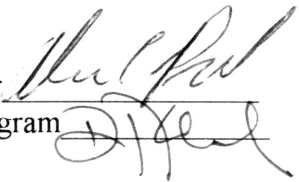# ETHNIC CONFLICT IN THE
# FORMER SOVIET UNION

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# Ethnic Conflict
## Growing Tensions in the Former Soviet Union

The world in which we live has changed markedly in the last few decades. New states have emerged on the world scene as territories formerly under the thumb of foreign powers have gained their independence. With that independence, in many cases, has come a rise in ethnic conflict among nationalities within these new states. In the mid-1980's, Donald Horowitz, a leading scholar in the field of ethnic conflict, wrote about the effects of decolonization. It "set in motion a chain reaction, the ultimate impact of which has yet to be felt" (Horowitz 1985, 4). Groups that fought for independence were not necessarily representative of the various ethnic groups in their territories, and divisions emerged after independence had been won. A pattern that began to appear at the end of colonialism in the 1940's and 1950's, ethnic conflict has continued to spread throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union after the demise of communist regimes as legitimate systems of government. The fall of communism set the stage, and, to quote Horowitz again, the "independence rally gave way to the ethnic riot" (Horowitz 1985, 4). By examining three republics of the former Soviet Union, Russia (specifically the case of Chechnya), the Ukraine, and Moldova, I hope to discover why ethnic conflict is growing as a serious problem, despite Soviet attempts to eliminate differences between nations, what root causes lie behind such conflict, and the implications of these problems for stability in the future.

Research in this field has been steadily growing, and is crucial primarily for what light it can shed on the future. Academically speaking, ethnic conflict is a big field involving many disciplines. What might have once been considered an irrelevant question even for political scientists (many scholars doubted the viability of ethnicity after modernization) can certainly not

now be relegated to just one field and requires the cooperation of sociology, history, political science and economics. As ethnic tensions mount across the globe, the search for *legitimate* policy solutions will be facilitated by academic research. Several scholars have already begun. Donald Horowitz's work Ethnic Groups in Conflict and Crawford Young's The Politics of Cultural Pluralism prove to be definitive texts on the subject, and they have provided the starting point for my research. These books provide intensive study of several developing nations, as contrasted to the kinds of ethnic conflicts likely to be found in typically western, industrialized nations, as developing states find themselves dealing with ethnic tensions at the same time they are attempting to create the political institutions to deal with such problems. States in the West were fortunate to have stable governments in place before ethnic conflicts really became an issue.

One way of looking at ethnic conflict is to begin with the nature of the division in society. Ethnic groups can either be ranked, in a hierarchical ordering in which one group is subordinate to another and mobility opportunities are restricted by ethnicity; or, groups can be unranked, in a parallel ordering system where groups are not definitively ranked in relation to each other (Horowitz 1985, 22-23). While it seems that this description would allow for only two ethnic groups in any system, which is seldom the case in real terms, it is possible, in fact, to combine within a political system ranked and unranked ethnic groups, and of course, groups do not fit perfectly into either of these molds. My task, then, is to categorize the nationalities present in this region and decide which label best applies to each. Horowitz gives several criteria by which nationalities can be "measured." First, do the groups have a recognizable elite? If both groups do, then they are parallel in nature, if there is a logical impossibility for one of the groups to have an acknowledged upper class, then clearly they have been subordinated by another group. Second, how do the groups choose their leaders? Autonomy in leader selection indicates unranked ethnic groups, while nationalities that must submit their choice of leader to another group for approval obviously sits at the bottom of the societal hierarchy (Horowitz 1985, 25-26).

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Ranked and unranked systems can move in several directions, perhaps to the dissolution of all ethnic divisions, or to the opposite type. Most likely for ranked systems is the change to an unranked system. Unranked systems are not usually pushing for major systemic changes, but are more likely to see jockeying for educational and occupational proportionality (Horowitz 1985, 34-35).

Other factors likely to influence ethnic conflict include the relative size of the nationality to the size of the state, dictating whether ethnic conflict will be more parochial and localized or more centralized in nature (Horowitz 1985, 40). Parochial groups often have more luck in negotiating with the center, as policies they request seldom affect other groups in the society. Horowitz maintains that centralized systems, centralized meaning that ethnic groups are large and deal primarily with the central government, as opposed to local officials, often have a high degree of deep cleavages, as policies favored by one ethnic group will usually affect other groups in an adverse manner (1985, 39).

As solutions to ethnic conflict are put forth, new questions about the viability of democracy will emerge. If divisions among ethnic groups can be ameliorated, will majorities and minorities be able to form stable systems of democracy that will provide for the needs of all (or at least will not shortchange anyone). Robert Dahl's Polyarchy gives eight necessary (but not sufficient) institutional guarantees a government must provide in order to create democracy. Among these are the freedom to form and join organizations, eligibility for public office, the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes, and alternative sources of information, as well as some conditions most Americans think of automatically, for example voting, elections, and freedom of expression (Dahl 1971, 3). Clearly a high degree of ethnic cooperation must occur before any of these necessary conditions can be guaranteed to all citizens.

The degree to which nationalities come to trust each other and work together can determine which type of democracy they might adopt. The Westminster model of democracy,

based in many ways on the British system, entails a high level of power concentration in the executive and fuses executive and legislative powers in the cabinet (Lijphart 1977, 6-9). Interest aggregation in the political system is high, as the population moves toward the center politically and there are usually two major parties. Another major characteristic of this system is the majority/plurality system of elections, by which the candidate with the most or a majority of votes wins the single seat for the district, and there is no room for second place. A much more likely model for democracy in previously ethnically divided societies is the Consociational model of democracy, specifically designed to restrain the majority. It is characterized by executive power sharing, separation of powers and a strong element of minority representation, typically a second house in the legislature (Lijphart 1977, 23-29). Special elections are sometimes provided for in order to create ethnic parity in the second house, but generally elections are based on the proportional representation system. This provides for the larger number of parties on the political scene due to a relative degree of social stratification and the large number of interests.

This question in particular is purely academic for the next several years as a brief overview of 21 long term democracies by Arend Lijphart shows that all belong to the well-to-do section of mankind; all maintain high levels of industrialization and urbanization; and most, except Japan, are culturally similar. Furthermore, democracy may be subordinated to other developmental goals, as described by Samuel Huntington. Four additional goals permeate developmental policies of growing nations, these are economic growth, economic equity, political stability, and national autonomy (Huntington 1987:4-5). These do not have to follow a specified progression, and Huntington argues that it may be necessary to sacrifice democracy in the short run for the political stability needed to accomplish other goals. Dahl seems to agree with this assessment, asserting that political order may be needed first to create the means of public contestation (liberalization) before all are given the right to participate (inclusiveness) (Dahl 1971:6). Development in ethnically divided societies face additional challenges in that issues that elsewhere would be

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considered routine administration become charged with ethnic tension, for example allocation of education services, land policies, location of power plants, and tax policies (Horowitz 1985:8).

More substantive reasons for studying ethnic conflict exist as well. The big question on the minds of many international leaders is how will inter-ethnic conflict affect the former Soviet Union in the near future? How stable will the system be, and to what degree will minority groups find themselves to be represented or restricted in the new governments. A number of different possibilities present themselves immediately. If the chances for the development of legitimate democracy are slim, it is most likely that one or another ethnic minority will find themselves subject to the rule of another group, whether it be under a form of nominal democracy or under a new type of dictatorship. Another more grim possibility is that of a new Russian Empire. Many of the newly independent republics have been facing economic problems beyond their means, forcing them to turn back to Russia to maintain their economic machines. As ethnic tensions mount in many areas and Russian troops are invited in to establish peace, questions about the legitimacy of the local regimes have come to light. For some former republics, independence will be difficult to maintain.

In order to look at the question of ethnic conflict from as many aspects as is manageable, I will examine three theories that may help to explain the ethnic conflict present in Chechnya, the Ukraine, and Moldova. These can best be described as historically derived culture, soviet regime indoctrination, and societal transformation.

The assumption of the historically derived culture theory states that values formed in the current period can be traced to influences from distant events or patterns of behavior. The Chechen people, for example, have experienced a volatile national history among the mountain peoples of the Caucasus. As the tsar's armies moved south in the nineteenth century, they encountered stiff resistance from the Chechens, a fiercely territorial group, known for their cunning and fighting ability. "These people can never be pacified," stated General Aleksei

Yermolov, commander of the tsar's forces, "they can only be annihilated." Indeed it took the Russians over half a century to subdue the Chechens and succeeded only by killing half the population (Nordland 1994:29). Ethnic antagonisms will sometimes last a long time: "Memories of earlier, lapsed conflicts, centuries and sometimes millennia old, can be revived to fit contemporary conditions" (Horowitz 1985, 98). This is particularly the case in Chechnya, where blood feuds run for generations, and exacting vengeance is a matter of honor. For many Ukrainians as well, centuries of subjugation at the hands of the Russians has manifested itself now as intense nationalism and a push for intolerant language policies.

In addition to age old ethnic conflict, this theory more directly applies to the undercurrents running through the Russian empire as a whole long before the revolution of 1917. First among these is Russia's unique position on the frontier between West and East which created a connection with the West that provided an impetus for change but was far enough removed to allow for a significant delay in those changes. The Empire was surprisingly slow to eliminate serfdom, reform land policies, and allow for industrialization (Parsons and Gerschenkron 1960). While the Soviet Union certainly made huge strides in the latter, the region is again faced with the question of to what extent it wishes to accept Western ideas and patterns of development. Second of the patterns flowing through the history of the area, and probably most important, is the autocratic nature of the executive power throughout Russian/Soviet history. The supreme authority of the emperor as autocrat was acknowledged by basic law and cemented by tradition (Brzezinski 1960:95) Advisors to the Emperor were loyal to him first, appointees to ministerial posts second. "Growing political conflict enhanced the political influence of the emperor since reform, of whatever kind, could only be achieved with him and through him" (Brzezinski 1960:96) Brzezinski illustrates continuities with the Soviet system, marked by one man rule, a man whose principal advisors and political leaders are party members, not administrators. Both cases entailed a high degree of centralized authority and therefore a degree of over

bureaucratization (Brzezinski 1960:98) despite outward appearances of Soviet federalism and local initiative, and political crimes were still just as harshly punished, if not more so. Brzezinski described three restraints on executive power: direct (i.e. Magna Carta, Bill of Rights), indirect (i.e. churches, economic interests, professional groups), and natural (i.e. national traditions, geographic constraints). He argues that the Russian empire was an authoritarian system which subverted the first type of restraint, clashed with the second, but never ventured to overcome the third. This is where the Soviet regime finds its major differences, in that it subverted the first, destroyed the second, and effectively challenged the third (102).

One resulting institution of this type of government also has a long and illustrious history, that of a political police. What had previously been the work of specially commissioned agents on an irregular basis was put into an official format with the creation of the Third Section of His Majesty's Imperial Chancery of Nicholas I in 1826. Its functionaries and spies were charged with the "general surveillance over all areas of life: not only power of arrest and investigation in crimes against the state, but also the prevention of such crimes" (Monas 1960:165). The creation of the Cheka after the revolution and its metamorphosis into the KGB have given a sense of continuity to a group which has watched over the people of this region for almost two centuries.

Finally is the way in which individuals and groups have interacted on the political and social scene over the centuries. For the most part, the state played a huge role in organizing and defining large social groups and delineating the rights and duties afforded to each group. Over time relations between these large groups were troubled by sharp cleavages exacerbated by the caste character of the administration which governed them leading to a general tendency for individuals and social groups to avoid collaborating with others to impose their will or improve the existing political order (Haimson 1960:110). When groups did begin to coalesce, many rejected political reform ideas garnered from the west, wishing to avoid the "evil political process" altogether; political parties, especially,, were seen as factional interests only seeking, "by servile

maneuvers or intimidation the favors the state was not legitimately allowed to bestow on them (Haimson 1960:112,115). It was not until the 1890's, argues Haimson, that large numbers of Russian intellectuals and activists began to hold the opinion that perhaps the Russian population could indeed be mobilized to gain political freedom and fight for the establishment of a representative government in Russia (120) Even then, he continues, several parties (Social Revolutionaries, Bolsheviks) envisioned a reformed political scene with only one party as sufficient and legitimate voice for the masses of society (130).

The second theory under study is that of Soviet regime indoctrination which argues that the Soviets were painstaking in their work to socialize new generations to the Communist political culture as the only culture. Horowitz says that early Soviet leaders believed ethnic conflict to be artificial. He states, "Belief in the importance of distinct ethnic interests constitutes part of an ideology that masks class interests and diverts the working class from pursuing their interests" (1985, 106). Lenin saw the eventual amalgamation of groups as progressive and even envisioned actual incorporation of smaller units into larger, but the leader of the Bolshevik revolution was also, to some extent, a realist, and compromised with the larger ethnic groups in the Russian empire to maintain its territorial integrity, promising them a policy of self-determination (Clem 1988, 8). Assimilation was supposed to entail two elements, a "flourishing" of ethnic awareness and a "drawing together" among similar groups which would continue a total assimilation of all groups into one identity. The USSR was supposed to be "national in form and socialist in content" [Joseph Stalin] (Clem 1988:15) The patriotic-nationalist aspect of Soviet political culture was to be common to elites and masses; official propaganda espousing Soviet and socialist patriotism was supposed to be the "universal cement" binding together the entire "Soviet people" in devotion to a single homeland (Barghoorn and Remington 1986:42)

All social entities are incorporated into the various hierarchical chains of command integrated by the apparatus of the communist party, constantly supervised by the political

leadership. This is one aspect of the "vanguard role" of the communist party in leading the nation, ostensibly, to socialism; others include licensing of all non-party organizations and meetings, centralized control of political recruitment via the nomenklatura system, penetration of other organizations by party members, and control of communications (Barghoorn and Remington 1986:36). Political participation is similarly restricted, as citizens are mostly restricted to a subject/participatory role, with activities directed ultimately from the political center at the top of the CPSU command structure (45).

Soviet ideological indoctrination took place in many arenas and affected all major aspects of life. The education system was filled with Soviet rhetoric. It was good to be both a (Soviet) nationalist and a communist because as the USSR was the leader of the communist movement "devotion to the country becomes devotion to the cause" (Barghoorn and Remington 1986:39). Barghoorn and Remington go on to say that a citizen's good standing in society depended on the extent to which he was indoctrinated in (or gave lip service to) the communist ideology, a requirement which increased in relation to education, status, and rank (55). Another requirement for those in higher ranks, especially within the party apparatus is volunteer service in doing the work of the party resulting in nearly 11 million individuals who served as ideological activists, political information speakers, and as part of a lecture bureau (Remington 1988:154-155). Soviet political indoctrination seemed to be working on at least a portion of the population, according to Walker D. Connor, who stated in his 1988 article that the Soviet working class was not likely to be a hostile force to the government because of "patriotic attitudes widely diffused among the Soviet working class, signaling a general acceptance of the system as legitimate and domestically rooted" (47).

Thomas Remington describes three phases of a single party regime. Initially the regime is intent on transformation of political and social structures to destroy alternative bases of power, seen in the early years of the Soviet Union. Next the regime consolidates power by regularizing

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institutions and procedures so that the party as an organization assumes even greater importance. Clearly the party centralized control of vital aspects of political and social life. Finally the regime is challenged with adapting to maintain its predominant policy role while acknowledging claims to power from new forces "grown up on the native soil of the regime" (Remington 1988:150-151) This is where, as to be expected, the regime ran into difficulty as the last few years of the Soviet regime saw a decline of ideology as it was relegated to "largely a rhetorical exercise" and new forces for reform found voice in the new generation of leaders. With that decline came a simultaneous increase in ethnic sentiment (Clem 1988: 26), evidence of the Party's failing ability to cross ethnic lines.

Finally, I intend to look at the theory of societal transformation, how the effects of modernization have changed values and attitudes across the republics. Soviet policy was intent on equalizing differences between nationalities by utilizing economic development to bring underdeveloped groups up to par. This resulted in a proliferation of Russians in non-Russian ethno-territories due to a lack of skilled indigenous manpower. Initially, Russians were to act as a trained cadre to assist locals in development, but over the course of the Soviet regime, the Russian population outside of Russia grew to more than a cadre, totaling over one third of the urban population and having a disproportionate share of better urban industrial jobs (Clem 1988, 21-22). Ethnic groups have not been oblivious to this pattern, at times seeking to avoid large heavy-industry investment, fearing that only Russian workers would have the proper skills and would be imported to take the jobs (Hough 1988, 103). Most modernization theories of ethnicity stress, rightfully so, that benefits of modernity are not equally spread among ethnic groups and this can lead to heightened tension between groups (Horowitz 1985, 101), clearly evident in the former Soviet Union.

The process of industrialization and development has thoroughly changed the entire society. The programs of the new nation sought to realize the dream of Communism, which

meant achieving economic success through industrialization, expanding education, and equalizing services. The first years saw the transformation of the population from primarily rural to significantly urban as peasants realized the opportunity to take a step up and join the hordes of workers. Unfortunately, the glory of the communist system was not as easy as building more factories. "Stalin's obsession with investment in heavy industry meant extremely low living standards even eight years after the end of World War II," which not only "betrayed all promises of abundance contained in Communist ideology, but was increasingly counterproductive for growth" (Hough 1988:74). New policies under Khrushchev and Brezhnev created an "appliance society" complete with one bedroom apartments (as opposed to one room apartments) for most and meat consumption almost level with some Western European nations. This was tempered, however, by the strict egalitarian policies to which the regime adhered, such as forbidding citizens from setting up private enterprises which would make them wealthy, paying wages along egalitarian lines (industrial workers made almost as much as managers and technical personnel), setting up a pricing policy so that everyone could afford basic items, and allowing factories to provide services which greatly eased the lives of workers, such as day care centers, school equipments, and food distribution at low prices (Hough 1988:93-97). These, along with educational policies which gave students excellent opportunities to advance in industry or join the intelligentsia, created a relatively prosperous society by about the 1970's.

Development then seemed to stall out, and the last years of Brezhnev's rule are usually characterized as economically and socially stagnant. The education policies which had virtually eliminated illiteracy and had given so many the chance to advance out the the worker class had produced too many students with a full secondary education wanting higher education and not a job in a factory. Reforms in the technical education system were swiftly made to counteract the problem, and seemed to help, but a decline in the number of students seeking higher degrees in engineering indicates a move away from such an industrial and worker based society. More and

more in the 1970's, students saw increasing prestige in a liberal arts education.

Furthermore, the incentive system which characterized the planned economy explains much about how the Soviet economy functioned before Gorbachev began his reforms. Energy saving measures, innovation in consumer goods and production techniques, worker and system efficiency, and high quality products were all highly resisted by a system which rewarded production at a certain level, but gave no incentive for implementing measures which, while they might work in the long run, might slow production while the bugs were eliminated (Hough 1988:87-89). The costs of such as system, argues Hough, are extremely high: it threatened the Soviet Union's military position, it undercut the effectiveness of the nation's foreign policy and it "utterly destroyed the legitimacy of an ideology that claims socialism is advanced and capitalism is backward" (84).

# 2: THEORIES OF ETHNIC CONFLICT

Conflict, defined by Donald Horowitz, is "a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals" (1985:95). Theories as to why ethnicity has become a basis for conflict and why it has become so prevalent in the last few decades have been far from reaching a consensus. At the end of the colonial era, many social scientists believed that independence would eliminate any residual instances of ethnic differences as freedom improved the economic situation of minorities living in the newly formed states. The Belgians left Zaire in the early 1960's, and contrary to expectations, independence "had not raised the level of well being; indeed, it had deteriorated. Discontent again stalked the land and cried out for the identification of new social enemies" (Young 1976: 4). Theories of assimilation began losing ground in about the same time period, as ethnic riots broke out even in countries that were supposedly stable, such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Young 1976: 9). In this section I will look at some of the theories of the past and present that represent the major trends of thinking about ethnic conflict.

In this study, I will use Crawford Young's definition of ethnicity and Horowitz's definition of conflict. Ethnicity is a "commonality according to language, territory, political unity, or common cultural values or symbols" (1976: 48), and conflict is "a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals" (1985:95). Young points out that none of his listed "commonalities" are necessarily universally valid criteria, but they will serve as a good starting point. Horowitz adds that ethnicity is indeed a condition determined by birth, and therefore can be seen as a type of greatly extended kinship (1985: 57-58). Ethnic ties are pyramided on kinship ties, bonds which provide solidarity in times of stress and aid in times of need. According to Joshua A. Fishman "ethnicity may be the maximal case of

societally organized intimacy and kinship experience" (Horowitz 1985: 59). The overlap of these two ideas, kinship and ethnicity, adds several new dimensions to ethnicity. First it creates a dependency of strong ethnic ties to strong family ties; second it generates a generally greater power and permeatability of ethnic affiliations in Asia and Africa than in the West; and it adds to the intensity of ethnic conflict when it occurs. (Horowitz 1985: 61). Race is another term that is often used to separate peoples into groups; it consists of conspicuous physical differentiations, especially skin pigmentation and facial characteristics. Young terms "race" as the "stepchild of prejudice" finding that it facilitates stereotyping and creates the propensity of members of one race to see all members of another as looking alike (1976: 49). Religion is also one of the greatest dividers of all time because it offers a comprehensive world view as well as an embracing social identity. The rituals and ceremonies which make up religious observance serve as a regular reaffirmation of an individual's sense of identity and group membership (Young 1976: 52). Evidence of this can be seen most clearly in Eastern Europe, where groups that might otherwise be identical, such as Czechs and Slovaks or Serbs and Croats, are divided into hostile camps because of religious differences. One final division, one not commonly thought of in the West, is that of caste, primarily a South Asian phenomenon. It creates a rigid ranked system of social strata which are endogamous, ascriptive, and often based on occupation (Young 1976: 60).

Among the areas of study in regards to ethnic conflict are the many theories as to how ethnicity has come to be realized by groups around the world. Horowitz and Young both mention that many social scientists recognized the existence of traditional ethnic allegiances and allowed for their reemergence after the fall of colonialism, but argued that modernization in general would wipe away ethnicity's final vestiges. Young argues that cultural identity comes about through a process of self-identification, and is really subjective. Cultural self-definition is only one of the many social roles an individual may assume at any given moment. Identity, he states, is relational and is shaped by the nature of relevant others in a social arena (1976: 41). "The linkage between

individual awareness of membership and collective social response by the group derives from the common set of symbols and cognition shared by the group" (Young 1976:38). Young continues that, the ideologization of identity, then, depends upon a group of persons working specifically to create and promote generalized symbols and values which express their collective past, otherwise known as cultural entrepreneurs, who are usually members of a professional middle class or intelligentsia. According to Benedict Anderson, author of Imagined Communities, ethnicity is a manmade creation facilitated by "the convergence of capitalism and print technology" (1983: 49) and the emergence of this new breed of middle class intellectuals. They were cultural entrepreneurs who worked to classicize and at the same time modernize the language of the people by making it uniform, yet usable, and creating a literature which contains symbols of a commonality (Young 1976: 45-46). "Early Soviet nationality policy spawned a generation of cultural entrepreneurs who enthusiastically attended to unification of their languages." This policy was intended to encourage non-political cultural expression in the hopes of eventual assimilation (1976: 47). "The new middle class intelligentsia of nationalism had to invite the masses into history and the invitation card had to be written in a language they understood" (Anderson 1983:77) Evidence that the creation of a group identity may be an even simpler process than that comes from studies on groups by Henri Taifel in the early 1970's which looked for the minimal basis of group differentiation. He discovered that a basic verbal division, "Subject X, you belong to group A; Subject Y, you belong to group B," was enough to produce group feelings and discrimination, even when the subjects had no interaction with other members of their "group". Furthermore, individuals seemed more concerned with the relative advantage of their group over another than with the absolute success of their own group (Horowitz 1985: 144-146).

At this point I would like to go a little more in depth on conflict itself and, a little later, the three theories mentioned in the first section when combined with theories of social conflict. According to Louis Kriesberg, a sociologist in the field of conflict, there are two issues that

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underlie social conflict. The first of these are consensual issues, those in which parties agree

about what they want, but conflict may arise when one side apparently gets more of what it wants

and the other receives less. Dissensual issues, on the other hand, are those in which parties differ

in norms, values, or beliefs and either the requirements of coordination make those differences

incompatible or one side wants the other to accept the values, etc., it professes (1982 : 30).

Disagreements about what is desirable (as opposed to disagreements about beliefs) are

particularly relevant to conflicts that are expressed in violence, and the biggest problem is finding

a common basis of evaluation. Differences based on distinctive values or beliefs are necessary,

but not sufficient conditions for dissensual conflict, needing in addition either a situation in which

the persons with the different views are in a social relationship that places the views in opposition,

or a situation in which persons with one set of views assert objectionable claims upon persons not

sharing the same views (Kriesberg 1982 :30). Kriesberg's studies indicate that one of the biggest

sources of group incompatibility is that adherents of one view claim non adherents are subject to

the same view, that others should share in the views of a particular religious or political ideology.

A rejection of these views by non adherents is seen as repugnant and often generates a feeling that

the "true faith must be brought to the non-believer" (1982 : 35). Consensus , on the other hand,

underlies social conflict only in conjunction with certain other conditions; these are (Kriesberg

1982 : 36): first, that at least one party must have basis to view the distribution of consensually

desired values as unsatisfactory, second, that a basis must exist for one or more parties to believe

that the unwanted distribution is attributable to an adversary or at least cannot be altered without

a loss to another party, and third, there must be a basis for a zero-sum view of the situation.

Now for a return to the three theories of ethnic conflict outlined in the first section of

this paper. The first of these, again, is the idea that the values, beliefs, stereotypes, and symbols

held by current members of an ethnic group are direct descendants of the influences of past

events or behaviors. "Ethnocentrism is this view of things in which one's own group is the center

of everything and all others are scaled and rated with references to it . . . Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders. Each group thinks its own folkways the only right ones, and it observes that other groups have other folkways, and these excite its scorn" (Kriesberg 1982 : 35). These folkways are the foundation for cultural identity on a group level, laid perhaps centuries ago, sustained by shared symbol systems and easily lend themselves to the creation of their own "paradigm of social reality" and thus conveying cultural differentiation (Young 1976:141). Variations in intensity of cultural identity can be caused by the image of the collective past and an individual's responsiveness to that image within a group. This image contributes to the propagation and generation of symbols and values expressive of this collective memory. Inherent in these memories are ideas about the attributes of one's own group as well as other groups; these cultural attributes are often invoked to explain the success of some groups, then de emphasized in favor of location or situational factors in the case of other groups (Horowitz 1985:154). The success of a group, or its status in society, may be strictly determined by a hierarchical pattern; if so, mobility may be achieved by improving the rankings (through emulation or a fight for rights) or by incorporation into other higher groups (Young 1976:101-104). This, of course, may mean a departure from the traditions and symbols that define that culture, creating instead a struggle for a sense of positive groups worth as groups that are in "implicit competition for a favorable evaluation of their moral worth" (Horowitz 1985: 142) will feel threatened in a hierarchical system. This is because groups define each other as well as themselves, as identity is partly established in contrast to others. Subordinate groups, especially in illegitimate power inequalities, will try to reject definitions imposed by superordinates, leading to a struggle over who has a right to define membership and the qualities of each group (Kriesberg 1982 : 94). In some cases, continues Kriesberg, groups have tried to refute allegations of less admirable qualities attributed to them throughout their past, and at other times have accepted the labels given to them but

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argued that these are good qualities (95). Cultural mobilization requires sharpened boundary definition; thus quite small differences become reinforced; "within a populace culturally and linguistically indistinguishable came first a distinction, then through unequal rates of social mobility, a difference. The distinction (ethnicity) fused with the difference (class); the resulting conflagration illuminated the . . . landscape" (Young 1976:177) For these historical trends to take root, several other factors must be present for a collective identity to form, however, such as a means of extensive communication or access to communication technology, proximity and density of members, a network of interdependent members who facilitate mobilization and are more likely to see themselves as a collectivity (Kriesberg 1982 :71). Furthermore, the social context may be a source of discontent, as historically repressed or under represented groups may find within the structure of society a criteria for evaluating conditions and possible changes.

The second theory is that of assimilation, the process that, through indoctrination into the Soviet ideology, was the ultimate goal of the Marxist-Leninist ethnic policy, and it can take one of two forms. Amalgamation is the adding of two of more groups to form a third. Incorporation involves the joining of two groups in that one group assumes the identity of the other group (Horowitz 65). Integration can have definite benefits in relations between adversaries in that it might lead to a suppression of hostilities (Kriesberg 1982: 98). Integration above a low level may inhibit the recognition of conflicts, and the closer the relationship, the greater the tendency to suppress hostilities. Unfortunately this can lead to an increase in the intensity and gravity of the issue and grievances can burst forth in greater magnitude. "Social conflicts do not disappear with integration" (Kriesberg 1982: 96-8), nor with seventy years of indoctrination. The Soviet state had a vital interest in increasing its power by first being seen as the primary vehicle for development, including political development, a role that would include comprehensive power for the state. This involved an identity-extension of the active sense of membership in the national community to the entire people, securing general acceptance of the rightness of their exercise and

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the structure of authority by the state, increasing the numbers actively involved in the political arena, ensuring that valued resources are available on equal terms to all persons and avoiding extreme concentrations of wealth, and finally extending the effective operation of the state to the farthest periphery of the system (Young 1976: 75). We can say the same pattern for instruments of coercion--an increased scale and scope of armed forces, and a clear trend toward the accumulation of resources in central institutions of polity, especially in the bureaucracy and the military (Young 1976:77-78). Because of the scope and control of the state, it serves as a mold for society, but as a superior power it can totally repress and intimidate the subordinate groups within its system, or it can attempt to convince the weaker group that they are indeed not deprived and have no grounds for grievance (Kriesberg 1982: 98). Of course, extreme deprivation can create in the deprived a preoccupation with survival and may prevent a shared discontent from developing, as people who rank low in the system are less likely to socialize with other lowly types. (Kriesberg 1982: 74). One aspect in particular in which the Soviet Union failed in its quest was its failure to fulfill many of its promises regarding the many ethnic groups within its borders. Ethnic conflict and feelings of hostility based on cultural differences are likely to increase with changes in attainments and expectations--perhaps a decline in what people have or an increase in what they expect, or especially a period of improving conditions followed by a deterioration in status are prime situations for conflict in the social system.

Social mobilization and issues of socioeconomic development are the final area of study. Some ethnic antagonisms have been of long duration and have become significant again, but even more unfortunate, are the new ethnic rivalries that have no real basis in history. These can be attributed to modernization, which relative to ethnic conflict, has meant widespread education, mass media, political participation, residence changes, and occupational changes. These changes have led to a race between "social mobilization" and assimilation. "The proportion of mobilized but unassimilated persons is the first crude indicator of group conflict" (Horowitz 1985: 98-99).

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Social mobilization, according to one theory, promotes ethnic competition especially in highly competitive modern sector because the modern competitor feels insecurities of change more deeply, and therefore seeks security and comfort of the tribe or home group. Modernization equalizes in that it creates the same wants, and then groups are competing for who gets what (Horowitz 1985: 100). Modernization theory states that effects and benefits of modernity are not equally spread among ethnic groups. This uneven distribution of economic and educational opportunities in the modern sector provides an important source of group tensions. Some would argue that ethnicity is only an "artificial adjunct of social class: ethnicity is nothing but an erroneous comprehension of social deprivation which should be understood in class terms" (Young 1976: 40), but I would disagree and say that a more likely scenario is that the two are combined to create conflict. Several dimensions of development have increased the phenomenon of cultural pluralism. Urbanization has had the effect of throwing people into direct competition with each other for jobs and material goods; communications technologies have had the effect of reaching more and more people; and the spread of literacy has aided the mobilization of the polity. Differential rates of access and entry to the modern social roles are of critical import: "ethnicity as a political determinant becomes entwined with social class formation" and the politization of competition within the perceptual framework of relative deprivation can be particularly painful (Young 1976: 175). The goals of groups that find themselves at the bottom of the economic totem pole must be attainable--the group must believe that its efforts will reduce the grievance. Furthermore, what a group thinks it can get is based on the resources they have, are able to control, and are willing to use against adversaries (Kriesberg 1982: 91) That also depends upon an assessment of the adversaries resources. The perceptions of the grievance have a large part to play as well, for people whose conditions have deteriorated are more likely to support radical goals (Kriesberg 1982:90).

The extent to which these theories interact in the real world is clearly evident in just about any work on ethnic conflict. A situation resulting in ethnic tensions may have begun as a clear cut case of historically derived culture and been transformed into issues of socioeconomic development. This was the case for many nations in Africa and Asia, which formed the primary regions of study for Young and Horowitz. Further along in his book The Politics of Cultural Pluralism, Young again discusses cultural identity in terms of how members of a group understand their status when threatened by another group. "Social cues carrying cultural symbols are likely to be perceived in communal terms at moments of cultural threat and insecurity." Group solidarity tends to increase (Young 1976: 144-145). This symbolic representation of the social universe is simplified by stereotyping of a significant other groups; the greater the saliency of cultural pluralism, the more likely these stereotypes are to homogenize (1976: 148). Much as the way racial classifications seem to remove any individuality from the members of a group, stereotyped groups are often seen as behaving politically as a single actor, increasing the perceived threat to other groups. At times of heightened cultural anxieties, incoming message flows are more susceptible to communal interpretations and stereotypes. This tends to distort information, transforming it to fit patterns of fear held by the community (Young 1976: 150-152). The stereotypes mentioned above, created during colonial times in many countries, play a large part in the success of ethnic groups in their current societies, measured mainly in group comparisons. Colonial policy helped clarify the field in which group comparisons were made. Methods used by European rulers to make sense of the new environment and create order had the effect of increasing contrasts and evaluations that emerged with group disparities (Horowitz 1985: 149). One the one hand, the desire for order on the part of the empire had the effect of, in several cases, bringing peace to warring peoples and regions; however, at the same time the colonial era made evident the dichotomy between "backward" and "advanced" peoples (1985: 150-151). Initial location of a group had something to do with how they advanced in colonial

society, for those near the capitol or close to a trading route were given more opportunities. Groups willing to migrate to better opportunities found favor and success in the colonial period, and some groups benefited from the placement of mission schools (provided they took advantage of them) (Horowitz 1985: 153). In addition to these rather inadvertent advantages, colonial powers often took deliberate measures in the recognition and employment of ethnic distinctions, sometimes protecting groups from one another, advocating certain immigration policies, and utilizing certain groups they found particularly capable to help govern their vast territorial holdings (1985: 158-159). Ironically, despite the benefits given to some groups and not others, colonial powers were extremely ambivalent toward ethnic groups. Those groups who were industrious and strived to be well educated were praised for serving the purposes of the colony, but were seen as too aggressive and acquisitive. Backward groups, on the other hand were seen as noble, pure and mannerly, but also slothful, unmotivated, and lacking civilization. All of these descriptions survived the colonial period and continue to haunt groups even now (Horowitz 1985: 160, 164). Backward groups have come to be seen in a generally poor light and are encouraged to emulate more advanced groups to improve their chances for success, and prevalent among these groups , especially their elites, is the feeling that unless they can successfully catch up they face extinction as a cultural entity (Horowitz 1985: 173-176). Exactly how this might be possible will be discussed later.

Young came up with an extensive categorization of states and how they are culturally based according to their colonial history, dividing the world's former colonial states into eight types. First are those states which had historically arbitrary boundaries and were populated primarily by a large influx in immigrants from the colonial homeland or elsewhere in Europe. At the end of colonial rule, power was given to the settlers. The national culture was that of the dominant immigrant groups. Countries in this group include most of Latin America, the United States, Canada, South Africa, and Australia. The second type includes states created by

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colonization, but where power was transferred to immigrant population from somewhere besides the colonial homeland, particularly Asia and Africa. The state has no historical derivations, and most of the indigenous population disappeared over time. Barbados, Jamaica, Singapore, and Guyana are among these. The third type can best be described as homeland states such as Israel and Liberia. A country was designated through the initial agency of an external force to serve as a home state for diasporas. Fourth are, again, entirely arbitrary colonial creations without historical antecedent but where new territorial elites representing the indigenous populace have inherited power. Now they face the challenge of creating a national culture while avoiding potentially dangerous affiliations with any one major group. Examples of these states are Nigeria, Zaire, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Jordan. Next in the typology of states is the group created by colonialism with clearly defined cultural identity already in place. A communal solidarity created a polity even without a formal state. Such a state's current territorial framework is a vestige from colonial times, such as Algeria, Iraq, India, and Sri Lanka. Category six includes states such as Libya, Madagascar, Egypt, Swaziland and Kuwait. These states historically predated colonial overrule but which survived as polities through their use as units of colonial administration. Seventh is a group of small states who completely escaped foreign colonization and whose links with the past are extremely strong, such as Ethiopia, Iran, Japan, Afghanistan, and Thailand. Finally are states which were established out of the wreckage of colonialism by cultural self-definition such as Pakistan and Somalia (Young 1976: 92-95). Young also delineated nations into six categories of cultural diversity, ranging from the homogeneous society (which is extremely rare) to a dominant bipolar pattern to a country which has a multiplicity of groups with multiple bases of differentiation (1976: 95).

# 3: CASES

At this point a determined look at each of the three cases is in order. Again, the recent (or relatively recent) manifestation of ethnic conflict in Chechnya, the Ukraine, and Moldova serve as excellent grounds for research in this area because of the variety of factors present in each region. Each has a distinct history, distinct characteristics, and while subjected to the same yoke of communism under the Soviet Union, has fared differently under the Soviets' policies.

**Chechnya**

A brief overview of the administrative hierarchy of the Soviet Union in 1990 clearly shows the presence of almost one hundred geopolitical divisions designed to accommodate ethnic populations. Forty-nine oblasts, six krays, and 16 autonomous republics made up the divisions at the regional level, subordinate to those were five autonomous oblasts and ten autonomous okrugs (Radvanyi 1992:71). Among the many nations that made up these districts were the Chechens, an Islamic group found in the southernmost Caucasus territories of the RSFSR. Chechnya and the Caucasus are currently one of the most depressed areas of Russia with high unemployment and a low standard of living. Said Nikolai Marchenko, a Russian expert on regional policy, "We must invest more in the region. We simply have to do it. If we remove the economic problem, the ethnic problem will be reduced" (Cooperman 1995:42). Mr. Marchenko may be correct in asserting that economic problems are exacerbating tensions in the area, but he is wrong if he believes that economic aid will pacify the Chechens, a group who held off tsarist armies for 47 years in the Caucasus mountains in the 19th century (Church 1995:45), and are known for their fierceness and tenacity. By Chechen accounts, more than one million Russians have perished during their recurrent drives to pacify the Chechens (Bilski 1994:21), and common to the culture of the area, blood feuds have long been used as a means of rough justice. What this means for the Russians is that few Chechens have forgotten the memories of the ethnic purges that occurred at

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the hands of the Russians and the Soviet leadership in the 1940's. According to the 1939 census, there were 408,000 Chechens living in the RSFSR. By 1953, over 317,000 were estimated to be living in exile in Siberia, and conservative estimates put the number of deaths in the first five years of exile at almost 100,000 (Rywkin 1994:67). The population did recover in numbers, and returned to their homeland during the "rehabilitation" period of the mid-sixties. Despite harsh repression along these lines, as well as cultural indoctrination, the Russians were never able to eliminate one important institution in Chechen society, the Sufi Brotherhoods (militant Muslims) who became the power behind the facade of Soviet administration in the area (Rywkin 1994:68), and even managed to penetrate the KGB units in place to monitor their activities. Long an influential power in the region, the Sufis were among the leaders of the group that declared the Autonomous Republic of Chechnya to be independent from the USSR in 1991. According to Solzhenitsyn in Gulag Archipelago, "There was one nation that would not give, would not acquire the mental habits of submission--and not just the individual rebels among them, but the whole nation to a man. These were the Chechens" (Amiel 1995:11)

Most of the autonomous regions in the RSFSR showed extraordinary ethnic disparities, where the in-migration of Russians and other nationalities connected with the development of oil and natural gas have made the native populations tiny minorities within their own regions, often receiving little, if any, return for the development of the natural resources in their territory (Henze 1994:70). The Russian increase in non-Russian republics, maintained one Soviet writer, was allegedly a brotherly help granted by the Russians to other peoples. In addition, he claimed, the "young people [of the ethnic minority] depart voluntarily to far away construction sites, and this is in no way deportation as capitalist writers think" (Dima 1982:77) Furthermore, differences in the patterns of economic development, if not outright inequality, reinforced rather than cut across ethno-national boundaries in the Soviet Union. The potential for national unrest in such a situation is obvious (Burg 1990:32). Many of the nationalities that made up autonomous regions

within the Russian territory found themselves living at Third World standards and facing cultural extinction. Some ethnic groups never had schools in their native languages, and after World War II, the number of non-Russian native language schools providing instruction in math and science decreased by as much as half (Anderson and Silver 1990:103). The number of persons reidentifying with the Russians in some of these areas is extremely high, particularly the Karelians and Mordvinians (160-180 per 1000 of age 0-38 by 1970). The Chechens do not appear at either end of the spectrum in this study by Anderson and Silver, neither as having large numbers or only a few persons reidentifying. Why they do not appear in the results of this study could mean that they fell somewhere in the middle, or that they simply were not included in the study. The second is most likely, considering most Chechens' opinions about Russia. "In truth we have no firm idea of what 'Russia' is or will be anymore . The events of recent weeks make plain, however, that Chechnya wont be a part of it" (Klein 1995:30) The rebels fight on, and their leadership threatens to bring terrorism to the streets of Moscow. According to The Economist (March 28-April 3, 1994:50) there is no reason why, in principle, Russia should not give more powers to some its territories than to others, such as the independence asked for by Chechnya, but the the federal government fears ceding special status to some areas because other areas will demand the same; a continued military debacle in Chechnya might trigger additional declarations of independence throughout the ethnically and culturally divided Russian Federation. Some authors argue that Chechens realized the instability of the system; saw that the current system was weak and seized the chance to attain independence, saying that with their distinct language and culture they have legitimate national aspirations (Amiel 1995:11), but others argue that the surge of nationalism was simply a weapon used by Jhokar Dudayev to defend his seizure of power and declaration of secession in 1991 (Matlock 1995:4). Matlock questions the popular support of Dudayev and the secession movement before e the full scale Russian attacks in December 1994 and argues that under different leadership Chechnya could have achieved by legal means more

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autonomy than American states enjoy. "That nation's current agony was caused, first of all and most fundamentally, by its misfortune in falling under the control of unscrupulous adventurers who exploited the appeal of wounded national feeling for totally different ends" (1995:4) Since the Russians deployed over 40,000 troops to the region in winter of 1994 (Specter 1995:1), strong sentiments run throughout Chechnya. "Russian had better stop the bombing," says Khamid Astaminov, a former factory director. "This is making every Chechen too angry. This is our own house. Chechens have no where to go, so they'll fight" (New York Times, Jan 16, 1995:A6). Furthermore, the rebels are in very little danger of running out of supplies just yet, due to the legendary "joyful cunning" that ordinary Russians admire and fear in Chechen and other Caucasian groups. "Mr. Dudayev's government has taken that cleverness to illegal extremes, Russians say, by stealing oil from the pipeline moving through Chechnya and selling it, defrauding banks, counterfeiting rubles, and selling drugs and arms" (Erlanger 1995:A10). It is for just some of these reasons, however, that some Chechens dislike their leader, they "despise him for all the trouble and destruction he and the Russian President Boris Yeltsin, have managed to bring down on Chechen heads" (Erlanger 1995: A10).

**Ukraine**

Historically tied to the Russians for centuries, the Ukrainians' declaration of independence from the USSR and its big brother Russia in 1991 startled and offended many Russians. Because they were culturally similar to the Russians, Ukrainians had held trusted positions within the Soviet system, second only to Russians in leadership occupations throughout the Union. The Ukraine is so populated with ethnic Russians that Russians constitute a majority of the urban population in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, almost 50% in the Don basin, and outnumber Ukrainians 3 to 1 on the Crimean Peninsula (Rywkin 1994:97). It is this last region that has proved to be the biggest problem for the new Ukrainian state because of its majority of Russians, its vital strategic position on the Black Sea (including the Black Sea Fleet) and the growing

presence of the returning Crimean Tatars. The Tatars are the remnants of the Mongol-Tatar Golden Horde which eventually settled in the Crimea . The region fell to Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great (Rywkin 1994:69). After the 1917 revolution and civil war the Crimea was designated as the Crimean Tatar Autonomous Republic, but Tatars made up only 25% of the population. During the second World War, the Tatars were also deported to Siberia for alleged collaboration with the Nazis, but unlike the Chechens they were forbidden from returning to their homeland after they were exonerated of crimes against the state in 1967. The territory had been given to the Ukraine as a gift in the 50's and had been settled extensively by Russians and Ukrainians (Rywkin 1994:70). As restrictions were loosened under Gorbachev, a resettlement program for the Tatars was planned but never officially begun. Not to be daunted by officials, however, the Tatar population commenced it's return to Crimea, swelling the Tatar numbers there from 38,000 in 1989 to 130,000 in 1991 and 250,000 in 1994 (Shaw 1994:228).

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and the subsequent split of its empire a huge out-migration of Russians has occurred from several of the former republics, but it is unlikely that Russians will leave the Ukraine as they have Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. The good "future of Russians in Ukraine lies in continued association with their Ukrainian neighbors and the final abandonment of old assumptions of Russian cultural and political superiority" (Rywkin 1994:99). Russians in Crimea or the eastern half of the Ukraine never felt alienated, as they saw the local language as a dialect of Russian, and viewed the Ukrainians as country cousins. But the Ukrainians, having spent several centuries under Polish rule, out from under the tight strictures of the Russian aristocracy, have different attitudes of liberty, authority, and individual freedom (being much more liberal in these respects than their eastern neighbors). The events of 1991 left many Russians in the Ukraine unhappy, but policies implemented by the new government were generally friendly to resident aliens, including generous language policies and native language schooling. Any state prefers linguistic hegemony, as did the Soviet Union, but a state may grant

greater roles to regional languages to improve mass perceptions of the government. A state prefers people in a region to learn the language of the center even if affairs in some social, education, and political areas must be completed in the language of the region (Laitin 1988:294). The year 1991 also saw a referendum in Crimea, by which the region's population voted for autonomy, later granted by the Ukrainian government. By the summer of 1992, the peninsula's leadership at Simferopol had negotiated an agreement whereby autonomy included decision-making power over local matters: the constitution, natural resources, and language and cultural policies, while Kiev governed foreign affairs, the military, state security, and customs (Shaw 1994:226-8).

Approximately that same time, however, a referendum was taken of Tatarstan, and 61% agreed that the republic should be a sovereign state (Economist March 28-April 3, 1994:49). Tatarstan is an autonomous republic within the RSFSR, meant by the Soviets to become the new homeland of the Tatars in order to break them away from Crimea and facilitate assimilation. According to Aspaturian, there developed three stages of assimilation in the Soviet Union. The first was sovietization, which he claimed had already been achieved by the imposition and acceptance of the Soviet institutions and integration into the Soviet system. Second is russianization, the process through which Russian is accepted and becomes the international language and possibly the culture of the USSR. Last is russification, a slower and more restricted process that occurs on an individual basis rather than collectively. Non-Russians are transformed objectively and psychologically into Russians (Dima 1982:92) This process, however, was not particularly successful in Tatarstan, where fewer than 40 per 1000 were found to have reidentified themselves as Russians by 1970 (Anderson and Silver 1990: 116). Statistics such as these would suggest a viable demand for sovereignty, but Tatarstan, while about the same size as Algeria, and producing about the same amount of oil (600,000 barrels a day), is completely surrounded by Russian territory and has a population that is two-fifths Russian. A push for outright

independence would create huge tensions in the region, and resettlement in their former territory would make a little more sense. Gorbachev's plan to resettle the Tatars in their ancient homeland even went so far as to allocate funds for such a project, but the regional government seems unwilling to give out aid to incoming families. "It discriminates against them and filches aid meant to help them resettle" (Economist May 14-20, 1994:53), and the recent election of the fiercely pro-Russian Yuri Meshkov to the Crimean presidency does not ameliorate matters any. Now the Tatars are demanding help from the Ukrainians to restore their political rights, to include a ban on all non-Crimean Tatar immigration, and economic rights, including an evaluation of historic property claims (Shaw 1994:229). Officially now Crimea is an autonomous region within an independent Ukraine--dominated by ethnic Russians whose authorities have given the Tatars a chilly welcome as they return to their old capital of Bahchiserai. "The fact that we were driven out does not lessen our rights to our native land," says Mustafa Cemiloglu, leader of the Tatars who helped secure 14 out of 96 seats in the Crimean Parliament for the Tatars.

**Moldova**

From 1711 when tsarist troops reached the border of Moldova for the first time, until 1944, Russia's forces invaded Romania 12 times. Territories in this region have changed hands often throughout history, at times falling under the Ottoman empire, sometimes independent, forming part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, at times a part of the Ukraine, and frequently a segment of the Russian/Soviet empire. What most historians consider to be a part of the greater Romanian nation, Moldova was traditionally a principality on the eastern frontier of Romania that joined with the latter to form the nation-state of Romania for a short time before World War I and between the wars. The final invasion of Moldova occurred during the second World War, and the process of sovietization and russification was begun in earnest. According to Soviet accounts, the new regime began to "liquidate the exploiting classes" by nationalizing big enterprises and land ownership. At the same time, over 100,000 Moldovans departed "voluntarily" to different Soviet

industrial sites, mostly in Kazakhstan, over 13,000 Soviet "specialists" were assigned to the region, and 500 Russian teachers were imported to begin instruction in the new official language of the republic (Dima 1982:43). It seems that hundreds of thousands of Romanians from the region were deported in the Stalin era, and at the same time hundreds of thousands of Russians, Ukrainians, and others poured into Moldova, "demonstrating that the Soviet goal was not economic but political, namely denationalization and russification" (Dima 1982:47) Hard hit among the institutions of the region was the church: the Romanian Orthodox Cathedral of Kishinev, partially burned during the war by Russia, was transformed into the Central Exhibition Hall of Moldova (the cross was taken down and the central dome was rebuilt. Monasteries that had survived from the 15th and 16th centuries were ruined, destroyed, or turned into warehouses (Dima 1982:46) These efforts continued into the 50's and 60's, as the Soviets attempted to argue that Moldovans were a separate nationality from Romanians, and party propagandists in Kishinev began emphasize the separateness; " if the Soviet Union could only have produced a Romanian-Moldovan dictionary, this might have solved the problem, but this was just not possible" (Dima 1982:51). At the same time, the Romanian language was slowly coopted in the circulation of books and periodicals by the increase of Russian editions and censorship of Romanian language materials. By no means, however, had the Romanians forgotten their kinsmen in the Soviet Union, and as late as the early eighties, "It appeared that Romania was again waiting for the right moment to finally achieve her ethnic and territorial integration" (Dima 1982:59). The Romanians were encouraged in their efforts by the Soviet's apparent lack of real progress in russifying the population. In 1970 65% of Moldova's inhabitants were Romanians and 98% of them declared Moldovan/Romanian as their native tongue; according to the 1979 census the situation was relatively unchanged. There has been an increase in the number of Moldovans who speak Russian as a second language, particularly in urban areas, but the number of persons switching solely to Russian has remained low (Dima 1982:2); as few as 3.3% of the

Moldovans in Moldova used Russian as their native language in 1979 (Solchanyk 1990:183). Furthermore, efforts to sovietize the Moldovan population were relatively unsuccessful as well. In the early 70's, Moldovan membership in the Communist Party was approximately one third that of Russian membership, and in 1988, while Moldovans made up 65% of the population, they only composed 40% of the republic's party membership.

Moldova has traditionally been a rural region, known for a r gentle climate and rich soil, but also lagging behind in development for the last 150 years. Under the Soviets, progress toward equivalent development was made, mostly in light industries and agriculture related industries. In the 60's and 70's Moldova was the most highly taxed republic with 13% of its national product going elsewhere in the Soviet Union. The 1970 per capita income was only 81% of the Soviet average, "while budget expenditures for education, health, and other social benefits were much lower than the Soviet average" (Dima 1982:66). The Soviet leadership did realize the value of industrializing the area in the 80's and invested in the creation of several light industry centers, of which Kishinev was the largest (500,000) and Tiraspol, a city on the left bank of the Dnestr River and never a part of traditional Moldova, was second. Not only was industry slow to come the area, but the population of ethnic Moldovans remained primarily rural, educated at only a mid-level (108 per 1000 population high school graduates), and not particularly mobile throughout the Soviet era, while the cities were mostly populated with Ukrainians and Russians, both known for a high degree of urbanization, high levels of education (256 per 1000 population high school graduates), high mobility, and good industrial skills (Dima 1982:71). Moldova had, for the majority of its period of subjugation to the Soviet Union, experienced a labor surplus, a problem that became more salient as more of the native population became skilled. "Indigenous specialist personnel do not seem to migrate to other areas even when there is a job shortage in their area. Soviet leadership needed to create an ever increasing number of professional positions reserved for indigenous workers in the periphery to keep this from becoming a basis for

disaffection" (Burg 1990:29).

Moldova's current ethnic problems center around its historical ties to Romania. When the USSR first broke up, many elites in the republic saw the relaxation of control as the opportunity to reunite with the Romanian nation, a movement that initially gained a good deal of support. Ethnic Russians, in particular, as well as several other nationalities, became concerned that such a move would subject them to Romanianization and possibly a loss of rights within the region. (King 1994:360). In one of the most publicized ethnic conflicts of the aftermath of the Soviet breakup, Russians in Tiraspol and the Transdnestr region took control of the city and industries in a successful attempt for their own autonomous region, an attempt that was encouraged by Moscow (Rywkin 1994:123). The Russians were significantly aided in their task by the presence of the Soviet 14th Army, under the command of Major General Aleksandr Lebed, a man the Dnestrians named Man of the Year for 1992 (King 1994:360). Furthermore, the left bank of the Dnestr was one of the most important administrative and industrial centers of the southwest Soviet Union, with almost 90% of the region's energy supply originating from plants in that territory. The Gagauz, a group of Christianized Turks who had entered the area in the 19th century to escape Turkish rule in Bulgaria, also rebelled and called for an autonomous republic in their name in the south of Moldova. While they are the fourth largest ethnic group in Moldova, they make up only 3.5 % of the population (Dima 1982: 75). The Gagauz have generally been more cooperative than the Dnestr Russians for several reasons: first, they have no army to back them up, their autonomous republic constitutes the poorest area of Moldova (with little development and few natural resources) which still relies on Kishinev for subsidies, and the ethnic Gagauz make up a majority in only two of the five counties they control--they simply have no strength to maintain order (King 1994:362). Since the initial outbreak of unionist sympathies in Moldova, the trend has been somewhat sluggish, and a majority of the Moldovan rural population is actually against a reunion with Romania. As the reality of a Greater Romania becomes more

and more remote, at least for the present, both the Dnestr and Gagauz republics have become less strident and more willing to cooperate with the central Moldovan government.

# 4:DISCUSSION

While all this may seem like just a jumble of facts, this is indeed a very meaningful jumble which can lead to an explanation of why conflict groups choose the means they do to achieve their aims. Inducements to convince adversaries to cooperate are outlined by Louis Kriesberg in his book Social Conflicts; they include persuasion, coercion, and rewards. The technique of persuasion involves many possible methods based on influencing others by communicating arguments or appeals (115). A party to a conflict may ask an adversary to take its role, it may point out complementary interests that can be served by coming to an agreement, turn a divisive issue into one that is shared and needs a mutually satisfactory solution, suggest that the two parties have a common antagonist and need to collaborate to overcome the third party, or it may appeal to common value and norms, a possibility that is often lacking from ethnic conflicts, which, by definition, involve different cultures and often different values. Coercion is using means to try to make the other side yield by reason of fear or actual injury (117), and it may be either threatened or implied, usually the first before the latter, in hopes that threats will illicit the desired result. Coercion varies in its content of negative sanctions, usually involving non-violent economic sanctions, or it can escalate to violent actions which involve physical prevention or impediments, sometimes resulting in damage to people or possessions (Kriesberg 1982:116). Rewards, on the other hand, occur when one side offers the other compensation for compliance rather than a punishment for non-compliance, they are conditional upon the actions of the other side, and often involve commodity exchanges (Kriesberg 1982:117). In combination, these inducements can take on many forms, from nonresistance and active reconciliation to direct action, non-cooperation, or non violent revolution. Which method is used depends on several factors, including the goal, characteristics of the "conflict unit," relations between units, and the

general environment in which those units operate (Kriesberg 123), and each of these is vitally important to any conflict.

Getting what you want partially depends on what you want. The ethnic groups in the regions discussed above have widely varied demands and requests, and their success in achieving their goals depends on how wisely they choose the means by which to pursue them. The greater the magnitude of the incompatibility between the two groups, the less likely it is that a fundamental change will occur as the result of rewards, bargaining, or persuasion (Kriesberg 1982:124). The Chechen conflict clearly falls into this category as the Russians are not willing to grant independence to its troublesome territory. Whatever methods tried after the Chechens first announced their intentions to secede obviously failed to ameliorate the situation, and the conflict has come to blows. Russians and Ukrainians on the other hand, have retained a generally non-violent environment in discussing the future of the Crimean Peninsula, possibly because of their cultural similarity. The nature of the conflict units can also help determine preferences for certain modes of inducement (Kriesberg 1982: 126). Cultural traditions and historical experience strongly influence this decision, for modes that have worked for a group in the past are often what the group chooses when faced with a new conflict. The previous experience of group members with efforts to redress grievances, their success or failure, can even determine whether a goal will be pursued at all. A group's access to accurate information about its adversary and general education level also may widen or narrow the scope of possibilities available to a certain unit. The resources available to the parties to a conflict can do more to determine the course of events than any other single factor, particularly the size of the contingent. A unit's "preferences for a specific mode are affected by the costs they have to bear to use one mode rather than another" (Kriesberg 1982:134). A huge size difference in adversaries may deter conflict action altogether, but a small group is more likely to be capable of terrorism or conspiracies, while large groups better lend themselves to internal warfare or nonviolent direct action, where a good number of

people are required for effective support and protection. Tangible resources, such as arms or natural resources can also be traded with the adversary in order to move toward the goal. Outright power, however, is relative to the point of application, for a group defending itself against a distant antagonist need not have equal total forces to sustain itself against the antagonist due to the nature of the forces, intervening space, and technologies involved. The Dnestr Russians are the perfect example of a conflict group with a fantastic resource base. Not only do they make up the majority of the population in the Transdnestr region, they were supported by a contingent of the Soviet army, and they controlled almost all of the industry and energy output for the republic of Moldova. The central government had no such resources and was forced to negotiate on the Russians' terms.

Relations between adversaries, essentially the degree to which the two groups are integrated, can do much to change the conflict intensity. "The greater the overlap of statuses between groups, the less likely is either side to utilize coercion" (Kriesberg 1982:137). Kriesberg continues to detail three conditions he deems essential for successful secure communities. These are: first, compatibility of major values relative to political decision-making; second, the capacity of participating units to respond to each other; and third, mutual predictability of behavior (140). Understanding and generally friendly relations have existed between the two Slavic groups of Russians and Ukrainians for centuries; inter ethnic marriages between the two groups are common, and they shared common positions in Soviet society. For these reasons, it is unlikely that problems between the two nations will come to violence, but it is for exactly the lack of these ties that Russians and Ukrainians are likely to clash with the Tatars returning to Crimea. Vastly different socioeconomic statuses are likely to exacerbate the religious and cultural difference that divide the Russians from the Chechens; and battles over linguistics and varying levels of urbanization serve to divide the peoples of Moldova for decades.

The conflict environment, of course, also changes the dynamics of any situation. There

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are social-psychological mechanisms that may escalate a conflict. Once conflict behavior has started, mechanisms are triggered that tend to increase its magnitude. "Increased commitment to the goals pursued justifies increased effort toward their attainment and the willingness to absorb, without yielding, the coercive efforts of adversaries; hence these mechanisms are sources of escalation" (Kriesberg 1982:166). There may be third parties within the system that may become allies, expanding the scope of the conflict and the constituencies involved, and often conflict units will choose their means in order to draw in certain outside groups (Kriesberg 1982: 147). Third parties may also serve as intermediaries by providing safe, neutral locations for communication and information about the nature of conflict and the views of adversaries, by reducing the emotional tensions and other barriers to communication. by helping the negotiators think of new options for settlement, and by improving negotiating procedures. Furthermore, tactics and techniques can spread contagiously from one group or area to another.

All of these factors contribute to the escalation or amelioration of a conflict, but what marks the end of a conflict? One adversary may simply refuse to agree that the struggle is over, "usually the defeated party." A continuance of the conflict or the renewal of conflict behavior generally forces the other conflict groups to do the same (Kriesberg 1982:214). One major determinant in the outcome of a conflict might seem to be power differences, but this is true only in terms of coercion; persuasion and rewards are determined by other resources (skills in persuasion may compensate for a weaker power position.). Intra-group dynamics may also lead to a renewal or continuance of the conflict, for the leaders of conflict groups who face individual competition for their position are often more militant to counteract the threat of being outflanked by more militant rivals for leadership (Kriesberg 1982:167).

# 5: CONCLUSIONS

Of course, like many theories of social or political behavior, explanations for ethnic strife are extremely situational dependent, and Kriesberg even goes so far as to elaborate on many factors present in conflicts that can push a conflagration down either the path to peaceful resolution or on the road to escalation depending on the environment of the struggle. In this discussion, I have attempted to point out the most vital factors to a conflict and the directions they have taken, but in many instances, events could have progressed along different lines with a slight change in any one of those factors.

Which theory, then, best describes the emergence and persistence of ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union? Soviet indoctrination as an attempt to eliminate former cultural identities and replace them with the concept of a soviet peoples did not seem to be all that effective. Perhaps only in Moldova did it amplify the regional identity of the Moldovans and create a tension that wasn't previously existing. It did very little to change ethnic groups' views of Russians or the Soviet system, often intensifying hostilities that lay dormant under the weight of the Union's repression and then exploded once those restrictions were removed. This indicates that history and culture are big players in the development of tension between nationalities. Centuries of coexistance can create understanding and bonds across ethnic lines that tend to ease hostilities, particularly among similar cultures. On the other hand, traditions that date back centuries, such as a group's religious affiliation or codes of honor, are parts of culture that maintain differences between groups and tend to create or escalate conflicts.

Historical culture, and its effects in the modern world, is never the whole story, however, and I would argue that the socio-economic factors that result from modernization also play a large role in the development of ethnic conflict. Groups that have similar cultural and linguistic histories may find themselves in a bitter competition over resources, jobs, and education if one

group perceives that the other is getting ahead and attributes that difference to ethnicity. More common in this region are groups that see their lack of development or low status in society as an issue that can be rectified by confronting the state. There are also groups that find themselves in the better educated, more urbanized sectors of the state who see their high position in the socio-economic hierarchy as threatened by the action of the state and move to induce the state to refrain from that action in order to keep their place in society.

And what of the chances for stability (or even democracy) in the region in the light of such ethnic conflict? Dahl argued that legitimate and effective means for public contestation should be achieved before inclusiveness of the system is complete. For many new states in the former Soviet Union, the opposite has been shown to be the case, as groups that need to have issues addressed by their respective governments decide that they have the best chances of achieving their goals by using illegitimate methods, such as violence or secession. Furthermore, while most of Dahl's institutional guarantees necessary for a democracy are in place in the former Soviet Union, some are still lacking, and others are not functioning properly ( the election that placed Dudayev in power in Chechnya is highly questioned by officials in Moscow, for example). Even more dangerous to the prospects for democracy are the economic problems which are at the top of every government's agenda, problems which seriously hamper these new republics in their efforts to maintain political stability and to retain their national autonomy. While ethnic tension in

Moldova seems to be on the decline for the moment, because of the government's move away from suggestions of Greater Romanian unification, Moldova is economically tied to Moscow, (as Romania was never really in a position to help) which is faring no better, and stands to lose a great deal of ground if the Chechen conflict continues, not only in military costs, but in lack of oil revenues from the region and withdrawn economic aid from Western nations who condemn Russia's actions there. Ethnic tensions in the area are likely to be exacerbated in the light of such problems, and governments are likely to tighten their controls in the short run if they are to make progress in the long run.

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