mention that the author has successfully passed behavioral exams for the position of a Special Agent in the services of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Dallas regional office and have successfully passed (Phase I) both written and oral exams, which among many aspects of potential candidates, test individual ability to critically assess individuals, data, events, integrity, honesty and ability to logically and objectively

connect loose ends as precisely what FBI, Special Agents are suppose to do in the field work. Additionally, the author has also successfully passed the the U.S. Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) with U.S. Department of State. Foreign Service Officer is a diplomatic career path with the U.S. Embassy anywhere in the world and in various capacities. FSOT, among many elements examines applicants ability and capacity to critically assess and diplomatically engage foreign elites. Lastly, during author's graduate studies at Columbia University author was selected for the interviews with Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA) for analytical career path of the agency and had passed several in person interviews before deciding that this type of career did not suit his academic career goals. The two exams and the interviews take time to prepare and successful results are indicative of long-term personal, professional and educational labor. These are behavioral and psychoanalytical exams which test among many things, individual integrity, objectivity and ability to see and analyze behind the facades of what may be presented at first glance. Both exam results are attached in the annex section. I strongly believe that the above accomplishments and experiences have given me additional preparedness for the research field work, which had enabled me to approach the political elites in Western Balkans with a friendly, diplomatic conduct, yet with a critically and acutely investigating approach.

The semi-structured approach enabled this study to explore and understand Tuzla's identity and political mobilization in relation to

the city's anti-nationalist position more completely than would structured interviews allowed to. The semi-structured interview method is used when researcher aims to drill down the critical issues while being flexible in responding to new potentially emerging information (Mertens 1998). Equally important, with its flexible approach it enabled me to dig deeper into the identity formation and processes behind Tuzla's anti-nationalist choice.

In addition to having an interview protocol for Tuzla's wartime leadership, which included the wartime mayor, current mayor his closest staff and wartime security apparatus, the study also needed to adjust for an interview protocol which utilized regular citizens. While not political decision makers however, the citizens representing Tuzla's strong civil society were as important as wartime leadership. Tuzla's civil society efficiently mobilized strong anti-nationalist movement, NGO organizations which directly supported sustainability of day to day life and other citizen activism. Most questions were constructed as open-ended but designed to solicit concrete, detailed examples, but more importantly I looked for logical reasoning to some of the elites and non-elite decisions (Mertens 1998; Yin 2009). The main interview protocol questions can be found in the annex section.

The protocol contained list of primary questions however additional questions were asked on ad-hoc basis if the interviewer opened up new areas of critical information. Other thematic questions were

asked in order to help keep the conversation ‘flowing’ and from being broken up. Thus, the study has relied on prepared questions, but it would ask additional questions depending on how the interview was proceeding. This is important to note, because participants were of different leadership positions, career paths and decision making authorities including their careers and experiences before and during the conflict. Thus adjustments for each interview were mandatory so that researcher is not put in the position of posing irrelevant questions.

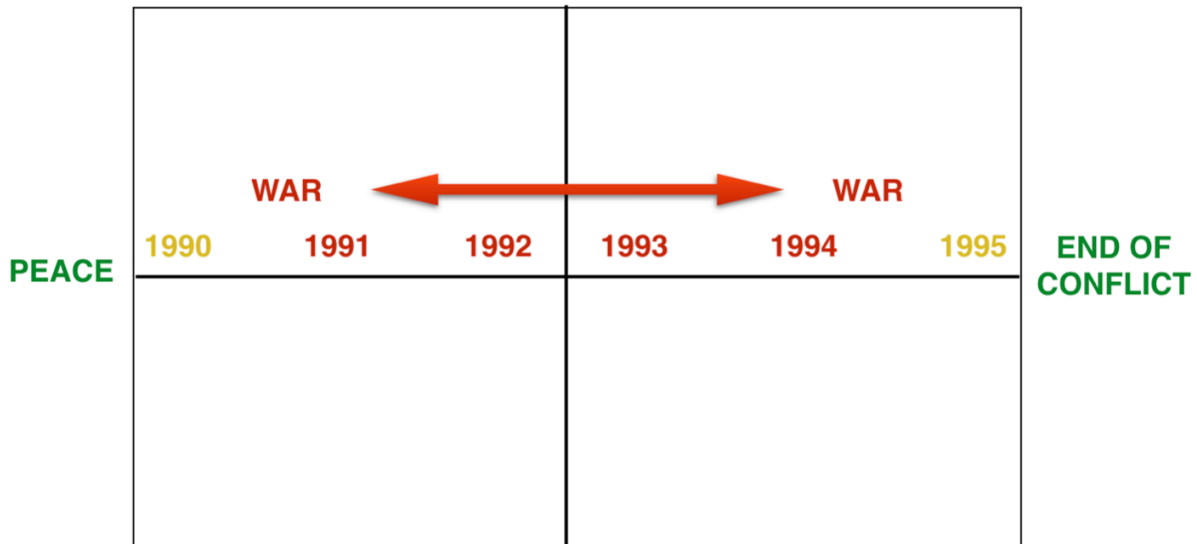
The author had to delineate the interview protocol not only in terms of decision and non-decision makers but also for interviewing Tuzla’s citizens to inquire about their experiences prior to the war. Illustration bellow, using XY axis chart, explains the paradigm of how the interviews were delineated in relation to retrieving information from individuals based on their Y axis (ranks in terms of decision making) and X axis (in terms of time frame which spans from peace, first armed skirmishes, intense fighting, cease fire and end of conflict again) (Nachmias 1992).

## **6. Data Collection Procedures**

When I first arrived in Tuzla in July 2015, my aim was first get the feeling how the city ‘breathes’, in other words, wanted to get a feeling for the city from the ordinary citizens: feeling of co-habitation,

**Interview Protocol Delineation for city of Tuzla**

**WARTIME CITY LEADERSHIP, DECISION MAKERS, ESSENTIAL STAFF,  
SECURITY APPARATUS.**



**NON-ESSENTIAL STAFF & ORDINARY CITIZENS, ACADEMIA, NGO  
LEADERS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZERS**

ethnic unity and solidarity and whether this concept really existed or not. Additionally, wanted to get the sense for the ethnic animosities within Tuzla, as well as animosities aimed towards other cities in the region. Next, wanted to hear the opinions on the ethnic unity of the entire country and lastly, what Tuzla's ordinary citizen taught of their local city elites. I made the decision to stay with a local family rather than hotel for the duration of my stay in Tuzla (Wax 1971; Schatzman 1973; Murphy 1980). Hence, I rented the extra room with a local Tuzlan family in the center of Tuzla. I lived with them for three and a half weeks. This, in return helped me to get a good sense on Tuzlan's

identity as I was introduced to their other friends, colleagues etc. The father of the house worked for the institute for the water filtration. He was also a war veteran of the Bosnian war, father of two, the mother was a stay home wife. I never asked what ethnicity they were, but by the names I knew they were either Serbs or Croats. I could not tell otherwise as they did not have any religious symbols around the house. After three weeks I sensed that these people did not care much about an ethnicity as elsewhere in Bosnia and appeared regular Yugoslavs. Tuzla saw an increase in numbers of those identifying as Yugoslavs from the last census. For example, there were approximately 300 Yugoslavs in entire Croatia, while approximately 22,000 in just city of Tuzla<sup>55</sup>. Bellow is the table of my time frame and research activity. After settling in, I first organized interviews with local NGO organizers, director of Forum of the Citizens, retired coal miners, labour union leaders and some taxi drivers [taxi drivers are often good for some ‘general’ knowledge around the city and ‘about’ the city and also most of them were also war veterans]. People were generally opened to me to sit down and talk to me, they felt sense of trust in me knowing I also shared their wartime experiences, however only this would not have been sufficient for a good interview. They also knew that while I was born in the region, that I was re-rooted at an early age, raised and educated in the United States. These people were not naive or uninformed. They felt that I did not

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<sup>55</sup> Konacni rezultati Popisa 2013 – Federalni zavod za statistiku. [www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvolzdanje.pdf](http://www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvolzdanje.pdf) . weblink accessed September 20th 2016; see also Croatian census conducted in 2011 [http://www.dzs.hr/default\\_e.htm](http://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm) Weblink accessed September 20th, 2016

come back to the region to make some personal profits, rather I came back for civic reasons, which was, trying to make some sense of the path, they and their city chose to take, which they knew was special but uncommon path during the war thus a paradox in some way. An important matter for the case study approach is also knowing the background and the extent of the experiences of the subjects being interviewed.

#### The Research Process

Time Frame	Research Activity
<b>June - July 2015</b>	Prepared the list of potential interviewees and contacts in BiH Made first contacts via email/phone Made arrangements with University of Sarajevo as a visiting fellow
<b>Aug - Dec. 2015</b>	Moved to Sarajevo, conducted initial interviews in Sarajevo Moved to Tuzla and started interview process in Tuzla Conducted necessary follow up and interviews at various locations in BiH Visited Cities: Belgrade, Novi Sad, Mitrovica, Podgorica, Skoplje, Zagreb, Split, Dubrovnik, Kumrovec, Rijeka, Ljubljana, Slavonski Brod, Knin, Beli Manastir, Ruma, Sombor, Osijek, Livno, Kiseljak, Kakanj, Zadar, Vares, Travnik, Sibenik, Moljkovac, Bijelo Polje, Igalo, Herceg Novi, Budva, Kotor, Banja Luka, Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Pristina, Zvecan, Pale, Pula, Breza, Kresevo, Umag, Rovinj, Bohinj, Senj, Solin, Makarska etc. Visited approximately 100+ cities, villages and municipalities across former Yugoslavia and spoke to locals in order to get a sense for the post-conflict reconciliation, if any.
<b>Jan. - April 2016</b>	Performed data management and analysis Discussed the field experience with advisor and colleagues

Thus, important matter to mention in this case is the background and experiences of the people which were to be interviewed by me.



Although, I was just a young boy during the war, and did not lose many material possessions and my immediate family is intact, I however, knew that I would run into people who have endured much serious experiences with either physical or emotional scars and I needed to be prepared for these encounters. These are the individuals as with any post war place, who have possibly lost a son, daughter, father, mother, husband etc. Some, whose home was burned, property looted, perhaps he or she was wounded in the war. Knowingly or unknowingly killed another soldier, during the fighting. Others perhaps might have watched somebody get killed, or perhaps he or she was subjected to torture, starvation, concentration camp, or perhaps somebody who did the torturing. Regardless, I was focused on the formation of an identity and wartime political processes by elites, and I knew I would come across some who had some war traumas, and some who did not. These were the realities of my research study, and I knew this because I started from myself. My father was a POW in this war. I knew personally how my own family felt when they lost everything in this war including some family members. I also knew that my brothers and father who were in the trenches fighting, were able to decompress from the war traumas in a new home far from Yugoslav front-lines. I had to anticipate these heartfelt truths. Some of the interview participants never left the conflict and I had to expect that their reconciliation was not complete, perhaps did not even start. I was prepared for wide range of possibilities.

There continues to be many unknown variables impacting how people transition from war to peace. Thus, it was far from being an easy task to go into the post conflict society that experienced vicious and horrific crimes and gather the information on the fly. Interviewing somebody who has endured horrors of such war as the one in Bosnia cannot be done by just anybody. Depending on the kind of study, it takes training, special skills, acquired particular knowledge of the region, its people and the knowledge of the local language(s). Many did not get the chance as I did, to have been re-rooted in a normal society. Thus, they had to come to terms with their war experiences on the top of the ashes of the conflict — instead to decompress from the war away from Bosnia. These are absolutely crucial facts every good researchers must keep in mind when working in the field in post conflict countries. Thus, I was inclined to share my family's and my own, war experiences and upon hearing this from me — symbolically, I would be given the 'green light', and they were put at an ease and become receptive to my inquiry and my research. In their eyes, I was not just some foreigner coming to study them like some laboratory mice<sup>56</sup> — I was one of them — and so I was embraced and helped with contacts and documents. At one point I was also invited to a TV studio where they wanted to find out more about my research and myself. They were struck that someone like me came to Tuzla to tell

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<sup>56</sup> Words usually used by locals about foreigners coming to study them interview them. May locals do not feel the connection and often just used. They generally dislike foreigners coming to interview them. This is because, they were proud citizens of Yugoslavia few years back. Living, comfortable, stable secure lives in a stable country. Now they are being studied as some poor, unlucky people of some third world countries. They are becoming widely less receptive of research studies because of this.

the Tuzla's story. All these circumstances, the past experiences, author's motives to come to Tuzla, author's credibility to approach citizens and elites of city of Tuzla to ask for their help to better understand how and why this counter intuitive community rejected something that no other community was able to.

The protocol for the ordinary citizens started with questions in form of breaking the ice. Thus first set of questions were to establish the basic facts that were important for my findings: a) if they were originally from Tuzla b) if they lived in the city during the wartime, c) in what capacity if any they participated in the war. After establishing this basic information, I jumped straight into the question which carried the logic of motivation: Fact that I would switch quickly from polite questions into something so personal and serious, I wanted to catch them little off guard. Sure not such a nice thing to do in a normal conversation, but this was a job, an academic inquiry and so I had to do what needed to be done. This approach would left them with little time to think about the answer and would initialize conversation immediately which usually can protrude the genuine sincerity and objectivity (Jorgensen 1989; Van Evera 1997). Hence, I would ask them if they voted for the non-ethnic party in the first multiparty elections and why they voted for the non-ethnic party. I asked them if they understood the role of Tuzla in the country as the

only municipality in Bosnia<sup>57</sup> and if they could list the factors that shapes Tuzla's identity which was in the core of its rejection of virulent nationalism. This question was intended mainly to start collecting citizen's understanding of Tuzla's identity formation as a strong working class society and the motivations behind their decision to elect non-ethnic party, while also addressing the question of wider meaning asking them to offer information on how and why Tuzla did what it did. Peculiar fact with many Tuzlan's is that they know what they [Tuzla] accomplished, but they cannot really [causally] explain it how. Which for me meant one thing: What they did was normal to them and there is no other they would act. This understanding came much later for me during the analysis of the data. It was one of those simple findings that is very easy to overlook, and yet it was 'in front of me' and very crucial for the case. Tuzlan's simply do not know how to behave any other way, from how they behaved during the war. Simple as that. Nonetheless, I needed to explain why this came about and how the process went on during the war.

More importantly, with the above question I wanted to see if Tuzla's path of non-nationalism and rejection of violence was — an arbitrary event — or whether it was *path-dependent* (Gomm; Hammersley and Foster 2000). This question was asked also because just as city of Vares first elected the non-ethnic leadership — its

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<sup>57</sup> City of Vares was the second city along Tuzla to go with non-ethnic party municipal electorate, however city of Vares was ran over by the nationalist Croatian faction HVO in 1993 and assumed the leadership of the city by expelling the democratically elected non-ethnic local leadership.

citizens stood by while the ethnic nationalist factions forcefully took over the city and expelled the moderate leadership. Therefore, I wanted to gain the sense to what extent Tuzla's historic legacy contributed to its identity. In other words, while Tuzla and Vares were the only cities that elected non-ethnic parties, Tuzla was able to protect this choice and Vares did not. I will address Vares case in bit more detail in the next chapter.

Next, I probed the ordinary citizens to possibly explain what they thought were the roots of Tuzla's identity; the working revolutionary class and the sense of solidarity and protection for other(s) it possessed. Conversely, I asked them if they could explain why other similar cities in Bosnia appeared not to have the same attitudes or why other cities did not do what Tuzla managed to do. This was a hidden question; heavily loaded on purpose, [again not so nice by me, but job is a job and it had to be done] because there was no way for them to know exactly why and what went on in the other cities, but I wanted to use a ploy against them (for the lack of the better word, trick them) (Yin 2009; Van Evera 1997) so that I can get the sense of objectivity in their answers for: a) How they felt about Tuzla as their own city b) attitude towards other cities as cities who did not accomplish what Tuzla did. This was important to me because I had an idea how Tuzla's identity was shaped, by early industrialization and strong working class, in particular miners, [strenuous work, often people who will fight for their rights which can serve as revolutionary

movement for the society] nonetheless, I wanted to see if Tuzla's citizens held some 'exclusive rights' for themselves? And if so, that would to some extent taint their 'worker's class' because true workers class has uniformity across. And so with this particularly loaded question, as an old adage goes, "got two birds with one stone". And indeed, Tuzlan's showed that they were uniformed working class, this is to say that they did not look on others as different or that their working class was special, secondly they could not pin point as to why others did not 'make it', meaning protect multiethnic society. This was interesting as well, because it may have proved my point from earlier, that Tuzlans only think in one way — tolerance and coexistence, everything else is not normal for them.

I also asked one more loaded questions to try to weed out the biases as much as possible. Crucial importance for the study was to make sure that the person behind the answers held high integrity and candor and in the case that they did not, then I needed to know whom I was dealing with. Biases was minor in unrelated areas, which still contributed to my study in form of the counterfactual arguments. However, objectivity and validity was number one concern for me and for my study, thus I wanted to fence off those who potentially were predisposed to the political alter motives (Hersen 1976).

Second group interviewed were the essential staff, the decision makers, there were several questions focusing on the root reasoning (Miles 1994; Yin 2009) and their motivations for the decisions they

during the war. After inquiring on the *why* question [why Tuzla succeeded] in respect to its identity formation, next goal was to conduct the inquiry on the *how* question and how the elites formulated strategy and actions during the war to defend their political choice. I asked for specific policies, reasoning and motivations behind the decisions that helped them defend the city from outside and within. I also asked to what extent they reflected on the demands from the civil society and the coordination between them and the civil society functioned. With this question I also wanted to know whether these elites were part of instrumentalist assumptions or as I these hypothesized — not part of the instrumentalist assumption therefore counter acted to it. Indeed, Tuzla's elites belong to the counter instrumentalist assumptions. On occasions I would circulate the question through a different formulation. I would reword the question until they answered the same question twice. This was one of the ways I was checking the validity (Stoecker 1991; Yin 2009).

Being fluent in the local language helped immensely, because I do not think I would have been able to do this kind of research knowing only English. Studies such as this, would be difficult or at best partial to do with a translator. Reflecting now on the research, being able to speak the local language was almost mandatory for a study such as this one. In addition to having good grasp on local and regional history, understanding the culture and people beyond what is obvious,

is one of the factors that makes this study special. It would be nearly impossible to have a real connection and meaningful conversation with these people having another person there to translate the conversation. There are certain distancing elements with former Yugoslavs with foreigners and locals, especially when foreigners that come to study these ‘poor’ Balkan people. There is a certain pride (Sidowski 1966) involved here as well. They were citizens of Europe, destined to join the EU as equal partners, contributing to the progress of EU and the world [as they have under Tito] now they are being studied like laboratory mice or tribes that have destroyed the state that united them, gave them peace and prosperity and to many these, facts are unsettling. Hence, there are unspoken signs, idiosyncrasies cultural understandings that allowed me to approach these former Yugoslavs, but also be accepted as one of them, despite that I was re-rooted from the region and grown in United States. They knew that I went through the same horrors as they did and for them that was reassuring. Me being raised in another country only added their assurance in me that I am objective and would not take anybody’s side in this.

Thirdly, without giving the interviewees a ‘list of choices’ or ‘pre packaged answers’ (Schatzman 1973; Yin 1981) in order not to limit them in any way, I wanted to see what is the common denominator among Tuzla’s elites and citizens as a number one factor which they held to be true that contributed to the sudden explosion of the ethnic



animosities in Yugoslavia and then in Bosnia. This answer was less structured and wide, however done so with a specific intent. I wanted to find out whether the answers would be different between the elites and the regular citizens. If so, this meant that I would need to look further into why differences existed in the information among the population, conversely, if there were no differences in answers that would work towards the validity of the study. What I found out that words “tuzlan’s identity” and “solidarity” were the common denominator among all.

Lastly, I asked all interviewees including wartime Mayor Mr. Beslagic, if he had anything to do with Tuzla’s success. I already have read reports<sup>58</sup> on Mr. Beslagic work and his impact on Tuzla’s success and I already had an idea of what this man had accomplished for Tuzla, what were his fundamental motivations, beliefs, his historical background, what was his style of management and some of the crucial decisions he has made during wartime but of course, I wanted to hear it first hand from the people he governed and himself. I spoke to Tuzla’s current leadership, citizens of different ethnic backgrounds and citizens affiliated with different political parties. To my big surprise even those citizens who were not and currently were not affiliated with the same political party as Mr. Beslagic, their answers were fairly positive of Mr. Beslagic. Mr. Beslagic, when asked during

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<sup>58</sup> Extensive information about Mr. Beslagic in his semi-autobiography: Beslagic, S., (1998), Tuzla The City and Tis Man; Addresses, Speeches, Interviews, prizes., (ed) Fatmir Alispahic, DJL, Tuzla.

the interview, did not take any credit and deservingly said, it were the citizens of Tuzla who accomplished it all — in fact they [elites] were only executing the wishes of the people of Tuzla, and he also generously gave me his autobiography book, while being mayor of wartime Tuzla, (autographed and personalized for me, wishing me well in completing my Ph.D. studies).

The possible validity threats associated with interviews, in the context of this research are social biases and foggy memory (Bradburn 1983). Steps recommended by (Van Evera 1997; Yin 2009), for the conduct of personal semi-structured interviews, is to be as detailed and careful with wording of questions, to explain the purpose of the interview and lastly assurance of confidentiality to reduce any potential biases effects in interviews. I have taken these steps and recommendations to the most extreme measures. Before every interview, the introductory explanation of my purpose for the interview stressed that the interview would not aim to evaluate their experiences or performance in any shape of form. Further that all the information they provide is of outmost confidentiality, that the information will be used strictly for the academic purposes and that the interview data will be deposited with me and the University of Milan only. The confidentiality form was handed to them to sign. I must note that many did not want or need confidentiality form including both Mayors of Tuzla. I do not know why, I can only guess, but did not feel the need to sign confidentiality papers and I was not going to

insist. On the other hand this was a positive sign for me, that they did not care so much about confidentiality because that would maybe mean that they have nothing to hide from the public and will most likely be honest and objective. At the start of the interview with former Mayor, Mr. Beslagic told me “everything I am about to tell you is a public information and I have nothing to hide”. Few did sign even though they did not fully understood why I am offering them privacy protection. This was anecdotal, [I knew this was Bosnia and that is how things are done] some did sign but only because I gave them something to sign, not because they were really concerned about privacy. But all this tells something about Bosnia in general, perhaps not so much about Tuzla, but it was interesting to witness this attitude towards confidentiality especially from me, coming from the U.S. Privacy in socialist countries, including Yugoslavia was not privacy as seen and understood in the west. Being private during socialism would perhaps mean that you are hiding something. Again out of respect towards me I think, some signed but only because I gave them a piece of paper to sign. Those that signed I only used their first and last initials for the purposes of thesis writing. In terms of foggy memory, I made sure to go slowly with questions, to rotate around the same question twice if needed, in instances that they appeared to have difficulties recalling some events and to see if there would be any variations in answers. I also reminded them that they can send information via email if they have recalled additional information.

## 7. Interview Procedure

Prior to the interviews, I made the call to interviewee, explain who I was, what the purpose of the call was, who has put me in touch with them and how I received their contact information<sup>59</sup> and asked them to give me an hour of their time for an interview. I must say that not one single person rejected my request, despite the bad reputation that some of the elites in Bosnia have, after explaining that I am from academia and University of Milan, conducting a doctoral research, they were more than welcome to sit down with me. However, I am not certain what the result would have been if I was not born in Bosnia, or that I did not speak the local language. Many elites and ordinary citizens still do not speak English well and are reluctant to sit down with a translator for the suspicious that their statements may get lost in translation. This is not always the case, but elites in particular tend to be risks averse with translators for non-official or non-government politics. I may have benefited from speaking the local language which I am positive aided me in having access to the elites and many other citizens who do not speak English. The time table above shows the research process and activities for the field work. All the interviews were preformed in a similar manner following the standard interview procedure and the study protocol in order to maintain the consistency and quality (Merton 1985).

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<sup>59</sup> Many of the elites I interviewed are still politically active and/or held high positions either on local or regional levels, for example, Dr. Nada Mladina, current Mayor Mr. Imamovic, President of the Forum of Citizens, Mr. Sehic or former Yugoslav President, Mr. Raif Dizdarevic. Getting their private contact information must be explained to them when, how and from whom I got them.

## The Research Process

Time Frame	Research Activity
<b>June - July</b> <b>2015</b>	Prepared the list of potential interviewees and contacts in BiH Made first contacts via email/phone Made arrangements with University of Sarajevo as a visiting fellow
<b>Aug - Dec.</b> <b>2015</b>	Moved to Sarajevo, conducted initial interviews in Sarajevo Moved to Tuzla and started interview process in Tuzla Conducted necessary follow up and interviews at various locations in BiH Visited Cities: Belgrade, Novi Sad, Mitrovica, Podgorica, Skoplje, Zagreb, Split, Dubrovnik, Kumrovec, Rijeka, Ljubljana, Slavonski Brod, Knin, Beli Manastir, Ruma, Sombor, Osijek, Livno, Kiseljak, Kakanj, Zadar, Vares, Travnik, Sibenik, Moljkovac, Bijelo Polje, Igalo, Herceg Novi, Budva, Kotor, Banja Luka, Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Pristina, Zvecan, Pale, Pula, Breza, Kresevo, Umag, Rovinj, Bohinj, Senj, Solin, Makarska etc. Visited approximately 100+ cities, villages and municipalities across former Yugoslavia and spoke to locals in order to get a sense for the post-conflict reconciliation, if any.
<b>Jan. - April</b> <b>2016</b>	Performed data management and analysis Discussed the field experience with advisor and colleagues

Locations varied, depended mostly on the interviewee availability and choice. Most of the current Tuzla's leadership, the interviews were held at the local municipality building. For example, current Mayor of Tuzla, Mr. Imamovic was interviewed at his Mayor's office, while former Mayor Mr. Beslagic who is retired now, invited me to the Hotel Tuzla. Interviews lasted anywhere between one hour and half on average to two hours maximum. All interviews were conducted in the local language Serbo-Croatian or as it is now trivially referred:

Croatian/Serbian/Bosnian/Montenegrin. Foreign officials working in Bosnia were interviewed in English. During each interview notes were taken (Van Evera 1997; Yin 2009). In addition, interviews were recorded on two devices to ensure reliability and with the agreement of the interviewee. The recorded interviews were then transcribed in order to produce easier analysis of the conversations.

Typically, the interviews started with a short introduction and the purpose of the interview, the interviewer's qualifications and the current work. Additionally, without potentially skewing their line of thought, choice of words or impacting their own framework of answers and information, I informed them of the nature of information which I am seeking in order to help me unpack the formation of Tuzla's identity and wartime processes. Throughout each interview, a gracious non-threatening and trusting environment (Van Evera 1997) was maintained as much as possible without being either too soft or genuinely disinterested. In several instances during questioning, logic of argumentation was not followed, I had to revert back to the same question in order to get the sound and valid argumentation for some of the decisions and motives participant tried to explain. If the answer sounded valid, but not sound or causation appeared to be weak or invalid I would politely re-formulate the question or find another way to see if valid and sound reasoning would come to surface. In instances where soundness would not appear despite reformulating a question, note was taken on that

particular question and would drill down the question with other interviewee until sound and valid information was provided (Prakken and Vreeswijk 2001).

Only in one instance, despite initial cordiality with the Croatian Consular at the Croatian Consulate in city o Tuzla, despite my best attempts, I made a difficult decision to walk out of the consular office within first few minutes.<sup>60</sup> These are, unfortunately the realities of Bosnia and post war Yugoslavia. I was prepared for all kinds of unpredictable occasions, good or bad. This particular one was not so pleasant, and it is unfortunate that a scholar be put through such unpleasantries, but that is part of the field work for many scholars who decide to go into the ethnically contested and politically charged regions especially those recovering from recent conflict such as Western Balkans. Academic scholars will find all kinds of issues when working in such environments. Even when scholar prepares well ahead of the field work, difficult events may still occur, however, well versed scholar should know where he or she is at all times, whom she is dealing with, if there are any alternative motives by interviewees etc.

Lastly, during each interview, validity inspection was constantly conducted by restating or rewording the salient information collected

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<sup>60</sup> Due to the inappropriate nationalist comments right at the start of the interview, I made a decision that this particular individual was not diplomatic despite his professional title. While I fully understand that diplomatic elite would have been helpful, I also understood that I was in Bosnia and that extreme sides are still presents. Line was drawn for the inappropriate nationalists comments right at the start of the interview and so I walked out of the interview with Croatian Council in Tuzla. A colleague from Tuzla University, who has arranged the interview for me also walked out of the office with me together.

(Van Evera 1997) and asking the participants to determine its factuality. Each question was repeated multiple times until a pattern of responses<sup>61</sup> was detected (Yin 2009; Van Evera 1997). At the end of the each interview, the participants were told about the data usage and offered a small gift (often some memorabilia from Texas or Italy) and offered to treat them with coffee or tea. On the other hand, I was treated with few lunches and coffees as well. I assign this to the south slav hospitality and did not expect anything less from them. The interviews were then followed by a thank you card, thanking each interviewee personally for their time. Bellow is the table of the Level of Analysis Approach, which describes to which extent I gathered the data. Since the main research questions is related to the local level processes, I was able to well cover the local approach.

## **8. Interview Data Analysis**

The interview data were analyzed following the steps recommended by Yin (2009). First, raw data was organized according to each area of investigation. Second, all the data were re-read in detail to obtain an overall sense of the information. Conceptual ideas and thoughts about what data represented were written in side margins. Third, the data were coded in relation to processes, activities, contexts, relationships and social structures (Miles and Huberman 1994). Forth,

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<sup>61</sup> In principle, a pattern is recognized as such when more than half of those being interviewed being asked the same question, respond in similar fashion.



a description of themes was generated based on the idea-concept and frequency of data codes (Wolcott 1990; Lipsey 1992). Fifth, involved detailed discussions with colleagues and feedback of the identified themes. Lastly, the data now constructed into meaningful information were interpreted and triangulated (Jick 1979; Yin 2009) with other primary and secondary sources.

### Case Study Level of Analysis

	State Structures and Actors	Nonstate Structures and Actors	Issues
<b>Local</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local elites</li> <li>representatives of the local government</li> <li>established institutional arrangements and socio-economic structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>locally resident ethnic/ religious groups and their members and elites</li> <li>locally operating               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– NGOs and their members and elites</li> <li>– rebel forces and their members and elites</li> <li>– private sector interest groups and their members and elites</li> <li>– criminal networks and their members and elites</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security</li> <li>Economy</li> <li>Corroborati on local and state authorities</li> <li>Media</li> <li>Maintaining of Ethnic Cohesion</li> <li>Maintaining Legal Framework</li> </ul>
<b>National</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>representatives of the national gov't.</li> </ul>		
<b>Regional</b>			
<b>Global</b>			

Throughout this process, I was able to construct the causal mechanism of Tuzla's success. This was done in two phases. First phase, formation of the Tuzla's identity, a set of three processes during three time periods, processes of: *bonding* of ethnicities and nationalities in Tuzla's large mining sector, *forging* of working class

through labor movements, union organization and anti-fascist movement and *cementing* of a working class in socialist Yugoslavia through economic, cultural and educational expansion. The identity formed in Tuzla was prelude to the wartime process conflict management. Indeed, second phase of the causal mechanism constructed as strategies and policies of wartime elites and civil society as a process of conflict management.

Data analysis process was not a linear process, rather a two-way one. Each phase of the analysis was interrelated to the other (Corbin and Strauss 2007). For example, analysis was carried out even during the data collection process. While conducting the interviews across Bosnia, I regularly reflected on patterns communicated to me, impressions I received by interviewees and other commonalities (Van Evera 1997).

## **9. Validity**

Validity threats were always present as with any research and data collection procedures. I have dealt with them when they were suspected during data analysis as well as the entire research process. Validity threats specific to the interview methods have already been addressed in detail in the corresponding subsection. Moreover, to avoid validity traps I also relied on four widely used tests and the recommended case study tactics as summarized in numerous textbooks: (Yin 2009; Kidder & Judd, 1986).

a) *constructing validity*: identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied; aim to avoid failing to develop a sufficiently operational set of measures and that ‘subjective’ judgments are used to collect data

b) *internal validity*: (for explanatory or causal studies and not for descriptive or exploratory studies), seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships.

c) *external validity*: defining the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized

d) *reliability*: demonstrating that operations of a study such as the data collection procedures can be repeated with the same results.

Dealing with these four tests, chart above identifies strategies for each test when doing the case study as well as a cross-reference to the phase of research when the strategy is to be used (Lipsey 1992; Yin 2009).

Lastly, the thesis relied on “reflectivity” (Wellington 2010), to further increase the validity of the study findings. Reflectivity refers to continuous self reflection on the entire process from the design of

research, data collection and analysis, and presentation of research findings. A similar proposal has been made by Peshkin (1988) that researchers should seek their subjectivity and monitor their biases

## Case Study Tactics for Four Design Tests

TESTS	Case Study Tactic	Phase of research in which tactic occurs
<b>Construct Validity</b>	Use multiple sources of evidence	data collection
	establish chain of evidence	data collection
	have key informants review draft case study report	composition
<b>Internal Validity</b>	do pattern matching	data analysis
	do explanation building	data analysis
	address rival explanations	data analysis
	use logic models	data analysis
<b>External Validity</b>	use theory in single-case studies	research design
	use replication logic in multiple-case studies	research design
<b>Reliability</b>	use case study protocol	data collection
	develop case study database	data collection

throughout the research process. To this end, the use of doctoral seminars, peer-group reviews and faculty mentoring were useful and actively utilized.

### 10. Limitations

This study has two limitations corresponding to the research design. First, the study did not examine other municipality, where the non-ethnic parties won; city of Vares and East District of Sarajevo. These

two additional cases could have possibly contributed to the study by possibly elucidating more clearly the themes and concepts of pre-war elections voters motivations and attitudes. Despite Vares being much smaller city than Tuzla, it could have possibly aided the study in having more general reach by examining additional place whose electorate behaved similarly with those of Tuzla. This in particular being that Vares was also the working class city with large mining industry, with iron, coal and other mineral deposits as well as other sub-industries such as forest, textile and military making Vares in turn almost a miniature Tuzla. It also had a well mixed ethnic population much like Tuzla. However, problem with Vares as it was mentioned throughout the study, is that in June of 1992 the city council, then KPJ-SDP was forcefully attacked<sup>62</sup> by HVO unites and replaced by HDZ political leadership who expelled the KPJ-SDP democratically elected city leadership. Thus, while Vares did in fact elect non-ethnic party, unlike Tuzla, it was not able to maintain and hold the political power in the city and thus succumbed<sup>63</sup> to he radical factions and eventual inter-ethnic<sup>64</sup> fighting. The thesis aims to research Tuzla's

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<sup>62</sup> Istina o Varešu - Praljak je unaprijed predao Vareš. <http://www.prometej.ba/clanak/povijest/istina-o-varesu-1-praljak-je-unaprijed-predao-vares-1050> Link accessed May 24, 2016

<sup>63</sup> In 1993 HVO from Kiseljak, came to Vares, seized all Muslim men from their homes and took them to schools for interrogation, beatings etc. These same HVO forces from Kiseljak also committed one of the most heinous massacres in the village above Vares soon after, the village of Stupni Do, killing mostly elderly, women and children. After that Muslim army (Army of BiH) reciprocated and attacked Vares and displaced all Croats and Serbian citizens. And during this attack Muslim units also committed atrocities towards Croatian and Serbian citizens in an around Vares.

<sup>64</sup> What happened at Stupni Do. <http://www.hercegbosna.org/STARO/engleski/operation.html> link accessed September 24th 2016 see also. Mehmed Alagic signed the order for the Vares offensive (See Alagic, Ratna Sjecanja. Ratni Memoari Mehmeda Alagica, Rat u Srednjoj Bosni. Bemust Zenica Press 1997).

identity formation which led to electing non-ethnic party leadership, but also seeks to learn how the wartime actions by the elites maintained the inter-ethnic peace, but upholding democratic principles. Vares unfortunately has only the first part needed for the comparative study, but not the second part, therefore decision was made not do the comparative study with a partial case. Vares perhaps should be a separate study case, and only then there could be a comparative study. District of Sarajevo was too small and not comparable to the size of the municipality to include it in the study, and much of the city was engulfed in the war anyway, so it too failed to maintain the initial path of non-ethnic leadership and rejection of nationalism.

Second, this study could have probably benefitted from having access to more radical elements of SDA party leadership in Sarajevo, which often came in conflict with Tuzla's elite leadership, with majority members in SDP. While this would not help the study understand the transition from Yugoslav system to multiparty ethnic affiliations, it could have provided some additional data in so far to understand SDA's motives in trying to expel the Tuzla's elites. De facto, Tuzla could have followed the suit of Vares. The only difference would have been that its faith would not have been signed by Croatian nationalists the HDZ, but rather by Muslim nationalist, the SDA. Nonetheless, both SDA and SDP in Tuzla carry majority of members whose religion affiliation is Islam, however their socio-political vision of

what Bosnia should be like are fundamentally different. However, I attempted to minimize this problem by interviewing SDA members in Tuzla canton officials who also came in conflict with city of Tuzla leadership, during and after the war. Nonetheless, since Sarajevo's SDA members had various directives during the war to destabilize Tuzla or after the war, when city was being shoved aside, having access to some of the political veterans could have potentially been informative.

In sum, Bosnia is a relatively small country, access to the elites is exceptionally difficult. Elites are evasive and have constructed the status of untouchables in the last twenty years. They are weary of any kind of attention or spotlight. This is part due because the masses have largely labeled them as corrupt and inept. Thus, any kind of attempt to do a research that would rely on gaining access to these political circles, is a major hurdle. Even if one gets access to the elites in the Western Balkans, next problem is elite's social desirability. Researcher must have a sharp analytical mind, cultural and regional knowledge as so to avoid traps of being labeled as naive foreigner or young 'academic researcher' in order to dig trough, what often can be defined as media sound bites or pompous answers or paying the lip service to whom ever they have given the privilege to get access to them. Bottom line, Bosnia is an extremely tricky place when it comes to the political elites and the reputation as one of the most corrupt countries in Europe crystallizes especially in regards the recent ethnic

war. All researchers must have an inquiring mind before, during and after the interviews and the ability to pose and ask high caliber questions (Yin 2009) and is absolutely a prerequisite for all case studies, in particular when dealing with political elites with corrupt governments. Despite all the difficulties, I maintained my goal of seeking desired results by creating a rich dialogue with the evidence, and activity that produced fruitful data. These limitations notwithstanding, it is believed that the information collected by this study provided useful insights into the successful process of city of Tuzla in rejecting the inter-ethnic violence, nationalist forces for takeover and protecting and maintaining the rule of law and Yugoslav era ethnic unity.

## **11. Ethical Considerations**

Main ethical issue in this thesis was protecting the participants privacy. As mentioned before, Bosnia continues to be the exceptionally politically charged environment and protecting participants privacy was of my crucial concern as well as theirs. Given that some of the information provided to me are of sensitive nature, and the little time I had to put any substantial trust in them and my job was to approach interviewees with trust, honesty and objectivity.

Another ethical issue was the fact is that I was born in Bosnia, and experienced the war just like most of my participants I interviewed



did in fact put them at ease. But also needed to be honest with them and have disclosed to all that my father was a POW in their city, from the times when Vares fell, captured during the fighting by Tuzla's corps. I also was honest in saying that my father being taken to Tuzla as a POW, has nothing to do with the fact that I as a researcher saw Tuzla as a beacon of peace and hope Bosnia. My parents raised me better than to succumb to subjectivity in matters such as this. And indeed, most Tuzlan's including Mr. Beslagic, felt sad that Vares 'did not make it'. Mr. Beslagic even told me to say "hi" to my dad with some sadness on his face. However, knowing that I was taken out of the region at an early age and grew up in the U.S., gave them the trust of objectivity they needed. The combination of these factors, felt that all people I interviewed felt I was doing the positive thing, regardless to their religious affiliation or party membership and therefore, all were willing talk to me with certain dose of repose and calmness. I was one of them - but I also was not. It was this balance that helped me get close and personal with these people but extract needed and objective data.

Lastly, even though that many did not feel the need to sign the interview consent and confidentiality form, it was offered to them regardless at every interview. A consent statement explained and specified that the researcher will honor anonymity and protect the confidentiality of responses, and If I would violate any of their privacy that I would be legally liable. I did not hold back, in the sense

because I wanted to be fully responsible by showing that level of commitment to stand for their privacy. For those who signed, during the phase of interview data analysis, I used their initials to protect their identities, (Creswell 2009), those that did not feel the need to sign, there was no need to create codes for them. Lastly, all the data collected were treated in a confidential manner. Records of this study, interview recordings, personal notes were kept private and inaccessible to other people except myself, my advisor and the University of Milan. All the data stored in a computer were password protected. The collected data will be used only for this dissertation and other academic and research purposes. The handling of collected data was clearly and explicitly communicated to all the study participants. With an exception of an incident with the Croatian council at the Croatian Consulate in Tuzla, I believe that my research work in Tuzla was very fruitful. I was welcomed by all Tuzlans regardless of their ethnic, religious or professional affiliation, all were willing to help me with my research and have extended their hand. I was treated with kindness and kind hospitality.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Presentation of the Results

### 1. Introduction

This chapter will present the results of the interviews conducted with Tuzla's wartime leadership, former Yugoslav government officials, war veterans, academic staff, civil society leadership, activists, EU officials in Bosnia and ordinary citizens. Research question wanted to answer how and why Tuzla rejected inter-ethnic violence during war in Bosnia, conversely was able to maintain peace and protect its multi-ethnic way of life. Through the field work and research findings the thesis first constructed phase one of the causal mechanism, which is Tuzla's identity formation of multinational and multiethnic, strong working class of revolutionary and anti-nationalist orientation. This identity was formed through three processes: *bonding*, *forging* and *cementing*, during three time periods in Tuzla's history. Chapter will explain how each process occurred, under which condition and during which period. The three periods are roughly defined: 1) the Austro-Hungarian industrialization of Tuzla, 2) period from the end of WW I to the end of WW II and 3) socialist Yugoslavia, which corresponds roughly to approximately 100 years or time period from 1887 to 1990. Secondly, as a second phase of the Tuzla's causal mechanism, thesis will present the process of *how* Tuzla's identity counter-reacted to the assault of the Serbian, Croatian and Muslim (Bosnjak) nationalism by

activating self-defense mechanism that is embedded in Tuzla's identity. Research results confirmed the hypotheses; that Tuzla counter reacted to virulent nationalism was natural or simply part of Tuzla's civil society and that Tuzla 'does not know any other way', than what it had manifested when it was attacked by radical nationalism. Lastly, Tuzla's reaction to the recent attack on its identity was not the first time, and has behaved similarly in the past as will result show bellow, thus path-dependent hypotheses was also confirmed. Thesis goes as far to make a claim that Tuzla would react again in the same way if needed, because the universal values for human rights, tolerance and solidarity among people in Tuzla have been well embedded and nourished. Will it last for additional 100 years or is Tuzla's identity completely immune to the outside socio-political changes, I cannot tell, but for the time being, Tuzla's identity continues to be impervious.

The interview results are presented according to the structure of the causal mechanism. First phase one is presented, the each process of identity formation; bonding, forging and cementing. Second, phase two is presented, wartime strategies, rule of law and civil society. Chapter will use quotes from the interviews to help synthesize the results and address broader implications. The interview results are cross-referenced with historical archival research of local government, official wartime documentation, secondary research material which corroborated the interviewees's accounts.

## 2. Empirical Research Results

The findings are organized according to the sequence of Tuzla's identity formation processes and corresponding time periods. The interview results are illustrated with narratives that connect the participant responses with the broader implications vis-a-vis firstly, accepting multi-ethnic and multinational society as way of life in Tuzla, secondly, rejection of any kind of ethnic, national or religious oppressions manifested through virulent nationalism which swept the nation and lastly, strong anti-nationalist counter mobilization.

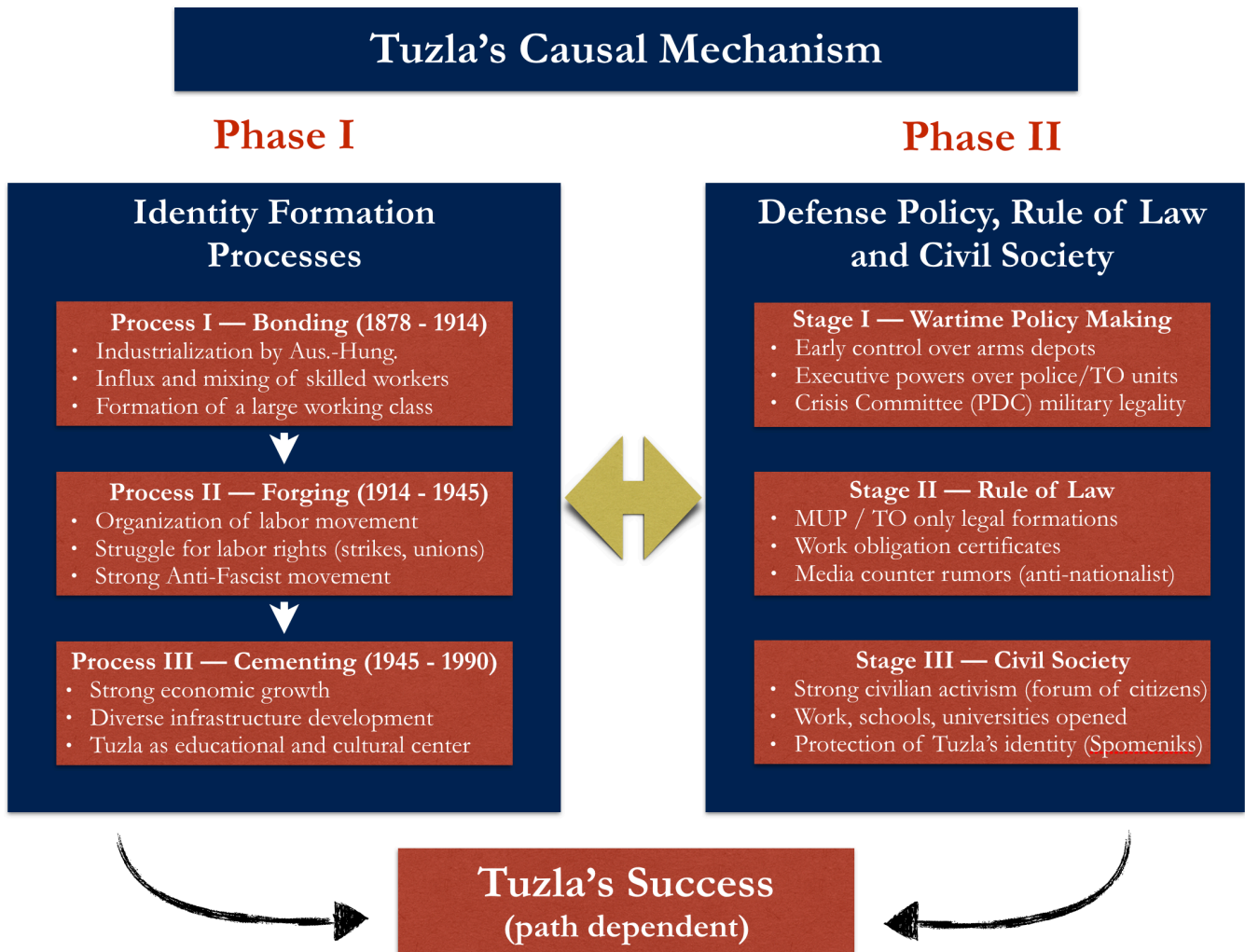
Some salient point were identified during the course of the analysis. Interview data generally showed that nationalist euphoria did not exist prior to the war nor was it able to transmit to the citizens of Tuzla once it was spread out throughout Yugoslavia. This finding did not contradict the hypothesis, in fact findings confirmed it. Secondly, research found that that rural areas in Bosnia, more so than urban centers tended to be pro-nationalistic as traditions were kept from generation to generation and just in general educational benefits with urban centers, however Tuzla's rural population was well integrated through mining sector, which was usually less paid in consequence of less education. Nonetheless, this integration of the rural masses helped 'traditional rural nationalist' ideas to dissipate while simultaneously taking on the socialist workers values during socialist Yugoslavia. This urban-rural societal mixing may not have happened in city of Mostar for example, hence reason why WW II myths were

kept passing on from generation to generation. I will discuss below, why Mostar for example failed to have this urban-rural dimension as Tuzla did, which ultimately may have been the key factor in what happened in Mostar and what happened in Tuzla.

Thirdly, Tuzla was the only large city where the left-block managed to form the local government with a comfortable majority in the local assembly. An important fact, that Tuzla's elected governing leadership were mostly made up of the leadership from the Tuzla's key industrial enterprises. The giant socialist enterprises were often powerful players on the local and regional level who could often impact local policies and beyond.

Lastly, some interview data suggests that, despite the countermeasures taken by researcher, social desirability may still have affected some of participant's responses during the interviews. The instance when I had to leave the Croatian consulate in Tuzla, before the interview with the Consul even took place. The other occasion was when I went to the Cantonal Ministry of Education (majority of SDA), while I was treated with outmost respect with Minister of Education, some looked at me with suspicion and some turned their head away in the hallway as to not even greet me. (weeks prior to the meeting I sent my CV and request to meet with the minister). The next section will illustrate Phase I of Tuzla's causal mechanism in being able to resist to nationalism and ethnic divisions. Phase I defined as "Identity Formation" of Tuzla and there are three process as discussed above.

Second section will then discuss Phase II of the Tuzla’s causal mechanism, which is “Wartime Strategy, Rule of Law and Civil organization”, in which Tuzla, militarily, strategically organized itself and through series of wartime actions successfully defended from nationalist forces and protected its identity and way of life. Following section will discuss Phase I. Bellow is a graphical illustration of Tuzla’s causal mechanism in rejecting virulent nationalism.



## a. Identity Formation Process I

### Bonding (1887 - 1914)

In this sub-section the interview results are clustered by the concept or theme, what thesis defines as *process of bonding*. This process can be defined as mixing of different nationalities from the Austro-Hungarian empire with Tuzla's own ethnic groups as skilled workers from the empire flocked to Tuzla's for salt and mining industry. As I already read about Tuzla's identity and started to form my own concepts of their identity, with interviews I wanted to mainly hear from the people how they understood their identity was constructed.

The interview participants came from different ethnic backgrounds but many were Muslims or ethnically mixed muslims and this is fundamental to the identity question especially because one would expect to hear in these instances that 'Ottoman rule' in Bosnia which lasted for nearly 500 years, left a large and profound impact on the Bosnian society in all aspects. However, my interview data generally contradicts this norm, which can be heard throughout Bosnia, but not in Tuzla. While Ottoman empire's legacy in Bosnia is mainly the religion (Islam) itself or about the religion, interview participants in Tuzla did not shy to explicitly criticize the Ottoman's legacy despite many of them being Muslims. This being the fact that Ottomans rule of Bosnia left majority of the Bosnian population unskilled, uneducated without roads, railroads, hospitals, public schools, and universities with largely an agrarian and peasant society (Klapic 2002;



Selimovic 2007). It was precisely this element, that created the large void for Austro-Hungarians in their quest to industrialize the region and create a large workforce. In other words, there were simply no skilled workers needed to fill in the jobs in the mining and other industrial sectors.

Thus, industrialization and urbanization of Bosnia was in full swing at the end of the 19th century which helped elevate large urban areas into working class cities, such as Tuzla. Development of salt and coal mines as well as numerous other factories from other industries, attracted a consistent, skilled and diverse labour force allowing for an impressive demographic as well as economic development of Tuzla. Inevitably, in order to extract the Tuzla's vast natural resources, the need was created for the skilled labour force, which the Austro-Hungary could only get from importing from other parts of its empire, which were commonly Italians, Slovenians, Germans, Polish, Slovaks, Austrians, Czechs and even Russians. (Selimovic 2007). In order to support this growth spur and development of the urban Tuzla, Austro-Hungary had to built complimentary infrastructure in order to support life line to the rapidly growing industries. Roads, railroads, hospitals, public schools and universities, libraries, post offices, cultural centers as well as military basses were built (Selimovic 2007; Armakolas 2011) to support the large working labour force. These structures and institutions are considered to be the first blocks of modern Bosnia. Hence, city of Tuzla from its modern (industrial)

inception was centered around its vast rich natural resources and the ever expanding industrial complex as early as Austro-Hungarian rule in BiH. In spite the ‘occupying nature’ of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Bosnia and in particular cities such as Tuzla, Zenica, Sarajevo, Vares Kakanj, benefited vis-a-vis Austro-Hungarian industrialization of the country. From this process on, Tuzla identified itself primarily with mining industrial complex, large salt deposits and its large working class needed to work in these industries (Klagic 2002).

This early emigration process into Tuzla from the various parts of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the skilled labor force essentially filled in addition to the mining sector jobs, also the complimentary institutions, such as: hospitals, universities, city clerks, army personnel all who inevitably remodeled the Ottoman legacy and introduced new national and religious cultural legacy. (Selimovic 2007). Interestingly, the newcomers from foreign countries essentially ‘implied’ that they were pillars of the new economic life in Tuzla (Ibid., 198). Hence, when comparing Tuzla with other regions in Bosnia, the city experienced large growth in particular of migrants or non-citizens of Bosnia of various religious minorities across the Austro-Hungarian empire, made up almost 36 percent of Tuzla’s population (Klagic 2002). This growth pattern continued despite two World Wars, when the percentage of citizens not affiliated to the three mainly

represented religions (Catholic, Orthodox and Islam) increased almost by eighty percent.<sup>65</sup>

### *interview question 1*

*Why Tuzla was the only city to elect non-nationalist party in Bosnia, during first multiparty elections in Yugoslavia ?*

I left the question open-ended on purpose to see see how many will directly give credit to their identity of workers class city and hence would probably provide insights on process of bonding during Austro-Hungarian industrialization. This would give me a hint on average how many people understood how their [Tuzla's identity was formed], which was important to me to know because knowing one's identity and what it stood for during this last war is as equally important on knowing how they did it. In other words, perhaps I would not think that Tuzla's success happened arbitrarily. Knowing who they were, what they stand for and how they did it — is what I wanted to get from the Tuzla's people. Otherwise, I would think what happened in Tuzla was arbitrarily. Conversely, if they went "too wide" with their answer, I would re-direct them and ask more structured question; "How can you explain Tuzla's uniqueness in selecting non-ethnic, multi-national, multi-ethnic political party ? In other words, can you tell me little bit about Tuzla's identity" ?

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<sup>65</sup> Most belonged to the Jewish community (Selimovic 2008)

Interview data indicates that most people knew how ‘Tuzla’s ‘tolerance’ was formed, citing ‘Austro-Hungary’, ‘industrialization’, ‘emigration of workers (Italians, Slovenians, Austrians, Czechs etc’ and ‘mixing with the local miners’. In fact, Tuzla’s citizens held high esteem of Tuzla’s historically fortunated economic prosperity and historically developed multinational and multicultural cohabitation of various groups and ethnicities in the city. This multicultural and multinational cohabitation was due to the high migration of different nationalities into the city across Austro-Hungarian. Admittedly, this findings corroborates with the secondary sources results. Overall, interview data shows that Tuzla prescribed to particular set of migrations mainly from the Austro-Hungarian empire in need of skillful labour to work in the Tuzla’s large mining industry. Ottoman empire left Bosnia in perils, with un-industrialized society largely uneducated

Interview data particularly from the University professors, lucidly consider Tuzla’s rich mining sector to be the prowess of the city and its people. They agree that the city was elevated by the industrialization and de-agrarian process during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia<sup>66</sup>. University professors in particular faculty of

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<sup>66</sup> Austro-Hungarian Occupation of Bosnia lasted from 1878 - 1918. While the occupation resulted in large parts of Bosnia being industrialized and economically developed from the end of the Ottoman Rule which held Bosnia in feudal-state like, the occupation by the Austro-Hungary eventually ended in the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo and the start of WW I.

Mining, Geology and Civil Engineering at University of Tuzla<sup>67</sup>, Professors Jugoslav Stahov and Tihomir Knezicek, both agreed that Austro-Hungary, while being an occupying force, it developed mining sector and industrialized the country [Bosnia and Herzegovina] particularly focusing on the cities such as Tuzla, Zenica, Sarajevo, Breza, Kakanj and Vares. The cities which found themselves on top of the natural resources much needed for the Austro-Hungarian empire life line. However, Tuzla more so than any other city in particular because unlike other cities which were rich in various crude metals, Tuzla also had large deposits of salt and was militarily strategically located as a mid point between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Serbia<sup>68</sup>. In fact, Professor Knezicek's, comments bellow will illustrate this point.

*“in addition to large heavy metal industry, Tuzla also had benefited from large salt deposits, and various other smaller industrial sectors, mainly leather, wood processing and while foreigners across the Empire would come to other cities such as Zenica, etc. skilled workers came to Tuzla in larger numbers because of the diverse industrial complex in Tuzla”* (Knezicek 2015).

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<sup>67</sup> Professors Stahov Jugoslav and Professor Tihomir Knezicek, both Professors Emiratus and war veterans discussed in detail beginnings of Tuzla's industrialization and the impact Austro-Hungarian development of Tuzla's mining sector had on the city and multiculturalism. Interviews held at their respective faculty departments, October, 2015.

<sup>68</sup> Serbia and AustroHungary would eventually declare war on each other. For extensive overview of Austro-Hungarian Occupation of the Balkans see, The Occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 by László Bencze, Frank N. Schubert Review by: Scott W. Lackey The International History Review Vol. 29, No. 1 (Mar., 2007), pp. 159-161

With regards to other cities and their own emigrant situation like the capital Sarajevo or Zenica which were another heavy industrial cities, Professor Knezicek (2015) remarks:

*“Zenica during this time only had surface and underground mines but not the iron foundry processing plant, Sarajevo did not have much industry but it was an administrative center for the Austro-Hungarian empire with also large numbers of skilled foreigners coming in from across the empire”*

On my follow up question as to why then was Sarajevo different in this recent ethnic war, from Tuzla’s, given no differences in administrative labour force versus Tuzla’s miner’s labour force during the Austro-Hungarian empire, his reply was

*“worker’s labour force is a revolutionary force”* (Knezicek 2015).

This insight also corroborates with secondary research indeed. Throughout the Tuzla’s history on several occasions the large worker’s labour force rose up against the oppression, first with Husin Revolt in 1920 when 7000 miners rose up against the mistreatment and working conditions, but also to protect the Slovenian workers ordered to leave Tuzla back to Slovenia and second time, when the strong anti-fascist partisan forces as part of Yugoslav People Army, under Tito command, liberated Tuzla in October 1943 as from Nazi Germany

making Tuzla then the largest free and liberated city in Europe<sup>69</sup>. Tuzla was then taken again by German forces forty days later, but then again liberated 2nd time by Partisans in 1944.

I have to make an observational note about Professor Knezicek. Since the thesis deals with Tuzla's citizens and local leadership my job as a researcher in Tuzla was not only to seek an answer how Tuzla defended itself from violent and divisive nationalism, I was also tasked to observe citizens of Tuzla in their environment whether they were offices, homes, whether they used [ethnonational] labeling, interactions with others. I listened intently for any freudian slip where they would have revealed something unintentionally. they did not want to reveal in front of me and so forth. Thus, while I interviewed Prof. Knezicek, and focused intently on everything he was addressing about relevance of foreign nationals in Tuzla arriving from various places of the Austro-Hungarian empire, I observed him, his university office and listened intently to his expressions. In one instance, he like wartime former Mayor Beslagic as well, was very careful to correct himself in one particular instance saying "...serbs, croats and bosnians during Austro-Hungarian rule... however during that time in Bosnia citizens were referred to catholics, orthodox and muslims". This showed me that he as former Mayor and many other Tuzla's citizens I have spoken to, do not think in ethnic terms, rather as they

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<sup>69</sup> Povijesni Podaci Grada/Opcine Tuzla. Sluzbene stranice grada Osijeka. <http://www.osijek.hr/index.php/cro/Medunarodna-suradnja/Gradovi-prijatelji/Tuzla-Bosna-i-Hercegovina-1996/Vise-o-Tuzli> weblink accessed October 7th 2016

always did in citizen-workers with different religious backgrounds. He was quick to correct himself in this instance and it is remarkable that he still pays attention much like former Mayor. However, more interesting peculiarity about Professor Knezicek, was his office at the university. On one of the walls, directly across his desk, there was a large framed photograph. It was a center piece of his office and it was a large portrait of former president of Yugoslavia, President Josip Broz Tito and Beatles to the left. This was in 2015. See photo below:





It should be mentioned however, that Professor Knezicek is an ethnic Croat of Italian ancestry (Trento region) a Bosnian War veteran who fought along side of his Muslim, Croatian, and Serbian colleagues against the Republika Srpska military [aggressor]<sup>70</sup>. He was also in HVO unit “Zrinska Brigade 115” which was integrated, but independent fighting brigade within Tuzla’s corps, which was not the case anywhere else in Bosnia, but Tuzla.<sup>71</sup> Professor Knezicek is also the President for the Italian Minorities in Tuzla and the President of the National Minorities for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to this day, many citizens of Tuzla, who can prove their Italian ancestry are eligible for either free education in Trento (Italy) with a stipend and eventual Italian citizenship. In fact Italian Ministry of the Interior, Citizenship Unit issued a law stating, that descendants of emigrants of Italian language and culture, originating from the territories which were under the Austro-Hungarian rule to this day can obtain Italian citizenship by making a formal statement of election.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Mr. Beslagic often delineated concepts between Serbs and Serbian-fascist aggressor and is common to see in his book; “Tuzla, The City and its Man, he specifically refers to the Serbian nationalists throughout Bosnia, “Serbian fascist” and I agree with this terminology, because it does not automatically include Serbs who fought or did not agree with Serbian radical nationalism incepted by Milosevic.

<sup>71</sup> When the Croat-Muslim War in Bosnia started, Sarajevo ordered that 115 Brigade Zrinski (HVO) in Tuzla be completely absorbed within Tuzla’s three brigades as there was a fear that Croat-Muslim War may spread among Tuzla’s defense forces. Decision is seen as good decision, as it saved the potential conflict in Tuzla and possible exodus of Croatian population as it was seen in Vares, Zepce, Kakanj etc.

<sup>72</sup> Associazione Trentini Nel Mondo (O.n.i.u.s.). Italian association which operates in Tuzla in helping Tuzla’s citizens of Italian ancestry to re-connect with Italian heritage. In fact, I met several Tuzlans in Trento in 2015, during my PhD summer conference at Trento University, who were brought in on free scholarship and living stipend to live and study at University of Trento. For further details on Italian minorities in Tuzla, see [http://www.trentininelmondo.it/cittadinanza/chi\\_ne\\_ha\\_diritto\\_en.html](http://www.trentininelmondo.it/cittadinanza/chi_ne_ha_diritto_en.html)

Next, I spoke to wartime Mayor at a Hotel Tuzla in the city center. Mr. Beslagic was easily approachable, on the phone very polite, soft spoken and genuinely kind person. He had a 50s black hat on, mid-length black coat, looking as a character from a black-white crim-Hollywood movies (the good guy). As we met in some central square nearby hotel Tuzla, he took me by my underarm at first and we walked [sing of closeness, which I was familiar with this gesture from when I was a boy visiting grandparents in Kosovo and so it did not take me by surprise]. As we walked [with arms interlaced] to the hotel Tuzla, many have greeted him in a personal and kind manner, which showed me that he was one of them not above them or unreachable, and that he was respected, but he would also greet them in a genuine way as well. He asked me where I was born, “in Vares” I replied. He said that he was well familiar with Vares [because Vares like Tuzla were the only cities who elected non-ethnic parties in Bosnia, but Vares succumbed to nationalist politics]. He then said, “We wanted to help Vares - but this was not in the interest of the Croatian government in Zagreb” (Beslagic 2015). Indeed, this corroborates with the secondary research, Tudjman openly supported the idea of Herceg-Bosna. Meaning, all if not, then majority of Bosnian Croats should be dislocated into Hercegovina, thus Muslim-Croat conflict, which resulted in expulsion of most Croatian population from central Bosnia, cities like Kakanj, Zepca, Vares etc. This has broader implications of both primordialist and instrumentalist approaches. Instrumentalist implication that indeed micro wars were conducted

where some civil societies resisted and some did not. Tuzla resisted, but Mostar, Vares, Brcko did not and so on. In terms of primordialism again, conflict induced by elites onto the ethnic population. As we walked towards Hotel Tuzla, I told Mr. Beslagic, that my father was captured by Tuzla's units when Vares was attacked by Army BiH, he looked at me and said "Give your father warmest greetings" (Beslagic 2015). When he said this, in his eyes I saw a moment of sadness and remorse. His eyes depicted regret, which may have been a sign that he was sad that he was not able to help Vares and prevent loss of life and ethnic cleansing of Croats and Serbs from central Bosnia. During my interview with Mayor, I learned that he offered Vares (HVO) leadership help by asserting Tuzla's protectorate over the city so that it would not come to a mass expulsions as it did. However, HVO in Vares refused. Tuzla's military corps numbered, not only Muslim army units, but Croats and Serbs and as mentioned above had separate HVO brigade fighting alongside.

I must admit, I wrestled with this policy suggestion in my mind for some time. Tuzla numbered vast larger military, majority were Muslims, how could HVO in Vares negotiate peace with Army BiH in the middle of the Croat-Muslim war? But this was Tuzla after all? In the end, all this made sense after I learned that Mr. Beslagic was nominated for Nobel Peace award for his efforts in Tuzla. After my field work in Tuzla, it was simple to understand, this man and his

citizens actually wanted peace and protect human loss regardless of ethnicity, or nationality. As strange as that sound today, and very difficult to understand then (during the war) this man had no alter motives. He was an identity of Tuzla in charge of a peaceful wartime city. After I came back to Dallas for Christmas that year, I did relay the message from Mayor Beslagic to my father. Dad just nodded his head with gratitude. The idea was not just polite superficial greeting, rather in this informal exchange of politeness, there was deeper message, the ‘foolishness of the war’, both men twenty five years later leading again normal lives who found each other on opposing sides gave each other some kind of humane ‘head nod’ — as almost to say sorry. With this gesture within first days in Tuzla, the city and its people were slowly opening in front of my eyes. Mayor, who has met with the son of a once captured POW<sup>73</sup>, sending truthful warmest regards. So while I did read and learned through interviews about Tuzla’s citizen’s solidarity, I also did not have to look much further for evidence. Mr. Beslagic is an ethnic Muslim. As we finally arrived at the hotel Tuzla, he offered to treat me with coffee, I accepted, then Mr. Beslagic took out his book from his briefcase, before we even started, signed it personally and gave it to me. He said, this will help you [and it did]. First question I asked was along the same lines as I asked Prof.

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<sup>73</sup> My father was involuntarily mobilized to HVO last days before Vares was attacked during the Croat-Muslim war. during the Bosnian War, by Tuzla’s corp units. By his recollection he was treated fairly and taken to Tuzla where he spent several months as a prisoner of war until Red Cross set up prisoner exchange between Muslims and Croats at which point he was released. But as far as my dad is concerned and from the moment he was taken by Tuzla’s units he has nothing bad to say about his treatment. My uncle was not as lucky, because he was on the southern flank of the city defenses where the Zenica corpus attacked, and unfortunately, dad’s brother my uncle brother did not survive that day. In fact, when I met with wartime Mayor Beslagic in Tuzla in October of 2015.

Knezicek. I wanted to see why Tuzla's citizens voted non-ethnic party when they could have easily voted for SDA. Tuzla had slight majority of ethnic "Muslim" citizens. It took me a while to understand that in Tuzla, ethnicity did not matter in public life, contrary to other places.

**Interviewer:** Why Tuzla's citizens elected non-ethnic leadership?

**Mr. Beslagic:** *what I think was most interesting in these elections was that citizens trusted us. I now see, that I think the point of all of this [Tuzla's success] was that we talked to the citizens, we had given them the trust and assurance in us but we also need to make sure not to loose their trust and faith we asked them to give us. So, If I promised that I will do something, then I needed to do it, and if I could not deliver it .. then it is better to say, I can't do it. That was the relationship we have had set up with our citizens .. during this process we developed the trust relationship between us and our citizens. They trusted us. They simply trusted us that we would not allow anything to happen that would put in danger human lives.*

**Interviewer:** Ok, but why didn't citizens trusted non-nationalist parties in other similar cities like Tuzla ?

**Mr. Beslagic:** *As I mentioned it before, in some of those cities, nationalist parties won because they started from the assumption that "our ethnic people are in danger and we have to save them". We, however were saving 'human affairs' [rights] and we succeeded*

*in this. That is something specific about Tuzlans.*

*Take for example Mostar, I cannot simply believe [...] city whom I was jealous of as a young adult, where you could not tell who was who even by the name and last name, whether he/she was Croat, Muslim or Serb etc. They had Neretva river, they had life [...] because we were purely industrial city. They had such conflict [...] Mostar underwent such harsh conflict [...] a conflict inside of Mostar that friend was firing on a friend during the war.*

**Interviewer:** Why ? How did this happen?

**Mr. Beslagic:** *I don't know.. Simply, somebody [anecdotally] installed a computer chip in their brain in that he/she is to hate some Croat there, or some Muslim to hate a Serb, or some Serb to hate Croat etc.*

**Interviewer:** Manipulation ?

**Mr. Beslagic:** *Yes manipulation. Manipulation indeed but on the religious basis not on ethnic. Did religious groups in Mostar help to create this conflict ? I don't know, but we in Tuzla had created good relations with our citizens and with different religious groups.*

Interview data collaborates with field work findings. Those who voted for Reformists in Tuzla, were mostly of middle class, industrial workers or retirees many part of partisans forces in WW II and also members of the communist party.

**First Multiparty Elections in Tuzla in 1990.**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
<b>Reformists</b>	<b>21,961</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Leftist Bloc (SKBiH - SDP)</b>	<b>17,233</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SDA</b>	<b>9,983</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>SDS</b>	<b>5,312</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>HDZ</b>	<b>2,917</b>	<b>5</b>

Thus, naturally they voted for this block (Calori 2015). During the elections, Markovic's economic reforms, were proposing privatization of some Yugoslav enterprises industries by giving shares of firms to the 'workers and managers', and since Tuzla was a large industrial city citizens may have preferred it over the nationalist parties whose political agenda focused on ethnic issues, rather than economic (Karadjis 2000). Also, large number of the members of the Markovic Reformist party and the Leftist Bloc (SKBiH-SDP) were former members of the Yugoslav Communist party who had status among the community (Armakolas, 2007).

Lastly, interview data showed that Tuzla's anti-nationalism in civic urban terms, resembled the model of anti-nationalist resistance found in the capitals of the republics, which were affluent, intellectual and

multicultural cities of the former Yugoslavia, likes of Ljubljana, Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo (Jansen 2008). However, Tuzla differed as it appeared to be relatively less urban than the capitals, less affluent, smaller in size and population but also have chosen the anti-nationalist path however, it appeared that the industry led workers led Tuzla, rather than an urban, intellectual middle class. This fact has an implication when taking Mostar in consideration. As I have alluded above in the beginning of the chapter, I will briefly propose an implication how Mostar ended up violently divided despite having similar ethnic mix as Tuzla and strong WW II anti-fascist legacy with large military industrial complex. One would assume as Mr. Beslagic wondered that Mostar would be that city that would resist the nationalism. However, after interviewing Prof. Markovina in Split who wrote a fantastic comparative study between Mostar and Split and how the both cities transitioned from anti-fascist legacy into the radical fascist legacy in post 1990, I realized one of the key determinants and differences between Tuzla and Mostar is the type of industry and rural-urban dimension. Meaning, Mostar's air force industry unlike Tuzla's mining, required higher technical skills. To build a plane (Soko or Orao, Yugoslav type fighter jets) most of the labor force needed to be well educated, unlike working in the salt and coal mines in Tuzla. After the WW II rural areas of Mostar remained rural and myths of WW II in regards to NDH were sustained and carried on from generation to generation as rural masses did not mix with urban class which was as most urban, educated centers



embracing Yugoslav socialist working class identity. Tuzla on the other hand, integrated rural areas as miners, hence WW II myths (if there were any were not carried on since rural masses integrated into the working Yugoslav socialist class. Hence, when Yugoslavia collapsed, ethnic groups in Mostar simply went back to their 'own' groups. Tuzla did not have 'their' groups. Tuzla had what they had — a citizen-working class regardless of their ethnic, national or religious affiliation. Hence, when elections came about, citizens in Tuzla voted for own identity, while other cities voted for their own identity(s). In other words, Tuzla's citizens were more likely to vote for a multi-ethnic and non-nationalist coalition for it best represented the composition of their society (Calori 2015).

In relation to this the large number of people identifying themselves as Yugoslavs can be assessed as both a re-declaration of pre-existing and already embedded Yugoslav identity and a reaction to the disruption of the Yugoslav state, its ideological and economic model and the certain way of life (Calori 2015). Nevertheless, the political choices of Tuzla suggest the construction of the city's common narrative as historically bound, path-dependent to its origins of multinational, multiethnic and working class fabric. Tuzla also projects high self-esteem of its identity, which is particular indeed, but this self-esteem is also interlaced with the necessity of preserving that identity, which is the thesis defines as Phase II of the overall Tuzla's causal mechanism of her success.

Many of the interview participants kept referencing ‘there was something particular about Tuzla’, even former Mayor himself made an analogy that “blood and salt do not go together” (Beslagic 2015), indirectly implying perhaps precisely their pride in their traditional solidarity, striving not for ethnonational rights rather universal citizen rights. And this is certainly true. While Bosnia was spiraling downwards soon after the nationalist parties won across the country, in Tuzla this process was reversed. In Tuzla citizens ‘counter’ mobilized and voted against ethnic parties and nationalism.

## **b. Identity Formation Process II**

### **Forging (1914 - 1945)**

This thesis defines *process of forging* as a process in the period of the two World Wars. This is the process where of poor working conditions particularly in low skilled labor such as mines caused working class to start organizing itself into unions, syndicates, forming labor parties and demand better workers rights. In this process of the working class, of an already mixed multi-national and multiethnic society, Tuzla’s identity was forged by combining these elements. As mentioned above, these three processes; bonding, forging and cementing are ongoing and are building not on top of each other, but rather creating layers of process which are connected rather than isolated processes.

As the WW I ended, Bosnia became integral territory of newly formed state emerged from the ashes of the two empires but also as an eventual goal of the south slav people, the Kingdom of Serb, Croats and Slovenes [later renamed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia]. A constitutional-monarchy with King Peter I as the king (Klapic 2002). First Yugoslavia as it is colloquially known, was the first attempt to unite the south slavs. Nonetheless, the country in particular Tuzla's region found itself in economically depressing period in the aftermath of the WW I heavy fighting and destruction. Loss of life significantly impacted Tuzla region, again leaving large gaps in the work force coupled with poorly planned agrarian reforms (Selimovic 2007). Since the war left Tuzla without skilled labor force, national government in Belgrade decided to send several hundred Slovenian miners to Tuzla who were left without the job. These Slovenian miners will actually be the spark to the entire armed rebellion in 1920. An event and a solidarity feat that forged the Tuzla's identity.

Must be noted that the second King of Yugoslavia Alexander I had 'dictatorial tendencies' and ambitions as there was a similar pattern in neighboring nations who headed in that direction while few became full fascist dictatorships, likes of Musolini in Italy, Horti in Hungary, King Zogu in Albania, king Karol II in Romania and army junta Metakasa in Greece (Becirovic 2015). Importantly, not to marginalize the impact of 1917 October Revolution on the workers struggles across the Europe. In this period, Tuzla's miners as well, organized

and participated in high number of strikes against their exploitative, unfair and poor working conditions. The region spiraled downward, labour unions in Bosnia especially in Tuzla, started to organize themselves for better conditions and rights. Anecdotally, for Tuzla, what initially helped the development and organization of the workers union was the sport union 'Sloboda' (freedom). As the work conditions worsened in Tuzla's mines, miners asked to negotiate the conditions and wages in January of 1920. Negotiations lasted entire year without success (Selimovic 2007) and preparations for large strike in Tuzla set stage.

Professor Jugoslav as well as most other interviewees, was inclined to underline the significance of strike in Tuzla, which turned into a full blown armed rebellion against the national government in Belgrade. For most citizens in Tuzla and Bosnia this event is one of the most important intersection of creation of worker's labour force, worker's rights and 'miners solidarity', coupled with strikes, unions and creation of the revolutionary force. The effect of these socio-economic and political manifestations, on the political affiliation of Tuzla's citizens, is still detrimental and continues to be regarded as one of the stages that contributed to the formation of a left-wing tradition and workers' unity in Tuzla (Brcic 1979, Becirovic 2015). The event that sparked the formation of union and revolutionary left-wing tradition of workers of Tuzla is Husin Rebellion. The King Alexander in Belgrade, ordered that all potential strikers be jailed,

Slovenian miners deported back to Slovenia and union leaders prosecuted (Selimovic 2007; Becirovic 2015). The government pushed forward and expelled Slovenian miners from their homes, but their local colleagues took them into their homes (Brcic 1979; Selimovic 2007; Becirovic 2015). The actions taken by the local miners in the aftermath of government expulsion of their Slovenian miner colleagues can be identified as the beginnings of the formation of the left wing tradition of the labour force in Tuzla. As the national government found out that Slovenian miners and their families in Tuzla were homed with their local miner families in several villages around Tuzla, (Husino, Moracani, Ljubace, Lipnice, Par Selo etc.), police was sent to the villages with an aim to again force out Slovenian miners, this time out of their fellow workers' homes. What ensued on December 27, 1920 was a full armed rebellion of 7000 Tuzla's miners, and other workers led by Yugoslav communist party and miners union against the national army. The revolt quickly spread to other mining cities, throughout Bosnia. In the end, rebellion was forcefully extinguished by the overwhelming army units sent to Tuzla from Belgrade and Sarajevo and local army units. In the end, over 400 miners wounded, tens of died and many were imprisoned. As a result, national government at the helm of King Alexander Karadjordjevic I, banned (KPJ), Communist Party of Yugoslavia; ban, which would last for almost twenty years until 1941, when it was put in motion again at the start of the WW II with the leadership of Josip Broz Tito.

## *interview question 2*

*What is so important about Tuzla's mining industry in relation to the Tuzla's identity formation ? In other words, why do you think mining sectors is a 'revolutionary force' and why mining supposedly unites and creates solidarity among citizens ?*

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Miners have some 'unusual' bond of trust and care among each other, where [they] are not bothered by who is of what ethnicity, religion and nationality, because one, or two hundred meters bellow the earth every man is precious to [you] and are very bonded. I think this is where one one should research for the cause why citizens [Tuzla], did not accept those ideas offered to them [during multiparty elections] that they were 'different', culturally, ethnically, religiously and nationally.*

*Bigger determinant was the fact that they were aware of each others companionship [comradery] and that this factor was more dominant in relation to those who [political parties] claimed that we were different (Jugoslav 2015).*

**Interviewer:** Okay, but do only miners have this strong bond and solidarity among each other ? Were other people in Tuzla

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Yes, this is what I wanted to talk about next. Tuzla was a 'pool'.. and industrial pool. There were many fabrics with large work force, people created bonds. They would interact with*

*each other, exchange ideas, discuss their problems. And in this process, these interactions bring people together.*

**Interviewer:** Okay, but we can say that this was a sort of a ‘norm’ across Yugoslavia, yet we have cities like Mostar and Sarajevo which obviously did not succeed.

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Yes, this is a good thesis and yes we had all this in Sarajevo and for me this would be difficult to explain, because if we saved Tuzla but Sarajevo was not ..*

**Interviewer:** yes, yes.. or Mostar also an industrial city ..

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Yes, like Mostar also .. this would be difficult for me to explain .. why we succeed but they did not ..*

**Interviewer:** Okay, Prof. Knezicek mentioned around 30 international minorities in Tuzla during the Austro-Hungarian rule. Does this influx of nationalities have something to do with it versus for example in Zenica or Mostar ?

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Yes, this is what was happening. Zenica was specific for its large iron foundry. There you had same working class, also had national minorities from various parts of Austro-Hungary, but what is particular about Tuzla is that Tuzla in addition to large mining sector also sits on large salt deposits and has a large salt processing plant, which by its nature is .. I would*

*not say has more complex technological process but we had Solvay Lukavac [sodium] plant, only plant in entire former Yugoslavia for production of sodium and was very successful internationally. One of those multi-national companies that had its fabrics across Europe. Solvay had its plants in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Belgium etc. And so, when the company needed to start new processes in Lukavac plant they would send experts from all over then Austro-Hungary and this would be process to this day. Solvay survived WW I and was untouched literally. Only after the war, it was turned into “Sodaso” Tuzla, but idea is many of these families form across the Austro-Hungary stayed in Tuzla.*

**Interviewer:** Were there any other cities in Bosnia that had salt deposits? I know of a salt plant on the island Pag in Croatia, but was Tuzla the only city with salt deposits and processing plant in Bosnia ?

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *No. No. Tuzla was the only city. That’s correct. The only city in former Yugoslavia with salt ground excavation. Pag had salt processing plant but on the sea (Adriatic sea), there was also one in Ulcinj in Montenegro.*

**Interviewer:** okay, so Professor you are saying that technological process by excavating salt from the ground is difficult and complex ? So what is the meaning of this ?



**Prof. Jugoslav:** *Correct, difficult and complex but this why these companies used experts from all over Europe and this is why Tuzla was international at least in the European sense and they would remain in Tuzla and stayed.. they way they did.*

Similar sentiments were expressed by Prof Knezicek when asked to explain why miners had special bond:

**Prof. Knezicek:** *Miners job is hard and brutal, it is hard labour and often not paid well, and when you are 100 meters bellow the ground in complete darkness, you rely on your miner fellow workers for survival .. down bellow you do not see who is of what nationality (Knezevic 2015)*

Dr. Mladina also expressed similar view.

**Dr. Mladina:** *I am a child of a miner. Miners watch each other because their work is dangerous work. Very difficult work. So, if Tuzla belong largely to the working class, then that workers solidarity, in Socialist Yugoslavia.. the solidarity was the foundation of our socialist society (Mladina 2015).*

Secondary data research indeed stressed this peculiar solidarity among workers. Tuzla's was the first city in Bosnia to receive the "Worker's Aid" food convoy. Worker's Aid was a broad solidarity campaign of trade unionists and left-wing organizations organized in the 1993 in Britain and Scotland. The campaign received broad support from

many trade unions. In Britain the union of the printers, the oil workers, the transport workers, the miners, the Dockers and of the journalists supported the campaign. The Belgian metal workers union, the French CGT, various local and small unions in Germany and Austria, the Autonomous Trade Union Federation in Croatia as well as Slovenian trade unions were also part of the campaign. The first Worker's Aid convoy arrived in Tuzla on November 7th, 1993 and brought about 18 tonnes of aid. "while this was not a lot of food given the terrible circumstances, it gave a lot of encouragement for the people in Tuzla."<sup>74</sup>

Moreover, throughout the interview process, I would often hear a phrase, 'worker's solidarity', unlike anywhere else in Bosnia, 'worker's solidarity' phrase was nearly an everyday phrase in Tuzla, while to me it was new and I was outmost unaware of it, and its significance to Tuzla and to citizens of this city, it later on made more sense. Tuzla's 7000 miners mobilized in Husin Revolt, and stood along those Slovenian colleagues. With this legacy Tuzla's identity was further forged. Interview data showed that the strength and unity of the Tuzla large multinational and multiethnic labor force stood against poor working condition in the period after the WW I, while also assuming revolutionary, anti-fascist and thus crucial role for the WW II that was going to come.

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<sup>74</sup> European trade unionists aid Bosnia <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/european-trade-unionists-aid-bosnia>. accessed June 28th 2016.

Second most important forging factor to Tuzla's identity in the process II and the period between two World Wars, was the revolutionary, anti-fascist movement. Tuzla's identity formation can be found in their [citizens] response to the Second World War. and nazi occupation. From the outset of NDH, Independent State of Croatia, in 1941 a puppet state under Italian fascist and Nazi Germany, it occupied Bosnia and some parts of Serbia. In its occupation of Bosnia, Tuzla was a strategic center because of its rich natural resources, heavy industry and transport infrastructure. However, occupation of Tuzla by German Nazi lasted only two years. Partisan forces [Yugoslav National Liberation Army) liberated Tuzla on October 2, 1943 and at that time Tuzla was the largest liberated city in the entire Nazi occupied Europe.<sup>75</sup>

However, the biggest significance of this liberation in 1943, is that Ustase (the Croatian fascists) faced military and economic losses from which they never recovered (Zekic & Tihic 1987; Jatic 2016). Tuzla was taken again by German forces, but in October 1944 Tuzla was again for the second time liberated in spite of unsuccessful attacks by other fascist, this time by Serbian Chetnik forces of Draza

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<sup>75</sup> "Dan Oslobodjenja Tuzle" at Gariwo.org web link: <http://www.gariwo.org/bs/novosti-i-dogadjaji/najave/dan-oslobodjenja-tuzle>. Link accessed on October, 16, 2015. See also, "Partizanske jedinice oslobodile Tuzlu od Okupatora" Historija.ba Web link: <http://www.historija.ba/d/427-partizanske-jedinice-oslobodile-tuzlu/>. Link accessed on October 16, 2015

Mihailovic.<sup>76</sup> Current Mayor of Tuzla, Mr. Imamovic explains Tuzla's anti-fascist legacy.

### *interview question 3*

*What is so important about Tuzla's anti-fascist movement in relation to the Tuzla's identity formation ? In other words, why is anti-fascism so important to Tuzla and how did anti-fascism get to be so fundamental to the city ?*

**Mr. Imamovic:** *Liberated Tuzla was an economic and political center, an important military-strategic location of the occupiers and a major regional transport intersection and it burst with liberty and solidarity in those layers of the population of Eastern Bosnia, who still did not join (National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia) but held anti-fascist ideals (Imamovic 2015).*

Thus in Tuzla, all layers of the population, first Muslim and Croatian masses started to be politically active by joining the Yugoslav National Liberation Army, at the same time, the Serb community distanced itself from the nationalist Chetnik movement, and brought its support to the anti-fascist forces. Around 5,000 new Partisans from Tuzla

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<sup>76</sup> Well known Serbian Royalist/Nationalist, leader of Chetnik movement during WW II, who openly collaborated with occupying Italian fascists and German Nazi forces. He was caught by Partisans, tried in 1946 for his crimes. However, in post Yugoslav era, like Ante Pavelic in Croatia, Draza Mihailovic was rehabilitated in an attempt to equalize Partisans and those who collaborated with fascist and nazis. Furthermore, current Serbian president who has officially been collaborating with Serbian Chetniks during Bosnian wars and called for wars in Croatia, has helped to rehabilitate Draza Mihailovic in 2015, through highest Serbian court, essentially completely reversing the Yugoslav court judgement from 1946. For more details see, Balkan Insight, Ghost of Draza Mihailovic Divides Serbia. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/ghost-of-draza-mihailovic-still-divides-serbia> web link accessed October 20, 2015

joined the anti-fascist Yugoslav Liberation Army, in fact every sixth citizen in Tuzla joined the Partisans.<sup>77</sup> During this time, Tuzla was the center of the highest anti-fascist leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina while at the same time, liberation press was created, “Front Slobode” (Freedom Front), “Nasa Borba” (Our Fight) and “Oslobodjenje” (Liberation) which played significant moral and psychological support not only for Bosnia, but for entire Yugoslavia. Other interviewees had similar comments Mr. Sehic, President of the Forum of the Citizens, commented:

**Mr. Sehic:** *.. presence of a strong communist resistance movement, and its success in the early liberation of the city, mobilized the different ethnic groups around the ‘non-ethnic resistance’ movement led by Tito”. What is key about Mr. Sehic comment are words non-ethnic and resistance. These words would come up a lot throughout various the interviews (Sehic 2015).*

Mr. Sehic is a gentle soul. He picked me up in his car and took me to a restaurant in Tuzla, where we spoke for hours. Tall protruding man of Slavic proportions, barely fit in his Skoda, offered was also a witty man of Bosnian dry humor. During our long conversation at some point among many funny remarks, this one stuck with me in particular; he anecdotally added, [which made me laugh]. *“these today’s Muslims [in other parts of Bosnia] that are going around,*

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<sup>77</sup> “Partizanske jedinice oslobodile Tuzlu od Okupatora” Historija.ba Web link: <http://www.historija.ba/d/427-partizanske-jedinice-oslobodile-tuzlu/>. Link accessed on October 16, 2015

*claiming their “Turkish roots”, when in fact they have nothing to do with Turks or Turkey.. look at them .. they are blond and pale like Slavs”* (Sehic 2015).

Even anecdotal, point of this is that Mr. Sehic, former prosecutor and a judge, former President of the Election Commission for BiH, and current president of Forum of Citizens and of a muslim ethnicity and both his first name, Vehid and his last name, Sehic are staunchly of a ‘Muslim’ background yet, he clearly pokes fun of those who have sought recognition of their ‘supposed’ Turkish ancestors<sup>78</sup> — yet his, much like most Tuzla’s anti-fascist Yugoslav principles, were never in question nor undermined throughout the wartime Bosnia under which nationalists rhetoric propagated.

Once, Tuzla was under the control of the People’s Liberation Army of Yugoslavia it showed the presence of a vivid movement within its population revolving on non-ethnic and anti-fascist principles. Front Slobode, the main local newspaper characterized by strong left-wing orientation, contributed to the forging of an anti-fascist conscience among Tuzla citizens. According to its former director Mr. Sinan Alic, *“Partisan relationship with the newspaper was particularly*

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<sup>78</sup> During the 500 year of Ottoman Rule of Balkans, christian Serbs, Croats and so forth were forced while some volunteered first to accept Islam as their religion, two to accept Turkish culture and identity. Hence today, Bosnia has a large population of Muslims, but many of those Muslims are ancestors of Serbs and Croats who switched the religion under the Ottoman rule. Today many of those try to say that they are Turkish when in fact their ancestors were Slavs who were either forced or volunteered to switch under the oppressing rule of Ottomans. See, Јован Хаџи Васиљевић Муслимани наше крви у Јужној Србији. Web link accessed on October 21, 2015 [http://www.rastko.rs/kosovo/istorija/vasiljevic\\_muslimani\\_c.html](http://www.rastko.rs/kosovo/istorija/vasiljevic_muslimani_c.html)

*emotional. The newspaper was part of the cultural identity of the city, it was a mirror of the city” (Alic 2015).*

Many Serbs, Jews and Croatian citizens were saved by the local Muslim community during NDH's Pavelic extermination policies during WW II in so much that in Tuzla, highest number of prisons by NDH regime were Croats and when Tuzla's Muslim community declared that Tuzla's citizens are not to be taken to camps, or 'revolt' will ensue, NDH started imprisoning Muslims and Serbs as to "balance out the quota" in the city. Soon after that, Tuzla's citizens massively joined the Partisan forces. The importance given by many interviewees to the example of non-ethnic movement to join around the partisan anti-fascist resistance and cohesion shows the extent of Tuzla's identity. Tuzla's WW II path and discourse has been that of memories of anti-fascist, anti-nationalist resistance and struggle for liberation from fascist and nazi ideology, to which these events re-constituted the memory of the Second World War as relatively free from ethnic grievances helped isolate the city from the radical nationalist influence in the 1990s (Andjelic 2003).

Additionally, interviews showed participants confirming the appreciation for the anti-fascist fight and Yugoslav Liberation Army in liberating Yugoslav people and its territories. Yugoslavia was identified as a significant contributor to the winning side of Allied forces in the world. Thus, Yugoslav contribution to the fight against the nazi' and fascist ideology was given high recognition by the

Allies,. This was particularly true because Yugoslavia in addition to Eastern and Western fronts, opened up so called 'Southern Front' in the WW II, which organized itself without significant moral or military support from the Soviets or Western allies which had tied over 500,000 German troops in the region relieving both western and eastern fronts and taking on the responsibility for its own liberation without asking for West and Soviets for significant military and strategic aid (Djilas 1980). The following comments by current Mayor of Tuzla, Mr. Jasmin Imamovic, generally illustrate the interviewees' view on this matter. Mr. Imamovic is an ethnic Muslim.

**Mr. Imamovic:** *In the 1990, we are having multiparty elections, most of Tuzlans vote for left-wing but also some center parties, as long as they are nationalistic and ethnic parties and nationalists here [in Tuzla] accrue election losses, only loss maybe even only one in the entire former Yugoslavia (Imamovic 2015).*

**Interviewer:** Why do you think this is so ?

**Mr. Imamovic:** *Because that was the prerequisite for the protection and conservation of the multiculturalism of Tuzla.*

**Interviewer:** Ok, but preservation of peace and multiculturalism at that time in Yugoslavia was assumed by all political parties in run up to the elections. No rational leader would run on the ticket calling for outright civil war and/or armed ethnic conflict.



**Mr. Imamovic:** *Yes, that is true. But what idea ? .. enabled .. [pause] .. enabled .. because, Tuzlans did not give up on the idea of anti-fascism, simply because in all other parts of the country, nationalists pushed back [swept] the anti-fascists.*

**Interviewer:** Ok, I understand that, but why only Tuzla ?

**Mr. Imamovic:** *Because again, they [Tuzlans] did not give up on ideals of anti-fascism [pause] .. this is my opinion.. my personal opinion.*

**Interviewer:** Ok. Thank you. But what are those ‘ideals’ of anti-fascism which enabled Tuzla to reject nationalism ?

**Mr. Imamovic:** *That of which is the best of anti-fascism. Thus, reformists [Prime Minister’s Ante Markovic Party] were not communists. Reformists were reformists .. which won the most votes [In Tuzla]. But they are anti-fascists. They preserved those elements of anti-fascism which are preserved in United Kingdom, United States, those ideals of anti-fascism. Idea of anti-fascism in Tuzla is in its fundamentalist state a “togetherness existence” in other words, “Brotherhood and Unity”. Tuzla was the first city in Bosnia to restart commemoration of Yugoslavian now, Bosnian dates which symbolize anti-fascist resistance which have occurred during WW II (Imamovic 2015).*

It is important to note that this was for me the first time that I have

heard a political elite in former Yugoslavia to use a Yugoslav motto “Brotherhood and Unity” in a public discourse. All former Yugoslav republics, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia have officially broken all ties with Yugoslav legacy<sup>79</sup> and to some extent banned many of the uses of these Yugoslav elements, from motto to having photos of Tito on the walls in the official public buildings and so forth.

In fact, in Serbia and Croatia, official government politics towards Yugoslav legacy can be best defined as “destructive’ to the extent that they have made “totalitarian regime’ of Yugoslavia nearly illegal. On TV in Croatia, Yugoslavia is never referred to as Yugoslavia, only as “former country”. Word Yugoslavia in Croatia has a connotation as something dirty. Croatian constitution specifically states that Croatia is to never again ‘attempt’ to unite with other southern slav nations to create another Yugoslavia. However, as it was shown above in Prof. Knezicek office at University of Tuzla, there was a large portrait of Tito. Prof. Knezicek is a Croat, Mr. Imamovic is a Muslim, both public servants and both completely open and with a strong sense of pride, disregard the nationalist ideology propagated throughout Bosnia, probably even wider region of former Yugoslavia. It is no surprise that there are nearly 20,000 Yugoslav just in city of Tuzla,

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<sup>79</sup> Unless there opportunities to claim only successes like birth right on Nikola Tesla, or Yugoslav era sports achievements and so forth. For all other things, new states do not want to have anything to do with Yugoslavia, including Tito’s statehood. Croats say while Tito was born in Croatia he is not Croat, and Serbs say he was never a Serb. One of the biggest world’s statesmen, is de facto currently stateless according to Serbs and Croats.

while only 300 in entire country of Croatia by the latest censuses in both countries<sup>80</sup>.

Importantly to remember, these statements were not from ordinary citizens, I sat in the main meeting room of the Municipality of Tuzla, across the Mayor of a third largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a potential EU member state in few years. Equally, sitting across one of the leading professors in a country, who is also the President of the National Minorities in the country. Sitting across former wartime Mayor, nominated for Nobel Peace prize, I was also on the phone with former President of Yugoslavia, Mr. Raif Dizdarevic, all of different ethnicities and religions, all war veterans [some WW II], and despite all their wartime experiences, they still stood by anti-fascist principles regardless of who they fought, German, Croatian or Serbian fascists. This objectivity and findings was astounding for me especially given the fact how much revisionism about WW II occurred in former republics of Yugoslavia as Jovic (2016) asserts:

“Anti-fascist consensus has been violated in Europe which, the first step of this violation was the unification of Germany. In doing so, the outcome of the WW II has become again ‘thing that we have to agree on’. Then, the wave of revisionism in Eastern Europe broke out and the story of "two totalitarianisms" — which is strictly a Cold War issue, for which de-nazification in both Germanys came to a halt — has become mainstream. And suddenly ‘all were the same’ which is

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<sup>80</sup> see 2011 Croatian census., also see BiH 2013 census.

only used to make everything [murky] unsettled again to open up the possibility for legalizing, those who were (in the original anti-fascist consensus) quite unique and incomparable (and this is the idea of the Holocaust, as well as unique and not comparable with any other processes / events) to those who beat them and were allies of the United States and the UK. And then it went a step further: today nothing positive can be read about partisan or anti-fascist side: in contrast to the other side now only portraying as victims”

Admittedly, I was little taken back and did not fully grasp what I was hearing. I knew Tuzla was different but I did not expect it to still be so strongly and genuinely upholding these values given the recent war and the current nationalist environment in the country. As the realities of Bosnian depression hit me, I was becoming more and more perplexed as to how, this particular town and its people were able to withstand, firstly pre-war nationalism, secondly, war and ethnic bloodshed and lastly, post-war nationalist revisionism and propaganda without giving up one inch of its original principles ? Throughout of former Yugoslavia, apart from Slovenia, Dalmatian coast and the capitals, many once large industrial cities are dying out. The large socialist industrial complexes left out to the elements of harsh Bosnian winters give visitors grim reality of Bosnia.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Na Vidiku EU: “Nekada su bile ponos, danas opljackane tvornice koje nitko nece” <http://www.navidiku.eu/vesti-dana/2011-11-13/nekad-su-bile-ponos-danas/14016> Weblink Accessed September 2016

**Administration building. Closed mining complex. Central Bosnia (2015)**



However, interview data, for the forging of the Tuzla's identity, stressed attention to its peculiar history of workers' strong movements their unwavering citizen-work and never ethnic struggle for better conditions, miners comradery and a strong anti-fascist resistance in other words all non-ethnic , non-national values. Tuzla propelled revolutionary character and an important anti-fascist movement during WW II. This mechanism is rooted in the historical narrative, and fosters the perception of an distinctive example of peaceful multiethnic dialogue.

### **c. Identity Formation Process III**

#### **Cementing (1945 - 1990)**

Cementing of Tuzla's identity process III, thesis defines as the process from 1945 to 1990 emboldening Yugoslav era socialist values of multiculturalism, anti-fascism, self-management economic, cultural, social, and educational growth.

Yugoslav socialism from the end of the WW II to the time of its disintegration had a significant impact on Tuzla's economic expansion underpinned by its industrial prowess. After the creation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1945, Tuzla's economy flourished and migrants across Bosnia and other parts of Yugoslavia poured in due to a constant growth of GDP (Selimovic 2007). Tuzla's post World War II reconstruction, witnessed processes of exponential industrialization, strong economic output and expanding of the socialist urbanized infrastructure. Growth and development of the Yugoslav economic self-management socialist system, resulted in an impressive population growth in so far that Tuzla had developed into the most significant mining and industrial centre of Bosnia (Selimovic 2007).

Tuzla, especially during the first decade after the WW II, saw most of its citizens employed as miners and industrial workers, especially in the salt mines and Tuzla's other growing industrial sectors (Klapić 2002). This industrial spur growth, set in motion further workers

migration from both within and outside the Yugoslav Socialist Federation, attributing further to Tuzla's multinational and multiethnic unity.

#### ***interview question 4***

*How did socialist Yugoslavia impact Tuzla ? What is about Yugoslavia that is key to Tuzla's identity ?*

Current Mayor Imamovic: *“this is a tradition of continuity of migration, multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity in Tuzla. We are accustomed to living together” (Imamovic 2015).*

Tuzla's socialist economic progress can be defined by several attributes seen across socialist systems, however I have to the best of my knowledge of the region and field work data collected, defined two structural and systematic features both in economic and social terms which can account for Tuzla's socialist progressive experience: economic prosperity and a high rate of worker migration.

Tuzla's gross national product during two decades from 1970 to 1990 was 6.5 percent and grew more dynamically than both the overall level in Bosnia of 5.8 percent and the two regional centers, Banja Luka which had 4.7 percent and Zenica with 3.6 percent (Klagic, 2002). Secondly, the economic importance of the city's industrial structure is illustrated by the fact that the Tuzla's municipality experienced,

according to data from 1981, the strongest workers' migration on a daily basis<sup>82</sup> in the whole region, approximately as many as three big regional centers (Banja Luka, Mostar and Zenica) put together, which allowed for a higher degree of contact between Tuzla and the surrounding villages. Moreover, the transfer of agrarian population to non-agrarian sectors was instantaneous (Calori 2015). The parallel between Mostar and Tuzla in terms of rural workers in mining versus air force military industrial complex in Mostar<sup>83</sup>. Tuzla's large industrial complex with its diverse mining activities were nationalized at the outset of Yugoslav federation and further developed during the Yugoslav socialist period, thus becoming the most important sector in the economic growth of the city and Tuzla becoming an industrial capital of Bosnia, and one of the biggest industrial centers of Yugoslavia (Sabotic & Isabegovic 2003). Consequently, Tuzla became strong industrial and mining workforce, which increasingly outnumbered the workforce employed in other sectors which contributed to the character of workers' socialist solidarity (Jansen 2007; Knezicek 2015). For example, Tuzla had the largest increase<sup>84</sup> in

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<sup>82</sup> Tuzla had 9,565 daily migrants; Zenica 5,115; Banja Luka 2,805; and Mostar 2,019 (Klagic, 2002).

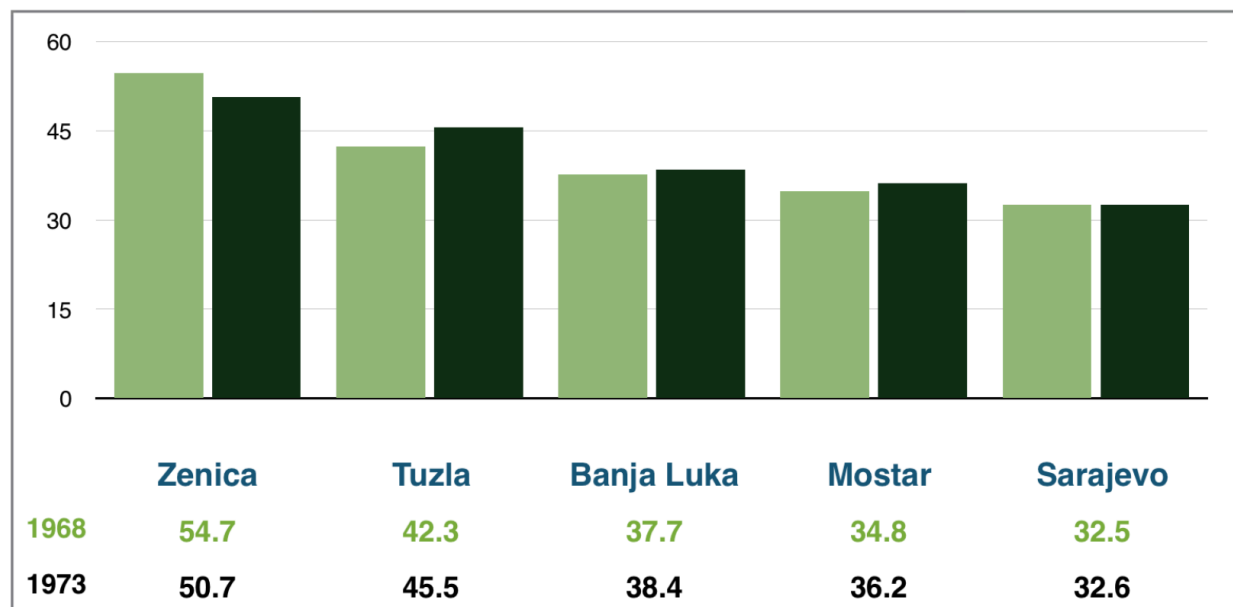
<sup>83</sup> Soko plant employed 8000 workers. Mostarski "Soko": Od dvije privatizacije do praznih hala <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/privatizacisjke-pljacke-u-bih-kako-je-propao-mostarski-soko/25272797.html> accessed on October 20th 2016

<sup>84</sup> Industry and mining workers percentage over total 1968 and 1974 (data from Opsti Podaci, 1974)pis Stanovništva, Domacinstava i Stanova SR Bosna i Hercegovina 1974, Opsti Podaci, Delegacije, Zaposlenost,Sarajevo 1975 [Accessed in the Tuzla Municipal Archive].



the percentage of industrial workers in the period five year period<sup>85</sup> from 1968 and 1973, as can be seen in the graph bellow. Interestingly, however, these processes defined the other similar industrial and urban centers in the region – such as Zenica, Mostar and Banja Luka — where similar urbanization, industrialization and economic growth had also occurred (Andjelic 2003).

**Per cent of workers in mining and industrial sectors**



This construction of Tuzla’s workforce and the cohesive social fabric matches the accounts of the interviewees. According to a former development aid worker she recollects:

<sup>85</sup> During the European “Golden Age” of economic growth in the 1950s and the 1960, planned economies were able to achieve relatively high growth rates. See (Kukic 2015), Socialist growth revisited: Insights from Yugoslavia, London School of Economic. Weblink <http://www.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/seminars/EH590Workshop/papers2014-15/SocialistGrowthRevisited-Kukic.pdf> Link accessed December 20, 2016

*“We could not determine the ethnicity of our friends and we did not care”* (Sabina 2015).

As for Tuzla, the existence of a strong Yugoslav identity was commonly understood as the identification with a multi-ethnic, socialist society of equals, and lends itself as an explanation for the lack of ethnic divisions in the city but as well as across Yugoslavia, in particular in and around the urban centers. In fact, Pickering (2007 pg 65) quotes (as confusing as it appear it was a reality of Yugoslav multi-ethnic, multi-national society) one of her interviewees who has expressed a similar view:

*“In 1991, I couldn't declare as a Muslim and ... I'm not Croat, and I'm not Czech, because that is what my husband is, even though his father is Czech and his mother is Slovene. My mom is Muslim, but in the 50s she declared as a Croat. On my birth certificate, it says Croat. My father was born into a Muslim family in Bihac, but declared himself a Serb. In 1991, I declared myself a Yugoslav”*.

Again, the background of such a strong rooted Yugoslav identity is not surprising nor something un-expecting. In terms of Tuzla, it was an occurrence as a byproduct found in the traditional presence of multinational industrial workforce, which progressed into multi-ethnic, multi-national and multi-religious socialist working middle-class. In fact, the ideological model of “Brotherhood and Unity”, as the current mayor of Tuzla, Mr. Imamovic spoke about in the

interview downgraded the national and ethnic particularities in favor of the “socialist demand for solidarity, equality and fraternity among the Yugoslav peoples” (Jovic 2003). This model of social and working class in relation to Tuzla’s social and economic attributes was particularly appealing to its citizens. Mr. Sehic, who is a former prosecutor, president of the Forum of Citizens of Tuzla who also won a Helsinki Foundation Award for Human Rights commented:

*I was born as a Yugoslav, and I will remain a Yugoslav. The condition of the workers was astounding, [prior to 1990s] you had all the chances to be privileged. At the same time, as previously mentioned Tuzla’s anti-fascist tradition allowed for establishment and development of a sense of identity and allegiance to Tito and Yugoslavia as the legitimate product of that movement. It looks like we just believed in Tito and that’s it, but we also truly believed and cherished ideals of “Brotherhood and Unity” (Sehic 2015).*

In terms of Tuzla, interestingly, this structural and systematic resistance to the ethnic divisions also resulted in the protection of not only three major ethnicities in Bosnia, but rather other minorities, which had been historically present in the city. The Jewish and Roma community in Tuzla, all had very positive experiences in Socialist Yugoslavia. For example, ninety six percent of Roma people were employed which contributed to the homogenization of Tuzla as a

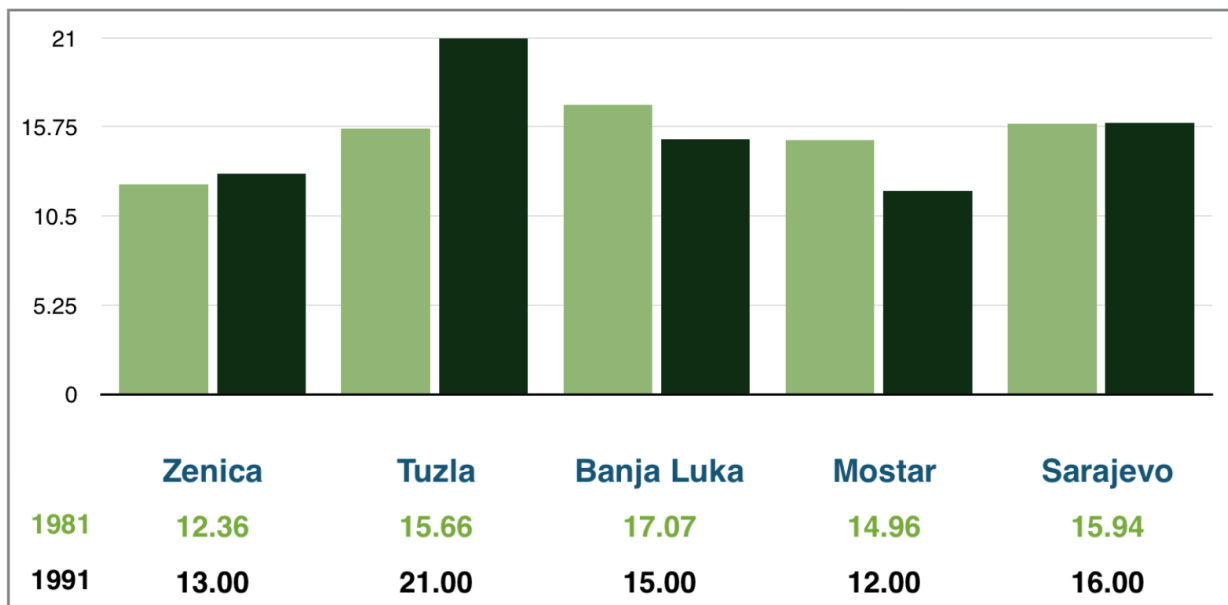
‘Yugoslav city’ (Calori 2015). Moreover, former wartime Mayor, Mr. Beslagic comments:

*“fighting for the ‘human’ rights .. not for national or ethnic rights, but for ‘human’ rights and that is if I may say, the precedence of the democracy in the world”* (Beslagic 2015).

This possibly meant, the the Yugoslav identity was not perceived as an forceful or imposing possibly, rather identity for citizen-workers rights as a model reflected wider Yugoslav socialist working class ideology.

In fact, the strength of a Yugoslav identity became numerically visible following the results of the 1991 census, when Tuzla recorded the highest segments of citizens declaring themselves Yugoslav; in addition, it registered the highest increase of such numbers since the

**Percent of People, Declaring as Yugoslavs**



previous census in 1981, in comparison with the other major urban and industrial centers in Bosnia. Graph above shows the comparison<sup>86</sup>.

What is interesting in relation to the above figures is that Tuzla stood in the opposition to the wave of ethno-national ‘awakening’ of the 1990s. During late 1980s, Tuzla as seen from the statistical representation of demographics, opposed the slow unraveling of the Yugoslav identity between 1981 and 1991, when the weakened economic Yugoslav state saw relatively high decline in the number of its citizens declaring themselves as Yugoslav which was at this point as low as around “seven percent at a national level, thus potentially preparing for the eventual widespread phenomenon of ethnic polarization (Somer 2001; Jovic 2002).

The process of cementing of Tuzla’s identity was embedded in the founding principles of Socialist Yugoslavia. From the end of the WW II, Tuzla was among the highest growing industrial centers attracting inter-migration of workers from different parts of Yugoslavia. Tuzla experienced cultural and sporting boom with creation of different universities and different sport clubs elevating life in Tuzla not only as a regional industrial center but also as socio-cultural center of Yugoslavia.

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<sup>86</sup> Federal Bureau of Statistics of BiH. Weblink, <http://fzs.ba/index.php/popis-stanovnistva/popis-stanovnistva-1991-i-stariji/> Accessed December 20, 2016.

### **3. Phase II**

#### **Wartime Strategy, Rule of Law and Civil Organization**

Phase two of the causal mechanism, thesis is defined as the strategies and policies implemented by Tuzla's leadership and civil society during pre and wartime in Tuzla, time period approximately reflecting period between 1990 and 1995. The city was able to in time form appropriate defense forces, maintain policing and rule of law within the city and lastly, reflect the wider civil society's voices and demands. Like the thesis defined three processes in the Phase I: bonding, forging and cementing of the Tuzla's identity formation, Phase II is as equally important because firstly: it enabled the elected party leadership defend the city militarily from the Serb forces by pushing them far into the surrounding mountains and two protect the Tuzla's political choice of a non-ethnic party from the nationalist forces striving to destabilize the city from within, something that city of Vares for example failed to do in spite electing non-ethnic, leftist block in the elections.

Interview data indicates that wartime elites maintained strong anti-nationalist agenda under all circumstances, including daily bombardment by Serb forces who besieged the city for ten months, local and regional HDZ and SDA attempts to destabilize the wartime government in the city, host of attempts by the federal government

of Izetbegovic in Sarajevo with an aim to assert SDA party leadership in Tuzla by continually labeling citizens of Tuzla and the wartime Mayor as ‘secessionists’ or ‘autonomists’, by formally declaring Serbian empty apartments in Tuzla as abandoned letting Muslim refugees from other parts of Bosnia to freely take them, even allowing muslim radical factions ‘green berets’ to temporarily ‘abduct’ Mayor Beslagic at one occasion (Beslagic 2015). However despite all these attempts to destroy Tuzla’s cohesiveness, the wartime elites under the leadership of Mayor Beslagic together with the civil society helped maintain Tuzla’s inter-ethnic peace.

The elections in Bosnia were a victory for the nationalist parties. They received 98 out of 130 seats in the chamber of citizens and 104 out of the 110 municipalities (Burg and Shoup 1999). On the other hand, the the reformed communist and socialist parties received 26 in the chamber of citizens and 5 seats in the chamber of municipalities (Burg and Shoup 1999). The three nationalist parties (Serbian, Muslim and Croatian) divided the governing seats between themselves and looked to secure the complete exclusion of the former communists and the Markovic Reformists from access to any power (Bulutgil 2016). The post election period also brought serious escalation of political and social tensions across Bosnia and inter-ethnic competition resulted in political paralysis at the republican level, while the policymaking of the national parties, which had been described as the “communitarian dismantling of the state” polarized and divided

state institutions and civil society along ethnic lines (Bourgarel 1996). Indeed, Tuzlans quickly found themselves isolated in the entire Bosnia. All around Tuzla, nationalist parties have won and set goals on territorial partition of the country, Tuzla for them was no exception. Throughout this period however Tuzla's anti-nationalist civil society and elites rejected any type of communal divisions or territorial partition.

### *interview question 5*

*How did Tuzla manage to organize its defenses in the first stages of the war ? What was the key decision that had helped the city in keeping the territorial integrity versus for example standard partitions as seen in Sarajevo, Mostar or Brcko ?*

As one of the first actions by Tuzla's leadership was to secure the defenses of the city that will reflect the multiethnic force, in other words be reflective of Tuzla's multiethnic spirit. Tuzla was acute and resolute in this action which proved to be one of the key factors in saving Tuzla. Within its wartime crisis headquarters, Tuzla drew on experiences from minor experiences in organizing strikes and there were also some WW II veterans and so the intuition was to first organize defenses via asserting control of the personnel and weapons. Police units were armed from the regional Territorial Defense depots and the negotiations started with the JNA military to



withdraw peaceful from Tuzla in 1992. Unfortunately, during the withdrawal, an incident of large proportions occurred as JNA column was withdrawing from Tuzla with over 90 JNA soldiers killed and 30 wounded. This case is still pending between Serbian and Bosnian governments in order to prosecute those who are responsible for this. Both sides deny any wrongdoings<sup>87</sup>. However, this incident is one of the saddest days along Kapija incident when Serb shell exploded in the city center killing 71 civilians mostly young.

After the incident at Brcanska Malta in May of 1992, Tuzla's reserve police units, federal police and territorial defense mounted a city defense force which numbered all ethnicities. Police and rule of law was never undermined within the city and continued to keep the policing work despite the wartime crisis. In fact, the crucial battle for the rejection of the nationalist attempts to influence Tuzla's anti-nationalist stance was when the local police force went on strike because nationalist parties appointed a divisive police chief, who eventually removed from the position. With this act, Tuzla distanced itself from the other municipalities which at this time virtually saw political divisions wedged, Yugoslav era ethnic unity proliferated and uncontrolled militia formations (Andjelic 2003; Burg and Shoup

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<sup>87</sup> The Tuzla-based JNA military based named Husin Revolt [Husinjska Buna] was under the command of lieutenant colonel Mile Dubajic. In the course of several days ahead of deadline set between BiH and then SRJ, the deadline for the JNA removal from the BH territory, and on that day, lieutenant colonel Dubajic was involved in negotiations with the Tuzla civil and military authorities, related to the details of the JNA peaceful evacuation from the compound. Specifically, the negotiations were conducted between Dubajic on one side and the following BH officials on the other: Selim Beslagic, president of the Tuzla municipal assembly and of the crisis staff presidency. For further detail on this incident see: <http://www.internationalcrimesdatabase.org/Case/1196/Jurišić/> also see., [http://www.asser.nl/upload/documents/DomCLIC/Docs/NLP/Serbia/TuzlaColumn\\_Indictement\\_9-11-2007.pdf](http://www.asser.nl/upload/documents/DomCLIC/Docs/NLP/Serbia/TuzlaColumn_Indictement_9-11-2007.pdf)

1999). The fundamental difference between Tuzla and other areas across Bosnia at that time, is illustrated by this excerpt, comparing the situation and understanding of the inter-ethnic relations in the neighboring town of Kalesija, where tensions had risen after a series of ethnically motivated assassinations. Tuzla's police were sent as reinforcements to the local Kalesija police in March of 1992<sup>88</sup>. This is how two senior Tuzla police officers one, Croat and one Serb recollect their encounter with the situation in Kalesija.

*“So in order to get to Kalesija we [passed] a few barricades. That was the first time that I saw that civilians had weapons. For example, you didn't have that in Tuzla. You couldn't see a civilian in public with a weapon. So there police employees were patrolling the city. And we are arriving in Tojsici and civilians are stopping us with weapons, you know [...] And I remember when I got out of the bus, when they asked us who are we [...] I presented myself and said that we are Tuzla Police and that we are coming as reinforcements to Kalesija, to see what is going on. And [one] guy used swear words against my mother and said: ‘You are Yugoslav Army in disguise. You are going over there to attack Muslims’.*

*That for me was unbelievable, you know ..*

*And we passed through five, six, of those barricades, and came to Kalesija. And in Kalesija the Chief of the local Police was a*

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<sup>88</sup> Front Slobode, March 20, 1992

*Muslim. The Commander was a Muslim, and the Deputy Commander was a Serb.*

*And then we sat down to talk, you know .. because I'm in that kind of situation for the first time. You understand .. That was unfamiliar to me. And, as far as I remember the details, this young guy is coming, running in. We are there. He doesn't know who we are .. And he is saying: 'Look, fu\*\* their Serbian mothers, they created problems up at the barricade in Osmaci'.*

*And now .. believe me, that was the first time I heard somebody swearing about someone else's mother because of their nationality.*

*You understand... And then that Stojkovic, who was Deputy Commander says to me: 'Look, .. fu\*\* their Muslim mothers for what they are doing to us'.*

*You know .. Then I asked myself: 'Dear God, what am I doing here?'*

*And [that] murder happened maybe in February '92. So war hadn't started yet. That is when the SDA armed people in Kalesija .. One of my policemen came and said: 'Boss, look what is happening'. Weapons from a Police station were literally handed out .. I informed my boss and came back [to Tuzla].*

*I said: 'I'm not going to that place again'. Why should the police be in between two sides, right ? Here Bosniaks with guns, there Serbs with guns, and we have to be like cannon fodder. I called up my people and came back to Tuzla. We were controlling the situation in Tuzla, and in other areas we couldn't.... (Armakolas 2011).*

When it was clear that there is no return to peace from the war in the first few days of the war, Tuzla brigades were created. They made up roughly similar ethnic mix to the city itself.

*“In all our units, we had Serbs, Croats and Muslims, so it was not uniquely Muslim army in Tuzla .. ethnic mix in our units was reflective of the 1991 census of Tuzla” (Beslagic 2015).*

Within weeks these military units regained control of the entire of Tuzla municipality from the Serbian forces (Pasic 1996). On the other hand Prof. Knezicek illustrate civic contribution in the beginning of the war:

*“Forum of the Citizens in my opinion had the biggest impact in the beginning of the war since it served as a reflection of the citizens’ needs, demands and aspirations [...] it was a way to discuss ethno-national taboo topics, that were steadily making headlines around us” (Knezicek 2015).*

When I asked about inner city divisions, between various political nationalist parties and whether they looked to take advantage of Tuzlas difficult situation in the first half of the war, facing daily bombardment from the Serbian aggressor, food shortages, besieged city, data from the interviews generally showed that they did in fact on multiple occasions tried to take over the city, all three nationalists parties in fact, but particularly SDA. Dr. Nada Mladina illustrates the importance of resolute city leadership during wartime. Dr. Mladina is of Serb ethnicity.

*It is very important how the top wartime leadership behaved during the war. We had a luck to have Mr. Beslagic as the Mayor, who despite all the pressures from the ethnic parties, did not switch sides and joined some ethnic party, but stayed strong to the foundations not only to the social democratic principles but also togetherness [cohesive] life in Tuzla (Mladina 2015).*

Following conversation with the former Mayor Mr. Beslagic illustrate the nationalist parties attempts to destabilize Tuzla. Mr. Beslagic is of Muslim faith.

**Interviewer:** Can you explain the attempts by nationalist parties to destabilize Tuzla ?

**Mayor Beslagic:** *Look, if I tell you now that SDA currently [2015] is looking to take Tuzla, then the fight for Tuzla is not*

*unimaginable.. this fight for Tuzla was always present .. now after those first elections in 1990, I have to say that there were tendencies to overthrow Tuzla's elected anti-nationalist government. But I also have to note that these attempts were not vivid and explicit. I received the information that [...] let's call them 'extreme factions of SDA' wanting to liquidate me [...] those are stories, I don't have proof for that but let's say that it's not uncommon to see this in times of wars. But I do know that they were getting ready to overthrow the government. However we did have the municipal government that supported pretty much everything I have suggested, among which I organized inter-party commission in Tuzla where we as the majority elected party would consult with all other parties, like HDZ, SDA, MBO, DS [...] I don't remember if liberals were there. But don't think that our government was easy to protect. However, one thing is sure, that SDA consistently thought I worked with Yugoslav Army, because we had good relations with Yugoslav Army in the beginning, '91 [...] We respected all the laws at that time [...] all laws on the Federal level, we were not coming up with our own laws.*

**Interviewer:** Ok. I understand. Can you explain your decision on why you expelled the ‘radical’ Muslim special forces, patriotic league<sup>89</sup> from Tuzla in April of 1992, who were sent from Sarajevo I believe ? I believe you sent Tuzla’s armed police units to escort them out of the city.

**Mayor Beslagic:** *This is what happened. This occurred in April of 1992, when we were holding a city assembly, we received an information that “patriotic league”, stopped somebody in Tuzla and have attempted to do some policing work in the city [..] and so we ordered our police to go out there and stop them. After the assembly, I went to talk to them*

**Interviewer:** And what happened after that ?

**Mayor Beslagic:** *They arrested me. And they held me there all day long, until in the morning. I didn’t even know that they arrested me, I thought that we were just discussing things. At the end I told them, look guys, I can’t do this like this, can you at least go buy me some “cevapi” (bosnian type burger food consisting of 10 small spiced minced sausages in Turkish bread with side of onions). At that point they saw that I was joking with them, that there is nothing of their attempt to do what ever they wanted to do, and then came Senad*

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<sup>89</sup> On December 19, 1990 Alija Izetbegovic and the SDA party discussed forming an independent paramilitary separate from the Yugoslav People's Army. In March 1991 Sefer Halilovic formed the Patriotic League (Patriotska Liga - PL) as an independent Bosnian army, with the same territorial organization as Territorial Defense Forces (TO). Later on the Patriotic League was connected to the TO. The Patriotic League, alongside the TORBIH, would later become the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Hasanodzic, he was a mayor of municipality Vukovac, and he then told them: ‘come on guys, what is wrong with you ? are you normal ? As he talked, I simply left the room. This incident was one of those excesses. And after this incident, we moved on with a decision to slowly incorporate them into our Territorial Defense and then later into BiH Army [...] The interesting thing was indeed that in their eyes [SDA] I was always a suspect. Until that famous taped phone conversation with JNA Major Pracar, when I asked him not to use the Yugoslav Air Force on us, and if we need to we’ll fight with spoons, as long as he does not bomb us using the air force.<sup>90</sup> And when SDA again came to talk to me, I took that phone conversation and showed them [...] after that they never caused me any problems. With HDZ I also had okay relations.*

There are several implications from the above conversation with the Mayor. First and foremost, Tuzla’s elites foreseen the pattern of virulent militia creation across the turbulent Bosnia by following events in Slovenia and Croatia. In leu of this Tuzla’s elites made their priority to uphold and continue the rule of law in the city regardless the fact that everywhere else, rule of law was hindered by the weakening of local police and creation of militias. This is why Mayor Beslagic immediately reacted when patriotska liga [muslim radical military faction] “attempted” to do some policing in Tuzla. That type

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<sup>90</sup> Mayor Beslagic in phone conversation with JNA Major Pracar on issues of Yugoslav Air Force leaving Tuzla’s Military Airport. For full transcript and the sound of the conversation in (Serbo-Croatian) see <http://www.bosnaonline.org/forum.php/viewtopic.php?f=149&t=1115> link accessed October 2016



of paramilitary behavior or actions was rejected from Tuzla with impunity. This is where Tuzla asserted itself as the rule of law. Tuzla's police is the only body that will do policing in the city and would not allow some 'military men' with guns to the official police work, by which it could have destabilized the city, threaten the citizens or cause distrust and commotion within the citizens. This is for example what Vares lacked. When I asked current mayor, Mr. Imamovic, as to why Vares leadership allowed HDZ and HVO to take over the city illegally from the democratically elected government, he commented:

*I was the secretary of the city council in Tuzla during that time and after that incident we met in Split, he told me they put a gun to his head, he had wife and children .. “that mayor of Vares, well, he was a young<sup>91</sup> guy, he was a positive character but he was afraid .. and did not have strength .. as a mayor you cannot get scared ..”* (Imamovic 2015).

Secondly, in order to support the rule of law, Tuzla's elites effectively organized the defense of its municipality when the local government decided on April 4th, 1992 to assert its executive power over the local police forces (MUP) and the Territorial Defense (TO). This policy had two-fold implications. First, it aimed to prevent the possible disintegration of Tuzla's security forces by not allowing any militias or

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<sup>91</sup> HDZ Vares president Ante Pejcinovic together with HVO force, suspended SDP government took over the government in Vares, using special forces of HVO units. Istina o Varesu, Praljak Prodao Vares unaprijed. <http://www.prometej.ba/clanak/povijest/istina-o-varesu-1-praljak-je-unaprijed-predao-vares-1050> accessed

paramilitary units to do as they please as can be attested from above examples, of Mayor Beslagic and his incident with Muslim Patriotic League and two, by securing the security forces meant to uphold the rule of law in the city, consequentially diminished the possibility of creating an ethnic security dilemma (Posen 1933), in other words, it diminished the possibility of downward spiral of ethnic mutual distrust and an arms race within ethnic groups.

“According to a former Police spokesman in Tuzla: “Tuzla was defended by Croats, Serbs and Muslims [...] what is even more important for the war is that Tuzla did not have those small local wild armies like in Sarajevo, because the Police had everything under control from the beginning” (Caroli 2015).

Moreover, since Tuzla’s police from the beginning was undivided, and Tuzla’s rule of law, upheld by multi-ethnic undivided Police force and in charge of policing the city, enabled effective somewhat normalized life with trust and security between citizens even during the times war.

According to Prof. Jugoslav (2015): *“as solders left front lines for a short one or two day break, they would leave the weapons outside the city [...] on the front lines with the army [...] once in the city they were normal civilians, with no weapons”*

Furthermore, Tuzla’s decision to confiscate all weapons and appropriate it only to designated formal institutions to maintain the rule of law squished any potential spread of social unrest or political

rumors that could have deceived people's perception of their own security. In this regard, Front Slobode on April 1992, published the appeal from Tuzla's Citizen's Council of Defense<sup>92</sup>, stating: 'We are certain that we are unified, and with trust in each other we can and we will get through this difficult times for all peoples and nationalities that live in this town'.

The citizens were also reassured that the Police and the Territorial Defense forces were the only legal formation, and that they would not line up with the Yugoslav Army (now Serbian led) or the pro-Muslim paramilitary formations (Pasic 1996).

According to the former Mayor Mr. Beslagic:

*'We never allowed for creation of any paramilitary units. Since the beginning of the war we organized our police well and with specific assignments to do: security for our citizens without any accent on any of the ethnic groups, outside and within the city, and secondly we set up that the military should have defended and liberated the territories outside the city [...] while the police had to insure the maintaining of the rule of law and internal security, and that the relationship between the army and the police should have been synchronized' (Beslagic 2015).*

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<sup>92</sup> Tuzla's citizens mobilized themselves on a voluntary basis and put in informal reservist units under the command of the Municipal People's Defense Council. "Crisis Committee" was created and authorized to govern the municipal defense system in case of war. This eventually asserted and solidified Tuzla's local government formal control over all military activities in the Tuzla. This in turn created Tuzla's multi-ethnic discourse to perpetuate itself from the top down.

When I spoke to Mrs. Jasna Kapetanovic, wartime director of RTV 7 station in Tuzla, she referred that during war Tuzla's media had to counter balance different propagandas from all nationalist sides. In particular she referred to the incident when Belgrade based TV station reported that on the main city soccer stadium in Tuzla "muslims were killing Serb citizens". Mrs. Kapetanovic is an ethnic Serb.

**Mrs. Kapetanovic:** *as we watched live Serbian TV reporting on war in Bosnia, they reported that radical Muslims and Patritoska Liga were rounding up Serbian civilians at Tuzla's main soccer stadium and killing Serbian citizens. I happened to have a direct view on the stadium from my balcony, I went to the balcony to see the stadium, and it was empty. Of course there were no killings of Serbs. No Serbs or any other Tuzla's citizens were ever rounded up, much less killed in Tulza, clearly they lied (Kapetanovic 2015).*

Other time, Prof. Jugoslav commented on attempting to live normal life in the city despite the daily shelling from the Serb positions.

**Prof. Jugoslav:** *In order to maintain normalcy in the city, the local leadership maintained that all work continues as normal as much as that was possible for safety reason. We [university] were open, some students, professors would get a paper slip when they went to the front lines. They would go two weeks to the frostlines and two weeks attending classes. Conversely, the city leadership issued*

*“work obligation’ certifications for those who needed to stay at their work and not be mobilized for the front lines (Jugoslav 2015).*

Current Mayor, Mr. Imamovic spoke of maintaining Tuzla’s anti-fascist values during wartime during difficult times when the general mood in former Yugoslavia equalized anti-fascism with Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia with Milosevic and Serb aggression, thus anti-fascism took on connotation across former Yugoslavia as something archaic, irrelevant and above all aggressive, however in Tuzla, that was never the case. Only in Croatia since 1990, around 3000 WW II monuments were destroyed and damaged (Markovina 2014).

**Mr. Imamovic:** *One of the most important concepts is protection of the cultural aspect and memories of [our] anti-fascist struggle. This is something we need to always do and speak to younger generations, that there does not exist worst idea in our civilization than idea of fascism. Problem that occurred in post 1990 is the ‘new’ fascism, and who ever attacks the foundation of anti-fascism [he] is destroying Bosnia and Herzegovina, who ever that is and however [he] presented himself. Tuzla was and remained the capital city that protects the anti-fascist legacy and memories, and when other cities in Bosnia follow the example of Tuzla, only then the state [BiH] will finally be reintegrated [reconciled]. (Imamovic 2015)*

Secondary research material confirms indeed that Tuzla was and remains staunchly anti-fascist, it continues through various cultural and educational manifestations to maintain<sup>93</sup> and spread the legacy and memories not only within the city of Tuzla but also regionally (Armakolas 2011).

There was unfortunately an example during war, where Tuzla showed that even in death they will not allow ethnic divisions to antagonize them. On May 25th of 1995, an artillery round from Serb military positions, hit the city center, killing 71 civilians, mostly young people and wounding other 150 (Alispahic 1996). Naturally, radical factions found the opportunity again to demand extreme measures. Despite this incident, Tuzla authorities, managed to prevent any type of anti-Serb reciprocate actions and no violence was recorded in the city. City authorities also made a tough decision to bury the victims together in one memorial and not to divided them according to their ethnicity or religion. Islamic community along other nationalist intellectuals were strongly opposing this idea, in the end Tuzla's government prevailed and buried the victims together.

**Mr. Beslagic:** *It's very sad. Most were young people, average age was 24. Youngest was two years old boy. There were Serbs, Croats, Muslims.. It was very difficult times for Tuzla and the people. We*

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<sup>93</sup> Tko udara na Tita i Anti-Fasizam, taj direktno rusi Bosnu i Hercegovinu. <http://tuzlanski.ba/carsija/imamovic-ko-god-udara-na-tita-i-antifasizam-taj-direktno-rusi-bosnu-i-hercegovinu-video/> accessed August 8th 2016. See also, Otvorenje izložbe "Tito u djelima likovnih umjetnika" u gradu Rijeka sa pokroviteljstvom umjetnicke galerije iz Tuzle., <http://www.mojarijeka.hr/korisnik/urednik/najave/otvorenje-izlozbe-tito-u-djelima-likovnih-umjetnika/> link accessed May 3rd, 2017

*knew that if we did not communicate with people and manage calmness that situation can get out of control, not from us, but from the extreme groups. We in the crisis headquarters made a decision to burry them in one memorial complex<sup>94</sup> [Slana Banja] and not divide them by their religion or ethnicity. There were strong oppositions, but we made a decision. They lived together, they died together and the should be hurried together. We were expecting another attack for the funeral commemoration, so we buried them in the night (Beslagic 2015).*

When another shell, again from the Serb position, hit the Serbian Orthodox Church, Mr. Beslagic together with Tuzla's authorities reacted in the same fashion.

**Mr. Beslagic:** *We knew it were the Serbs shelling the church. I don't know whether they did it on purpose or not. But when the shelling stopped, first we made sure that there should not be any looting of the church and so we sent the police to check up on the church until the reparations. In the following days, I suggested that we repair the church. Some asked, why should we repair "their church" after they shelled it.. I told them, it's not their church, that's [our] Tuzla's church. This is during the times in Bosnia when all three sides were destroying each other religious objects, mosques, churches, bridges*

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<sup>94</sup> Slana Banja Complex., <http://www.transconflict.com/2011/06/reconstructing-cultural-heritage-in-bosnia-the-case-of-the-slana-banja-memorial-complex-in-tuzla-156/> link accessed March 10th, 2015

*etc. We, decided to repair the church, because it was ours. And so we repaired it* (Beslagic 2015).

One peculiarity about Mr. Beslagic is that, throughout the war he actively wrote to the international bodies, UN, EU, United States about the situation in Tuzla, in regards to Tuzla being besieged for ten months, food shortages, even when Tuzla was proclaimed a Safe Zone, calling out for intervention against Serbian [fascists], pleading to open the Tuzla's military airport for in order to get the food in, especially when Tuzla absorbed over 80,000 refugees from eastern Bosnia and the list goes on. There are hundreds of these letters, sent to Boutros Ghali the General Secretary of the UN, Yasushi Akashi, General Secretary of the UN for former Yugoslavia, Red Cross, Central Command to UNPROFOR, Foreign Ministers of US, Russia, Spain, France, Britain, President Clinton and President Yeltsin Croatian President, International Media, UN Security Council, President of Croatia, Cardinal of Croatia, Bosnia, President of so called HercegBosna, Anti-Fascists Global Community, and many daily communications to the people of Tuzla. There are virtually hundreds of mails and other correspondences pleading to help Tuzla. When I asked Mr. Beslagic, given that he has done so much for Tuzla, if he saw himself as the 'savior of Tuzla' he commented:

**Interviewer:** Mr. Beslagic, do you think Tuzla would have done what it did if you were not the Mayor at that time ?



**Mayor Beslagic:** *Maybe if I were self-loving and that I like [that], I would now tell you that I saved Tuzla.. but I did not. I have no clue .. I'll tell you something briefly and you take what you need out of that and if you are happy with the answer we can continue if not, we can re-address it. I finished University and got the job, I remember my Professor, Ivic .. I was elated .. I got a job .. I finished my JNA term.. f..k .. everything was going my way .. I said to Prof. Ivic, look at this good system .. he is looking at me .. he said, Selim, do you think maybe that it would be better if it were some other system ? It puts you in a thinking mode, would it be better' or not ? .. now that I look at all of this after so many years, you know where Tito made a mistake ? Then, when we had money in this country [Yugoslavia], he didn't give a chance .. or better said .. he didn't make room that private capital money would be invested in creating new industrial values .. the private investment into the industry and private companies .. and we had money then, but did not have ideas, so we started building vacation homes, the dead capital. That's his only mistake in my opinion. You could have had small private firms, but can you imagine if the private capital was invested in the industry ? .. private capital investment would not allow nationalism to win. Everybody would be protecting their property .. but no, .. destroy that, destroy this, break this .. No one was taking care of the 'public' social property! Therefore, I am not*

*going to say .. I mean, an individual has some role [importance], and in that sense, Selim Beslagic does have some role, but his role is not any bigger or any less, from the role of the citizens [of Tuzla].. because if the citizens did not want Selim, then I would not be there, even though I would have still been this same guy. Do you understand ?*

**Interviewer:** Yes, I understand.

**Mayor Beslagic:** *I only behaved how my parents raised me and how this system made me.*

**Interviewer:** Which is .. ?

**Mayor Beslagic:** *To treat the people by their character, whether [he] is a good worker or not a good worker, or thug or a thief.*

**Interviewer:** *So, the citizens trusted you ?*

**Mayor Beslagic:** *Citizens trusted me from the beginning. But when .. listen to that conversation between me and Colonel Pracar<sup>95</sup> (JNA). After that conversation, when I told him, use the army, just don't use the airplanes on us, we'll fight with spoons if we need to, I don't give a sh..t anymore, I don't have Yugoslavia*

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<sup>95</sup> Beslagic - Pracar phone conversation May, 13th 1992. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7UvAVBxV4> accessed October 10th 2015.

*anymore, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is my only country now. After that, there was euphoria in the city. (Beslagic 2015)*

What is important to note that Mr. Beslagic tone and the ‘message’ did not change from 22 years ago. When he was asked in June 1995: *why Tuzla, his government and him personally were frequently a target of criticism from politicians of other political parties ?* Beslagic answered:

*Listen, the people from SDA - especially those from Tuzla - call us Chetniks. Karadzic and his fascists call Selim and [his] city [muslim] fundamentalists. This is the best possible proof that we are on the right track. These attacks come with equal frequency and we are caught in the crossfire. Tuzla is a thorn in their side because of its multicultural character. This is the heart of their problem. But this is not what they want. It is paradoxical that the ruling parties in the country believe Tuzla and Bosnia to be their homeland and yet they are attacking both of them. There is another possible reason for these accusations. Maybe it's their method of getting control of our city .. democratic state can only exist if the rules of the game are respected in practice, if the Constitution and laws reign supreme on behalf of all the all people. If they operate only on behalf of certain individuals or groups, that is tyranny. (Beslagic 1999 pg. 426)*

Generally, data collected suggests that in the phase two of the thesis' defined causal mechanism, elites reflected Tuzla's identity, [the phase one processes], their demands and voices. In other words, elites reflected the needs and demands from the people that elected them. City authorities mobilized its citizens towards a non-ethnic, anti-nationalist, civil option reflecting city's preferences of the historically undivided city. This was as achieved by wartime leadership asserting well organized acute strategies, to secure the city from outside, rule of law from the inside and maintain day-to-day normal activities in the city by: asserted power over the local police and TO units and weapons depot, eliminating any potential paramilitary radical formations maintaining legal rule of law framework in and around the city. Secondly, the leadership created space for inner and constructive dialogue between citizens and elites, decontamination of potentially destabilizing nationalist elements either through nationalist political parties, radical paramilitary units or radicalized media. Lastly, by creating certain degree of safety for continuation of a normal life in the city despite times of war. These actions fall within areas of mechanism which were necessary for the preservation the wartime peace in the city. The strong political leadership as part of the longstanding anti-nationalist revolutionary legacy was able to organize viable, efficient defense of the city and impose formal rule of law within. Firm leadership that continuously distanced itself form the radical factions, but also visibly protecting the Tuzla's historical values, of multi-ethnicity, anti-fascist values, reflected wider demands

form the civil society and put further trust in the local authorities. Tuzla's uniqueness, as seen through diverse elements of its society, possibly means that Tuzla's political elites felt supported, if not respected, in engaging in a constructive dialogue with the community. The political elites and Tuzla's institutions acknowledged the necessity of maintaining and strengthening Tuzla's legacy as an undivided city. The next chapter is conclusion. Conclusion will summarize and synthesize the findings and discuss the broader implications of the study with the policy recommendation section at the end.

### **Tuzla (east) (Photo 2015)**



## CHAPTER SIX: Discussion and Implications

### 1. Summary of findings

The purpose of this study was to understand why and how wartime city of Tuzla became the counterintuitive case that constructed socio-political mechanism in order to successfully reject virulent nationalism, inter-ethnic conflict and territorial partition during the war in Bosnia. Tuzla was the only large city who elected the non-ethnic party in the first multiparty election in former Yugoslavia in 1990 but it was also successful in protecting this choice during the war. The political elites in Tuzla reflected the choice and demands from the civil society, whose voice was historically embedded in the working class struggles and in time was able to organize militarily as well upholding the strong rule of law in the city. Tuzla who had identified itself strongly with socialist Yugoslavia, working class and anti-fascism is the testament that despite the fact that elites on the federal and regional levels in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia were able to incite the conflict among the ethnic groups in almost entire former Yugoslavia, they however, failed to do so in Tuzla, or rather the citizens of Tuzla together with the wartime leadership did not allow that their multiethnic society becomes that of Mostar or Sarajevo in other words, territorially partitioned, ethnically divided and with demolished city's infrastructure.

Overall, present study did not find any compelling evidence that ethnic ‘ancient’ differences or hatreds between Serbs, Croats and Muslims were as professed by primordialist approach were key factors in starting conflict in Yugoslavia. Furthermore, study did find evidence that overreaching elite assumptions by instrumentalism on behalf of elites is not necessarily true, as seen in Tuzla. Additionally, by having overarching assumption, Bosnia was approached as a macro war, assuming unitary elites for unitary war. Clearly, this is not true. Micro wars, fractionalized along regional and local level, amalgamated with ethnic alliance switching. In this process instrumentalists not only failed to address micro conflicts on the regional level, but also failed to notice instances of peace, such as Tuzla. Tuzla presented evidence that elites did not act to self preserve economic and political riches vis-a-vis ethnic conflict as espoused by instrumentalism, but more importantly it showed that instrumentalism failed to credit formation, structure and composition of the civil society which played a central role in counter mobilizing against radically divisive nationalist elite politics in former Yugoslavia.

Research question inquired why and how Tuzla resisted the virulent nationalism which inflamed the ethnic violence in former Yugoslavia. Research found that there were two fundamental phases in this mechanism that allowed Tuzla to accomplish what it did. Thesis defines it as phase one and two. Phase one includes three processes, through which Tuzla’s identity formation of the civil society occurred

and during three periods in Tuzla's history. These three processes are: bonding, forging and cementing, corresponding to roughly 100 years.

### *identity formation*

In the phase one, the first process of bonding occurred in the period from the end of the Ottoman empire [also] beginning of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia in 1878 to the end of the WW I in 1918. This period is known for strong industrialization of Tuzla's mining industry for the exploitation of its vast natural resources (coal, salt, various minerals etc.) Shortage of skilled labor as consequence of agrarian Ottoman rule, the Austro-Hungarian administration had to import skilled labor force, which was composed of different nationalities coming from different territories across the Austro-Hungary. Thus, the bonding process occurred firstly, between the various European national groups from different areas of the empire mixing with the local population in Tuzla and secondly, the bonding occurred in terms of formation the working class which was comprised mostly of the miners. Second process of forging occurred in the period from the end of the WW I to the end of the WW II. This period is often referred to the labour rights movement and organization of unions and syndicates of the working class in Tuzla tasked with fighting for better working conditions. Riots, strikes and revolts in this period forged miners and workers class in Tuzla and with the inception of the WW II, the working class took on



revolutionary position and in large numbers joined the anti-fascist movement in Yugoslavia. Thus, during the WW II, the workers stood by and upheld anti-fascist ideals, protecting those who were targeted by nazi regime and fought for the liberation of Yugoslav territories, particularly liberating Tuzla twice as part of Yugoslav Partisan forces from the German and Ustasa occupation. Third and last process of identity formation of Tuzlan's identity was from the start of the socialist Yugoslavia in 1945 to 1990, during which Tuzla experienced strong economic boom and expansion in all areas of social, cultural and political life. Tuzla became not only the industrial center of Yugoslavia, but also cultural and educational center of Bosnia, well incorporating rural and urban masses into its workers socialist class society. When nationalist forces won in Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Tuzla's reaction to the nationalism was only a natural one. The attack on its multi-cultural, citizen-worker society was seen as life threatening to its existence and thus Tuzla did what it has done prior to WW I, during WW II and reacted again for the third time. This is the answer to the *why* part of the research question. The part of the research question of *how* Tuzla accomplished to push back the nationalism forces and sustain the non-ethnic choice of the first multiparty elections is what thesis defined as phase two.

### *wartime strategies, management and organization*

The phase two thesis defines as the set of three stages of military strategies, management of rule of law taken by wartime leadership reflecting citizens demands as well as organization and actions taken by the civil society. Thesis constructed three stages / themes that correspond to the strategies and actions taken by the wartime leadership and the civil society. First, the wartime leadership took the responsibility to assert its control over the depot weapons in the city, organize its military defenses accordingly and assert its control of the active, reserve and federal police units setting up strong rule of law in the city. This actions proved to be monumental move by Tuzla's leaderships because city of Vares, unlike Tuzla, who also elected the non-ethnic party, succumbed to the radical nationalist factions during the war. However Tuzla's vigilant wartime leadership whose part of the leadership traces its roots to the miners organizations and some WW II veterans were able to rely on their organizational intuitions and experience and organize defense forces and assert immediate control over the local and federal police including control of the arms depots to secure resolute rule of law in the city. Tuzla's leadership in this aspect was resolute and acted without hesitation. This strategy proved to be the key reason why Tuzla was able to defend itself externally from the Serb military aggression and internally by maintaining rule of law, never allowing any parallel paramilitary formations who were known to create fear, tensions and antagonisms

across then wartime Bosnia including, political aggression from radical nationalist activities whose goal was also to destabilize the non-ethnic local political choice. As the last stage of the phase two, Tuzla tried to maintain normalcy in the city by keeping most firms opened and working, universities holding classes and a long list of communications and pleads from the local government to international organizations and governments, where Tuzla after some time did get some international media attention.

The research found compelling evidence that Tuzla's wartime leadership were able to construct successful defense of democratic institutions, and had the special connection with local community through which high degree of legitimacy was maintained in the city, connecting and abiding by views and concerns of the citizens which were to reject all types of radical nationalism, protect territorial integrity of city of Tuzla, promote ethnic pre-existing networks of ethnic unity and actively respond to radical attempts to destabilize the city by strong anti-nationalist calls and maintain pre-existing local ethnic patronage networks through the operation of the large then Yugoslav enterprises and local administration.

Research also found special facets of the Tuzla's intra-party politics. Wartime Mayor Mr. Beslagic, maintained association with the former communist economic and political networks which were part of the SDP and Reformist structures, incorporated with Tuzla's local industrial enterprises. Tuzla's industry only on rare occasions under

heavy mortar shelling ceased its production, and the complexes mostly continued working, providing jobs, materials and revenues.

At the same time, Mr. Beslagic's government maintained extensive control over personnel policy, maintaining firm control over institutions, functions and resources. While some may perceive as prudent to issue "work obligation certificates" to the citizens during war, it was precisely these disciplinary actions that kept retain routine, discipline and order even during the war. Additionally, the local political elites demanded strict party discipline and loyalty even during the harsh conditions of war. The pressure was exerted on defectors; removal of the party defector from the function of secretary for social affairs and his replacement by an ethnic Croat party loyalist, enraging muslim radicals as was unthinkable that in a 'Muslim' city as perceived by them, for an educational institution to be managed by a non-Muslim'. Additionally, Tuzla's elites on occasions built cross-party informal alliances and informal collaborations on ad-hoc basis with like-minded political forces. Implicit long-term understandings were also built with moderate individuals and factions within the opposing parties at local, regional and even republic levels. Tuzla reached out to other non-ethnic elected cities like Vares despite being territorially and militarily separated. These alliances and understandings were temporarily formed and importantly at critical junctures of the SDA's attempts to topple Tuzla's non-ethnic government. In addition, certain levels of charismatic leadership was a feature of Tuzla's government and the ability to make decisive, pro-

democratic and anti-nationalists decisions, who managed to formulate, inspire and create policies that elicited loyalty and trust from the citizens, which in return organized themselves as Forum of Citizens which acted and had crucial tasks in particular with anti-nationalist and anti-fascist assignments during the war.

## 2. Theoretical implications

The case of Tuzla, examines overreaching assumptions of elite instrumentalism and primordialist ancient hatred assumption. Instrumentalism defined as elite manipulation of the ethnic cleavages to incite ethnic antagonists and conflict with an aim to acquire economic and political richness. Tuzla, opposes central instrumentalist assumptions regarding the elites, where they [elites] are presumably ominous in their ability to manipulate whomever, whenever and incite conflicts, whose manipulative skills are virtually unchecked. With this overreaching assumptions, it is likely that conflicts would be then seen from the *macro* perspective and miss to notice potential *micro* regional and local conflicts, inter-ethnic alliances but more importantly instances of peace. Further to this point, since instances of peace in these cases may go unnoticed during the wider macro war, the tendency then is to assign even to those counterintuitive instances, the standard theoretical assumptions, and in that case, the knowledge obtained may not be representative. Hence, Tuzla is a counterintuitive case in Yugoslav wars, where the

bottom-up actions to manage peace were victorious in relation to the top-down actions to instigate the war. Instrumentalism failed not only in terms of macro-micro dimension in relation to the war, but more importantly, it failed to appropriately credit the formative structures and compositions of the civil society and its power to resist the top-down approach in engineering the conflict.

Instrumentalism continues to be relevant in defining conflicts from the national perspectives as in former Yugoslavia the case of Milosevic and Tudjman for example. However, assumptions within instrumentalism may require little more flexibility in order to address the intricacies of the regional and local conflicts and hence be more cognizant of the realities on the ground which would inadvertently help spot the instances where absence of conflict is manifested.

Other implication is with the primordialism. Even with the reformulation of the theoretical approach relying on emotive aspects of human nature as fear and anger foundation for hatred (Peterson 2000) is still cumbersome to be remotely relative to Yugoslav disintegration. Primordialism in addition to the flawed definition that ethnic identities are ascriptive and fixed, where ethnic and cultural differences simmer until being violently discharged through conflict fails to accommodate other pragmatic issues with ethnic wars, primarily inefficiently being able to address accumulation and sustainability of presumed antagonisms but also the capacity to explain once the conflict starts, how switching of warring rivals

through creation of opportunistic military alliances occurs between ethnic sides who presumably hate each other with a highest human contempt possible. If the attempt then is to propose that it would be rational to switch sides to benefit oneself during the war, that would then mean instrumentalism. However, as already noticed that instrumentalism sometimes fails to notice micro conflicts and military alliances, hence this could become looping inquiry without definite or clear answers. Primordialism cannot be applied in case of Yugoslav wars in particular war in Bosnia, because it is difficult to rationally defend, given the continued high possibilities of inter-ethnic and military alliances in conflict by which this presumed ancient hatred can simply be *paused* between ethnic groups caught in the fierce armed conflict, in order to create a temporary military alliance where by symbolically one would have to hit *pause-hate* button so that they combat the third ethnic group before maybe one of the groups would click the *restart-hate* button to create some new alliance or switch the team and so on. In other words, there were too many inter-ethnic rival alliances or 'team switching' in Bosnia, for primordialism to remotely have any explanatory power in addition to all other insufficiencies discussed above. Primordialism importance is however in its ability to define primordial feelings of identity which have own academic merit, but rather to espouse assumed human nature as filled with fear, angst and anger should backtrack few steps back and stay in the realm of descriptive framework of primordial identities and definitely not maintain fixed or ascriptive identity assumptions. Because

primordialism, as it was carelessly used when Yugoslav conflict initially started, it left cumbersome scars on the entire region by strongly insinuating the idea of ‘ancient ethnic hatred’ or deeply rooted ethnic differences between Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. This, coupled with post-conflict nationalist myths, has now left nearly irreparable socio-political damage to the societies of former Yugoslavia and as such as this thesis suggests that primordialist espoused view of Yugoslav conflict should not be simply left to the elements of time, instead firmly continued to be pushed aside so that the post conflict Yugoslav societies can let correction and realignment of the reconciliation and reintegration process take place in so much without also having to fight the primordialist stigma.

### **3. Suggestions for Future Research**

Future research suggestions stem from the limitation of the study. Suggestions are for regional and theoretical advancements. While conducting research in Bosnia, additional questions were raised although of comparative nature. Questions mainly focus on why other cities in Bosnia, with similar ethnic structures and/or similar historical background to Tuzla, either opted for or succumbed to, inter-ethnic violence. The cities that come to focus are mainly Mostar, Zenica, Vares even Sarajevo and Banja Luka to some extent. Of most significance probably Mostar would be the best choice for the



comparative study between Tuzla and Mostar. Mostar had large industrial work force, as even Mr. Beslagic had commented he was jealous of this city. Mostar also had similar ethnic mix like Tuzla, despite all the similarities with Tuzla, it was violently torn apart between Serbs, Croats and Muslims, particularly during the Croat-Muslim war. Mostar to this day is the most divided city in Bosnia. There are some my own hypotheses as to why this may have happened as I have discussed in chapter five, but proper academic comparative research would be in order. With this research then, other cities could be added to the comparative list, like city of Vares given the fact that this city also was multi-cultural, industrious as Tuzla and Mostar, and even going further having elected non-ethnic party like Tuzla, yet it ‘succumbed’ to the radical nationalist factions. Thus, we could say that Mostar, ‘choose’ to be divided, Tuzla choose not to be divided, while Vares succumbed to radical factions.

Nonetheless, without watering down the comparative study, Tuzla-Mostar study would be suggested as a first comparative research and then add Vares but not before separate study on Vares is conducted. Nobody has done any study on this city, much like as with Tuzla. And this is precisely one of the problems with our knowledge of the wars in Bosnia, which is that there has not been sufficient regional and/or localized studies. One of the reasons for this is because most academic focus was on the ‘ethnic’ capitals such as, Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka, naturally being that they are regional capitals, with

academic, cultural and financial centers, while cities like Tuzla, Vares, Zenica, Jajce etc., have not been studied at all which could give a new dimension to the war and my hypothesis is that they most likely would. Therefore, in combination with already extensive studies on war in Bosnia, regional non-studied places would likely present us with a more comprehensive picture on the inter-ethnic military alliances, elite manipulations and elite-civil society cooperations. Zenica is also a peculiar case with an almost equal ethnic mix as Tuzla in the 1970s, which however by 1990 this mix drastically changed and like Tuzla also an industrial city. However, equally like Mostar it overwhelmingly elected ethnic party. What is interesting about Zenica is that ethnic mix changed drastically in the period from 1970 to 1990.

Additionally, there were other cities in Bosnia, where left block parties reached up to 45 per cent of the votes, like the city of Modrica and Sarajevo center with 41 per cent for example. Other cities where non-ethnic parties had significant per cent won seats around 30 percent were: Maglaj, Gradacac, Prijedor and then the numbers tapered off with Banja Luka, Bihac etc. Even though Modrica and Sarajevo (center) did not get the majority like in Vares and Tuzla it would be interesting to explore their socio-economic structures as well. There are two implications with this inquiry, one it may show that ethnic polarization was not as dominant as it is often perceived, this is to say that people of Bosnia did not overwhelming elect ethnic parties and two as from the above examples, none of the cities are in

Herzegovina region. Herzegovina at the start of the war proved to be staunchly nationalistic between Croats and Serbs, where ethnic parties took overwhelming majorities. Hence experience of Mostar during the war for example, which continues to this day. Additional question is why nationalism is strongly rooted in Herzegovina region despite for example having played important role in the anti-fascist fight during World War two.

Lastly, it would be of significant knowledge to understand how and why KPJ-SDP leadership in Vares succumbed to HDZ and HVO in 1992, as this event was not only illegal suspension of democratic principles, but eventually caused mass exodus of Croats and Serbs from central Bosnia, while implicating not only Vares politics, but also HDZ politics of then Herceg-Bosna in Mostar, which at that time was under the close guidance of Tudjman's government in Zagreb. With all of this in mind, war(s) in Bosnia would probably espouse more realistic picture between the people and the elites, especially because for some ethnic groups, elites continue to be seen as their 'defenders', but with the above suggested studies perhaps wider society could possibly see that an idea of elites being defenders is very far from the truth. Therefore, elites would be much more implicated with the war or peace depending on the case. On the other hand, this crystallization of the regional and local elites and the civil society attitudes during the war would probably then pave more coherent path to the regional and local integrations. The current ambiguities

surrounding the local and region politics especially during the war act almost as an obstruction to the much needed [true] reconciliation.

#### **4. Limitations of the Study**

There are several limitations to the study. Thesis could have benefited from the comparative component. There were two possible cases that could have been considered to conduct a comparative study research but decision was made not to incorporate them. As from the discussion above, other cases considered were Vares and Mostar. Vares and Tuzla were the only cities who elected non-ethnic party in the first multiparty municipal elections. Both cities had large industries, strong working class and had similar ethnic mix of the population. However Vares failed to protect the political choice, and succumbed to the HDZ and HVO radical factions in 1992. Tuzla on the other hand was able to protect the people's choice and the democratic principles by which it stood throughout the war. Thus, Vares was taken out as an option because comparative study would have been limited to pre-war events only and not the wartime phase which was needed to explain both questions of peace, why and how.

Secondly, city of Mostar would have been a good candidate for a method of differences comparative approach. Mostar did not have any comparative shortages like Vares, in fact it would have been perfect candidate to conduct the comparative study with Tuzla,

however decision was made based solely on the amount of academic literature. Mostar has been dissected from all angles and thus academic literature and available data is immense. There are countless reports by international organizations, foreign governments, EU organizations, all who have strongly focused on Mostar for years in the post-war construction period in addition to numerous media reports, but more importantly there are virtual libraries of scientific academic work regarding Mostar. This is because, Mostar was extremely violent during the war and in addition to Sarajevo, Mostar needed to be made an example of international organizations, and foreign governments coming together and making a success story of Mostar in its post war reconstruction. However, today we know that, that plan largely failed. Mostar is as divided as it was in the war period. Therefore, most know what happened in Mostar but only some know and few understand what happened in Tuzla. My advisor and I made a tough decision knowing that the case study only on Tuzla may cause some concerns, but after contemplating for some time there were more positives than negatives as to why Tuzla needed to be taken as a separate case. First, Mostar was not a counter intuitive case like Tuzla and ethnic violence was common in all major cities in Bosnia. This alone was sufficient to study Tuzla. Secondly, Mostar was well and beyond academically researched but there are only a handful, published articles on wartime Tuzla [and to the best of my knowledge], no in-depth academic research using Serbo-Croatian as the language of inquiry, has been done on wartime Tuzla.

Lastly, Tuzla is the only instance of a large city in Bosnia to have successfully fended off nationalism and as such requires to be a separate case. This is not to say that in the future, Tuzla should not be incorporated in some comparative studies, in fact benefits are clear of such study, but currently, there is no data and no scientific work has been done on Tuzla and because it was an instance of peace, the decision was made not to water-down the case of Tuzla as it requires to be separated and studied in-depth first.

Second limitation of the study has been discussed in the chapter four, research design and methodology in relation to social desirability and will be briefly addressed here as well. Social desirability was a major concern during the implementation of the study. During the interviews, in some cases possible presence of social desirability in participants' responses was noted, despite countermeasures taken, including being cognizant of individual past prior to the war experiences, professional, political, ethnic, religious and community affiliation. Questions were clearly worded and explanation of the research purpose and the assurance of confidentiality communicated. I was also cognizant of the places during the interviewees, some were official government offices and some were public places. In this sense I always planned that the place of meeting was quiet and that it vibrated with calmness. I also did not want to appear as someone who was coming from outside to study [them] as laboratory mice, even though Tuzlan's were very welcoming and kind however, because for

many, I needed them to retrieve memories of war and only for this gesture, I had to show cordiality and sincerity. In this sense, the fact that I also had to endure similar experiences made at least this part of the job easier. However, despite all the measures taken, social desirability was suspected in few instances. One of which was the incident with the Croatian council in Tuzla and second one was at the Cantonal Ministry of Education. The latter, deputy Minister, was genuinely kind and soft spoken, however because in 2014, Tuzla's citizens protested against the BiH's federal and Tuzla's cantonal government failures which turned into violent riots which then extended to most of Bosnia. However what is important in this instance is that during these protests and riots, the high-rise office building in Tuzla where the cantonal offices were located, was set on fire and it burned down the entire building and thus my meeting took place at an elementary school where the temporary offices were placed. My conversation with cantonal officer therefore was reflective of these riots. However I could also tell that the deputy minister tried hard to stay objective although human nature sometimes takes the better of it. In terms of Croatian council in Tuzla, as I entered his office, he offered me figs from 'Hercegovina' noting that those are good tasting figs. Personally, I love figs, in fact they are one of my favorite anti-oxidant Mediterranean fruits, and I regularly eat figs from Dalmatian region where they are more common than in Hercegovina, but what I noticed right away that I would be dealing with a strong social desirability. In fact soon after I was asked where I

was from, I answered that I was born in Vares, but grew up in Texas, at which point, (i guess he concluded that my name would correspond that I am an ethnic Croat, thus a refugee and one who had to leave) made the comment on how he feels bad for ‘Croats’ of Vares who were ‘kicked out’. In what ensued in the next minute or two was an exchange of facts with opinions. I then thanked the council for his time and walked out of his office. Perhaps I could have stayed to listen to the nationalist point of view however entire former Yugoslavia is full of these kinds of people and I have already listened and assessed their rhetoric and as such I knew I would not learn something new. Thus, the Croatian Council in Tuzla was deemed not appropriate for my research study on the spot, as I would have only wasted my time which I could have dedicated to someone more appropriate. Nonetheless, point was taken that there are still radical factions in Tuzla. (I also sincerely doubt that those figs were from Herzegovina. They had to be either Dalmatian or Italian).

## **5. Conclusion**

The study identified causal mechanism for the justification of Tuzla’s success during the war in Bosnia. Explanation was found in the combination of two factors, historical identity formation of Tuzla’s identity in the period spanning hundred years with three processes that bonded different nationalities with local population largely employed in the mining industries, forging of a working class and



strong anti-fascist resistance in WW II and finally cemented these relationships and bonds during socialist Yugoslavia. The second factor was found in the wartime Tuzla as a reaction to the nationalist attack on Tuzla's identity. This factor was identified as set of strategies, actions and norms taken by then wartime leadership together with the civil society. In time relying on experiences of working class struggles and WW II veterans, wartime leadership intuitive strategy to assert immediate control over weapons and police units in the city and organize formidable defenses served further as a commitment to the civil society that local leadership they elected would be supporting their anti-nationalist choice. Civil society in coordination with the elites, wartime strategies and formal political institutions in Tuzla defeated all radical movements.

The thesis started from the premise that our academic literature and scholarly understanding of the factors ushering the elite instrumentalization of the ethnic cleavages and politics to war and to the breakdown of democratic institutions would benefit from an inquiry of counter-intuitive case: of agency that will not subscribe to ethnic extremism [nationalism] and of political crises that will not lead to radical policy outcomes. In developing this analysis, reference was made to the theoretical insights tasked with explanation of conflicts, instrumentalism for illustrating the elite instrumentalization of the ethnic cleavages and primordialism for illustrating the ancient ethnic antagonisms between ethnic groups. While the thesis main

objective was to construct causal mechanism for Tuzla's success, the analysis in the research study provided conclusions that can be utilized to assess the relative strengths of the theoretical insights used in thesis.

Instrumentalist assumptions of elites' unchecked powers to instrumentalize the population without addressing the anatomy of the civil society appears overreaching. Clearly from the case of Tuzla, elites did not behave under such assumptions, importantly civil society mounted anti-nationalist and anti-conflict policies and elites responded to their demands. Furthermore, instrumentalism vis-a-vis overreaching assumptions on elites, inadvertently can polarize the conflict defining it in macro and strictly polarized terms when that might not be the case, while failing to observe instances of fractionated intricate micro conflicts that may give the main war a more nuanced meaning of ethnic attitudes and/or how truly polarized is particular conflict, but importantly it misses to observe the instances of peace, which can give a whole different meaning to the conflict, ethnic groups and the elites involved.

Primordialist assumptions which posits that ethnic identities are fixed and ascriptive and that conflict is simply the byproduct of ethnic differences and of emotive attributes of fear and anger, appeared inconsistent and irrelevant with the research. While nationalism is euphoric and tends to rile up the deepest feelings of one's identity which supposedly appear to be tied to one's ethnic group, language,

territory and so on, it would be overreaching to imply such clear identity attributes across the vast territory that has been crossed with different empires, states and ethnic groups for centuries now as. What is evident indeed that Andersen's "imagined community" and the resistance to maintain exclusive 'rights' on an identity in the contested territories such as Balkans, through either revisions, construction or de-construction of identities and myths as in Hobsbawmian terms "inventing myths" were processes that were materialized in the Balkans from the nationalist groups. However, this process is in direct clash with the modern global political direction in particular projects such as EU, however it also appears not to be spared of its own brand of manifested populist mobilization.

Overall, the analysis of Tuzla demonstrates that, formation of multinational and multiethnic working class society with a strong anti-fascist, anti-exclusivist/nationalist ideals despite the difficulties, civil and political moderation is not impossible to accomplish and sustain. The analysis has also shown that political moderation can be achieved during conflict even if strongly challenged by radical forces from within and outside own community. Coordination between the elites and civil society, together with resolute and democratic sagacity can defeat robust radical opponents. The case of Tuzla also shows that in the context of wartime political processes, new political structures as well as the historical legacies, pre-existing institutions and material networks and resources, can be used both for fostering and for

defusing conflict. Disintegration of the Yugoslav state, presented political actors with new opportunities; it allowed certain groups to mobilize and seek to settle old scores with opponents. As individualistic can score settling sometimes appear, conflict commonly spreads quickly. Equally, the process through which elites and ethnic groups ethnicize their politics is anything but linear or automated. The battle becomes unfair, violent and opportunistic. Those who made the conscious choice could have tipped the scales either way, the winner however appears to be that of vigilance, courage, with early organization and if needed pre-emptive strike. Tuzla's wartime elites were able to make acute decisions to strike back radicalism and uphold the rule of law which gave them further legitimacy from the civil society for further political and military actions which brought about the decisive defeat of the radicals within and outside the formal institutions. However, the responsibility does not fall on the elites, rather it falls within Tuzla's civil society, actions were taken and resources were mobilized. Civil society leaders mobilized and created positive change when they had the support of important segments of society, found the courage and confronted powerful and often violent opponents through organized political activities. The cooperation of elites and civil society allowed for political engagement and policymaking towards authentic and moderate politics. Finally, for wartime leadership policies of support from the society was pivotal. Deservingly, in Tuzla it was in the

Tuzla's identity where the radical nationalists lost a crucial battle before their decisive defeats in military and politics.

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## *APPENDIX - 1*

### *LIST OF INTERVIEWEES*

Dr. Prof. Mladina, N. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd September [Dr. Prof. Mladina Nada is President of Tuzla's Municipal Council and Wartime Doctor at Tuzla's main Hospital]

Mrs. Jahic, M. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd September [Mrs. Jahic, Mersija is a Deputy Minister for Education, Science and Culture of Tuzla Canton]

Dr. Prof. Stahov, J. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd September [Prof. Jugoslav Stahov is a Professor Emeritus of Physics at University of Tuzla and Active Member of Citizens Forum]

Dr. Prof. Knezicek, T. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 7th September [Professor Knezicek Tihomir is a Professor Emeritus of Mining and war veteran. President of Italian Minority in Tuzla and National Minorities in BiH]

Dr. Prof. Dejan, J. (2015) Interview with the author, Zagreb, 3rd June [Prof. Dejan Jovic is Professor of Political Science at University of Zagreb and former First Advisor to former President of Croatia]

Dr. Prof. Vasiljevic, S. (2015) Interview with the author, Zagreb, 4th June [Prof. Snjezana Vasiljevic is a Professor of European Law at University of Zagreb]

Mrs. Kapetanovic, J. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 5th September [Mrs. Jasna Kapetanovic is the current Director of Radio & Television Station in Tuzla RTV7]

Mrs. Nadzakovic, S. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd November [Mrs. Sabina Nadzakovic is the National Program Officer for Education in Tuzla, OSCE]

Mr. Sehanovic, D. (2015) Interview with the author, Sarajevo, 2nd September [Mr. Damir Sehanovic is Journalist and Local Activist, Radio and TV Tuzla]

Mr. Dizdarevic, R. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd November [Mr. Raif Dizdarevic was a Former President of Yugoslavia 1989]

Mr. Pejic, B. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 1st September [Benedin Pejic works at Institute for Geology and war veteran]

Mr. Rosic, V. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 15th September [Vlatko Rosic is a Principal of Catholic Elementary and High School in Tuzla]

V.M. (2015) Interview with the author, Sarajevo, 7th July [V.M is EU Director of European Integration for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Banja Luka]

A.F. (Informant 1) (2016) Interview with the author, Dallas 25th January [A.F was a soldier in the JNA, TO and HVO forces in the period between 1991 and 1994]

M.F. (Informant 2) (2016) Interview with the author, Dallas 26th January [M.F POW in Tuzla and part of HVO forces in the period between 1993 and 1994]

B.F. (Informant 3) (2016) Interview with the author, Dallas 27th January [B.F Soldier in HVO forces in the period between 1993 and 1994]

Alic, S. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 5th October [Sinan Alic is the former Editor and Director of Front Slobode, Tuzla]

A.R. (Informant 4) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 26th October [A.R was a soldier in HVO and ARBiH in Tuzla during the war]

B.D. (Informant 5) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 21st October [B.D was a worker in Tuzla during the war period]

Beslagic, S. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 20th October [Selim Beslagic was the former Mayor of Tuzla between 1990 and 1996]

Blagojevic, Z. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 4th October [Zoran Blagojevic has been a soldier in ARBiH and is currently the local SDP spokesperson]

D.E. (Informant 6) (2015) Interview with the author, Lipnica, 29th October [D.H., a former trade unionist, was a worker in the Tuzla mines. During the war, he was a soldier in ARBiH]

D.M. (Informant 7) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 27th October [D.M. Bosnian journalist from Tuzla]

Imamovic, J. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 19th October [Jasmin Imamovic, the current Mayor of Tuzla, was the President of the Crisis Committee during the war]

Muhamed Effendi Lugavic (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 3rd October [Effendi Lugavic is the former Effendi of the Tuzla Muslim Community]

Rainer, M. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 3rd October [Marina Rainer is the current President of the Jewish Community in Tuzla]

R.M. (Informant 8) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 18th November [R.M. was a former Partisan in the People's Liberation Army between 1941 and 1945]

Selimovic, S. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 9th November [Sead Selimovic is a current History Professor at the University of Tuzla]

Sabotic, I. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 10th November [Izet Sabotic is a History Professor at Tuzla University and former director of Tuzla archive]

M.T. (Informant 9) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 14th October [M.T. President of the Youth Resource Center in Tuzla].

Sehic, V. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 29th October [Vehid Sehic is the founder and President of the Forum of Tuzla Citizens (FGT)]

S.A. (Informant 10) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 17th November [S.A. a former trade unionist, has been a worker in one of the major industries in Tuzla (AIDA) since 1982]

S.B. (Informant 11) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 14th November [S.B. war veteran, originally from Sarajevo, now lives and works in Tuzla]

D.B. (Informant 12) (2015) Interview with the author, Pula, 26th November [D.B. Croatian NGO in higher education]

S.T. (Informant 13) (2014) Interview with the author, Skoplje, 7th April [S.T. is a U.S. Embassy Employee in Macedonia]

Z.K. (Informant 14) (2014) Interview with the author, Podgorica, 8th April [Z.K is Employee at the Hypo Alpe Adria Bank]

D.M. (Informant 15) (2016) Interview with the author, Split, 9th November [D.M. is a Professor of History, University of Split]

Trakilovic, M. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 23rd November [Miomir Trakilovic is now the president of SNSD, the Serbian Nationalist Party, Tuzla]

S.M. (Informant 16) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 22nd September [S.M. wartime leadership in Tuzla, currently one of managers for legal affairs at municipality of Tuzla].

M.P (Informant 17) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 2nd November [M.P. Catholic clergy in Tuzla]

Slavuljica, N. (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 29th November [Nikola Slavuljica is a former Police spokesman and a member of the Reformist-SDP coalition. He is also president of the Josip Broz Tito Society]

M.L. (Informant 18) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 3rd November [M.L. Islamic clergy in Tuzla].

T.A. (Informant 19) (2015) Interview with the author, Tuzla, 10th October [T.A. responsible for legal affairs for return of refugees and their property to Tuzla]

## *APPENDIX - 2*

### *INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*

#### **interview question 1**

Why Tuzla was the only city to elect non-nationalist party in Bosnia, during first multiparty elections in Yugoslavia ?

#### **interview question 2**

What is so important about Tuzla's mining industry in relation to the Tuzla's identity formation ? In other words, why do you think mining sectors is a 'revolutionary force' and why mining supposedly unites and creates solidarity among citizens ?

#### **interview question 3**

What is so important about Tuzla's anti-fascist movement in relation to the Tuzla's identity formation ? In other words, why is anti-fascism so important to Tuzla and how did anti-fascism get to be so fundamental to the city ?

#### **interview question 4**

How did socialist Yugoslavia impact Tuzla ? What is about Yugoslavia that is key to Tuzla's identity ?

#### **interview question 5**

How did Tuzla manage to organize its defenses in the first stages of the war ? What was the key decision that had helped the city in keeping the territorial integrity versus for example standard partitions as seen in Sarajevo, Mostar or Brcko ?



## APPENDIX - 3

### INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

You are invited to be in a research study for Study Case of Tuzla as a counterintuitive for inter-ethnic peace during wartime between 1992 and 1990. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as someone who has great extensive knowledge on wartime Tuzla. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

**This study is being conducted by: Goran Filic, as part of Doctoral Research Study, at University of Milan, Graduate School of Political and Social Sciences.**

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this interview is to understand how and why Tuzla was able to reject radical nationalism during war in Bosnia. The collected data will be utilized to assess Tuzla's identity formation and processes of wartime military and political defenses.

#### **Procedures and Confidentiality:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to participate in a semi-structured interview: the interview will take approximately 1.4 to 2 hrs, depending on your responses. The interview will be audio taped. All records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be kept securely by the researcher; only the researcher will have access to the records. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

If you have any questions you can contact me personally at [goran.filic@unimi.it](mailto:goran.filic@unimi.it) or my advisor Prof. Andrea Carati at [andrea.carati1@unimi.it](mailto:andrea.carati1@unimi.it). **You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.**

#### **Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have received answers to my questions. I consent to participate in the study

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX - 4

### ETHNIC AND PROFESSIONAL MIX OF PARTICIPANTS

Count	Nationality / Ethnicity	Profession	City	Country
1	American	Academia	New York City	United States
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Media	Sarajevo	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Government	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Government	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Media	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Clergy	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Government	Vares	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Academia	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Government	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	NGO	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Bosnian (Muslim)	Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
	12	Bosnian (Muslim)	Academia	Tuzla
Croat		Academia	Tuzla	Bosnia
Croat		Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
Croat		Military	Split	Croatia
Croat		Academia	Tuzla	Bosnia
Croat		Academia	Tuzla	Bosnia
Croat		NGO	Pula	Croatia
Croat		Military	Vares	Bosnia
Croat		Academia	Mostar	Bosnia
9	Croat	Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
1	Montenegrin	Military	Podgorica	Montenegro
1	Finnish	Government	Banja Luka	Finland
1	Macedonian	Government	Skopje	Macedonia
	Serb	Mining	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Serb	Medicine	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Serb	Academia	Belgrade	Serbia
	Serb	Media	Sarajevo	Bosnia
	Serb	Clergy	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Serb	NGO	Tuzla	Bosnia
	Serb	Clergy	Tuzla	Bosnia
	8	Serb	Government	Tuzla
Yugoslav		Academia	Zagreb	Croatia
Yugoslav		NGO	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		Mining	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		Government	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		Media	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		Military	Tuzla	Bosnia
Yugoslav		NGO	Tuzla	Bosnia
10	Yugoslav	Academia	Mostar	Bosnia
	Yugoslav	NGO	Tuzla	Bosnia

APPENDIX - 5

CAPACITY TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS



Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service  
Washington, DC 20522

February 2013

GORAN FILIC  
500 RIVERSIDE DRIVE # 902  
NEW YORK CITY, TX 10027

Dear GORAN FILIC ,

Congratulations! The scores you achieved on your Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) qualify you for the next step of the Foreign Service Officer selection process, which is your prompt submission of a personal narrative for review by the Qualifications Evaluation Panel (QEP).

As you know, the Foreign Service selection process is a series of evaluations that can lead to an offer of employment as an entry-level Foreign Service Officer. Now that you have received a passing score on the FSOT, you must submit responses to six short-essay questions, which are known as the Personal Narrative (PN) questions. **You must complete your PN responses and submit them before 11:59 PM Central Time on March 20, 2013.** Failure to submit your PN responses by that time will terminate your candidacy.

To launch your PN responses, go to: <https://testregistration.org/rsp/?realm=30300874>, and enter your username and password which you created, to login and complete your PN responses. The PN responses, along with your FSOT results and information from your application form about your education and experience, will be reviewed by a Qualifications Evaluation Panel (QEP). To help write your PN, focus on your own experience in answering the questions. You should give positive examples that demonstrate your abilities and indicate how your experience will contribute to success in your chosen Foreign Service career track.

Once the QEP has completed its review, you will be notified by email and may check the results to learn whether your rank order entitles you to proceed to the next step of the selection process, the Oral Assessment. You will receive this email in mid-to-late May 2013.

If you have any questions or issues concerning the completion of the PN questions, please contact [fsot@act.org](mailto:fsot@act.org), or call 800-205-6358 (or 319-341-2500) during the office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00 Central Time.

To advance to the next step of the Foreign Service Officer selection process, the Qualifications Evaluation Panel (QEP) review, applicants must have achieved a score of 154 or above on the multiple-choice components of the FSOT and an essay score of at least 6 on a 12-point scale. Essays were scored for those candidates who received at least a 154 or above on the multiple-choice section.

There were three parts to the multiple-choice section. You scored as follows:

Job Knowledge:	50.74
Biographic Information:	56.38
English Expression:	46.86
Multiple-Choice Total:	<u>153.98</u>

Your essay score: 6

Congratulations again. We look forward to receiving your personal narrative submission.

Sincerely,

The Board of Examiners

*APPENDIX - 6*

*CAPACITY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS*

**FBI Special Agent Phase I Testing - Retest Assessment Results**

1 message

**fbi\_support@panpowered.com**  
<fbi\_support@panpowered.com>  
To: goran.filic@gmail.com

Mon, Feb 18, 2013 at  
10:21 PM

Dear Goran,

Congratulations, you achieved a passing score on the Special Agent Selection System (SASS) Phase I test. Under the current SASS, your scores will never expire.

You are among a select group; many Special Agent candidates do not successfully pass the Phase I test. You have clearly differentiated yourself, and the FBI encourages your continued participation in the SASS.

Within the next few weeks, your local FBI office will extend an invitation to participate in the Meet and Greet component of the SASS. During this meeting, you will learn about (1) the duties and responsibilities of the Special Agent position, (2) the Special Agent compensation and benefits package, and (3) the next steps of the SASS. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to ask questions about the FBI, the Special Agent position, and the SASS.

Please note that only those candidates deemed to be most competitive, based on standardized selection criteria and the investigative needs of the Bureau, are nominated to continue to Phase II of the process to a structured interview battery and writing assessment. If you progress to this stage, additional information will be provided.

We encourage you to keep your local Field Office advised of any changes in your application and wish you continued success with the SASS.

Respectfully,

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Human Resources Division (HRD)  
Special Agent Recruitment and Selection Unit (SARSU)