

THE POWER OF MEMORY:
HOW WESTERN COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF THE HOLOCAUST
FUNCTIONED IN DISCOURSE ON KOSOVO

by
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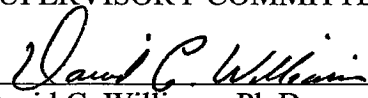
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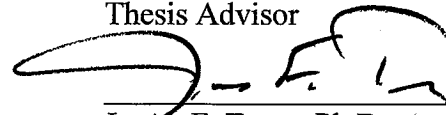
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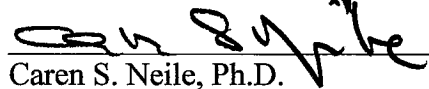
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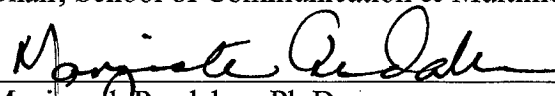
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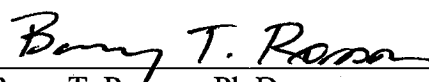
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis provides a rhetorical analysis of the Western representation of the Kosovo conflict and its resolution in the year 1999. By reviewing political, scholarly and media rhetoric, the thesis examines how the dominant narrative of “genocide in Kosovo” was created in Western discourse, arguing that it gained its persuasive force from the legacy of the collective memory of the Holocaust. Using the framework of Kenneth Burke’s theory of Dramatism and Walter Fisher’s theory of the narrative paradigm, this thesis aims to understand how language, analogy and collective memory function in rhetoric to shape audience perceptions and guide political and military action. The study illustrates the mechanics of the operating rhetoric by analyzing two primary sources, the rhetoric of U.S. President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In dealing with human conflict in general, and war in particular, it is difficult to determine the absolute truth. As Riikka Kuusisto points out, “there are only contending alternatives and various versions of what has happened, how things are and what should be done” (335). This understanding is very important in dealing with any kind of human conflict, and more vitally so when dealing with war. The topic of this thesis is a war that took place in the Southern Yugoslav province of Kosovo between the Serb authorities and the Albanian majority seeking secession. After a series of violent incidents in Kosovo, and failed political negotiations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) deployed its armed forces into Operation Allied Force and carried out airstrikes against Yugoslavia (then comprised of Serbia and Montenegro) in the spring of 1999.¹ The aerial campaign went on for eleven weeks, resulting in victory for NATO and withdrawal of the Yugoslav authorities from Kosovo.

The Kosovo conflict, or any other conflict for that matter, is complex and ought to be examined from several different perspectives in order to do it justice. The perspective I will use is rhetorical, based upon the notion that both conflict and its resolution are made possible through the use of language and rhetoric as means of human communication that can shape perceptions, offer interpretations and move people to act.

¹ This very brief and general account of events is taken from Kuusisto for introductory purposes only. The Kosovo conflict will be examined in more depth later in the thesis.

In examining the rhetorical representation of the Kosovo conflict in the West, and by “the West” I mean the United States and Western Europe, I came across many instances in which the language presented to the public by politicians and media functioned to stir traumatic memories of the collective historical experience of the Nazi Holocaust carried out sixty years earlier. The Kosovo conflict was not represented as a distinct case of human conflict brought on by unique historical and socio-political complexities, but as a case of genocide, a *déjà vu* consistent with the collective memory of the Holocaust in which genocide was a political objective of Nazism and played out incrementally, starting with verbal abuse and social exclusion of certain groups and resulting in physical abuse and mass killings.²

In this thesis, I argue that the Western political, media and scholarly rhetoric in dealing with the Kosovo conflict utilized the collective memory of the Nazi Holocaust and that the power of that memory functioned to justify, and thereby procure public support for a particular type of political and military action. By examining the rhetorical function of the collective memory of the Holocaust in the case of Kosovo, this thesis aims to add to the field of rhetorical studies in the following ways: (1) to enable a better understanding of the Kosovo conflict by illuminating the function of language and rhetoric in bringing about conflict and its resolution, (2) to examine the function of analogy in shaping audience perceptions, and (3) to explore the relationship between rhetoric and collective memory. In my review of literature on Kosovo (27), I have come across only one study that mentioned the collective memory of the Holocaust in relation

² The explanation of the collective memory of the Holocaust is taken from Weymouth 160.

to understanding the Kosovo crisis.³ Many other studies conducted on the topic of the Kosovo conflict, to be discussed later in this thesis, make references to the Holocaust. However, they do not explore the function of the collective memory of the Holocaust in the rhetoric on Kosovo, and I believe that my study would contribute to fill that void. There is much written on collective memory and rhetoric in general.⁴ However, regrettably, a review of that literature is beyond the scope of this thesis.

I do not mean to suggest that only one type of collective memory was used in dealing with the conflict in question. The public discourse surrounding the Kosovo conflict had a layering of memories, but the featured memory, particularly for Western audiences, which gave the rhetoric its persuasive force, was how the West remembered the Holocaust. There are many instances, to be cited later, where the term “Holocaust” itself was not used *per se* to describe the nature of events that occurred in Kosovo. However, the collective memory of that experience was stirred through strategic use of language and images generally associated with both the horror and the guilt that accompany it. The power of the memory of the Holocaust is not only in the horror that underlines it, but in *the guilt* that accompanies it. As Weymouth points, the West also remembers the Holocaust as “the failure of Western values to prevent it” (160).⁵

Although it is too late to save the victims of the Holocaust, it is not too late to *prevent* any

³ Weymouth talks about the use of the collective memory of WWII as a frame of reference in the Western media coverage (143), and mentions the collective memory of the Holocaust in an attempt to explain the motivation of the politicians and the media to use exaggerated numbers in relaying the nature of the atrocities in Kosovo (160).

⁴ A search of academic articles that deal with “rhetoric and collective memory” returned about thirteen thousand results on all kinds of topics.

⁵ Weymouth suggests that there are feelings of guilt as part of the Western collective memory of the Holocaust relative to the initial reluctance to get involved in suppressing the Nazi policies and practices in World War II.

future instance of mass persecution and murder. I argue that this was the predominant rationale in the West in dealing with the problem of Kosovo, a rationale stated repeatedly by politicians, media and scholars alike: we must act in order to prevent another Holocaust.

The rhetoric that operated on such a rationale was powerful and successful in unifying the public and procuring justification for action. However, it is important to understand that it was founded on one-sided representation of events and actors in the Kosovo conflict. If the conflict in question was represented and dealt with as a “civil war” rather than “genocide,” the Western audience would have had a more holistic understanding of the complexity of it and might have compared it to a radically different touchstone, such as the U.S. Civil War. “Genocide” as mass violence against a group of people “unilaterally defined and denied a right to response”⁶ presupposes the placement of actors in the conflict into clearly defined roles of “perpetrator” and “victim.” “Civil war,” on the other hand, calls for multiple representations from differing perspectives, using conflicting accounts of both events and actors. However, from a rhetorical perspective, representations that are less than consistent would have created discord among the audience, and, as a result, the rhetoricians (politicians, media and others who addressed the Western public) would not have been able to procure justification for the military action that took place. Consequently, the representation of the events and actors in the conflict was tailored in a way that would facilitate the success of the operating rhetoric.

⁶ This definition of genocide is taken from Bauman 160.

In reality, war rhetoric functions to polarize the public opinion by creating a dichotomy between “good” and “bad,” or “victim” and “perpetrator” respectively. Although such discourse greatly simplifies a conflict and makes it more understandable, in reality it places the actors into closed linguistic categories that can leave little room for alternative representation and can, ultimately, function to justify certain action, for example, “in the name of the good.” Polarizing discourse also allows for the elevation of the “good” and the demonization of the “bad,” and in doing so only functions to deepen the conflict between the two. If rhetoric were applied to enabling a polyphonic understanding of a conflict, it could be the means of resolving it. However, until people are able to use language in such a way, reflexively and with great care, rhetorical critics are left to study the war rhetoric for the purposes of inviting a greater understanding and knowledge towards a “purification of war.”⁷

In order to invite a better understanding of the Kosovo conflict and to add to the knowledge that can be gained from studying the last war of the twentieth century, this thesis will proceed by giving a historical overview of how the actors in the conflict were situated in relation to one another in the geo-political sense. My study will then unfold with a review of select Western literature on Kosovo which seeks to understand how the narrative frame of “genocide in Kosovo” was created and subsequently dealt with in the West, from media to academia. I will then proceed by presenting a methodological framework with which to analyze the reviewed discourse, followed by the analysis of the

⁷ This expression was used by Kenneth Burke to denote the purging of war as his ultimate purpose in creating his theory of Dramatism and devising linguistic tools for analysis of human motivation.

general trends that shaped and guided the Western discourse on Kosovo and two primary sources (political speeches) that exemplify the trends in their most dramatic form.

In a 2008 issue of *The American Conservative*, William Lind quoted an “old saying” that “the problem with the Balkans is that they produce more history than they can consume locally” (21). With that in mind, it is difficult to condense so much history into several pages and strike a balance between different interpretations of historical facts. As much as I would like to, I cannot present all the different interpretations within the scope of this thesis. For the purposes of my argument, I have selected two Western authors who provide digestible narratives that cover the historic period relevant to this thesis. The first author is a British journalist, Tim Judah, who visited Kosovo on several occasions and grappled with the complexities of interpretation and representation first-hand. My second source is an American high-school textbook author, Michael Schuman, who presented a cohesive and digestible narrative of the history of Yugoslavia in the format of a high-school study aid on societies in transition. Judah’s is a journalistic account, Schuman’s is educational, and I believe them to be sufficient in highlighting historical facts pertinent to my study. However, I do not mean to suggest that Judah’s and Schuman’s writings, or my selections from them, represent the absolute truth.

Determining the absolute facts is, regrettably, undoable, especially in the scope of this study.

I believe that it is important to this thesis to show how the actors in the Kosovo conflict were situated in the Balkan Wars, World War One (WWI) and World War Two (WWII) because in all these wars the territory of Kosovo changed hands between different entities. I will continue the examination with an overview of how Kosovo was

territorially and politically defined in the Communist Yugoslavia until the end of the Cold War, and finalize this chapter with focusing on the conflict between Serbia and Kosovo before and during the NATO bombing campaign.

Yugoslavia in the 20th Century until the End of the Cold War

As explained in great detail by Tim Judah in his 2008 book *Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know*, at the onset of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) Kosovo was part of Albanian territory still occupied by the waning Ottoman Empire (37). The Balkan Wars began in October of 1912 when Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece began fighting to drive out the Ottomans from the Balkans (38). 28 November 1912, saw the creation of an independent Republic of Albania, confirmed in December of 1912, at a conference of ambassadors in London. However, at the same conference, the territory of Kosovo (as constituted today) was divided between Serbia and Montenegro (38). The Albanians and Bulgarians were dissatisfied with their territorial shares and in June of 1913 launched a second Balkan war “in a failed attempt to take more” (38).

The regional devastation caused by the Balkan Wars continued in 1914 with WWI. On 28 June 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated in Sarajevo⁸ by Gavrilo Princip, and the Austro-Hungarians declared war on Serbia (Judah 39). In *Nations in Transition: Serbia and Montenegro* (2004), Michael Schuman explained that Gavrilo Princip was a teenager of Serbian decent, a member of the Young Bosnia Movement, “a pan-Slavic group whose goal was the unification of all the South Slavs into a single state in which [the] South Slavs would rule themselves”

⁸ Sarajevo is the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the time of the assassination, the city was occupied by the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

(26). Although the evidence showed the assassination to be a work of terrorists, the Austro-Hungarians saw it as a Serbian attack on the Empire itself and declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914 (26). The countries of Europe began taking sides and entering the war as either the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary and Germany) or the Allies (England, France, and Russia) which Serbia joined as well (26). By 1915, Serbia was invaded by the Central Powers (joined by Bulgarians) and the territory of Kosovo was divided between the Empire and the Bulgarians, and the Serbian “king, army, and many more” began to evacuate across Kosovo towards the Albanian coast to reach the Allies (Judah 40). Tim Judah pointed out that many Serbs were killed in this retreat “picked off by Albanians eager for revenge” for the atrocities visited upon them by the Serbs in the Balkan Wars (40).

The United States, led by President Woodrow Wilson, sided with the Allies and entered the war in April of 1917. The war officially ended with the signing of a peace treaty on 11 November 1918 in Versailles, France. In the Balkans, on 1 December 1918, the Southern Slavs declared a new state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, encompassing Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Vojvodina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia, informally known as Yugoslavia, which was ruled by the Karadjordjevic monarchy (41). Judah pointed out that the new Kingdom included several non-Slav minorities: Germans and Hungarians in the north (in Vojvodina) and Albanians in the south (in Kosovo) “whose armed resistance to their reincorporation into the Slav state lingered well into the 1920s” (41-42).

Judah wrote that WWII further aggravated the relationship between the Serbs and the Albanians in Kosovo. In April of 1939 Mussolini’s forces invaded Albania, and

although the invaders were not popular at first, their popularity rose gradually because they encouraged the idea of a Greater Albania (46-47). After Yugoslavia was invaded by the Nazis in April of 1941, the territory of Kosovo was divided between the Germans, the Bulgarians and the Albanians who formed Greater Albania (47). Judah wrote that the Kosovo Serbs were under attack, their villages burned to the ground, many were sent to concentration camps in Kosovo, and some 70,000 fled and were registered as refugees in Serbia's capital, Belgrade, by April of 1942 (47).

After invading more of Yugoslav territory, Germany created another puppet state, the Independent State of Croatia. Schuman explained that the new Croatian state,

comprising not only Croatia but Bosnia and Herzegovina, was placed under the Ustasha, which had changed from an extremist organization intent on Croatian unity to a virulent group that preached racial superiority and collaborated with the Nazis. Their enemies were the Jews, Serbs, and Roma. Some Serbs were offered a choice of forced conversion or death. Others were given no such choice and were simply executed. That included Jews and Roma, whose property was confiscated and who were sent to death camps. (36)

In *Serbia* (1999), Milivojevic wrote that 750,000 Serbs were killed in the Nazi Holocaust (56), while Yad Vashem gives figures of “more than 500,000 Serbs [who] were murdered . . . , 250,000 expelled, and another 200,000 forced to convert to Catholicism.”⁹

The German occupation in Yugoslavia also gave rise to anti-Nazi movements, which, as Schuman pointed out, were organized into two camps (36-37). The first camp was known as the Chetniks. They were anti-communist groups who resisted the Nazis and pursued the Ustasha “with brutality of their own” (36). The second camp was known

⁹ The data was compiled by the Shoah Center at the International School for Holocaust Studies, available at http://www1.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%205930.pdf.

as the Partisans. They were made up of communists and led by Josip Broz Tito who managed what was then “an underground and illegal branch of the Communist Party” (36). The Chetniks and the Partisans at first fought together against the Nazis, but their coalition fell apart in 1942 and they began fighting between themselves until 1943 when the Partisans emerged as “the only real organized Yugoslav group other than the occupying Nazis and the fascists” (37). The three big Allies of WWII, the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, supported the Partisans and together “battled against and wore down the Nazi stranglehold on Yugoslavia” (38). In September of 1944, Tito met with the Soviet premier Joseph Stalin to procure help from the Soviet Red Army for the liberation of Yugoslavia (38). On 15 May 1945, the German and the Ustasha forces surrendered to the Partisans and WWII was officially over in Yugoslavia. The loss of human life on Yugoslav territory was devastating. Schuman wrote that “roughly 1.7 million Yugoslavs, or 11 percent of the population in 1941, were dead as a result of the war. Only Poland suffered a higher mortality rate of its citizens” (38).

Tito took office in March of 1945 as the premier of Yugoslavia, a communist federation organized into six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia (Schuman 38). Vojvodina and Kosovo, the two districts of Serbia with non-Serb ethnic minorities, were made into provinces within Serbia, while the Serbian minorities in Eastern Croatia were not given the same autonomy (51).

Post-War Yugoslavia was at first aligned with the Soviet Union. However by 1948 Tito became uncomfortable with Stalin’s dictatorial demands and Yugoslavia was banned from the Communist Information Bureau (also known as Cominform, 1946-

1956), which resulted in the creation of a more liberal form of communism in Yugoslavia which functioned as a kind of socialist self-management (39). Post-1948, Yugoslavia became a unique country, balanced between the East and West, communist but independent of the Soviet control, and pursuing its own path in becoming a founder and the only European member of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1960s (Hudson 39).

The 1960s and the 1970s are particularly relevant to this thesis because they contain several constitutional milestones that affected the development of ethnic relations in Yugoslavia. In 1963, Kosovo was promoted from “region” to “autonomous province” and by 1968 the Kosovo Albanians were rioting and demanding bilingual university education as well as the promotion of their province to a republic (Judah 53). The Yugoslav constitution of 1974 established Yugoslavia as an eight-unit confederation of states, with the two provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina, equal to the other six republics in all but name (Pavlovic 104). This constitutional change affected the power structure of the Yugoslav federation in the sense that the autonomous provinces could nullify decisions made by their republic while the republic they were part of could not do the same for them (104).

Another very important change in the Yugoslav constitution occurred in 1968 when the Bosnian Muslims were recognized as Muslims “in the national sense” (Babuna 195).¹⁰ This particular constitutional change was problematic because it bonded religion

¹⁰ The communist regime in Yugoslavia did not recognize the concept of religious minority. It did, however, differentiate between nationalities: Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Muslims since 1968. The Bosnian Muslims, although a religious group, could only be recognized on the basis of their national description (based on ethnicity). To make matters more understandable, a “Slovene” was territorially defined and could be of any religion, but a “Muslim” was not territorially defined and could only be of the Muslim religion.

to nationality and in so doing arguably contributed to the development of ethnic relations that led to the final destruction of the Federation. Nations, as Tim Judah pointed out, “had the right to republics,” and the republics “had the theoretical right to secede” (54). The 1974 Constitution did not recognize Albanians in Kosovo as Albanians in the national sense, although they were not Slavs.

President Tito passed away on 4 May 1980 and was eulogized as “a national hero and a respected international statesman” at a funeral attended by the leaders of forty-nine countries (Schuman 42). Soon after Tito’s death, dormant ethnic rivalries began to resurface, and the years of 1981 and 1982 were marked by Albanian protests in Kosovo demanding the status of a full republic (44). Judah wrote that some of the slogans of the protests were: “We are Albanians, not Yugoslavs!” and “We want a unified Albania!” (58). During the 1980s, the Albanians in Kosovo were “in charge,” yet still believed that Serbia held power over them, which Judah posits was the reason why the Serbs in Kosovo were exposed to “increased harassment and hostility” (58). The maltreatment of the Serbs in turn increased their emigration and created a political climate that, as Judah worded it, “Slobodan Milosevic [President of Serbia elected in 1989] could use to his advantage” in the years to come (58).

Judah also wrote that as of about 1969 the Serbian Orthodox Church began compiling data about the “gradual exodus of Serbs from Kosovo,” but it wasn’t until after Tito’s death that the fate of the Kosovo Serbs was a subject of petitions (Judah 61). In September of 1986, a Serbian newspaper published parts of a memorandum drafted by anonymous members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts which, apart from addressing concerns and economic issues the country was faced with, also stated that the

Serbian community in Kosovo was faced with a “reign of terror” (62). The memorandum stated that

if genuine security and unambiguous equality for all peoples living in Kosovo and Metohija¹¹ are not established; if objective and permanent conditions for the return of the expelled nation [Serbian community] are not created, then this part of the Republic of Serbia and Yugoslavia will become a European issue, with the gravest possible unforeseeable consequences. (62-63)

Judah argued that the memorandum laid “the intellectual foundations” of the Serbian nationalism that arose in the subsequent years (63). The memorandum designated the Serbian community as the “expelled nation,” a designation that is arguably evidence of a position that bonds nationhood to a people rather than to a place, as was the case with the Muslim nationality, which was not territorially defined.¹²

On the eve of the downfall of communism in Eastern Europe, Slobodan Milosevic was elected President of Serbia in May of 1989 and soon afterward appealed to the Serbian people to start repopulating Kosovo – a political move that did not go over well in Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia “where the Serbs constituted a sizeable minority” (Schuman 46). During that time, Croatia “had its own nationalistic movement brewing” led by a former army general Franjo Tudjman (46). In addition to the volatile political situation, the Yugoslav economy was in shambles. The national debt, estimated at \$18.5 billion in 1982, continued to grow and in year 1989 alone it was estimated that 1,900 separate workers’ strikes took place throughout Yugoslavia (46).

¹¹ “Kosovo and Metohija” was the full name of the autonomous Yugoslav province at the time.

¹² Depending on the translation of the memorandum, the term “nation” could have been used in Serbo-Croatian to denote “narod,” a word that means both “people” and “nation” in its common use. In the absence of the original document in Serbo-Croatian, I cannot determine how the term “nation” was used. The “expelled nation” could have been in its original version the “expelled people.”

The Post-Cold War Breakup and the Notion of Civil War

In 1989, Yugoslavia was not the only place of unrest in Eastern Europe. Former Soviet communist satellite nations tumbled one after another. Starting with the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, “the Communist governments of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Romania all fell” (Schuman 47). The communist government of Yugoslavia fell more gradually and crumbled from within.

In July of 1990, the Milosevic-led Serbian government amended the 1974 Constitution by revoking the autonomous status of Vojvodina and Kosovo (Schuman 48). The amendment was met with outrage among the Kosovo Albanians followed by an unsuccessful attempt to “grab control of Kosovo and secede from Serbia” (48).

In June of 1991, Slovenia was the first Yugoslav republic to secede from the Federation after a brief confrontation with the Yugoslav People’s Army (49). Macedonia was another Yugoslav republic to secede from the Federation in 1991. It broke away peacefully and remained neutral for the duration of the Yugoslav conflicts in subsequent years. Croatia seceded next, but was not let go “quietly or peacefully” (49). When Franjo Tudjman was elected President of Croatia in May 1990, his “nationalistic rhetoric,” as Schuman worded it, made the Serbian minority population in Croatia “anxious” and they “held a referendum and declared themselves a separate state called The Republic of Krajina” (47-48). They joined forces with the Yugoslav Army and began fighting a civil war against Croatia which went on until December 1991 (49). In February of 1992, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) moved into Croatia on a peacekeeping mission and the Yugoslav Army withdrew (49). Schuman further wrote that the Krajina became a UN Protected Area, and remained so until 4 August 1995 when the Croatian

troops regained control of it in a “surprise attack” which resulted in a massive wave of Serbian refugees, upward of 160,000, searching for “asylum and safety,” as Schuman worded it, in the remaining Yugoslav republics (52-53).

Roughly a month after UNPROFOR moved into Croatia in March of 1992, “the voters of Bosnia and Herzegovina officially declared the nation’s independence” from the Yugoslav federation, followed by the Bosnian Serbs’ announcement that “they were separating themselves from the majority Muslims and forming their own Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Schuman 49-50). What followed in Bosnia was a war that lasted until the end of 1995 in which 97,207 people were killed or disappeared, as reported by a Sarajevo-based Research and Documentation Center (Simons A6). More than half of the casualties were suffered by the Bosnian Muslims, about 25 percent were Serbs, and approximately 8 percent were Croats. The casualties presented by the study include about 7,000 Bosnian Muslim males killed in a single attack during the fall of the East-Bosnian town of Srebrenica (Judah 68). Judah argued that this event was “seminal” and changed “the course of history” in Kosovo and explained that in his view the “Western leaders . . . were prepared to move fast to bomb Serbia because of Kosovo, fearful that such a thing [another Srebrenica] would happen again” (68).

In Kosovo, in 1992, elections were held and the voters whom Schuman described as “mostly ethnic Albanians” elected Ibrahim Rugova as their president and “filled the seats of 130-member assembly” (Judah 50). The new assembly and the president were not recognized by the federal (Serbian) government; nevertheless, they operated as a “shadow government” (50). By December of 1993, Judah wrote, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was founded and began “distributing leaflets” at home, while in the

Diaspora the members promoted their political ideas and some “began military training” (77).

In November of 1995, the Bosnian war ended with the Dayton peace agreement. Although Dayton was about Bosnia, Judah remarked that “it also marked the effective end of hostilities between Serbia and Croatia, too” (Judah 79). Bosnia and Herzegovina was comprised of two entities: the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb-led Republic of Serbs, whose co-habitation was implemented and monitored by a NATO-led peacekeeping force with 60,000 troops (CIA n. pag.). In the wake of Dayton, the European Union recognized the state of Serbia and Montenegro, at the time still named the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a political move that did not suit the Kosovo Albanians because in the newly recognized country they still remained in a state of revoked autonomy (Judah 79).

After the Dayton agreement, the breakup of Yugoslavia continued when Montenegro seceded from the Federation peacefully in 2006. For Kosovo, the secession was more difficult and prolonged, finalized with a declaration of independence in February of 2008. At the time of this writing, Kosovo seems to have been the last piece of Yugoslavia falling apart in a domino effect.

With regard to how the West understood the armed conflicts in the breakup of Yugoslavia, the review of literature pertinent to my thesis showed two very different understandings, especially in academia. One group of scholars understood the armed conflicts as acts of civil war, while the other group understood them as acts of unilateral Serbian aggression directed by Slobodan Milosevic, described by Sabrina Ramet as “a despot who had already brought great suffering to Slovenes, Croats, Bosniaks,

Hungarians of Vojvodina, and Muslims of the Sanzak ... now extending his programme to the Albanians of Kosovo” (Ramet “The USA” 178). This disagreement in interpretation has an important function in the discourse on Yugoslavia in general, and Kosovo in particular, and I will discuss it later in more depth. This thesis will now focus on the proceedings of the Kosovo conflict itself in order to illuminate the depth and complexity of the relationship between the warring parties.

Serbia and Kosovo in Focus

The complex relationship between the Serbs and the Albanians in Kosovo can be traced back several centuries. The Kosovo land itself is integral to the formation of both the Serbs’ and the Albanians’ national identities. As summed up by Cristopher Williams in “Kosovo: The Desecrated Icon” (a chapter in *The Kosovo Crisis* 2001), both entities claim Kosovo as the cradle of their civilization:

The Serbs argue that they have been in Kosovo since the seventh century, that their medieval kings were crowned there and but for a defeat by the Ottoman Turks at the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 Serbs would have retained control in Kosovo; while the Albanians suggest that they arrived in Kosovo prior to the Serbs and that they are the direct descendents of the region’s earliest inhabitants. (17)

Apart from this rift that arose from the contested territorial claims, the two entities differ in other very important ways: in language and religion. The Serbs speak Serbo-Croatian and are Orthodox Christians; the Albanians speak Albanian and are mostly Muslims, with some Orthodox and Catholic. There is a well-supported argument that many of the Kosovo Albanians are actually Serbs who were forced to give up their religion during the Ottoman reign over that region (17-18). Conflict is seldom brought about by the things that bring people together, but more often by what sets them apart. Both entities in

Kosovo focused not on their shared connection to the same land, but on their individual rights to claim that land as their own, and thus they arrived at conflict.

The standard and official representation of how the Kosovo conflict played out in the years leading up to the NATO bombing, taken from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), is the following:

Despite legislative concessions, Albanian nationalism increased in the 1980s, which led to riots and calls for Kosovo's independence. At the same time, Serb nationalist leaders, such as Slobodan MILOSEVIC, exploited Kosovo Serb claims of maltreatment to secure votes from supporters, many of whom viewed Kosovo as their cultural heartland. Under MILOSEVIC's leadership, Serbia instituted a new constitution in 1989 that revoked Kosovo's status as an autonomous province of Serbia. Kosovo Albanian leaders responded in 1991 by organizing a referendum that declared Kosovo independent. Under MILOSEVIC, Serbia carried out repressive measures against the Albanians in the early 1990s as the unofficial Kosovo government, led by Ibrahim RUGOVA, used passive resistance in an attempt to try to gain international assistance and recognition of an independent Kosovo. Albanians dissatisfied with RUGOVA's passive strategy in the 1990s created the Kosovo Liberation Army and launched an insurgency. Starting in 1998, Serbian military, police, and paramilitary forces conducted a counterinsurgency campaign that resulted in massacres and massive expulsions of ethnic Albanians. International attempts to mediate the conflict failed, and MILOSEVIC's rejection of a proposed settlement led to a three-month NATO bombing campaign against Serbia beginning in March 1999 that forced Serbia to agree to withdraw its military and police forces from Kosovo.¹³

The above standard representation assigns “repressive measures,” “massacres and massive expulsions,” and “rejection of a proposed settlement” to Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbian forces at his command, while the Albanian population is credited with “passive resistance” and later “insurgency” to which the Serbian forces responded with “massacres.” The CIA narrative gives a simple, straightforward representation with a

¹³ Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Kosovo*. 2009. Web. 19 Nov. 2009. <<http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html>>. The capitalizations are in the original.

clear assignment of roles to victim and villain alike, and I will discuss later in this thesis how such representation functioned in discourse.

Contrary to the standard representation, Western media reports of ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia prior to 1998 did not ascribe the charge to the Serbian forces but to KLA. In 1982, *The New York Times* reported that Kosovo was overcome with a huge exodus of tens of thousands of Serbs fleeing from discrimination and intimidation by the Albanian majority living in Kosovo (Howe A8). At that time, the Western media reports ascribed ethnic cleansing to Albanian nationalists in Kosovo, who had a two-point platform,¹⁴ "first to establish what they call an ethnically clean Albanian republic and then to merge with Albania to form a greater Albania" (Howe A8). By 1987, *The Times* reported that the ethnic cleansing of the Kosovo Serbs was becoming increasingly violent and gaining momentum, and Kosovo was becoming an ethnically pure Albanian region (Binder 1:14).

Tony Weymouth wrote in "The Media: Information and Deformation" (in *The Kosovo Crisis* 2001) that after the Kosovo Albanians began a quest for secession from Serbia by establishing a range of parallel institutions and the Serbian parliament revoked their autonomy, the years leading up to the NATO bombing were marked by several outbursts of violence between KLA and the Serbian security forces (148). The violence resulted in casualties on both sides, with numbers being higher on the Albanian side "because 90 per cent of Kosovo is made up of Kosovo Albanians" (148).

The clashes between the two entities were aggravated in the spring of 1997 when Albania collapsed into a state of anarchy. Judah wrote that, as a result, "hundreds of

¹⁴ According to Becir Hoti, an executive secretary of the Communist Party of Kosovo. In Howe n. pag.

thousands of weapons were available,” including Kalashnikov rifles “for as little as \$5 each,” which became a source of supplies for KLA (80). Schuman wrote that, as of February of 1998, “ongoing fighting” between the Serbian police forces and KLA became “standard” and by the summer escalated into an “all-out civil war” (55-57). In early 1998, roughly one year before the NATO bombing, President Clinton sent a special envoy to the region, Robert Gelbard, who reported back that KLA was “without any question, a terrorist group” (Leupp n. pag.). By February of 1998, both the U.S. State Department and the British Foreign Office believed that KLA was a terrorist organization reportedly funded by Osama bin Laden (J. Simons 230). By the end of June of 1998, KLA controlled about 40 percent of the Kosovo territory, at which point Gelbard joined Richard Holbrooke for a meeting in Switzerland with KLA officials and the organization was soon removed from Washington’s terror list (Ramet “The USA” 168). The removal of KLA from Washington’s list of the world’s terrorist groups was a crucial political moment. This thesis will not speculate on the political agenda that may have motivated such a turn, but will, rather, illuminate its rhetorical implications. For example, I argue that the removal of KLA from the list of terrorist groups enabled its rhetorical re-casting from a terrorist group seeking secession (accused of ethnic cleansing) to a military group on a quest for liberation.¹⁵ This re-casting enabled a more clear-cut assignment of roles in narratives used to represent the Kosovo conflict in which Serbia is the perpetrator of violence and the Albanian population in Kosovo is the defenseless (and blameless)

¹⁵ Schuman quoted a 1998 Human Rights Watch description of KLA: “When you encounter them, you may meet a villager with a hunting rifle defending his home, or someone who clearly has had military training” (58). Schuman concluded that “Whether the KLA is seen as a terrorist organization or a group of freedom fighters depends on which side the observer is on” (58-59).

victim. One very interesting point is that as the placement of actors and events in Kosovo changed, the language changed as well. The initial depiction of events in Kosovo as “ethnic cleansing,” defined as “expulsion or extermination of ‘others’ in the name of ethnic purity” (Murji 114), was soon replaced by the term “genocide,” defined as “mass violence against a group of people unilaterally defined and denied a right to response” (Bauman 160) which is a much more powerful term because it is part of the terminology (and memory) of the Holocaust.

In early October of 1998, an agreement was obtained between Milosevic and Holbrooke, under which Serbia agreed to withdraw its troops from Kosovo and permitted the arrival of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission (Ramet “The USA” 169). Judah remarked that regardless of the ceasefire, by the end of the year, the number of clashes between KLA and Serbian forces “began multiplying” (84). After KLA murdered six Serbian teenagers in a café in December of 1998 and several Serbian police officers in early January of 1999, the Serbian forces commenced an offensive against a “KLA-held village” which resulted in the murder of forty-five people (84). At that point, NATO representatives called the Serbian and Albanian representatives from Kosovo to negotiate peace in Rambouillet, France (Schuman 57).

The peace negotiations began on 6 February and lasted until 23 February when the Serbian representatives rejected the proposal (Judah 85). Judah wrote that the Albanian team was made up of key politicians and KLA leaders; the Serbian team was made up of “nonentities” and Milosevic was not present (85). The standard narrative, exemplified earlier, refers to negotiations in Rambouillet as international attempts to mediate the conflict that were rejected by Milosevic. However, what was lacking in

public discourse was the knowledge that the Rambouillet Accords was a document demanding that Serbia grant the U.S. and NATO forces "free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout" all of Yugoslavia, not just Kosovo, immunized "from any form of arrest, investigation, or detention by the authorities in [Yugoslavia]," given unrestricted "use of airports, roads, rails and ports without payment" (Leupp n. pag.). The Accords also mandated that Serbia would have to "grant all telecommunications services, including broadcast services, needed for the Operation, as determined by NATO" and that the economy of Kosovo "shall function in accordance with free market principles" (Leupp n. pag.). In "Kosovo: The Desecrated Icon," John Simons posits that "no country in the world could reasonably have been expected to agree to such terms" and points out that the document provided "a mandate for war" irrespective of whether Yugoslavia signed it (in *The Kosovo Crisis* 227). This knowledge, the details of the Accords, was not made public and therefore did not have a function in the public discourse. What was widely publicized was the fact that the Serbian president refused to sign the document. Milosevic's refusal to sign the Accords was not only a crucial political moment, but it had a rhetorical function as well. It reinforced Milosevic as the villain in the narrative because his refusal to sign was interpreted as the rejection of peace.

Perhaps the saying that "history repeats itself" is a cliché. However, as in the previous wars fought on the Yugoslav territory in the twentieth century, the Allies stepped in to bring about the resolution of conflict. On 24 March 1999, NATO launched air strikes first against Serbian military targets and then strategic targets such as "oil production facilities, bridges, and highways, including those in the capital city of Belgrade" some of which resulted in civilian casualties (Schuman 58-59). Judah wrote

that the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch estimated that five hundred civilians died as a result of the bombing (89). On the battlefield, the fighting between the Serbian forces and KLA continued despite the aerial campaign (Schuman 60). However, in late May, two events occurred that arguably expedited Serbia's defeat. NATO approved that 50,000 peacekeeping troops be moved towards Kosovo's borders, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)¹⁶ indicted Milosevic and four other Serbian officials for "war crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva conventions, and violations of the laws or customs of war" (60). Increasingly vulnerable, Milosevic agreed to a peace plan on 3 June, and NATO stopped their bombing campaign after seventy-eight days (61).

After the bombing ended, Kosovo was "handed over to a U.N. administration and a NATO-led peacekeeping force" and Kosovo Albanian refugees began returning home while the Kosovo Serbs began to flee (Schuman 61). Judah recounted that time as one of "general euphoria" in which

many did not see, or overlooked, the dreadful reprisals that took place against Serbs in particular but also against Roma and other non-Albanians. NATO troops were unprepared to deal with the murders and mayhem ... and the flight of tens of thousands of Serbs, accompanied by attacks on Orthodox churches. (91)

Judah wrote that the Serbs fled "virtually all towns in Kosovo" or were "ethnically cleansed from their homes and villages" (91-93).

After the NATO bombing, the forensic investigation of the ICTY exhumed 2,108 bodies in 1999, as reported by ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte to the United Nations

¹⁶ ICTY was established by the UN Security Council Resolutions 808 and 827 in 1993. The Tribunal employs a staff of about one thousand with a "regular budget" currently at \$350 million. For more on ICTY see <http://www.icty.org>.

Security Council on 24 November 2000 (Del Ponte n. pag.). The report may not be the final count and it does not make an ethnic distinction in terms of the bodies. I have come across media reports that give a higher estimated figure of casualties, generally around 10,000, and others that break the ICTY figure down based on ethnicity. However, I have not been able to verify the truthfulness of the reports and for that reason have not included them in this thesis. Del Ponte finished her term as chief prosecutor of the Tribunal and subsequently published a book in 1998 in which she claimed that “she had received credible reports, with compelling circumstantial evidence” that post-NATO arrival in Kosovo three hundred Serbs were “abducted and taken to Albania ... murdered after organs had been taken from their bodies to sell” (Judah 92). However, no hard evidence was found and the investigation halted due to “jurisdictional limitations” of the Tribunal, and Del Ponte was banned by the Swiss foreign ministry from further promoting her book (92).

Following the 1999 NATO settling in Kosovo, the United States started building what is now reputed to be the largest NATO base in Europe: Camp Bondsteel, covering approximately 955 acres of the Kosovo land (Szamuely, n. pag.). Milosevic was overthrown by the citizens of Yugoslavia in October of 2000, arrested and handed over to the ICTY authorities in 2001 and, after five years of trial, passed away during the ICTY proceedings in 2006.¹⁷ Kosovo declared independence on 17 February 2008, and was recognized by the U.S. and most member states of the European Union, as well as many other countries throughout the world. However, many countries such as Russia, Brazil,

¹⁷ ICTY Trial Transcript recording the death of Slobodan Milosevic, 14 March 2006: 49191. Web. 7 Oct. 2009. <<http://www.un.org/icty/transe54/060314IT.htm>>.

China, India, and many Muslim countries did not recognize Kosovo's independence (Judah 150) and have yet to do so at the time of my writing.

Having reviewed the complex relationship of the two entities fighting over Kosovo, what is left to examine in the geo-political context relevant to this thesis is NATO as the third entity that took part in the conflict in order to bring its resolution.

Status of NATO in Post-Cold War Europe

As discussed at length by Robert Kagan in his best-selling book *Of Paradise and Power* (2004), the bombing of Serbia was the first time that NATO had undertaken military action in the fifty years of its existence. As Kagan explained, NATO was founded in 1949, after WWII, at a time when European nations previously considered as global powers were nearly destroyed. Such a weakened Europe was not strong enough to hold its own against the perceived threat of the Soviet Union and began to rely on the U.S. for strategic support and protection during the Cold War (17-18).

However, as Kagan pointed out, since the fall of the Soviet Union and the subsequent ending of the Cold War, NATO has been in a state of identity crisis, or rather, a lack of purpose. Moreover, the identity crisis had been fueled for several years by the fact that the U.S. military power far outstripped that of Europe in the total power count. The imbalance of power was a source of tension among NATO members, because they measured threats and risks differently, and disagreed upon the use of force as a tool in international relations. Post-Cold War America became free to intervene, and it did so in Panama, the Persian Gulf War, and Somalia, and during the Clinton years, in Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo (27). The military forces of the European allies were reduced to

filling in for the US as part of peacekeeping missions once the US carried out its military mission and stabilized the situation (22).

The tension between the U.S. and Europe within NATO escalated in 1999, with the allied military intervention against Milosevic's Serbia. The intervention in Kosovo was considered by many as an effort to save the alliance and preserve the cohesion of NATO (50). The NATO military commander at the time, General Wesley Clark, confirmed such claims in his book *Waging Modern War* (2002), in which he wrote: "No single target or set of targets was more important than NATO cohesion" (430).

Kagan argued that preserving the NATO alliance was a means to preserve the unity of the West. Although Clinton officials defended the intervention on the basis of the national interest, it was a means to preserve the alliance (Kagan 50).

For the United States, preserving the cohesion and viability of the alliance was not just a means to an end in Kosovo; it was among the primary aims of the American intervention, just as saving the alliance had been a primary motive for America's earlier intervention in Bosnia, and just as preserving the cohesion of the alliance had been a primary goal of American strategy during the Cold War. (49)

Kagan further recounted that the biggest lesson that the alliance members learned from the bombing campaign was, in Clark's own words: "we never want to do this again" (Clark 417). The disparity in military power, and consequently decision-making within the alliance, continued to be a source of tension that culminated during the campaign. Although it was a joint effort, America clearly dominated the war: it proposed 99% of the targets, it flew the vast majority of the missions, and it provided over 90% of the missiles. In general, it carried out the intervention "the American way," without much reference to the European political strategy (Kagan 46). General Clark was continually exasperated by

the need to constantly find a compromise between American military doctrine and what he called the “European approach” (requiring a legal authority beyond NATO) (Clark 420-421). Kagan also posed the question of whether the Europeans would have even bombed Serbia had the U.S. not forced their hand (7).

Although there may have been internal differences in NATO with regard to the military and political strategy employed in Kosovo, the fact remains that NATO as a Western alliance subscribed to the same ideological values, and all the members supported the intervention. They only disagreed on the means, diplomatic versus military, through which to achieve that end. Whether NATO had other political reasons to act as it did is not the concern of this thesis. What is relevant to my study is that NATO was faced with two challenges at the time, first, to remain unified against a common enemy and second, to attain public support for military action.

In conclusion to this chapter, I hope to have presented a deeper understanding of the contextual complexity of the Kosovo conflict. Whether discussed as part of the Yugoslav breakup or in its own right, the topic of Kosovo has inspired much interest and writing by journalists, scholars, public intellectuals, legal experts and many others. The variety of the accounts that I have come across is truly overwhelming in both size and scope. And yet, the topic of the Kosovo conflict still finds its way into public discourse, which shows that the quest for knowledge that can be gained from it is still not satiated. This thesis aims to contribute to that quest by examining the function of language, rhetoric and collective memory in shaping perceptions and bringing about conflict resolution.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON KOSOVO

In an attempt to understand how the story of the Kosovo conflict was told in the West, I have reviewed hundreds of texts written on the topic in the last ten years. The majority of the texts reviewed do not offer interpretations of the conflict but, rather, deal with matters of political and military strategy, funding, logistical support and similar, and are consequently not relevant to the purpose of this thesis. Relative to my purpose of analyzing the function of language, analogy, and collective memory in shaping the rhetoric that told the story of Kosovo, I will focus on the texts that depicted events in Kosovo as “genocide.” Reports of atrocities as bare numbers that indicate human suffering are meaningful to be sure, but they are so much more meaningful when integrated into stories and given names such as “genocide,” a profoundly powerful term that evokes the story and memory of the mid-twentieth-century Nazi Holocaust.

In discussing my findings, I will begin by examining the political discourse that shaped the story of Kosovo, followed by an exploration of several Western media outlets in order to see how their reporting contributed to the development of the dominant narrative. I will finish this chapter by reviewing academic considerations of political and media rhetoric. Academic discourse on the topic of Kosovo is particularly important to my study because it takes place in the educational realm where history and memory are recorded and preserved.

Political Rhetoric Drawing Parallels

The reports of human suffering in Kosovo in early 1999 drew much attention from the Western public. Politicians and media alike initially struggled to interpret the volatile situation and to decide how to present it to the public. However, once the complex conflicts were explained in the form of simplified narratives about “one evil man [Milosevic] who is carrying out genocide,”¹⁸ an interpretation was in place that was analogous to the mid-century Nazi Holocaust. Such interpretation had already been in place (post-Bosnian War) when fighting in Kosovo began to escalate, and Kosovo was part of a country ruled by Milosevic, it was easier, if not logical, to view and present the conflict simply as a continuation of unilateral Serbian aggression directed by Milosevic rather than change the existing interpretation (and confuse the general public) by calling the conflict a “civil war.”

Political rhetoric reported in the media in the weeks that led to the NATO bombing and during the campaign itself contained actual accusations of “genocide” and estimates of such frighteningly high numbers of victims that it was impossible for the public not to draw parallels between events in Kosovo and in the Nazi Germany. The U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen, Senator Joseph Biden, Senator Charles Hagel, and former Senator Robert Dole all accused Serbia of genocide. “We've now seen about 100,000 military-aged men missing. . . . They may have been murdered,” warned Cohen.¹⁹ “There are indications genocide is unfolding in Kosovo,” declared State

¹⁸ A phrase used by Noam Chomsky to sum up the media rhetoric on Kosovo in a June 1999 interview with Patrick Cain in *The Activist*. <<http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/199906--.htm>.>

¹⁹ In Leupp, n. pag.

Department spokesman James Rubin.²⁰ On 19 April 1999, the U.S. State Department announced that “500,000 Albanian Kosovars . . . are missing and feared dead.”²¹ Joska Fischer, the German minister of Foreign Affairs said, "When we find out the whole truth I believe it will much harder than we can bear," and went on to prophesy a "1930s or 1940s-style ethnic war" in Yugoslavia.²² President Clinton voiced similar fears of "deliberate, systematic efforts at genocide"²³ while Tony Blair, two weeks into the bombing, stated the following: “I pledge to you now, Milosevic and his hideous racial genocide will be defeated.”²⁴

Four German court opinions and three British Foreign Office intelligence reports from October 1998 to March 1999 all challenged the accusations of ethnic cleansing and genocide laid at Serbia’s door.²⁵ According to the Opinion of the Upper Administrative Court at Munster of 11 March 1999, "Albanians in Kosovo have neither been nor are now exposed to regional or countrywide group persecution in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."²⁶ Even if these reports were distributed and discussed in political circles, they were not widely publicized and consequently did not challenge the accounts and estimates given by key political figures.

In the United States, there was much political debate on the topic of Kosovo before and during the bombing campaign. However, the questions debated did not deal with the representation of events and actors in the conflict, but, rather debated the

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ In Halimi and Vidal, n. pag.

²² In Leupp, n. pag.

²³ In Pilger, n. pag.

²⁴ In Weymouth, 150.

²⁵ In Leupp, n. pag.

²⁶ Ibid.

necessity and legality of the NATO bombing campaign as a solution to the problem at hand. Republican presidential candidates (Pat Buchanan, Lamar Alexander and Dan Quayle), leaders in the House and Senate (Tom Delay, Don Nickles), as well as some senators and representatives (Bob Smith, Randy “Duke” Cunningham), all questioned the objectives and strategy of NATO’s involvement in Kosovo.²⁷ Former presidential candidate Pat Buchanan stated in NBC’s *Meet the Press* (25 April 1999) that he believed the bombing of Serbia to be an “unjust war” no longer waged for Kosovo but “to save NATO’s credibility and NATO’s face,” while a few others questioned the political strategy of bombing a country into signing a peace agreement rather than mediating a solution acceptable to the warring parties.²⁸

In “The USA: To War in Europe Again,” Sabrina Ramet pointed out that the U.S. Senate itself was divided on the issue of authorizing the bombing campaign on the basis of lack of national interest (171). According to Ramet, the Republican Party was internally divided on the issue as well (171). In late March, “41 senators (38 of them Republicans) opposed using force against Belgrade, in a surprising vote against Nato [sic] councils” (172). However, President Clinton authorized the use of the U.S. military force as part of the NATO campaign and the bombing began on 24 March 1999. As Ramet recalls, on 30 April 1999, 37 days into the bombing, “26 legislators . . . filed a lawsuit against President Clinton” contending that “his commitment of military force . . . was illegal under the War Powers Act [of 1973]” (175). However, because the 1973 Act “had authorized the sitting president to commit US forces to a combat situation for up to

²⁷ Available at http://www.democrats.org/pdfs/gop_kosovo.pdf.

²⁸ Ibid.

60 days without obtaining Congressional approval” the lawsuit was dismissed on 8 June “as the aerial campaign was ending” (175).

While there was disagreement among politicians regarding the Kosovo conflict, it hinged on political strategy and proposed solutions. What was not questioned and debated was the foundational evidence itself, the actual accusations and estimates that shaped the nature of the political and military response that followed.

While the political debates did go on and were reported to the public, what was reported with more immediacy and attention were the narratives and the footage of human disaster, “the shattered villages, the streams of refugees, the dead and the accounts of atrocities related to the cameras by distraught civilians” (Weymouth 155).

President Clinton’s rhetoric in particular contained depictions of terror and suffering, often graphic and consistent with stories of Nazi-style persecutions in the Holocaust, told by survivors in memoirs and re-told in films:

We’ve seen innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with bullets; Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up and shot in cold blood. This is not war in the traditional sense. It is an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people²⁹

Five hundred villages burned. Men of all ages separated from their loved ones to be shot and buried in mass graves; women raped; children made to watch their parents die.³⁰

Apart from telling stories of murder, mass graves and rape, Clinton also related other types of suffering experienced by the Kosovo Albanians. He told the Western audience about the kind of suffering brought on by “freezing and starvation in the hills where they

²⁹ Clinton’s Address to the Nation, 24 March 1999. Available in the Appendix.

³⁰ Clinton’s Address to the Nation, 11 June 1999.

[the Albanian refugees] had fled to save their lives,”³¹ “foraging for food in the cold of mountains and forests.”³² Clinton also related the psychological terror the refugees felt not only while “hiding in cellars, wondering if the next day will bring death or deliverance”³³ but also in “denying them their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives.”³⁴

Although Clinton’s rhetoric reviewed in this thesis had plenty of rational appeal in offering justification for the NATO bombing, I argue that it was the emotional appeal that accounted for most of the rhetoric’s persuasive force. Even when Clinton offered justification for bombing in a seemingly “rational” way, he used language such as “innocent lives” and “our children” that appealed to emotions:

. . . we have acted now – because we care about saving innocent lives; because we have an interest in avoiding and even crueller and costlier [regional] war; and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.³⁵

The rhetoric of the British Prime Minister Tony Blair was less descriptive than that of Clinton. However, he used language such as “massacres” and “racial genocide” to label the events in Kosovo. In a mid-bombing campaign article in the *Evening Standard Newspaper*,³⁶ Blair explained the events in Kosovo as “monstrous crime[s] of ethnic cleansing” in which “literally thousands of Kosovar Albanians [were] brutally massacred as an act of deliberate policy” and upheld the resolve that “good must triumph over evil” and that “racial genocide in Europe” must be stopped (Blair, n. pag.). Although Blair’s

³¹ Clinton, 24 March 1999.

³² Clinton, 11 June 1999.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Clinton, 24 March 1999.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Accessed through the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office website, available in Bibliography.

rhetoric in the article arguably contained less emotional appeal than Clinton's, he used terminology that evoked the Holocaust as a deliberate political objective (of Nazism) that played out incrementally and led to physical abuse and mass killings.

Alongside the parallels to Nazi-style persecutions, the review of the political rhetoric also showed a definite singling out of Slobodan Milosevic as the villain in the story of Kosovo, often described as a local and regional menace spreading repression and terror, on occasion compared with Adolf Hitler in a subtle manner.

In Blair's article in the *Evening Standard Newspaper*, Milosevic's name was mentioned fifteen times, while the Serb forces were mentioned twice. Blair accused Milosevic of "deliberate policy [of brutal massacres]" and "destabilization of the Balkan region" (Blair, n. pag.). When relating the progress of the bombing campaign, Blair wrote in such a way that he made it seem as if all the damage and losses caused by the bombing were suffered by only one person, Milosevic, and not the Serbian armed forces or the Serbian people.

Milosevic has suffered huge damage . . . we are destroying *his* capacity to refuel, rearm and direct the forces carrying out *his* vile policies . . . Milosevic has now lost the equivalent of a whole brigade . . . *His* losses are mounting every day. (Blair, n. pag. emphasis added)

In a short mid-bombing campaign Op-Ed for *USA Today*,³⁷ the U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, mentioned Milosevic by name seven times, nearly in every sentence, and made it seem as if the NATO campaign was waged against a single person rather than against the Serb forces which she mentioned once. Albright described Milosevic as a villain who "refused a diplomatic solution," and who will "remain subject

³⁷ Accessed through the Secretary of State website, available in Bibliography.

to indictment by the War Crimes Tribunal” as well as have to “answer to the Serb people” (Albright, n. pag.). Albright assured the readers that Milosevic “will not win” but will “get only what he has earned, which is the contempt of humankind” (Albright, n. pag.).

President Clinton’s rhetoric also singled out Milosevic and depicted him as a dictator “who has done nothing since the Cold War ended but start new wars,”³⁸ and both a local and regional menace, spreading terror over a period of time:

We should remember that the violence we responded to in Kosovo was a culmination of a 10-year campaign by Slobodan Milosevic, the leader of Serbia, to exploit ethnic and religious differences in order to impose his will on the lands of the Former Yugoslavia. That’s what he tried to do in Croatia, in Bosnia, and now in Kosovo. The world saw the terrifying consequences.³⁹

Perhaps more so than other politicians, Clinton also subtly equated Milosevic with Hitler. On Holocaust Remembrance Day (13 April 1999), Clinton released a statement in which he said: “On this day let us resolve not to let this ethnic cleansing and killing by Mr. Milosevic go unanswered.” In his address on 24 March, Clinton accused Milosevic of starting the wars in Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia and Kosovo, and then not-so-subtly equated him with Hitler by describing the war in Bosnia as “genocide in the heart of Europe – not in 1945, but in 1995. Not in some grainy newsreel from our parents’ and grandparents’ time, but in our own time, testing our humanity and our resolve” (Clinton, n. pag.).

Political rhetoric reviewed in this thesis seems to have told the story of Kosovo as a story about “one evil man committing genocide.” Although such a narrative frame

³⁸ Clinton, 24 March 1999.

³⁹ Clinton, 11 June 1999.

greatly simplified the story of the complex conflict and made it more understandable to the public, it also presented the events and actors in Kosovo as analogous to those of the Holocaust, and in so doing stirred a very powerful collective memory that shaped the story of Kosovo as well as its outcome.

When dealing with conflict in a foreign country, it is only natural for the public to look to its political leaders to interpret and explain the events and actors. Although it is the media who report the story, they too rely upon persons of authority to *tell* the story (discuss, explain, or categorize the reported events), and then the media either challenge or reinforce political representations. Next, I will examine the Western media themselves, to see how they reported the story of Kosovo and how their coverage affected the dominant narrative.

Media Coverage Analogies to the Holocaust

When I talk about the Western media, I do not mean to discuss them as a uniformed collective entity. Although the majority of the media coverage reviewed in this thesis functioned to reinforce political representations, there were some media outlets that questioned the widely reported simplistic narratives that told the story of Kosovo. However, such outlets were in the minority and consequently not widely accessible. I will discuss some such texts, but will focus more on media representations that functioned to reinforce political depictions.

While the media do not create events, they convey and interpret them and in so doing inevitably tell a story that sheds light on some issues at the expense of others. As Anelia Dimitrova pointed out in “Nightmares in the Nightly News: CNN Covers

Atrocities in Kosovo” (2001), apart from providing narratives, reporters also supply the language with which to think about the participants in a conflict and their agendas (3). Nevertheless, I argue that to a large extent they rely on their sources of authority to explain the reported events. In dealing with foreign conflict, media coverage inevitably intersects with foreign policy, and I argue that media representations are frequently illustrations of claims and references made by certain authority figures (politicians, renowned scholars and the like). For example, if a high-ranking political official says that “genocide is unfolding in Kosovo,” the press representatives are, arguably, likely to approach the reports from Kosovo looking for elements to support that claim. Furthermore, in many instances of foreign conflict media representatives are often denied access to the physical location of conflict (for reasons of safety, political agenda of warring parties and conflict mediators alike) and in such cases naturally become more reliant upon assessments of political authority figures.

The number of documents in Western print media written on the topic of Kosovo is truly overwhelming, and a review of them all is far beyond the scope of this thesis. In examining how the Kosovo conflict was analogized to the Holocaust, I have considered three major Western media outlets: the *New York Times*, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Cable News Network (CNN). In examining the *Times*, I have relied upon *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* archives, and in exploring the BBC coverage, I have reviewed its online database. The majority of articles published in the two media outlets on the topic of Kosovo did not analogize the conflict to the Holocaust, but, rather, dealt with other topics pertinent to the campaign itself (e.g. political and military strategy, matters of campaign funding and similar). However, in telling the story

of crimes and supplying the moral imperative to act, a significant number of the articles did draw parallels to the Nazi Holocaust, and those are the articles I have focused on. In discussing CNN, I have primarily relied on Anelia Dimitrova's 2001 comprehensive study and will discuss her findings in relation to my argument.

The New York Times

The *Times* coverage of the Kosovo war was very prolific. A keyword search of the *Times* database for the year 1999, accessed through *ProQuest*, on the topic of "Kosovo," returned over three thousand documents. The in-depth reading and analysis of so many documents is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, roughly one hundred of those documents matched the keyword search of "genocide in Kosovo," and I have reviewed them in order to examine the development of the dominant story that has survived the test of time and debate. The dominant narrative is perhaps best exemplified in Roger Cohen's Op-Ed "Here Comes Kosovo" (14 February 2008), published in the *Times* three days before Kosovo proclaimed independence, to announce to the readers that the proclamation will take place:

Slobodan Milosevic, the late dictator, set Serbia's murderous nationalist tide in motion Milosevic's quashing of Kosovo autonomy was central to his conversion of Yugoslavia into "Srboslavia."⁴⁰ The revolt against his bullying brought independence to former Yugoslav republics from Croatia to Macedonia Albanians accounting for about 95 percent of a Kosovo population of 2.1 million cannot be reconciled with a Serbia that suppressed, beat up, evicted and killed them until NATO's 1999 intervention Milosevic rolled the dice of genocidal nationalism and lost.

⁴⁰ The name "Yugoslavia" is a mix of two terms: "Yugo" means "southern" in Serbo-Croatian, while "Slav" denotes the Slavic heritage of the people. "Yugoslavia" is literally "the land of the southern Slavs." "Srboslavia" is a play on words that suggests a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, a land of the Serbian Slavs.

Although the above is an editorial rather than a news article, it was published at a politically crucial moment and functioned to remind readers of the conflict that had taken place nine years ago. The *Times* did not publish a news article in the form of dispassionate analysis that looked at the conflict in retrospect and discussed the atrocities that occurred in the aftermath of the bombing. Rather, the newspaper opted for a passionate op-ed that used highly emotional language to re-tell the story as it was told nine years earlier.

In my review of the *Times* articles and opinion editorials published in early 1999, I have gone back in time to see how the dominant narrative was developed. My findings indicate that the newspaper's reporting for the most part functioned to reinforce the interpretation of events and actors given through political rhetoric.

In the weeks prior to the NATO bombing, as well as during the aerial campaign, the *Times* frequently quoted high-ranking administration officials on the topic of Kosovo. As the bombing campaign was unfolding, the *Times* published reports that reinforced the events in Kosovo as "genocide" and supplied the moral imperative to act. On 24 March 1999, when the campaign commenced, Jane Perlez quoted President Clinton, Senator Hagel and Javier Solana (NATO Secretary General), all of whom argued for military action. President Clinton relied on lessons learned from previous wars and implicitly aligned Milosevic with Hitler: "What if someone had listened to Winston Churchill and stood up to Adolf Hitler earlier? How many people's lives might have been saved?" (A1). Perlez further quoted Senator Hagel who said "History will judge us harshly if we do not take action to stop this rolling genocide," while Javier Solana invoked moral imperative

in saying “We must stop an authoritarian regime from repressing its people in Europe at the end of the 20th century. We have a moral duty to do so” (A1).

On 26 March, A.M. Rosenthal, a critic of the NATO campaign, wrote that many Americans will support the NATO bombing “because only a person whose soul has died can stand the pictures of refugees and bodies without wanting to stop the carnage” and went on to describe Milosevic as a “dictator” who is “ever ready to kill his own people to maintain and keep power” (Op-Ed, A23).

On 30 March, the *Times* reported that “The Clinton administration claimed that evidence of genocide by Serb forces was growing to ‘abhorrent and criminal action on a maximum scale’” (News Summary, A2). On 31 March, Warren Hoge reported from London that “Tony Blair spoke of ‘unimaginable suffering and barbarism’ in Kosovo” while Defense Minister George Robertson “told of Balkan ‘killing fields’” and Robin Cook used the terms “appalling brutality” and “genocide” to refer to the conduct of Serbian forces in Kosovo (A12). Hoge reported that he had heard the politicians speak at a war briefing where they “used highly emotive words . . . characteristic of the comprehensive and robust way that Britain has been framing the rationale for bombing Yugoslavia in moral terms” (A12).

In April of 1999, several articles were published that stirred the collective memory of the Holocaust more strongly and dealt with the Kosovo conflict as analogous to the Nazi genocide. R.W. Apple, Jr. wrote on April 1: “Mr. Clinton has compared Mr. Milosevic to Hitler, just as President George Bush compared Mr. [Saddam] Hussein to Hitler” (A14). On 7 April, the *Times* quoted the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as saying “of all gross violations, genocide knows no parallel in human history . . . the signs

are that it may be happening, once more, in Kosovo” (A15). Michael T. Kaufman wrote on 11 April that “Nazi policies of Jewish extermination . . . remain a benchmark of evil in this century” and then compared the Serbian people to the German people, raising the question of collective responsibility.

There are, of course, many decent Serbs who decry the violence, just as there were decent Germans under Hitler, but that does not excuse the Serb nation for its part in making a killing field of so much of the former Yugoslavia. (WK1)

Opposing views that challenged the accusations of “genocide” and comparisons between Kosovo and the Holocaust were published in the *Times* sporadically, such as Steven Erlanger’s “Auschwitz Survivor in Belgrade Now Fears NATO” (9 April 1999, A11). Erlanger interviewed a Serbian Jew living in Belgrade,⁴¹ Mr. Singer, a Holocaust survivor who strongly criticized the “indiscriminate” and “criminal” use of force by NATO. Erlanger quoted Mr. Singer as saying that he thought there was a tendency “to use the unique experience of the Holocaust as propaganda or justification for policy” and claiming that “what was done in Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo, however horrible . . . is not genocide.” Mr. Singer also criticized President Clinton and Prime Minister Blair for “comparing Serbian attacks in Kosovo to the mass murder of the Nazis” and thought that in so doing the politicians were “also manipulating with the Jews.”

As the bombing campaign extended longer than initially anticipated, and the number of refugees from Kosovo rose steadily,⁴² some politicians questioned whether it was the right course of action. The *Times* published such concerns along with articles that

⁴¹ Belgrade is the capitol of Serbia.

⁴² There are two different understandings as to what prompted the displacement of refugees. One understandings claims that the refugees were fleeing from NATO bombing in Kosovo, while the other claims that the refugees were “driven from their homes by Serbian forces” (Ramet “the USA” 171).

reinforced Milosevic as a villain; such articles wrote that “the one word for Slobodan Milosevic . . . is: killer,” and reinforced Milosevic as a regional menace who aimed to “spread the war throughout the Balkans, and beyond” (Rosenthal, 23 Apr. 1999, A25). As the bombing campaign neared its end, so did the coverage that described the events and actors in the conflict.

In criticizing the *Times* for one-sided coverage of Kosovo, political journalist George Szamuely, in a 2007 article “Still Slandering Serbia,” argued that the *New York Times* reporters John F. Burns and David Rhode, who collected the Pulitzer Prize for their reporting from Kosovo, and op-ed columnists Anthony Lewis and Leslie Gelb all wrote within the following narrative frame:

The Serbs were to blame for the breakup of Yugoslavia; the Serbs were responsible for the wars in the former Yugoslavia; the Serbs alone committed genocide . . . and were it not for U.S. determination to bomb, the Serbs would have wiped out every ethnic group and realized their ancient dream of Greater Serbia. Not coincidentally, tales of Serb horrors, replete with photos of women wailing and girls lighting candles, serve the purpose of reassuring readers that, contrary to what they may see or hear, it is U.S. adversaries, and not the United States, that commit atrocities. (Szamuely, n. pag.)

Szamuely’s pointed critique is an opinion editorial, published quite late after the bombing campaign in an online publication *CounterPunch*. The *Times* itself or any of the journalists named did not respond to Szamuely’s critique.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

BBC covered the Kosovo conflict extensively during the aerial campaign. The BBC online archives break down the coverage of NATO air strikes on a day-by-day basis (organized into weekly segments, e.g. “NATO Strikes: Week One”) with several articles,

images and footage that conveyed news, but debated weekly issues as well.⁴³ In reviewing the articles, I have found that the majority of them did not analogize the events and actors in Kosovo to the Holocaust; they addressed other issues related to the campaign. However, those articles that did analogize did so as a direct implication of a statement made by an authority figure supplying the language with which to interpret (or frame) the events.

On 11 February 1999, after the burial of 40 Albanians killed by the Serb police forces in Racak, BBC quoted William Walker, the head of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Kosovo at the time, who condemned the killing as “crimes against humanity.”⁴⁴ BBC reported that “Mr. Walker denounced the killings as a massacre in January [after they had happened]” and pointed out that “his [Walker’s] remarks . . . were the main catalyst in getting the international community to convene urgent peace talks in France to end the conflict.”⁴⁵

Colonel Bob Stewart, a former British UN commander, in a statement to BBC News Online (25 March 1999) branded the events in Kosovo “acts of genocide” and added, “I hope that the British people cannot tolerate watching acts of genocide being perpetrated against the people of Kosovo or any other human being.”⁴⁶ On 30 March 1999, BBC quoted Martin Bell, a British MP, stated that “An entire population, the Albanians of Kosovo, are being driven from their homes for no other reason than they are

⁴³ NATO air strikes timeline at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/1998/kosovo2/312003.stm.

⁴⁴ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/277671.stm>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Bob Stewart’s statement, titled by BBC as “NATO Troops ‘May Have to Fight’” is available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/303637.stm.

not Serbs. We are witnesses of genocide It is a defining moment Our response to it will tell the world what kind of people we are. We have a clear choice.”⁴⁷

Although the previously quoted officials all categorized the events in Kosovo as either “crimes against humanity” or “genocide,” perhaps the strongest language came from the British Prime Minister himself. On 14 May 1999, Tony Blair wrote for BBC News Online that

It is no exaggeration to say what is happening in Kosovo is racial genocide. No exaggeration to brand the behavior of Milosevic's forces as evil. It is something we had hoped we would never experience again in Europe . . . the terrible atrocities happening in Kosovo are not accidents but the results of a deliberate policy There are no half measures to Milosevic's brutality He is determined to wipe a people from the face of his country. Nato [sic] is determined to stop him. And we will. We are united in our determination to right this wrong and reverse the ethnic cleansing.⁴⁸

In “The Media: Information and Deformation” (2001) Tony Weymouth argued that the NATO intervention, fought in the name of humanitarian values such as “justice, compassion and basic human decency . . . found a general consensus of support among the majority of the European and American media” (156). While there were arguments about the means with which to achieve the NATO objectives, Weymouth argued that “the objectives themselves, the halting of the perceived Serb oppression of the Kosovo Albanians and the punishment of Milosevic” were never in question. On 27 March 1999, BBC reported “Mr. Blair says the purpose [for NATO air strikes] is crystal clear, it is ‘to curb Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's ability to wage war on an innocent civilian population’” (BBC).

⁴⁷ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/1998/kosovo2/308009.stm.

⁴⁸ Tony Blair’s article titled “My Pledge to the Refugees” is available in the Appendix.

However, as the aerial campaign unfolded, Weymouth wrote, there were dissident voices in the mainstream media such as Robert Fisk (of the *Independent*) and John Simpson (of BBC) who challenged NATO's motives and reported the loss of civilian lives in the bombing, "which Nato [sic] and some other media coverage referred to as 'collateral damage'" (Weymouth 157).

The Cable News Network (CNN)

In "Nightmares in the Nightly News: CNN Covers Atrocities in Kosovo," Anelia K. Dimitrova conducted a very impressive study of CNN's coverage of "Strikes against Yugoslavia," as the network termed the NATO campaign. Dimitrova documented the Network's coverage before, during and after the campaign and analyzed how CNN's international correspondents structured their narratives and utilized footage to facilitate the creation of meaning. Dimitrova found that a total of fifty-two out of one hundred and forty-seven stories related news of atrocities committed in Kosovo in four narrative frames (16). In each frame, the reported atrocities functioned to further both the story and the message that the military intervention is the only viable solution.

Dimitrova pointed out that visual rhetoric was used to engage audiences emotionally and mold the Western public opinion into supporting the NATO intervention. More so than any other network that reported the bombing, CNN's coverage of the campaign had the added benefit of using instantly transmitted images and the network's ratings skyrocketed as audiences around the globe watched the network's coverage of "strikes against Yugoslavia" (1). According to Dimitrova, CNN's audience was shown graphic and gory images as reporters "told stories of atrocities, massacres,

genocide, and ethnic cleansing” (2). Some of the images of atrocities were borrowed from archives on South America, Bosnia, and the Holocaust Museum, in order to illustrate the scope of the Serbian crimes in Kosovo. Thus a visual parallel was drawn between the Nazi Holocaust and the Milosevic regime, and Dimitrova pointed out that the parallel in question was an illustration of a reference made by President Clinton “which equated the two regimes” (42). On 26 May 1999, CNN aired a sound byte from one of Clinton’s earlier speeches in which he “linked Milosevic’s policy of systematic persecution to the Holocaust,” a reference which tied the historical memory to the Kosovo crisis.

According to Dimitrova, CNN journalists and officials alike referred to atrocities in Kosovo in their scripts. However, they used very different language. Journalists reported news of “atrocities,” while policy makers used words such as “genocide,” “mass killings” and “war crimes” (23). Dimitrova argues that the language of political officials functioned to amplify the reported violence and add a sense of urgency to the argument for military action (23-24).

Dimitrova wrote that CNN frequently sought opinions from various political and military officials whose claims of violence served as *evidence* that atrocities were taking place. She found that in constructing the actual evidence of atrocities “the [CNN] studio still remained the most active platform” despite the fact that after the bombing journalists were relatively free to investigate and report atrocities on-site (34). What stood for evidence was built mainly on verbal images offered by administration officials, journalist’s reports of refugees’ stories, and footage of symbolic imagery (digging of graves) that “transferred meaning from one historical period [the Holocaust] to the

current crisis” (35). As an example, Dimitrova points out a reflective story aired on 1 July 1999 which offered metaphoric evidence:

Here the journalist tells the story of the now past Kosovo war against the background of documentary pictures of atrocities held in the Holocaust Museum, thus confirming the many tropes equating Milosevic and Hitler. (35)

Dimitrova concluded that, as a result of such metaphoric representation, “the legacy of the past served as *evidence* for the present” (35, emphasis added).

In the entire sample analyzed by Dimitrova, CNN interviewed only two intellectuals who gave a critical evaluation of the network’s coverage. The first was a Georgetown University Professor Michael Brown whose analysis of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was aired on 30 March 1999, six days after the start of the bombing campaign (38). In his analysis Brown challenged the network’s coverage by pointing out that “some KLA members have been involved in ethnic cleansing” (38). However, Dimitrova writes, Brown was given neither prominence nor air time (38). The second intellectual interviewed was Belinda Cooper, “editor of a book on Nazi war crimes” (38). In the 19 June 1999 interview, Cooper defined “war crimes,” and challenged the coverage by explaining that Kosovo was different from Bosnia and by stressing the importance of forensic investigation and “securing evidence of atrocities.”⁴⁹ It is interesting first, that so few intellectuals were interviewed and second, that what they said had so little bearing on the network’s coverage. Dimitrova concluded that *proof* with

⁴⁹ Quoted in Dimitrova 38.

which atrocities were verified was given in the form of statements and stories, and “mostly metaphoric imagery” (e.g. fleeing refugees) (41).⁵⁰

Although CNN’s ratings skyrocketed during the timeframe Dimitrova analyzed, the network received much criticism for its reporting. Domestically, CNN received criticism that “it functioned as Clinton News Network, rather than as a professional news organization” (27). Dimitrova further quotes Michael Messing who published a media analysis during the bombing campaign in *The Nation*. Messing categorized CNN’s coverage of the Kosovo conflict as “appallingly shallow and uninformed” and accused the correspondents on the ground of having “ignored the obvious questions” (Dimitrova 12). Foreign criticism that Dimitrova mentions came mainly from the Serbs, who claimed that “the network operated as ‘a factory of lies’” (27).

Although political rhetoric and media coverage alike received some criticism at the time of reporting, deeper analysis and critical evaluations of events and actors in Kosovo (and how they were presented and reported) occurred in the academic arena. Next, I will review scholarly considerations of issues surrounding the Kosovo conflict to see how such issues were treated in the realm of education.

Dissent in Scholarly Discourse

Robert Hayden, a prominent scholar on the former Yugoslavia, pointed out that before the 1990s, foreign scholars who studied Yugoslavia were a small community, usually had high linguistic competence and high standards of scholarship, and were

⁵⁰ Dimitrova pointed out that CNN aired some digital images presented by the U.S. military in the early stages of the Kosovo war as well as some footage of dead bodies and burial sites “on loan” from Kosovo Television “whose questionable origin . . . was legitimated by U.S. military official sources, and six local witnesses” (42).

familiar with each other's work "across academic disciplines" (Hayden 182). However, as the media publicized accounts of ethnic cleansing, rape, war crimes, and accusations of genocide, scholarly attention to the wars of former Yugoslavia intensified. The result is a very large body of literature which Hayden claims is of "very mixed quality," some produced with much expertise, but most done with minimal research and with "predetermined conclusions" (183).

Scholarly discourse surrounding the Kosovo conflict reviewed in this thesis was somewhat divided in its approach, and it generated controversy as a result of that division. Some scholars attempted to *explain* the events and actions that took place, while others engaged in *identifying* the culpable parties. However, a significant portion of academia engaged in justifying the assigned blame and the corresponding action of the West. Scholars who sought to *explain* events and actors rather than identify the culpable party were singled out as partisan. Debate and controversy alike were for the most part founded on the problem of "genocide."

Two scholars in particular engaged in a debate that hinged on a moral viewpoint and ended in a heated discussion. In the 2007 edition of *East European Politics and Societies*, Robert Hayden and Sabrina Ramet, both renowned scholars of long standing with expertise in former Yugoslavia, engaged in an intense exchange prompted by Ramet's book *Thinking about Yugoslavia: Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo* (2005), which Hayden reviewed in the journal. In *Thinking about Yugoslavia*, Ramet reviewed 131 books written about the fall of Yugoslavia in several languages, and essentially divided the scholars who wrote them into two categories: the idealists (also termed "universalists") and the realists (also

termed “relativists”). This division hinged on the moral viewpoint of the scholars and their level of commitment to the principles of universal human rights.⁵¹ Ramet explained the realists as the heirs of Hobbes, and the universalists as the heirs of Kant (Ramet *Thinking About Yugoslavia* 143). In Ramet’s words,

On the one side are those who have taken a *moral universalist perspective*, holding that there are universal norms in international politics . . . founded in Universal Reason and expressed in international covenants such as The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. . . . On the other side are authors who reject the universalist framework, with its emphasis on universal norms and universal human rights who, in their accounts, embrace one or another version of *moral relativism*. . . . Authors in this second school tended to be more *sympathetic*, in the 1990s, to the arguments made by Milosevic, Karadzic and their collaborators. (Ramet 1-2, emphasis added)

As an example of the realist or relativist, Hayden cited the following selection from Ramet, an excerpt from Burg and Shoup’s *The War in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (1999), a book which Ramet classified as written from “a pro-Serb, anti-Muslim, relativistic perspective” (Ramet 23; Hayden 187):

The accusation of genocide, unlike the charge of war crimes, fixes guilt on one party, and by implication, absolves the other (the victim). The charge of genocide is almost always accompanied by demands that the alleged perpetrator(s) be punished – not only for the alleged act(s) of genocide but for all actions surrounding the genocide. The charge of genocide thus becomes a vehicle for negating and denying all other issues surrounding the conflict . . . whatever argument one wishes to make, the gravity of the accusation of genocide demands precise charges and precise evidence. (Hayden 187)

⁵¹ Ramet explained the “universalist” position as “sometimes inspired by Jean Bodin (1530-1596) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), [which] involves applying moral criteria to judge the actions of states and, in the context of the Yugoslav troubles, led to demands for Western intervention to stop the atrocities being committed against civilian populations.” (Sabrina Ramet “A Review” 196)

As an example of the idealistic or universalist approach, Hayden gave a quote from Mestrovic and Cushman's *This Time We Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia* (1996), which Ramet cited as exemplifying the approach:

It often seems that modern day intellectuals . . . go out of their way to be balanced in their discourse on the Balkan conflict, even if such attempts at balance cause confusion about the historical record of just who is killing whom and why, or how many people have been killed. Balance is a necessary quality of intellectual life, except when it comes, as has been the case of much analysis of events in the former Yugoslavia, at the cost of confusing victims with aggressors, and the failure to recognize those who are perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity. (Hayden 186)

Hayden discredited Ramet's work as a "moralizing discourse" which functions, as Tzvetan Todorov explained in his 2003 book *Hope and Memory*, on the basis of the rhetorical device of the excluded middle: "whoever is not antifascist as we are may be suspected of indulgence toward Fascism" (Hayden 185). In other words, such a structure creates a strict either/or placement of discourse. Moralizing discourse is thus problematic not only because it creates division and polarization, but also because it excludes the middle that could otherwise provide balance and keep the polarities in check.

The examples of both types of discourse contain the charge of "genocide," one in an attempt to *explain* how the charge works in discourse as a vehicle that negates and denies other issues that surround it, while the other is concerned with *identifying* the culpable party. One is looking at the *how*, and the other at the *who* of it, respectively.

Scholarly disagreements were not only contained to the pages of academic journals, but carried over into the realm of mass media. Roger Lippman, editor of an on-

line publication *Balkan Witness*,⁵² compiled and published a list of “deniers of Serbia’s war crimes,” some of them academics, and their articles on the Kosovo conflict, last updated in December of 2009. Lippman also published a list of U.S. and British prominent scholars who rejected arguments for the NATO intervention and signed a manifesto titled “Academics against NATO’s War in Kosovo”⁵³ in which they demanded

an immediate halt to the bombing; the organization of a Balkan conference in which the representatives of the states and of all the national communities within these states take part; defense of the right of peoples to self-determination, on the sole condition that this right is not fulfilled on the back of another people and by the ethnic cleansing of territory.⁵⁴

One scholar who made both of Lippman’s lists is Noam Chomsky, professor of linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a renowned public intellectual in the U.S. and Great Britain. In a June 1999 interview with *The Activist*, Chomsky was asked to comment on the use of the terms “humanitarian crisis,” “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” as they were applied to Kosovo.⁵⁵ Chomsky replied that the technical meaning of “humanitarian crisis” was “a problem somewhere that threatens the interests of rich and powerful people,” and explained that

. . . any disturbance in the Balkans does threaten the interests of rich and powerful people, namely, the elites of Europe and the US. So when there are humanitarian issues in the Balkans, they become a “humanitarian crisis.” On the other hand, if people slaughter each other in Sierra Leone or the Congo, it’s not a humanitarian crisis. . . . Kosovo is a crisis because it is in the Balkans.

⁵² Lippman’s full credentials are unknown. He is generally referred to as the editor of the *Balkan Witness* and a social change activist.

⁵³ Lippman’s list is available at <http://www.glypx.com/balkanwitness/Articles-deniers.htm>.

⁵⁴ For more information about the manifesto see <http://periodafter.t0.or.at/pa1/statements/6.htm>.

⁵⁵ Interview available at <http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/199906--.htm>.

Chomsky further explained that he thought that the use of the term “genocide” in Kosovo was “an insult to the victims of Hitler” and “revisionist to an extreme.” He said:

If this is genocide, then there is genocide going on all over the world. And Bill Clinton is decisively implementing a lot of it. . . . If it increases further, it may reach the number of refugees in Colombia, where the number of people killed every year by the army and paramilitary groups armed and trained by the United States is approximately the same as the number of people killed in Kosovo last year.

The term “ethnic cleansing,” on the other hand, Chomsky thought was “real” and explained his position by pointing out that

Unfortunately, it [ethnic cleansing] is something that goes on and has been going on for a long time. It's no big innovation. How come I'm living where I am [in the U.S.] instead of the original people who lived here? Did they happily walk away?

Chomsky’s statements in this particular interview, although arguably provocative, did not spark a response from political writers and fellow scholars.⁵⁶ Four years later, however, Chomsky gave an interview to the *New Statesman* which provoked an outraged response from some fellow intellectuals. In relation to the Kosovo conflict, Chomsky stated that

The [NATO] bombing was undertaken with the anticipation [that] it was going to lead to large-scale atrocities in response. As it did. Now there were terrible atrocities, but they were after the bombings. In fact, if you look at the British parliamentary inquiry, they actually reached the astonishing conclusion that, until January 1999, most of the crimes committed in Kosovo were attributed to the KLA guerrillas.⁵⁷

Chomsky’s interview was originally published by the *New Statesman* in July of 2003, and then republished in June of 2006 at which time it sparked controversy mainly due to Chomsky’s claims related to KLA’s crimes and atrocities that occurred during and after

⁵⁶ That same year, Chomsky published a book titled *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (Common Courage Press: 1999) in which he questioned the motives of the U.S. and the UK in acting as they did in Kosovo.

⁵⁷ Interview available at <http://www.newstatesman.com/200307140016>.

the NATO bombing. Lippman was the first to respond and, in a letter to the editor of the *New Statesman*, accused Chomsky of “ill-informed denial of the war crimes of Serbian forces” (Lippman n. pag.). In response to the same interview, a U.S. scholar Michael Berube placed Chomsky within a “defend-Milosevic crew” of scholars and writers, one of whom he called “insane,” and ended his letter with the following plea: “Whether you supported war in Kosovo or opposed it, please, please let’s leave the Milosevic apologetics and the war crimes denials to the fascists” (Berube n. pag.). While both Lippman and Berube placed Chomsky into a category of “denial,” Berube in particular equated such a statement with fascism, thus drawing a parallel between “Kosovo war crimes deniers” and “Holocaust deniers.” The *New Statesman* published the interview with Chomsky two times and three years apart, and it sparked interest and controversy in 2006, so late after the bombing had ended. The timing of the controversy supports my argument that the desire to obtain knowledge on the Kosovo conflict is not yet fulfilled. Indeed, the question of “why” still remains to be answered and will be revisited later in this thesis.

Although the reality in which the Serbs committed genocide in Kosovo was challenged by some scholars, it was uncontested by many, and continues to be so at the time of my writing. As a consequence, there is a fairly recent academic study by Janine Natalya Clark “Collective Guilt, Collective Responsibility and the Serbs,” published in 2006, which suggested that the Serbs are collectively, politically, and metaphysically responsible, but not guilty, for war crimes committed in their name. Clark attempted to make a distinction between “responsible” and “guilty” and explained that “collective responsibility” is political (non-responsible are the people who leave the community that

commits crimes, for example, refugees), while “collective guilt” is moral and personal, produced by the knowledge of crime that interferes with the conception of self (683). Clark pointed out that any charges of Serbian “collective guilt” were discredited by the ICTY, the first international court established to deal with genocide after Nuremberg (672-673). Clark made a case against the notion of Serbian collective guilt, and said that “[such a claim] does a major injustice to those [Serbian] individuals who bravely fought against the Milosevic regime” (668). In recognizing the individuals who “fought against the Milosevic regime,” Clark implied the existence of two camps among the Serbian people, therefore undermining the notion of unified collective guilt. In her argument, Clark drew parallels between the Serbian people and the German people, and between Milosevic and Hitler (674). Clark’s study very clearly utilizes the collective memory of the historical past to deal with the events in the present. Although in the present, the issues surrounding Kosovo thus become a way to re-address the unresolved issues of the past such as the collective responsibility and guilt related to the Holocaust itself.

III. METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

The review of literature on Kosovo conducted in this thesis showed that terminology played a very important part in how the conflict was understood and dealt with in the West. Claims of violence labeled “genocide” by policy makers shaped perceptions and provided a frame of reporting for the media. As powerful as the terminology was on its own, however, it was even more so when integrated into stories where actors were assigned motives and behavior analogous to those of the Nazi Holocaust. The narrative frame of “genocide in Kosovo” was not constructed through hard evidence but through particular language that functioned to give meaning to the present by borrowing experiences from the past.

Given the nature of my findings, the most appropriate methods of analysis would be those that would allow for a deeper examination of how the rhetoric *functioned* and a better evaluation of how it *worked*. After careful consideration of the findings, I have decided to use an amalgamation of two different, yet compatible, methods of analysis. The first method is dramatistic criticism, based on Kenneth Burke’s theory of Dramatism, which seeks to understand what rhetoric reveals about “human motivation, action and linguistic reality” (Burghardt 187). The second method is narrative criticism, based on Walter Fisher’s theory of the narrative paradigm, which seeks to evaluate storytelling as a non-rational, yet universal, mode of communication that invites action based upon good reasons derived from human experience.

A Dramatistic Perspective

My findings in the literature review that specific symbolic constructs (language) were instrumental in how the Kosovo conflict was understood and dealt with in the West invite a critical method that examines *how* humans use language in relation to *action*. Dramatistic criticism is a fitting method with which to analyze and evaluate the given language because it looks at what language *reveals* about ways in which people are moved and motivated to act within a specific linguistic reality.

Dramatistic criticism is based on Kenneth Burke's theory of Language as Symbolic Action in which man is "a symbol-making, symbol-using and symbol-misusing animal" (Burke *Language* 16). Burke explains that humans are mind-bodies separated from their animality by their symbolicity, or rather, by symbols (language) as the primary tools of their making (*Grammar* 325). To Burke, language is a tool for people to communicate and rationalize with. In this view, language and communication are understood as *symbolic action* through which humans engage one another and the world, and through which they construct reality.

As soon as Burke defines man as the "symbol-using animal," he poses a question as to what *motivates* man as such: "Which motives derive from man's animality, which from his symbolicity, and which from the combination of the two?" (Burke *Language* 7). Burke points out that *language* is what alters our motives and thereby transforms us.

Burke's efforts to analyze human motivation as altered by language resulted in his theory of Dramatism, a literal comparison of classical drama to real life. Burke explains that a dramatistic approach treats language "as an aspect of 'action,' that is, symbolic

action” (*Language* 44) and he is particularly concerned with the *suasory* function of language (rhetoric), which has the potential to move people to act.

Unity as the Motive for Rhetoric

Burke claims that humans are “apart from one another” (*Rhetoric* 22), divided, and need a rhetoric to unite them. Unity is important to Burke not because it is an ideal that can or even ought to be attained, but rather because it constitutes *the motive* for rhetoric. The initial drive to build unity can be found in what Burke coins as the key term of rhetoric, *identification*. The key term of classical rhetoric in relation to its function is *persuasion*. However, in his 1950 book *A Rhetoric of Motives* (reprinted in 1969), Burke argued that “persuasion” was the key term of the *old rhetoric* and proposed that the key term of the *new rhetoric* ought to be “identification,” which is a much broader term that encompasses persuasion. In the very simplest case of persuasion, Burke said, “you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *identifying* your ways with his” (*Rhetoric* 55, emphasis added). Identification can also be understood as the “translation of one’s wishes into terms of an audience’s opinions” (55, 57). To Burke, the audience is not passively receiving a rhetorical statement, but *collaborating* in it.

In order to explain identification, Burke introduces the notion of *consubstantiality*, wherein humans identify with each other to the point of being “substantially one,” but at the same time remain individual and, as such, unique loci of motives (*Rhetoric* 20-21).

A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B. Or he may identify himself with B even

when their interests are not joined, if he assumes they are, or is persuaded to believe so In being identified with B, A is “substantially one” with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time, he *remains unique*, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (*Rhetoric* 20-21)

Although they may be identified and consubstantial with each other, two persons are never identical. Each of them retains his or her *identity*, the unique internal “self” that is individually motivated and as such a locus of *division*. In simple terms, humans are divided and invited through rhetoric to unite. When two persons are united, they are symbolically *transformed* in the process. However, after two persons unite on one issue, another issue will inevitably come up that will divide them because they are individually motivated, and through rhetoric they will identify and unite with someone else, and so on. When we understand ourselves as symbol-using animals engaging in life through the use of language, our very existence can be viewed as “essentially rhetorical, a kind of drama of identification, persuasion, and transformation” (Rueckert 42).

There are numerous ways for a rhetorician to invite unity. One of the more successful rhetorical strategies, however, frequently used in contemporary public discourse, is identification by opposition, which can be stated in very simple terms as “*us* against *them*.” This strategy is also known as “congregation through segregation” (Burke “Dramatism” 451). Although there are many instances in human behavior where one might find examples of how people identify with a group against an “other,” I argue that this strategy is easily found in situations of conflict. I also argue that this rhetorical strategy is natural to war as a magnified instance of human conflict. When politicians are faced with a large and diverse audience, one of the most effective ways to unify it is in

opposition to a common enemy, an evil force that transcends audiences' personal and national differences.

Western audiences were invited to *identify with* the Alliance and support its proposed solution in Kosovo *against* Milosevic and his actions. The use of dramatic criticism will help me to analyze the language with which audiences were invited to unite in their response to the problems at hand and see whether the operating rhetoric sought a response in the name of "what we stand for" (external self) or "who we are" (internal self). Next, I will discuss how language itself functions to shape perceptions that can be taken as "reality" and in so doing has the potential to mislead judgment and pave the way for "tragedy" rather than "comedy" in the drama of human relations.

Terministic Screens

Given my findings that terminology was instrumental in symbolically constructing the common enemy, the extent of what constitutes the enemy's evil actions, and accusations and evidence taken as "truth," the question that such findings invite is: how does language shape perception and create a picture that can be taken as reality?

According to Burke, reality is symbolically constructed. He argues that "many of our observations are but implications of the particular terminology in terms of which the observations are made" (*Language* 46). In other words, language *directs our attention* so that we can see some things rather than others. Burke says that "even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality" (45). Burke explains that language can function like a lens on a camera through which one

clearly sees the elements in focus while at the same time one's view of the elements outside of that focus is blurry. What Burke means is that the language used to describe and interpret a situation becomes a terminological *lens* through which that situation is viewed. Burke terms this function of language a "terministic screen" and proceeds to explain how it works.

We must use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms; whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another. Within that field there can be different screens, each with its ways of directing the attention and shaping the range of observations implicit in the given terminology. (50)

Burke sees the use of terministic screens as natural and inevitable. However, it is important to note that, by its very nature, a terministic screen directs our attention and *enables* us to see certain things, but at the same time *prevents* us from seeing other things. Burke cautions the symbol-users that "a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing," and this two-faceted function of terministic screens is where language has the potential to mislead judgment. Ideally, one would not rely upon a single lens, or a set of complementary lenses, in order to obtain a "complete picture" of a situation. Rather, one might consider alternate views, switch between contradictory lenses, in order to obtain a multifaceted understanding of "reality." However, regrettably, this is not typical human behavior.

Viewing the Kosovo conflict primarily, if not completely, through the lens of "genocide" gives a limited understanding of it because through that lens one only tends to look for elements of reality that correspond to genocide. The lens also presupposes the placement of actors into fixed categories of "perpetrator" and "victim" and in so doing

assigns the responsibility and blame to one party while absolving the other. Kosovo, seen as a case of “genocide,” also implies an attitude, i.e. it functions to invite a response that would eradicate the evil and punish the perpetrator. Lastly, the term functions to stir the collective memory of the Nazi genocide and to analogize events and actors in Kosovo with those in the Holocaust.

In dramatic terms, not using an alternative lens (or view) enables an inflexible frame of mind that rejects information contrary to its understanding. In the drama of human relations, Burke terms this a “tragic frame” of mind, a “my way or the highway” approach to conflict resolution. As in classical drama, apart from tragedy, there is also comedy and, correspondingly, Burke talks about a “comic frame” of mind as a way to approach drama, not simply through laughter, but through allowing for human error. As in the case of classical tragedy, when a “tragic frame” is employed in dealing with conflict, there is a tendency, or in Burke’s words “a temptation” (*Language 2*) to project outwardly the cause of evils that led to conflict upon an Other,⁵⁸ or in Burke’s terms: a *scapegoat*.

Purgation by Scapegoat

The function of the scapegoating practice in discourse, or “the scapegoat mechanism” as Burke terms it, is predicated upon principles of merger and division. Before scapegoating begins, an original state of merger, a *covenant* (e.g. social norms), is in place. Once that covenant is broken, however, a division begins. Burke explains that the *guilt* from failure to keep the covenant calls for a *sacrifice* that would be the means of

⁵⁸ Robins defines an Other as that which “resides outside the sphere of ‘our’ culture and community. It is the non-self and the non-us.” For more on this, see Robins 249-251.

purging that guilt on some level, which can be accomplished rhetorically through either mortification or scapegoating. Mortification purges guilt through either punishment of self or some transformative self-sacrifice in order to symbolically atone for whatever sinful social imperfection is the source of guilt. Scapegoating, on the other hand, requires a sacrificial *scapegoat*, someone who is blamed for the social imperfection and symbolically punished or purged as evil because he or she has broken the social covenant (and with it the unity). Although scapegoating works through the punishment or sacrifice of an Other, it also works on the self, in the realm of identity. By *transferring* ills onto a scapegoat, the self is “cured” of the guilt in the process, or as Burke says “purified through its [scapegoat’s] suffering” (*Grammar* 406).

Burke explains the dialectic of the scapegoat (or the “scapegoat mechanism”) in the following way. He says that the scapegoat “represents the principle of division in that its persecutors would alienate from themselves to it their own uncleannesses [sic]” (*Grammar* 406). The congregation “ritualistically alienates” the one who broke the covenant, and becomes unified in opposition to that common foe (406). The “ritualistic alienation” of the scapegoat enables the transference of guilt from the congregation onto the scapegoat who becomes a vessel for “vicarious atonement” of the congregation (406-408). The congregation expresses “moral indignation” and condemns the scapegoat who broke the covenant (406). By loading upon the scapegoat the burden of their own iniquities, the congregation “purifies itself” of both the iniquities and the guilt (406) and once the scapegoat is done away with, a new merger begins among the congregation whose “purified *identity* is defined in dialectical opposition to the sacrificial offering”

(406, emphasis added). The new identity that emerges is *purified* of both the evil and the guilt, and thus symbolically *transformed*.

Understanding the situation in Kosovo as a case of genocide naturally invites that the ills be assigned to a perpetrator. Although “perpetrator” can refer to a group of people, it can also refer to a person leading and directing a group to commit atrocities. In my review of literature on Kosovo, while the perpetrator of violence in Kosovo was seen and identified by some as “Serbian forces” (police and military), the vast majority of the rhetoric projected all ills upon the Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic. The moral order established after WWII in general, and the Holocaust in particular, can be understood as the covenant that was in place in the West until Milosevic broke it fifty years later. The post-World War II slogan of “never again” can be understood as one vocalization of that covenant. The European and American democracies can be understood as the congregation that responded with moral indignation and sought the punishment of Milosevic, first through the military campaign and then through the legal means of the International Crime Tribunal. The source of the guilt that triggered the “moral indignation” can be understood as two-fold. It can be found in the past, in the initial inaction of the Western powers to stop the Nazi genocide sooner than they did, as well as in the present, in the failure to keep the covenant of “never again.” By doing away with Milosevic, the congregation is cured of the guilt to keep the covenant, and the covenant itself is restored. What emerges in the process of restoration is a new *unity*, and with it a new *social identity*, purified of the guilt through the means of vicarious atonement.

In his 1968 essay “Dramatism,” Burke explains that scapegoating is inevitable in the drama of human relations, and consequently in human societies. Once there is conflict, Burke says, people are inherently prone to scapegoating, which he sees as a “constant temptation of human societies, whose orders are built by a kind of animal exceptionally adept in the ways of symbolic action” (451). Although he sees scapegoating as common and inevitable, Burke points out that “insofar as ritual transference of guilt feelings to the scapegoat is frustrated, motives of *self-destruction* must come to the fore” (*Grammar* 408). Burke cautions the symbol-users that unless guilt is faced from within, its ritualistic transference may ultimately lead to self-destruction.

The Narrative Paradigm

One of the most effective ways to establish the common enemy, and identify with one’s audience *against* him/her, is to tell a story, use the universal mode of narrative discourse to relate who is the enemy, as well as the extent of what constitutes the enemy’s evil actions. My findings that the story of Kosovo was told in the form of dramatic narratives that conveyed the “truth” about the conflict (analogous to another story from the historical past) invite an examination of how the narrative form itself functioned to aid the *reasoning* about the conflict and further the argument of “something needs to be done.”

According to Walter Fisher, who developed the theory of the narrative paradigm, narratives fulfill psychological needs in the audience, and that is what gives them persuasive force. People learn about the experience of life and the human condition through stories (their own and those of others) and that is what makes the narrative

discourse universal and “natural” and therefore more efficacious than other modes of persuasion. Fisher points out that “the narrative impulse is part of our very being because we acquire narrativity in the natural process of socialization” (247). According to Fisher,

. . . narration comes closer to capturing the experience of the world, simultaneously appealing to the various senses, to reason and emotion, to intellect and imagination, and to fact and value. It does not presume intellectual contact only . . . one does not need to be taught narrative probability and fidelity; one culturally acquires them through a universal faculty and experience. (254)

When considering what makes one narrative more effective than another in establishing audience identification, one can consider what Fisher terms “narrative probability” and “narrative fidelity.” The notion of “narrative probability” refers to what constitutes a coherent story, while “narrative fidelity” refers to whether the story of the moment is consistent in truthfulness with the stories we take to be true in our lives. Narrative probability and narrative fidelity together build a “narrative rationality” which is not scientific but, rather, *descriptive* because it offers accounts of human behavior, such as choice and action (248).

Narratives, Fisher says, are also moral constructs. When they impart accounts of reality, they contain an argument of “what ought to be, undermined by the ‘truth’ that prevails at the moment” (252). The argument of “what ought to be” is a “public moral argument” and refers to what is presented in the narrative as “good reasons.” Those reasons are related to the motivations and values of the characters involved in the narrative, the way they behave, and the overall narrative probability and narrative fidelity of a story told, “which may well take the form of ‘reasoned argument’” (253). Public moral argument is moral in the sense that it is founded on ultimate questions – of life and

death, of how persons should be defined and treated, of preferred patterns of living, and of choices in the realm of what ought to be (252-253).

In the rational world paradigm, the public is presented with rational arguments given by experts, and the public chooses which one to believe in the manner of a jury. In the narrative paradigm, however, “the experts are storytellers” (Fisher 252) and the public is an active participant in the formation of meaning in the stories and as such chooses the story that is “most coherent and reliable as a guide to belief and action” (253).

The use of narrative criticism as a method of analysis allows for evaluating storytelling as a non-rational, yet universal, mode of discourse that invites action based upon good reasons derived from human experience. The story of Kosovo told in the form of dramatic narratives about “one evil man committing genocide” fulfills all the requirements of the narrative paradigm. It is a coherent story, probable and believable, and it easily furthers the public moral argument of “something needs to be done” to stop the violence and punish the perpetrator. Furthermore, such a story was heard before in the relatively recent history as part of the Western collective memory of the Holocaust. The analogies between the stories function to transfer certain *qualities* of one story to the other. When the story of Kosovo is told as consistent with the story of the Holocaust, actors in the conflict are assigned behavior and motives accordingly, and a solution in the form of an Allied intervention is seen as logical and natural. However, is the story line itself the only quality that transfers from one story to another, or do other qualities such as the feelings a story arouses transfer as well? A very important point to consider in my analysis is whether, in addition to the transfer of the story line, the latent *feelings of guilt*

connected with the Holocaust itself were transferred to the story of Kosovo as well and if they had a function as such.

The use of narratives can be a very effective rhetorical strategy because of the ways in which storytelling engages the audience. As mentioned earlier, in the narrative paradigm audiences are not passively receiving a message, but, rather, actively participating in the formation of meaning in the stories they hear (Fisher 252). This kind of collaboration works to engage the audience and to invite their identification. In addition, narratives function to fulfill psychological needs in the audience to see a story end in a certain way. In the case of Kosovo, the story would “end well” if the conflict is resolved, the victim is saved, and good triumphed over evil.

Fisher’s theory is compatible with Burke’s view that the audience is never passively receiving a rhetorical statement, but *collaborating* in it, drawn into collaboration through formal appeal, or simply put: form. Burke defines form in relation to the psychology of audience, in terms of human appetites, desires and interests: “Form is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the auditor, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite” (*Counter-Statement* 31). Burke uses a Platonic framework to explain that human mind and heart are infused by appetites, and therefore prone to manipulation by form. In the realm of rhetoric, Burke equates the psychology of form with eloquence. Eloquence in rhetoric is at its best when it’s best suited to its end, when it pleases what it is designed to please. In other words, eloquence works when it fulfills the end for which it was designed, when it satisfies appetites it was designed to arouse in the mind of the audience. The narratives that told the story of Kosovo can also be analyzed and evaluated

on the basis of formal appeal to see if and *how* the operating rhetoric created an appetite in the minds of the audience that it subsequently satisfied.

IV. ANALYSIS

The review of literature on Kosovo conducted in this thesis indicates that the dominant Western narrative of “genocide in Kosovo” was created through the rhetorical interplay between political authorities and media. While it was the political rhetoric that provided a terministic orientation for the narrative, it was the media that contributed to its development by reinforcing political representations. The dominant narrative was challenged by some journalists and scholars during the NATO intervention, as well as in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict, who questioned the language used to represent Kosovo in the West (such as “genocide”) as well as the apparent motives for action. However, some such scholars and journalists have been singled out as partisan and labeled “appeasers,” “apologetics” and “deniers.” As a result, the dominant narrative remains largely uncontested at the time of this writing. The question that begs to be asked is *why* is the narrative frame of “genocide in Kosovo” so impervious in discourse? What *qualities* make it so powerful that it rejects alternate views as “denial?”

This chapter aims to spotlight the mechanics of the rhetoric and the qualities of the dominant narrative that guided the Western discourse on Kosovo. I will begin by identifying several general trends that emerged in the discourse that I reviewed. After discussing the trends briefly, I will focus on two primary sources in which these trends are exemplified in their most dramatic form. In order to understand *how* the dominant narrative functioned to move the audience and motivate action and *why* it worked as well

as it did, I will analyze the rhetoric of two Western politicians: President Bill Clinton's public address given at the onset of the NATO bombing campaign, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair's mid-campaign news article published by BBC. I have selected both texts based upon the criteria of timing (they were delivered at politically critical times), level of representation of dominant trends (they synthesized the trends and represented the dominant narrative that guided the discourse on Kosovo very well), and overall effectiveness (they were generally well received by the Western public and followed by action in foreign policy).

Dominant Trends in Discourse

Transferring the Story

My review of literature on Kosovo brought to the fore several trends that guided the Western discourse on Kosovo before and during the NATO campaign in 1999. The first and in many ways *pivotal* trend was the use of the term "genocide" to describe the extent of the Serbian violence in Kosovo. I argue that this trend was pivotal because it evoked the mid-century Nazi genocide and in so doing shaped the discourse on Kosovo *in terms of* the story and memory of the Holocaust, and furthered it toward a predetermined ending.

"Genocide" as a term that denotes acts (or even intent) to obliterate an Other is a profoundly powerful term by itself. However, in the Western collective memory, the term "genocide" evokes the collective historical experience of the Holocaust as the most recent historical occurrence of genocide in Europe (by many considered the ultimate evil of the 20th century) and how the West responded to it. As I mentioned in the Introduction to this

thesis, the power of this memory is not only in the horror that underlines it, but in *the guilt* that accompanies it. Remembering the Holocaust as “the failure of Western values to prevent it” (Weymouth 160) adds to the motivation to act because part of that *motive* is the amelioration of guilt for the initial inaction of the Western democracies in the past.⁵⁹

The term “genocide” can thus be understood as a very meaningful term that evokes powerful feelings and experiences in the West. I argue that when this term is applied to a new situation, some of its residual meaning (and feelings the term arouses) is *transferred*, and the term can function to create meaning in the present by borrowing from the historic past. The meaning is transferred through the means of *analogy*. The more similarities between the Holocaust and the present situation the stronger rhetorical function the term can have in Western discourse because of the unique source of guilt related to the Holocaust itself.

All the references to genocide in the past that I came across in my literature review were directed at the Holocaust rather than at genocide *in general* in other parts of the world (Rwanda and Armenia, for example). There were some references to Bosnia, but they mainly functioned to add to the residual guilt because, as President Clinton pointed out, “the world did not act early enough to stop that war *either*. . . . This was genocide in the heart of Europe – not in 1945, but in 1995 . . .” (24 March 1999, emphasis added). The failure to keep the post-World War II covenant of “genocide can

⁵⁹ My discussion of the Holocaust as a “failure of Western values” (Weymouth 160) overlooks specific social and economic conditions that contributed to it. Weymouth and I focus more on the meaning that the term “Holocaust” holds and the feelings it arouses. The Nazi Holocaust is generally not remembered in the West for the socio-economic conditions that preceded WWII and the creation of specific Nazi policies, but, rather, for the horrors that went on for years before the Allies joined forces and stepped in.

never happen again” in Bosnia thus became an added source of guilt for the Western democracies which greatly added to their motivation to act.

On a purely formal level, memories are also stories, and the story of the Holocaust has a storyline that can be transferred through analogy along with the other qualities discussed in the paragraph above. The storyline of “one evil man committing genocide in the heart of Europe” already exists in the collective memory and can be given new life through the transfer of one story to another. The old story functions as a lens through which the new story is understood and the new characters are placed (assigned behavior and motives) accordingly. Apart from working internally on the characters themselves, the transfer of the storyline works externally as well in the way it engages the audience. The new story “rings true” because it is so very similar to the old story and the audience is engaged (through collaboration) to create meaning through implicit and explicit analogy. In addition, the new story creates an appetite relative to the old story in that it invites particular action (an Allied campaign) that would once and for all defeat the resurrected evil, and in that defeat assuage the guilt for both having acted too late in the past and for having failed to keep the covenant of “genocide can never happen again.”

Once the Kosovo conflict was understood as genocide, the discourse naturally progressed toward inviting the public moral argument of “something needs to be done,” and based upon the *moral choice* in the matter, supplied the Allied campaign as a solution to the problem at hand. However, in order to progress from “problem” to “solution,” the discourse needed to address questions (and engage audiences) in the realm of moral responsibility and choice.

Supplying the Moral Imperative

The second trend that emerged in my literature review was the use of verbal, and on occasion visual, references to World War II and the Holocaust in supplying the *moral imperative* to act in Kosovo. By referring to failures of previous generations of Western democracies to act in the Holocaust sooner than they did (Weymouth 160), this trend functioned first to appeal to the audience's *moral conscience* and feelings of *guilt*, second, to supply the Allied intervention as a solution *justified* on moral grounds, and third, to absolve the Western policy-makers of the moral responsibility for carrying out a bombing campaign and for the loss of civilian lives that it might cause.

In supplying the moral imperative to act, one of the basic challenges in the operating rhetoric was how to address the public and appeal to every one of its members *individually* in a language that translates into action. Individual appeal that I came across in my literature review was mainly based on the grounds of moral conscience, in the name of “who we are,” and it functioned to transform the audience from passive onlookers into active supporters of the Allied campaign. This kind of appeal can be found throughout the rhetoric I reviewed. For example, in the days leading up to the commencement of the bombing campaign, Martin Bell, a British MP, appealed to individual moral choice as the basis of action in Kosovo: “We are *witnesses* of genocide . . . Our response to it will tell the world what kind of people we are.”⁶⁰

As effective as words alone can be in involving the audience on an individual level, the rhetorical appeal that moves people to act can be greatly enhanced by the use of

⁶⁰ http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/1998/kosovo2/308009.stm, emphasis added.

images. In “Nightmares in the Nightly News: CNN Covers Atrocities in Kosovo,” Dimitrova argued that actual images in addition to textual reports of atrocities functioned to transform the audience from “passive observers,” generally thought of as exempt from moral responsibility, into *witnesses*, burdened by the images and “compelled by a moral imperative” to get involved in “seeking punishment for the crime because otherwise they become accomplices” (36). As mentioned earlier, some of the footage CNN showed to its audience in order to illustrate the crimes committed in Kosovo was borrowed from the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and CNN archives on Bosnia. While the transfer of images from the past facilitated the creation of meaning in the present, it also functioned to appeal to the audience’s moral conscience and the dormant feelings of guilt connected with the Holocaust and Bosnia themselves, and in so doing strengthened the moral imperative to act to ensure that “genocide can never happen again.”

Dimitrova’s writing is consistent with the work of Brigitte Hoijer, who pointed out that through the moving images and the global reach of television, audiences are increasingly becoming aware of the “sufferings of remote others” and are “challenged to include strangers in their moral conscience” (Hoijer 515). When audiences see and interpret images of human suffering, those images make “indelible impressions” on their minds and they become “bearers of inner pictures of human suffering” (520). Hoijer further pointed out a very important tendency among audiences to perceive images as truthful eye-witness reports of reality and seldom question their legitimacy or see them as “constructions of events and situations” (521).

The question of how much audiences internalize emotional pictures shown repeatedly over time was also discussed by Robinson, Brown, Goddard and Perry in their

2005 article “War and Media.” They discussed how new technology “has led to a more superficial experience of contemporary conflicts” and leaves little time for the audience to reflect upon fragmented reports and instantly transmitted images (952). Although this understanding seems contrary to Hoijer’s and Dimitrova’s, I argue that they can be understood as complementary in two ways. The new media technologies, with their more superficial reporting, can be understood to have enabled the success of simplistic narratives in media reporting, especially the kinds of narratives that draw upon collective memory, so the audience does not need to “figure out” and “reflect,” but, rather, rely on the qualities of a familiar story. Secondly, through technological progress, proceedings of conflicts are more accessible and audiences are more easily transformed from passive observers into witnesses.

Rhetorical appeal (verbal and visual) that transforms audiences into witnesses can be very effective in moving people to act. Becoming witnesses to crimes is a crucial moment for audience members because it takes them into the realm of identity (“who we are”) and moral conscience, and thereby speaks to each and every one of them *individually*. As a result of such deeply personal audience involvement, rhetorical appeal can move people to act more easily, as well as pave the way for the individual *purgation of guilt* that scapegoating can bring.

Identifying the Perpetrator

The third trend that emerged in the discourse I reviewed was the representation of the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, as the sole perpetrator of violence in Kosovo. Understanding the Kosovo conflict as “genocide” naturally invited the question of *who* is

the “evil man committing genocide in the heart of Europe” and what is to be done with him? By singling out Milosevic and aligning him with Hitler, this trend functioned in discourse first to strengthen the overall analogy between Kosovo and the Holocaust, and second, to progress the discourse towards finding a solution that would punish the perpetrator for breaking the covenant of “genocide can never happen again” and in the process of punishment purify the Western democracies of guilt for failing to keep it.

The majority of the rhetoric examined in my review of literature assigned most, if not all the ills to Milosevic. By transferring the storyline of the Holocaust onto Kosovo, the actions of Hitler (deliberate systematic obliteration of an Other) were transferred through analogy upon Milosevic, representing him as a vile dictator “determined to wipe a people from the face of his country” (Blair “My Pledge” n. pag.). In the Western representation of events, NATO did not want to go to war, but was *forced* into it by Milosevic’s actions. In addition, action against Milosevic was advocated in a construct that if the West did not stop the killings, it would in fact be enabling the continuation of them (as *accomplices*):

If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation [to act] as a license to kill. There would be many more massacres, tens of thousands more refugees, more victims crying out for revenge. (Clinton, 24 March 1999, n. pag.)

In finding ways to deal with Milosevic, diplomatic means alone were declared as insufficient. Political rhetoric pointed out that Milosevic “refused a diplomatic solution”⁶¹ when “we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully,”⁶²

⁶¹ Albright, 21 May 1999, n. pag.

⁶² Clinton, 24 March 1999, n. pag.

and “when our diplomatic efforts ... were rebuffed [by Milosevic] ... we and our allies chose to act.”⁶³ I argue that diplomacy alone was declared insufficient because it did not *punish* the perpetrator enough for breaking the social covenant and thereby did not assuage the guilt of the congregation for failure to keep it. Milosevic needed to be removed from power and international politics in order for the covenant to be restored and for the guilt to be cured. To restore the moral order also means to restore *unity* in Europe, a place where international social norms specified in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be upheld, a place where “genocide can never happen again.”

A solution with which to punish Milosevic was presented in the form of an Allied intervention, and I argue that it was seen as logical and natural because it was analogous to another Allied intervention fifty years before. However, the bombing campaign alone was not enough to punish Milosevic because upon its completion he would still remain in power as president of Serbia. This would mean, in Kenneth Burke’s terms, that the purgation by scapegoat was not exactly complete.

The follow-up came in the form of the ICTY (perhaps analogous to post-World War II Nuremberg Trials), founded on 25 May 1993, by the UN Security Council resolution 827, with a mandate to “prosecute persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991.”⁶⁴ On 27 May 1999, roughly one month into the bombing campaign, the ICTY indicted Milosevic along with four other top Serbian officials “for crimes against humanity – including, specifically, murder, deportation and persecutions – and for

⁶³ Clinton, 11 June 1999, n. pag.

⁶⁴ Travers, 265.

violations of the laws and customs of war committed since the beginning of 1999 in Kosovo.”⁶⁵ Milosevic was overthrown by the citizens of Yugoslavia in “a largely peaceful revolution in the autumn of 2000” (Ash 98), arrested in 2001 and, after five years of trial, passed away during the ICTY proceedings in 2006.⁶⁶

Once Milosevic was removed from power and handed over to the ICTY authorities, the covenant of “genocide can never happen again” was restored. What emerged in the process of restoration was a new unity and with it a *new social identity*, purified of the guilt through the means of vicarious atonement. The Western democracies are united and consubstantial with one another in upholding the moral order. There are no more vile dictators breaking the covenant. The West is united, democratic and free.

Scapegoating is very effective because it works on the individual locus of motivation, in the realm of *self*. Once the Western audiences became witnesses to crimes (inner bearers of suffering of others) and the guilt mounted, Milosevic was presented as the scapegoat who could bear that guilt, and the guilt would be gone once Milosevic is gone. When evil is projected upon one person, solutions with which to counter it are simple and straightforward: do away with the foe and you will do away with the evil and restore the moral order.

Although scapegoating is an effective rhetorical strategy, it creates a situation in which a problem can be only temporarily solved. By projecting ills upon one person, once the person is removed it follows that the ills will be removed as well. However, those same ills may occur again, in different places and with different actors, and the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 267.

⁶⁶ ICTY Trial Transcript recording the death of Slobodan Milosevic, 14 March 2006: 49191. Web. 7 Oct. 2009. <<http://www.un.org/icty/transe54/060314IT.htm>>.

question of *why* such ills occur in human history remains insufficiently addressed in discourse.

Having identified dominant trends in the Western discourse on Kosovo that shaped and guided the discourse in general, I will next focus in on a primary source in which the trends are exemplified in their most dramatic form. This thesis will proceed by analyzing an address to the nation given by the U.S. President Bill Clinton on 24 March 1999 on the first day of the NATO bombing campaign (available in the Appendix). In my analysis I have used the transcript of the address provided by the Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) online, where the address was broadcast live on *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*.⁶⁷

President Clinton's Address to the Nation

As fighter jets and cruise missiles began what was to be a seventy-eight-day bombardment of military targets in Yugoslavia, President Clinton addressed the American nation in order to justify the involvement of their troops in the NATO campaign. Clinton's address came at a politically critical time to announce to supporters and critics alike the reasons for the military campaign.

Clinton synthesizes all three trends that I previously discussed as early as in the opening lines. After supplying one vocalization of Kosovo as "genocide," he brings in the historic memory of previous World Wars to strengthen the imperative to act, and then stresses unity as an ideal which rests on the covenant of Western values. In stating the reasons to act, Clinton begins by supplying the apparent motive "to protect thousands of

⁶⁷ Available at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/jan-june99/address_3-24.html>.

innocent people in Kosovo” but in the very next sentence evokes the collective memory of World War I and World War II: “We act to . . . diffuse a powder keg that has exploded *twice before* in this century with catastrophic results” (emphasis added). Clinton finishes the paragraph by stressing the need for *unity* in the West: “And we act to stand united with our allies for peace” in the name of “our values.”

The address then unfolds as Clinton situates Kosovo in a geo-political context, “in the middle of southeastern Europe” with a population that is “mostly ethnic Albanian and mostly Muslim” and singles out Milosevic as a local and regional menace who “started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade.” Clinton then focuses in on Kosovo where Milosevic spread *psychological terror* by “denying them [Kosovo Albanians] their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives” and then began the use *physical* force when he “sent his troops to crush them [Kosovo Albanians].” This paragraph functions to establish Milosevic as a local and regional menace, a vile dictator who spreads repression and terror over a significant period of time, “a decade” in Clinton’s words, thus identifying Milosevic as the source of evil.

In the next paragraph, Clinton progresses from problem to solution by pointing out that there was a NATO-brokered attempt to find a diplomatic *solution*, a peace agreement which the Kosovo Albanian leaders accepted and the Serbian leaders refused:

The Kosovar leaders signed that agreement last week. Even though it does not give them all the [sic.] want . . . they saw that a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war. The Serbian leaders, on the other hand, refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. As the Kosovars were saying ‘yes’ to peace, Serbia stationed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive.

What can be seen here is how Clinton's rhetoric establishes the leaders in Kosovo as pragmatic and rational, and the Serbian leaders as foolish and irrational (they refused peace), determined to attack "a largely defenseless people, whose leaders have already agreed to peace." I argue that this distinction between the two parties functions first to appeal to the audience to identify with one rather than the other, and second, to establish Milosevic and the Serbian leaders as *irrational*. This paragraph also functions to progress the narrative toward a description that paints the actions of Milosevic and the troops at his command as madness analogous to the actions of Hitler and the forces he had directed in the Holocaust, which Clinton supplies in the very next paragraph.

What comes next is the most graphic description of conduct on the ground that the address supplies, and echoes of the past can be found throughout. Here Clinton talks of physical terror of "shelling civilians and torching their houses," "innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with bullets; Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up and shot in cold blood." Apart from highlighting the actors as either "innocent people" or killers, and implicitly analogizing between the events in Kosovo and the Holocaust, I argue that the use of such descriptive and highly emotive language functions to appeal to the members of the audience to *internalize* the suffering of others, a move which would function to transform the audience members into *witnesses* of crimes who need to make a *moral choice* to act in order to *punish* the perpetrator. I argue that this paragraph is crucial in the address because of its particular appeal and that it gives the address its persuasive force.

Having told of the terror, Clinton proceeds by saying that "ending this tragedy is a moral imperative" and supplies a geo-political context in which practical reasons for

action emerge as well because Kosovo is surrounded by “countries that could be overwhelmed by a large new wave of refugees from Kosovo.” As he transitions from the geo-political context into supplying the moral imperative to act, Clinton reiterates

Milosevic as the responsible party:

All the ingredients for a major war are there: ancient grievances, struggling democracies, and in the center of it all *a dictator in Serbia* who has done nothing since the Cold War ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division. (emphasis added)

Having given practical reasons for action, Clinton proceeds by supplying the legacy of the past in order to strengthen the moral imperative to act in the present. He reminds the audience of the Western failures in World War I and World War II “and the Holocaust” where “Europe was slow” and “the United States waited even longer” to end the conflicts: “Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved.” I argue that Clinton here appeals to the *feelings of guilt* by reminding his audience of the past failure to act sooner. He then mentions Bosnia as an additional source of guilt where “the world did not act early . . . *either*” (emphasis added) and draws an explicit parallel between Bosnia and the Holocaust by saying: “We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia And let’s not forget what happened -- innocent people herded into concentration camps . . . a quarter of a million people killed . . . because of *who they were*. . . . This was *genocide* in the heart of Europe – not in 1945, but in 1995. . . . testing our humanity and our resolve” (emphasis added). The transfer of the storyline and guilt alike from the past to the present functions to support the moral imperative to act in Kosovo “before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too.” In terms of the form of the address, I argue that by this point, Clinton’s eloquence has fully

established the problem, the actors, and the moral choice that needs to be made relative to action, and in so doing created an *appetite* in the minds of the audience to find a solution which would put an end to the terror and guilt alike. In Kenneth Burke's terms, this is good form, one that arouses appetites it was designed to arouse in the mind of the audience (*Counter-Statement* 31) and progresses the rhetoric towards presenting a solution which would *satisfy* those appetites.

Clinton satisfies the appetites straight away by supplying the military campaign as the only viable *solution* in the current situation. He points out that "we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully" but "Mr. Milosevic has refused," and sums up the purpose of the NATO bombing by saying: ". . . if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war." Apart from providing a solution, this part of the address also functions to reiterate Milosevic as evil and to show that NATO did not want to go to war, but was *forced* into it by Milosevic and his actions. In addition, through strategic use of language, Clinton maximizes the actions of Milosevic ("make war") and minimizes the actions of NATO ("limit his ability").

In the next paragraph, Clinton informs the audience that there are "risks to our pilots and the people on the ground" but justifies those risks by saying that "the dangers of acting are far outweighed by the dangers of not acting." Apart from informing the audience of the risks associated with the campaign, Clinton's rhetoric here functions to imply an *equality* of risks to "our pilots" and "people on the ground." I argue that through equating the two categories, this kind of rhetoric works to *minimize* the damage that is done to the people on the ground. In making his point, Clinton uses specific words to

draw a subtle parallel between the Holocaust and Kosovo and points out that hesitation to act would be the means of *enabling* the continuation of terror:

If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation as a license to kill. There would be many more *massacres*, tens of thousands more *refugees*, more *victims* crying out for revenge. . . . Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were *massacred* on NATO's doorstep. (emphasis added)

I argue that what can be seen here clearly is how language can function to turn observers into *accomplices* unless they seek punishment for the crimes they have observed as *witnesses*.

Clinton next refers to a map (shown to audiences on camera) with dots and arrows that illustrate how actors on the ground are positioned relative to one another, as well as the countries that surround them which would be affected if the conflict were to spread. By providing a visual reference, Clinton transfers the story from the realm of "imaginary" into the realm of "reality," and in so doing anchors the story to a real place where actions have real consequences.

As he brings his address to a close, Clinton upholds the unity of the West as an ideal and establishes "our values" as a covenant that America has a responsibility to preserve: ". . . if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure, *undivided* and free . . . a Europe that shares *our values*" (emphasis added). Clinton also mentions several other "challenges to that vision of a peaceful, secure, united, stable Europe," such as relationships with Russia and the Islamic world, which function in the address to present the importance of *unity* in the West as it faces external challenges, as well as to invite the audience to unite with him in that vision.

Clinton closes his address by inviting the audience to pray for the armed forces “who are undertaking this mission for the sake of our values and our children’s future” and in so doing projects an image of *active supporters* that members of the audience can grow into. As Edwin Black pointed out in his 1970 essay “The Second Persona,” in rhetoric, audiences are not only invited to “believe something, but to *be* something” (in Burghardt 95). The second persona invites audiences to inhabit a subject position, a particular *role* such as “a witness” or “a supporter.” Having previously used the kind of language that functions to transform audience members from passive observers into witnesses, Clinton now invites the witnesses to be *moral agents* rather than accomplices. By projecting an image of active supporters of the Allied campaign upon the audience, Clinton invites them to be moral agents who have made a choice based upon *moral judgment* (in the name of “who we are”). By acting as moral agents, the members of the audience are a part of the covenant and can help restore it, and in the process be purified of the *guilt*. However, if the members of the audience choose otherwise, they would be breaking the unity (and the covenant) and in so doing would not be cured of the guilt but, rather, accumulate more of it.

As I mentioned earlier, Clinton’s address was given at a politically crucial time, at the onset of the NATO campaign. Although the address may not have worked on all the members of the audience in equal measure, I argue that its effectiveness can be seen in the discourse that followed it. Its representation was for the most part reinforced in the media outlets that I reviewed.

Having analyzed the operating rhetoric in one primary source, this thesis will proceed by focusing on the second primary source which exemplifies the dominant trends

from a different geographical location in the West (Europe). For the second primary source, I have selected an article written by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair as a response to growing criticism of the NATO campaign in the British media. Blair's article was published by BBC News Online on 14 May 1999 under the title of "Blair: My Pledge to the Refugees" (available in the Appendix).

Prime Minister Blair's Article

As the British media reported news of civilian casualties caused by the NATO bombing in Yugoslavia, including what was explained by NATO as an accidental bombing of the Chinese Embassy in the Serbian capitol Belgrade, the news sparked a marked increase in the voices of dissent and several prominent politicians (all MPs) offered strong criticism and bleak prognosis for the NATO campaign in a commentary published by the BBC News Online on 13 May 1999.⁶⁸ In response to the growing criticism, Tony Blair wrote an article for the BBC News Online, published one day after the above commentary, on 14 May 1999, in which he offered mostly emotional appeal with which to counter the growing dissent. Blair's article is divided into four sections: an introduction followed by three other sections titled "Never Forget the Refugees," "Nato [sic] Remains United," and "We Will Prevail."

As was the case with Clinton's address, Blair's article synthesized all of the dominant trends that guided the discourse on Kosovo at the very beginning, as early as in the first three sentences:

It is no exaggeration to say that what is happening in Kosovo is *racial genocide*. No exaggeration to brand the behavior of Milosevic as *evil*. It is

⁶⁸ "Kosovo: Voices of Dissent" can be found at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/342752.stm.>

something we had hoped we would *never experience again* in Europe.
(emphasis added)

By starting off with such powerful words as “racial genocide,” “evil,” and “never again” (the covenant), which evoke both the collective memory of the terror of the Nazi genocide and the lessons learned from it, Blair captures the attention of the readers. He also implicitly aligns the events and actors in Kosovo with those in the Holocaust and in so doing enables the transfer of the storyline from the past to the present.

Indeed, in the very next sentence, Blair begins a description of events in Kosovo that one might have read in a memoir of a Holocaust survivor, if not in a history textbook: “Thousands murdered. One hundred thousand men missing. Hundreds of thousands of people forced to flee their homes and their country, robbed of anything of value at gun-point.” I argue that this description functions in the article to illustrate the word “genocide” and the general similarity between the present and the past, which Blair implied earlier. It also functions to further the article towards a description that would illustrate the “evil,” which is what Blair does next.

The article proceeds with an illustration of the “evil” by describing Milosevic as someone who will offer “no apologies” for the “campaign of ethnic cleansing” and “terrible atrocities,” and who makes no effort to “avoid civilian casualties” which are the result of his “deliberate policy.” Apart from providing an illustration of what he means by “evil,” this is the first time in the article that Blair covertly addresses the critics of the NATO campaign. By using words such as “ethnic cleansing” and “deliberate policy” to describe Milosevic’s actions, Blair implicitly aligns him with Hitler (remembered for his deliberate systematic persecution of the Jews and others) at the same time contrasting

him with the NATO Alliance that commenced a campaign against military targets *only*, all the while *avoiding* civilian casualties. In contrast to Milosevic who will offer “no apologies” for his actions, NATO did apologize for their mistake (bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade) to the Chinese government. Blair strengthens the contrast by pointing out that atrocities in Kosovo are “not accidents but the results of a deliberate policy,” thus implying that the civilian casualties caused by the bombing campaign are *different* from those caused by Milosevic, in that they are simply *accidents*, and thus not planned in any way.

Blair admits that “these atrocities cannot be seen . . . because the Serbs will not allow journalists or TV crews to report what is happening But that does not make the atrocities any less real or terrible or newsworthy.” I argue that this paragraph functions to address the critics who question the dominant narrative based upon the lack of evidence and in so doing *invites* the critics and readers alike to not believe only what they see, but to *imagine*. This paragraph also functions to transition the article into the next section, titled “Never Forget the Refugees,” in which Blair re-tells some of the refugees’ stories which he heard himself on a visit to Macedonia.⁶⁹ The title itself, especially its first part, “Never Forget,” also contains echoes of the covenant of “never again” and sets the stage for an illustration of terror which ought not be forgotten but, rather, acted upon.

Blair begins the section by advocating that “it is vital [that] we never tire of hearing the refugees’ stories” and goes on to point out the “powerful reporting” that

⁶⁹ The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) is a country which borders with Kosovo.

conveyed “the horror these innocent people [Kosovo Albanians] have experienced” can only “touch the surface” and cannot “prepare you for the camps and the plight of these people . . . as I found *myself* when I visited Macedonia last week.” Although he praises news reporting as “powerful,” Blair undermines it by pointing out its limitations and stresses his own personal experience, as a *witness* hearing the refugees’ stories, as more trustworthy. This is a crucial moment in the article because here Blair establishes himself as an *authority* who possesses first-hand knowledge, an authority *higher* than the media and the critics whom the media inform. In addition, by depicting the media reporting as limited, he yet again invites the readers to imagine, to *collaborate* in the creation of meaning by relying on collective memory rather than images which only “touch the surface.”

Blair finishes this section by relating to the readers that he “heard first-hand of women raped, of children watching their fathers dragged away to be shot. . . . of whole villages . . . torched as they [the refugees] were forced to flee. These refugees are the reason *we* are engaged in this conflict. *We* have pledged they will return” (emphasis added). Having previously established himself as an authority, Blair now progresses to a witness who “heard first-hand,” and by emotive descriptions of the committed crimes, invites the audience to bear witness along with him, and join him in a pledge (a covenant), compelled by the moral imperative to act. By using the pronoun “we” relative to action, Blair also invites the audience to identify with him and support *him* rather than the critics, and then transitions into the next section in which he deals with the theme of *unity* in more depth.

In the next section, titled “Nato [sic] Remains United,” Blair reaffirms Milosevic as brutal and determined, and presents the NATO campaign as the solution with which to “right this wrong and reverse the ethnic cleansing.” He then points out that the Alliance is “*united* in our determination” (emphasis added) and that “the *whole* of the Nato [sic] alliance is *clear* about our aims” (emphasis added) and proceeds to supply the goals that need to be achieved before the campaign can end. What can be read between the lines here is that the congregation is *together*, united in *opposition* to the foe who broke the covenant of “never again.”

In the very next sentence, through strategic use of language, Blair singles out Milosevic and makes it seem as if the campaign is carried out against a single person rather than the Serbian police and military forces:

And, as Milosevic knows, the air campaign is working. . . . *his* war machine is being destroyed. *He* has suffered huge damage to *his* air defenses. We are destroying *his* capacity to re-fuel, re-arm and direct the forces carrying out *his* vile policies on the ground in Kosovo. And increasingly, Nato [sic] is targeting these forces themselves. (emphasis added)

In singling out Milosevic as the party against which the campaign is waged, Blair establishes him as the one who needs to be *punished*, and progresses into the next section, titled “We Will Prevail,” in which he reaffirms that the military campaign is the only viable solution with which to do so.

Blair begins the section by emphasizing that NATO did not want to go to war and that it attempted diplomacy before resorting to the use of force, “made every effort . . . to find a peaceful solution,” but was forced into it by Milosevic:

But even when Milosevic was talking peace, he was planning war. He used the cover of the peace talks . . . to build up his forces so he could

intensify the ethnic cleansing. Such conduct is nothing new from him. He has been responsible for starting five wars. . . . He must be stopped – and he will be.

I argue that Blair here presents Milosevic as a cunning politician who cannot be trusted, and therefore cannot be dealt with in the realm of diplomacy. Apart from reaffirming Milosevic as “evil,” this paragraph functions to strengthen the argument that the military campaign is the best option. “We will keep working on the diplomatic track,” Blair writes, but “there can be no compromise on our minimum demands.”

Blair brings his article to a close by reminding the readers that “we owe it to the refugees to ensure that they can return to their homes in safety” and sends a message to all those “would-be” dictators in the world that “the international community will not stand by and let them *kill* at will, *destabilize* a region, *destroy* a people” (emphasis added). I argue that Blair finishes his article in good form. He restates the ultimate goal of saving the victim by using words such as “refugees,” “homes,” and “safety” and places them in opposition to actions such as “kill,” “destabilize,” and “destroy,” which can be attributed to Milosevic, Hitler, and “every other would-be dictator in the world.” Apart from inviting identification by opposition, this paragraph functions to strengthen the imperative to act and to justify it as “a just cause,” in Blair’s closing words.

Blair’s article preceded the ICTY indictment of Milosevic “for crimes against humanity – including, specifically, murder, deportation and persecutions – and for violations of the laws and customs of war committed since the beginning of 1999 in Kosovo” (Travers in *The Kosovo Crisis* 267), which was announced on 27 May 1999. It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty how much the dominant trope which compared Milosevic to Hitler influenced his indictment by ICTY. Nevertheless, I hope

that the general trends and the primary sources analyzed in this thesis illustrate that the operating rhetoric *worked* because of the *legacy* of the Holocaust that it was infused with. In supplying “genocide in Kosovo” as a narrative frame, the operating rhetoric bonded itself to the Holocaust as a touchstone, and in so doing enabled the collective memory of the past to be transferred into the present through the means of *analogy*. I argue that it was through analogy that the storyline (and with it the guilt) was transferred into the present where it gained *new life*. Collective memory and analogy can thus be said to have played a crucial part in the operating rhetoric and given it persuasive force because they accounted for the *mechanics* of shaping audience perceptions and guiding action.

V. CONCLUSION

Western rhetorical interpretations of the Kosovo conflict brought the faraway atrocities and destruction from a little-known place behind the Iron Curtain into the realm of the familiar by drawing upon the collective memory of the Holocaust. The connection between the present and the past was made through the means of analogy embedded in dramatic narratives wherein specific language such as “genocide” functioned to draw a parallel between the two dimensions in time. The legacy of the historic past was transferred into the present through two-dimensional rhetoric (combining the past and the present) that shaped perceptions and guided action towards a solution which was at once a resolution for the present and *redemption* for the past.

As I bring my thesis to a close in this chapter, I will draw several conclusions that aim to benefit the field of rhetorical studies and to inspire future research. My goal was to understand the internal workings of the rhetoric centered around the narrative frame of “genocide in Kosovo” and I hope that it will not be misunderstood as a work that attempts to exonerate any of the actors in the conflict, or cause additional pain to anyone who considers himself or herself a victim of the conflict at hand. As this thesis has illustrated, the word “genocide” is a very powerful word that can stir a range of emotions in the audience, and it cannot be treated lightly. However powerful, “genocide” is not a taboo word, and its power calls for an understanding of its possibilities in rhetorical discourse, and it was with this in mind that I have written about it.

This chapter will proceed by drawing several conclusions about the rhetorical legacy of the Kosovo conflict itself and identify several long-term implications that came about as a consequence of the function of dominant narrative of “genocide in Kosovo” in discourse.

A Rhetorical Legacy of Kosovo

As I have talked about the legacy of the Holocaust in the Western discourse and how it was applied to the Kosovo conflict throughout my study, it would be fitting to finish this thesis by highlighting the Kosovo war itself, the last war of the 20th century, and *its legacy* for future generations relative to public discourse.

As Stanley Henig points out in “Conclusion: Retrospect and Prospect” (in *The Kosovo Crisis* 2001), on the ground in Kosovo “the war is entering its eighth century with the widespread perception that nothing has been (finally) resolved” (277). However, since June 1999, the conflict has been treated as formally resolved in the Western discourse. Since that time, Kosovo has proclaimed independent statehood, which was almost immediately recognized in the West but has yet to be recognized by the Serbs and other minorities who reside in Kosovo, as well as by Serbia itself of which Kosovo was a part. The West has committed forces and resources (NATO’s Camp Bondsteel, the EU’s police monitoring and legal missions such as EUPM and EULEX) to support an arrangement which, as Henig points out, is “neither signed nor accepted” by those parties directly concerned by it (277). Although these specific concerns reflect a reality on the ground, they do not receive much airtime in the Western discourse at the time of my writing. I suggest that Kosovo is “old news,” but it does, however, find its way into

scholarly writing, and perhaps here one can see its true legacy because history is recorded in the realm of education.

One of the most debated questions on the topic of Yugoslavia in general, and Kosovo in particular, in the scholarly discourse that I have reviewed is: “Was there genocide in Kosovo, and if so who committed it?” This is a very important question and one that has been a source of dissent in the academic arena, as this thesis exemplified in the literature review in the fairly recent dispute between Robert Hayden and Sabrina Ramet on the pages of the academic journal *East European Politics and Societies*. This kind of question reflects a growing concern in the West with individual accountability for those who commit the crimes of war, also addressed through organizations like the International Criminal Tribunal, and inspires questions of collective accountability (of whole nations), a trend that can be seen in studies like Natalya Clark’s “Collective Guilt, Collective Responsibility and the Serbs” (2008). Although this study can function to re-address unresolved issues from the past, I argue that it also marks a growing demand for accountability in the West in the present, especially since the Kosovo conflict, and can thus be understood as a legacy of the Kosovo conflict itself.

Another trend in the Western discourse that can be understood as a legacy of Kosovo is a growing commitment to the principles of human rights and action underlined by a *moral* rather than *legal* basis. In a 1999 editorial for the *Independent*, Phillip Knightley, a notable British scholar,⁷⁰ observed that in the case of Kosovo the media believed what the military told them because “the military has stolen the moral high

⁷⁰ Knightley authored *The First Casualty* (1975, 2000), an exhaustive encyclopedic study of the media legacy from Crimea to Kosovo.

ground by claiming it is anti-war. It bombs in the name of peace, to save or liberate to show the tiniest disagreement with Britain's policy in Kosovo, is regarded as little short of treason, not just unpatriotic but *immoral*.”⁷¹The growing commitment to the principles of human rights and questions of morality versus legality can also be found in the scholarly realm. It can be seen in the dispute between Hayden and Ramet, which I discussed earlier in my literature review, which came about as a result of Ramet's classification of scholarship on Yugoslavia based upon their level of commitment to the principles of human rights into “universalists” or “relativists.”

Another general change in discourse that can be understood as a rhetorical legacy of the Kosovo conflict is a tendency to label critics as “enemy appeasers,” “deniers,” even “fascists” on occasion, as Michael Berube has done with Noam Chomsky. I argue that this particular move in discourse is problematic and can be understood as an infringement upon one's freedom of speech. In addition, it can also be understood as a discursive mechanism that silences debate. In “Lessons of the First Draft of History” (2000), British scholar Philip Hammond wrote that during the NATO bombing “even mild critics of British government policy were instantly denounced as appeasers and enemy stooges” (850). While he recognized the phenomenon as “hardly new,” Hammond pointed out that in practice the suppression of dissent means the silencing of debate:

Particularly since the Bosnian war, anyone doubting the altruistic motives of the West or the bestiality of demonized enemies[,] like the Serbs[,] risks being branded a neo-Nazi Holocaust-denier. In this context, the suppression of dissent is done with such self-righteousness that it seems difficult to resist. (850)

⁷¹ Available at <<http://www.mail-archive.com/pen-l@galaxy.csuchico.edu/msg39403.html>>, emphasis added.

All of the legacies discussed so far have come as a consequence of dealing with the acts of war in Kosovo as “genocide” and reflect changes in orientation of the Western discourse in general. There are several other implications of the dominant narrative that I would like to highlight that can also be understood as a rhetorical legacy of the Kosovo conflict. They are intrinsic to rhetoric, changes in the language and form, and I will briefly discuss them next as I believe that the field of rhetorical studies (rhetorical criticism in particular) would benefit from a closer inspection into those changes.

In my review of literature, as well as in the two primary sources which I analyzed, I have noticed a change in language used to denote acts of war. Although CNN used the term “atrocities” more than any other term to denote acts of violence in Kosovo, other general terms such as “shooting” and “killing” seemed to have been replaced with more *descriptive* terms such as “ethnic cleansing,” “massacres,” and “genocide.” I believe that this change warrants a closer examination of the terms themselves relative to their evolution, as well as relative to the audience psychology.

The term “genocide” itself, which was so crucial in the rhetoric I reviewed in this thesis, is another term that warrants a closer examination because it seems to have evolved in practice into an admonitory *ideograph* and it could be rhetorically evaluated as such. An ideograph can be understood as a word that audiences have been preconditioned to respond to automatically, non-reflexively, and predictably, and I argue that “genocide” has become one such term.

Implications for further research can also be found in the function of simplistic narratives in the operating rhetoric that reduced the complexity of the Kosovo conflict

into a singular representation. I believe that media studies and rhetorical criticism alike would benefit from a better understanding of the inner workings of *metonymy* in progressing narratives in discourse and inviting a non-negotiable response and scapegoating. When a complex situation is reduced to a singular representation, I argue that it closes itself from alternatives and invites a non-negotiable response. For example, once the Kosovo conflict was understood as (reduced to) “genocide,” it invited a non-reflexive response in discourse that became non-negotiable in the literal sense: one does not *negotiate* with Hitler or any other actor aligned with him in the present (Milosevic). If one does negotiate, that action takes him too far from the *covenant* and then he has guilt to deal with that cannot be cured by the means of scapegoating.

And finally, in closing, one of the most important rhetorical legacies of the last war of the 20th century can probably be found in its bond with the collective memory of the Holocaust. I believe that studies in rhetoric and collective memory alike would greatly benefit from a closer look at the mechanics of the rhetoric surrounding the Kosovo conflict, in the West as well as on the ground, in order to understand human rationality and motivation (and behavior) relative to collective memory. My study of the role that collective memory of World War II and the Holocaust played in the Western discourse dealt only with how that memory shaped the perceptions and action of one of the actors (the West). In order to gain a better understanding of how the collective memory of World War II truly worked in Kosovo, one would need to examine it from other perspectives, on the ground in Kosovo, where the memory might have worked with more immediacy to influence one human being in making a moral choice between taking another’s life or not.

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APPENDIX

Transcript of President Clinton's Address to the Nation

The following is a verbatim copy of the Address transcript provided by the PBS in *a NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* online on 24 March 1999.

My fellow Americans, today our Armed Forces joined our NATO allies in the strikes against Serbian forces responsible for the brutality in Kosovo. We have acted with resolve for several reasons.

We act to protect thousands of innocent people in Kosovo from a mounting military offensive. We act to prevent a wider war; to diffuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before in this century with catastrophic results. And we act to stand united with our allies for peace. By acting now we are upholding our values, protecting our interests and advancing the cause of peace.

Tonight I want to speak to you about the tragedy in Kosovo and why it matters to America that we work with our allies to end it. First, let me explain what it is that we are responding to. Kosovo is a province of Serbia, in the middle of southeastern Europe, about 160 miles east of Ital. That's less than the distance between Washington and New York, and only about 70 miles north of Greece. Its people are mostly ethnic Albanian and mostly Muslim.

In 1989, Serbia's leader, Slobadan [sic] Milosevic, the same leader who started the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, and moved against Slovenia in the last decade, stripped Kosovo of the constitutional autonomy its people enjoyed; thus denying them their right to speak their language, run their schools, shape their daily lives. For years, Kosovars struggled peacefully to get their rights back. When President Milosevic sent his troops and police to crush them, the struggle grew violent.

Last fall our diplomacy, backed by the threat of force from our NATO Alliance, stopped the fighting for a while, and rescued tens of thousands of people from freezing and starvation in the hills where they had fled to save their lives. And last month, with out [sic] allies and Russia, we proposed a peace agreement to end the fighting for good. The Kosovar leaders signed that agreement last week. Even though it does not give them all the [sic]

want, even though their people were still being savaged, they saw that a just peace is better than a long and unwinnable war.

The Serbian leaders, on the other hand, refused even to discuss key elements of the peace agreement. As the Kosovars were saying "yes" to peace, Serbia stationed 40,000 troops in and around Kosovo in preparation for a major offensive -- and in clear violation of the commitments they had made.

Now, they've started moving from village to village, shelling civilians and torching their houses. We've seen innocent people taken from their homes, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with bullets; Kosovar men dragged from their families, fathers and sons together, lined up and shot in cold blood. This is not war in the traditional sense. It is an attack by tanks and artillery on a largely defenseless people, whose leaders already have agreed to peace.

Ending this tragedy is a moral imperative. It is also important to America's national interest. Take a look at this map. Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity. To the south are our allies, Greece and Turkey; to the north, our new democratic allies in Central Europe. And all around Kosovo there are other small countries, struggling with their own economic and political challenges -- countries that could be overwhelmed by a large, new wave of refugees from Kosovo. All the ingredients for a major war are there: ancient grievances, struggling democracies, and in the center of it all a dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the Cold War ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division.

Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved, how many Americans would not have had to die.

We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. The world did not act early enough to stop that war, either. And let's not forget what happened -- innocent people herded into concentration camps, children gunned down by snipers on their way to school, soccer fields and parks turned into cemeteries; a quarter of a million people killed, not because of anything they have done, but because of who they were. Two million Bosnians became refugees. This was genocide in the heart of

Europe -- not in 1945, but in 1995. Not in some grainy newsreel from our parents' and grandparents' time, but in our own time, testing our humanity and our resolve.

At the time, many people believed nothing could be done to end the bloodshed in Bosnia. They said, well, that's just the way those people in the Balkans are. But when we and our allies joined with courageous Bosnians to stand up to the aggressors, we helped to end the war. We learned that in the Balkans, inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality. But firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too.

Over the last few months we have done everything we possibly could to solve this problem peacefully. Secretary Albright has worked tirelessly for a negotiated agreement. Mr. Milosevic has refused.

On Sunday I sent Ambassador Dick Holbrooke to Serbia to make clear to him again, on behalf of the United States and our NATO allies, that he must honor his own commitments and stop his repression, or face military action. Again, he refused.

Today, we and our 18 NATO allies agreed to do what we said we would do, what we must do to restore the peace. Our mission is clear: to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course. To deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.

Now, I want to be clear with you, there are risks in this military action -- risks to our pilots and the people on the ground. Serbia's air defenses are strong. It could decide to intensify its assault on Kosovo, or to seek to harm us or our allies elsewhere. If it does, we will deliver a forceful response.

Hopefully, Mr. Milosevic will realize his present course is self-destructive and unsustainable. If he decides to accept the peace agreement and demilitarize Kosovo, NATO has agreed to help to implement it with a peace-keeping force. If NATO is invited to do so, our troops should take part in that mission to keep the peace. But I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.

Do our interests in Kosovo justify the dangers to our Armed Forces? I've thought long and hard about that question. I am convinced that the dangers of acting are far outweighed by the dangers of not acting -- dangers to defenseless people and to our national interests. If we and our allies were to allow this war to continue with no response, President Milosevic would read our hesitation as a license to kill. There would be many more massacres, tens of thousands more refugees, more victims crying out for revenge.

Right now our firmness is the only hope the people of Kosovo have to be able to live in their own country without having to fear for their own lives. Remember: We asked them to accept peace, and they did. We asked them to promise to lay down their arms, and they agreed. We pledged that we, the United States and the other 18 nations of NATO, would stick by them if they did the right thing. We cannot let them down now.

Imagine what would happen if we and our allies instead decided just to look the other way, as these people were massacred on NATO's doorstep. That would discredit NATO, the cornerstone on which our security has rested for 50 years now.

We must also remember that this is a conflict with no natural national boundaries. Let me ask you to look again at a map. The red dots are towns the Serbs have attacked. The arrows show the movement of refugees -- north, east and south. Already, this movement is threatening the young democracy in Macedonia, which has its own Albanian minority and a Turkish minority. Already, Serbian forces have made forays into Albania from which Kosovars have drawn support. Albania is a Greek minority. Let a fire burn here in this area and the flames will spread. Eventually, key U.S. allies could be drawn into a wider conflict, a war we would be forced to confront later -- only at far greater risk and greater cost.

I have a responsibility as President to deal with problems such as this before they do permanent harm to our national interests. America has a responsibility to stand with our allies when they are trying to save innocent lives and preserve peace, freedom and stability in Europe. That is what we are doing in Kosovo.

If we've learned anything from the century drawing to a close, it is that if America is going to be prosperous and secure, we need a Europe that is prosperous, secure undivided and free. We need a Europe that is coming together, not falling apart; a Europe that shares our values and shares the burdens of leadership. That is the foundation on which the security of our children will depend.

That is why I have supported the political and economic unification of Europe. That is why we brought Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO, and redefined its missions, and reached out to Russia and Ukraine for new partnerships.

Now, what are the challenges to that vision of a peaceful, secure, united, stable Europe? The challenge of strengthening a partnership with a democratic Russia, that, despite our disagreements, is a constructive partner in the work of building peace. The challenge of resolving the tension between Greece and Turkey and building bridges with the Islamic world. And, finally, the challenge of ending instability in the Balkans so that these bitter ethnic problems in Europe are resolved the force of argument, not the force of arms; so that future generations of Americans do not have to cross the Atlantic to fight another terrible war.

It is this challenge that we and our allies are facing in Kosovo. That is why we have acted now -- because we care about saving innocent lives; because we have an interest in avoiding an even crueler and costlier war; and because our children need and deserve a peaceful, stable, free Europe.

Our thoughts and prayers tonight must be with the men and women of our Armed Forces who are undertaking this mission for the sake of our values and our children's future. May God bless them and may God bless America.

Transcript of Prime Minister Blair's Article for BBC News Online

The following is a verbatim transcript of Tony Blair's article as it was published by BBC on 14 May 1999.

My pledge to the refugees

It is no exaggeration to say that what is happening in Kosovo is racial genocide. No exaggeration to brand the behavior of Milosevic's forces as evil.

It is something we had hoped we would never experience again in Europe. Thousands murdered. One hundred thousand men missing. Hundreds of thousands of people forced to flee their homes and their country, robbed of anything of value at gunpoint.

There will be no apologies from Milosevic for this campaign of ethnic cleansing, no efforts made to avoid civilian casualties.

There will be no apologies simply because the terrible atrocities happening in Kosovo are not accidents but the results of a deliberate policy. They are designed to force the majority population out of Kosovo.

These atrocities cannot be seen, of course, because the Serbs will not allow journalists or TV crews to report what is happening behind Kosovo's closed borders for themselves. But that does not make the atrocities any less real or terrible or newsworthy.

Never forget the refugees

It is why it is vital we never tire of hearing the refugees' stories. There has been some powerful reporting of their suffering, not least on the BBC. Fergal Keane and his colleagues in the region have used all their skills to convey the horror these innocent people have experienced.

But these exceptional journalists would be the first to accept that they cannot tell the whole story, that they can only touch the surface. For nothing can prepare you for the camps and the plight of these people –

their fear, the horrors they have lived through as I found myself when I visited Macedonia last week.

I heard first-hand of women raped, of children watching their fathers dragged away to be shot. I was told of whole villages, their villages, torched as they were forced to flee. These refugees are the reason we are engaged in this conflict. We have pledged they will return. It is a pledge I repeat today.

Nato [sic] remains united

There are no half measures to Milosevic's brutality. There can be no half measures about how we deal with it.

He is determined to wipe a people from the face of his country. Nato [sic] is determined to stop him. And we will. We are united in our determination to right this wrong and reverse ethnic cleansing.

The whole of the Nato [sic] alliance is clear about our aims. They are not excessive but they must be met. We want his troops out, the refugees back home, and international military force allowed in to keep the peace so they can rebuilt [sic] their lives in safety. Until then, the air campaign goes on.

And, as Milosevic knows, the air campaign is working. The last few days have been the most successful so far. Day by day, night by night, his war machine is being destroyed.

He has suffered huge damage to his air defenses. We are destroying his capacity to re-fuel, re-arm and direct the forces carrying out his vile policies on the ground in Kosovo. And increasingly, Nato [sic] is targeting these forces themselves. The equivalent of a whole brigade has already been destroyed. As the summer weather settles, these losses will grow.

We will prevail

I take no pleasure from this campaign. Nor do the other Nato [sic] leaders. We tried hard to avoid this war. We made every effort over months of negotiations to find a peaceful solution.

But even when Milosevic was talking peace, he was planning war. He used the cover of the peace talks, entered into sincerely by others, to build up his forces so he could intensify the ethnic cleansing.

Such conduct is nothing new from him. He has been responsible for starting five wars. The consequences have been terrible. He must be stopped – and he will be.

We will keep working on the diplomatic track for a solution. But there can be no compromise on our minimum demands. There will be no fudge, no half-baked deals.

We owe it to the refugees to ensure they can return to their homes in safety. And when they do, every other would-be dictator in the world will know that the international community will not stand by and let them kill at will, destabilize a region, destroy a people. It is a just cause – and we will succeed.