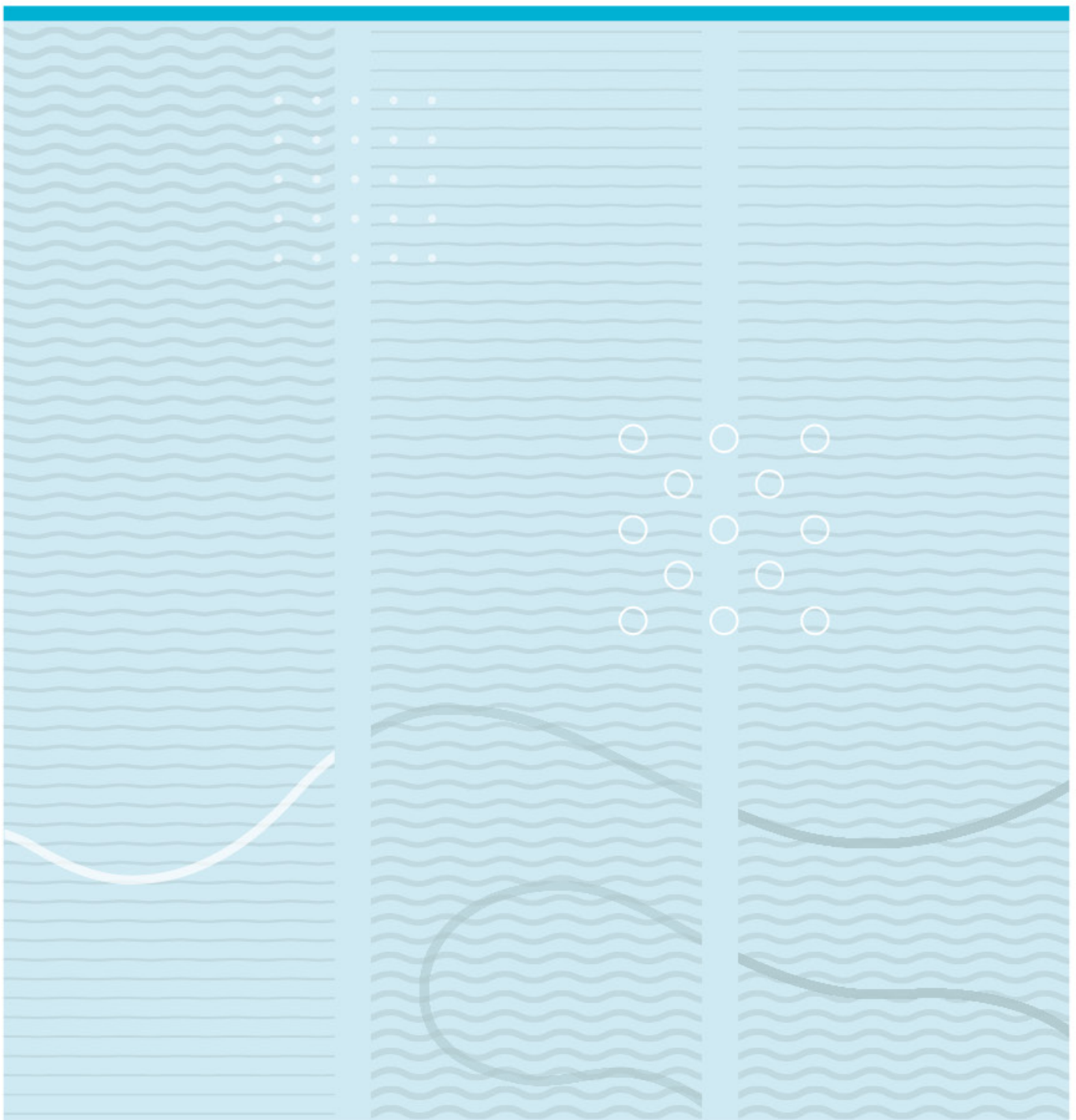


Susanne Holter Hjukse

History education and reconciliation in post war societies

A narrative analysis of Serbian and Kosovar history textbooks for students in primary education



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This thesis is worth 45 study points

Abstract

Since the civil war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s there has been a conflicting relationship between Serbia and Kosovo. Lack of reconciliation is, according to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16, "Peace, justice and strong institutions", a threat to attaining sustainable development. (UN). When states live in conflict, it affects the citizens' ability to live according to what the UN and the international community call a sustainable context for development. Education in the classroom has, as former director-general of UNESCO Irina Bokova says, a bigger purpose than teaching pupils to read and write, *"It is about values. It is about teaching human rights and cultural diversity, nourishing peace and fostering inclusive and sustainable development."* (Aloni, Weintrob, & Bokova, 2017).

By using a qualitative thematic and narrative analysis, this master thesis aims to investigate what narratives from the Yugoslavian war are taught the new generation in post-conflict societies. Using former enemies from civil war in the 1990s Serbia and Kosovo as a case study. With an interdisciplinary approach in social psychology, political science perspective and historicism, the study discusses what impact the interpretation of history may have on the relationship between former enemies. May it contribute to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence? — or opposite, foster more conflict?

Having an interdisciplinary approach, theories from historian John Tosh, political scientist Benedict Anderson's and psychologist Vamik D. Volkan are used as theoretical framework in the analysis (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). Using John Tosh concepts of uses and interpreting history. Benedict Anderson's theory is interesting because it explains how people inside states develop an imagined community based on a shared identity made by what they choose to forget and remember from history. Volkan's theory on large-group psychology is relevant while analysing how communities are affected by traumas like conflict and war. By connecting these theories, I hope to discover just how significant the role of history is in a reconciliation process.

Key words: Reconciliation, history education, nationalism, identity, large-group psychology.

List of acronyms

KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
UN	United Nations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

List of figures and tables

Figure 1 Map showing the expansion of the Ottoman Empire (c. 1300–1700). Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

Figure 2 Former Yugoslavia – political map. Retrived from reserachgate.net

Figure 3 Word cloud from Kosovo history curriculum

Figure 4 Word cloud from Serbian history curriculum

Contents

Abstract	2
List of acronyms	3
List of figures and tables	4
Contents	5
Foreword	7
1 Introduction	8
1.1 An eagle and a train	9
1.1.1 Why the need for reconciliation?.....	10
1.2 Research question and purpose of the research	11
1.3 Methodology.....	13
1.4 Structure	14
2 Contextual background	15
2.1 Becoming Balkan.....	15
2.1.1 1389.....	15
2.1.2 The Ottoman Empire and “The Great powers”	16
2.2 Yugoslavia.....	17
2.2.1 Multi-ethnic Southern Slavic	18
2.3 The secession wars and breakup of Yugoslavia.....	20
2.3.1 The war between Serbia and Kosovo	22
2.4 The relationship between Serbia and Kosovo today.....	24
2.4.1 Efforts on joint history narrative	26
3 Literature review	28
3.1 Hystography; truth or interpretation?	28
3.2 Reconciliation.....	29
3.3 History as reconciliation	31
3.4 Challenges with history education with the aim of achieve reconciliation	33
3.5 Summary	34
4 Theoretical framework	35
4.1 Benedict Anderson and imagined community	36
4.2 Identity; conceptual contributions from Vamik D. Volkan.....	38

4.3	The interpretation and impact of history: concepts by John Tosh.....	42
4.3.1	Impact of history.....	45
5	Methodological approach	50
5.1	Epistemological foundation.....	50
5.2	Data analysis.....	51
5.2.1	A combination of thematic and narrative analysis.....	52
5.3	Coding and categorizing.....	54
5.4	Documents of research and translation.....	55
5.5	Strengths and limitations.....	55
6	Data findings and analysis	58
6.1	Identity markers.....	58
6.1.1	Focus.....	59
6.1.2	Conflicting memories.....	62
6.1.3	The reason for war.....	63
6.1.4	KLA.....	64
6.1.5	NATO`s involvement.....	65
6.1.6	Casualties from the war.....	67
6.1.7	The final outcome of the war.....	69
6.2	Identity.....	72
6.2.1	Kosovo's narrative about "us"; Martyrs and chosen glories.....	73
6.2.2	Serbia about "us"; Victims and chosen traumas.....	75
6.2.3	The others.....	78
6.2.4	Serbia`s narrative about Kosovo.....	81
6.3	Interpretation and uses of History.....	82
7	Conclusion.....	85
	References/bibliography	88

Foreword

The finalization of this thesis is a symbol of a full circle in my academic life. In my bachelor's, I wrote about conflict resolutions between toddlers, and in this paper, I am doing a deep dive into conflict and reconciliation between nations. Like I did with my bachelor's, I would have loved to observe and see the research object up close in Kosovo and Serbia, but because of Covid-19, I had to remain in Norway and explore the subject through text. My interest in the area of research came through a field trip to Western Balkan in 2017, where I still saw a deeply divided society. In contrast to a field trip to Rwanda later that year, where they somehow manage to find a way to live together. This observation made me curious about what the new generation growing up learning about the past and their conflict.

Sadly, with the recent events of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the issue of reconciliation and conflicting truths are also very relevant.

Being a more hands-on and practical learner, I could not have managed to do this text analysis without my supportive co-eds, Sara, Caroline, Isabell and Llanell. Our regularly zoom-meetings kept me going, especially when we could not leave our home to study for several months.

In addition, family and friends have supported and motivated me to continue. Especially my parents and my boyfriend and his eight-year-old children Hampus and Elmer. They all have been very patient, supportive and contributing with cheers and important discussions about the topic of the thesis with me.

I also want to thank my supervisors Kjersti Brathagen, Stig Bjørshol and Ådne Valen-Sendstad. Together, they finally got me through this research project, while I was juggling fulltime work and moving to an old house at the countryside.

Thank you to my translators, Liridona Gashi, Gjuljas Seferi and Nikola Tomašević. Without them, there would not have been some data to analyze.

Helgeroa/16th of October .2022

Susanne Holter Hjukse

1 Introduction

History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it.

Winston Churchill

This master thesis investigates what narratives from the Yugoslavian war are taught the new generation in post-conflict societies. With an interdisciplinary approach using a social psychology, political science and historicism perspective, the study discusses which impact interpretation of history may have on the relationship between former enemies. May it contribute to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence? — or opposite, foster more conflict? Using former enemies from civil war in the 1990s Serbia and Kosovo as a case study.

Education in the classroom has, as former director-general of UNESCO Irina Bokova says, a bigger purpose than teaching pupils to read and write,

“It is about values. It is about teaching human rights and cultural diversity, nourishing peace and fostering inclusive and sustainable development.” (Aloni, Weintrob, & Bokova, 2017).

According to Marta Nussbaum, literature, both fiction and non-fiction, may contribute to developing our ethical thinking because text challenges our imagination and empathy. This is also in line with Socratic dialogue-based teaching, which is advocated by Marta Nussbaum

“a liberal education is intended for all people; it should be individualized and adapted to students’ different circumstances and contexts; it should be pluralistic and treat a variety of norms, ideals and traditions; and books should not be used authoritatively.” (Nussbaum, 2019)

With this perspective, the narrative in the history texts presented to the students of elementary school in Kosovo and Serbia today may impact what type of citizens the new generations will be.

The reason for choosing Kosovo and Serbia as the subject of research in this context is that the atmosphere between the two countries is tense and filled with unresolved issues after the Yugoslavian war in 1990s. The reason for choosing to analyse the history texts, is because several theorists claim that reconciliation first can happen when there has been an agreement and acknowledgment on past wrongdoings. By conduction a thematic and narrative analysis of the

narrative in each text, it is interesting to see if there is possible to identify their relationship and if this narrative is contributing for the possibility for reconciliation in the future.

1.1 An eagle and a train

To explain the ongoing tension between Serbia and Kosovo, I will use two examples of an incident during a football game during the World Cup 2018. A Kosovo-born player for Switzerland, Xherdan Shaqiri, made a two-handed eagle gesture with his fingers after scoring a game-winning goal against Serbia. The gesture is a nationalistic sign that many with ethnic Kosovo-Albanian roots make and was perceived by the Serbs as a provocation (Montague, 2018).

Another incidence occurred in 2017, when a Serbian owned train, decorated in Serbian Christian Orthodox symbols and flags signs reading “Kosovo is Serbian” in 21 different languages, was prevented from entering Kosovo. That Kosovo prevented this, made Serbia accuse Kosovo’s leaders of “wanting war” and warned that it would defend “every inch” of its territory. (New York Times. January 15, 2017). These acts tell us that two decades after the war between Serbia and Kosovo ended, the tension between the countries is still present.

In addition to proactive acts from the public, politicians from both countries contribute more to the conflict with public statements, like the following that were made during the UN Security Council meeting on October 31 2019;

*“There is something fundamentally wrong with a people so consumed by the bitterness and hatred of the past that they can find no peace with the present”
(Vlora Çitaku, Kosovo’s ambassador in the US, 2019).*

“Before any agreement can be reached, these people (Serbs living in Kosovo) must be ensured physical safety; freedom of movement and religion; the right to return to employment and participate in political life; and protection of their cultural and religious heritage.” (Ivica Dacic, (First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia) 2019).

These citations above from the leaders do not seem that they have the same perception of what happened during the war and blame each other (BBC News. March 24 2019, Vlora Çitaku, 2019, Ivica Dacic, 2019). This climate is continuing today, where the leaders are announcing claims and accusations about each other that do not correlate.

The tension in the public sphere is related to the unresolved issue of Kosovo's independence. In 1999, when Yugoslavia was, Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo were still a province in Serbia. A liberation war broke out, and both Macedonia and Kosovo broke free from Yugoslavia, and Serbia was the only state left. The UN security council placed Kosovo under a transitional administration before reaching absolute independence in 2008. Over a hundred states around the world later recognized Kosovo's independence. However, Serbia is not one of them, and states like Russia support Serbia, which makes this issue even more difficult in the international community concerning the east-west problem (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000).

Even though a significant number of Serbian live in Kosovo, they support and rely on the Serbian government and do not recognize Kosovo as an independent state. Serbians living in Kosovo claim they have fewer rights than the Kosovans. The Serbian government still does not recognize Kosovo as a state and claims they live in a province of Serbia (UPR Serbia 2018, The World Bank). Galtung claims that a country has a geographically defined area, and a nation is identified by culture, language, religion and history with connections to a specific area. If more nations have a link to the same area, we can get a conflict. (Galtung & Transcend, 2003).

The issues concerning the rights to the area of Kosovo and a historical overview will be thoroughly presented in chapter 2, the contextual background.

1.1.1 Why the need for reconciliation?

Lack of reconciliation is, according to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 16, "Peace, justice and strong institutions", a threat to attaining sustainable development (Nations, 2015). When states live in conflict, it affects the citizens' ability to live according to what the UN and the international community call a sustainable context for development. Since the war in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Kosovo and Serbia have had a conflicting relationship. A citizen poll in Serbia conducted by the think tank BCSP in 2020 shows that of the people asked, 70 % do not see a reconciliation or a normalization of their relationship with Kosovo soon. (Elek, 2020). Not being able to find a similar poll conducted asking the Kosovars the same, the recent statement from the UN Special Representative Caroline Ziaeh according to their relationship are a good indication of the climate between them.

“While this process¹ has led to meaningful results on various practical matters, a comprehensive normalization of relations between the two sides so far continues to be elusive. Reconciliation and addressing grievances of the past should reinforce the pursuit of important strategic objectives,” (UN, 20 April 2022)

1.2 Research question and purpose of the research

The interest in history's role in a reconciliation process and the ongoing conflict between Serbia and Kosovo resulted in the following research question:

Are the identities found in Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks hindering the prospect of reconciliation between them?

To answer this question, a qualitative thematic and narrative analysis of the Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks distributed to elementary schools in Serbia and Kosovo is conducted. The aim of the study is to understand their relationship by investigate what they teach about the Yugoslavian conflict in the 1980s and 90s, and also analyse which impact this may have on the prospects of reconciliation between them by identifying how they portray the war, themselves and each other.

In studies about conflict and wars, political science is usually the primary source of theories used in the analysis (Psaltis, Carretero, & Čehajić-Clancy, 2017). From the perspective of this thesis, though, an interdisciplinary approach is applied. Using political science with Benedict Anderson's theory on imagined communities to analyse if there are indications of nationalism in the texts. A social psychological perspective with contributions from Vadmik D. Volkan is used to understand the issues of intergroup relations in conflict. Lastly, John Tosh's theory on historicism is applied to analyse the interpretation and uses of history. Together they construct a theoretical framework that gives the analysis the possibility to identify the status quo between Serbia and Kosovo but also makes some suggestions on their narrative's impact.

German historian Simone Lässig (Korostelina & Lässig, 2013) explain that reconciliation must be understood as an ongoing process and not as an ending product that has been attained. She explains that it is a never-ending project because there is always a chance that peace between two

¹ Referring to United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

parts can be reversible. From this perspective, this thesis can provide some new perspective, where this study can provide some updated data that may give insights into the reconciliation process between Kosovo and Serbia. I base my research on the knowledge that several efforts have been conducted to write a collective history in this region of what happened during the Yugoslavian war in the 1990s. These efforts have not yet resulted in an official shared understanding of the past in their historical narrative. The signs of two unreconciled countries show both in the political landscape and on the ground level where Serbian and Kosovar live in separate enclaves inside Kosovo.

If reconciliation can be viewed as an ongoing process, it limits what conclusions of the future relationship between Kosovo and Serbia would be. However, signs of reconciliation are possible to identify in a research project of this scale. Hence, this thesis will hopefully provide an understanding of the Kosovan and Serbian relationship and if their historical narrative contributes to reconciliation or conflict between them. In that case, this paper can be considered a micro contribution to understanding the reconciliation process between these two groups. A micro contribution, Merry (2017:141) argue, can give valuable insight into the bigger picture of reconciliation. The examination of history textbooks can thus give an insight into the reconciliation process in practice, as Sally Engle Merry say in "Research Methods in Human Rights: A Handbook (2017)":

"To understand how human rights ideas and laws affect local communities, it is essential to examine local-level ideas, experiences and practices. Individual cases and situations provide valuable insight. Its effects become visible in the micro-processes of human rights discourse, practice and consciousness." (Andreassen, Sano, & McInerney-Lankford, 2017)

After I started researching the topic of history as reconciliation, I realised that there are thousands of pages written about the subject. So, what I can bring as a new perspective to what is already written, is to contribute to existing research on the theme of the role of history education in a reconciliation process. Clark (2012) supports this view by seeing social research as "The process of examining and attempting to understand competing versions of the truth, can thus shed important light on significant obstacle to reconciliation as well as potentially offer valuable insight into how that obstacle may be addressed and perhaps ultimately overcome with time"(Clark, 2012:830). His perspective offers the view that history education also can contribute to further conflict, which is a perspective that will be examined in the textbook analysis.

1.3 Methodology

A qualitative research strategy has been applied to investigate the identities and narrative found in the history textbooks of Serbia and Kosovo. Connecting reconciliation and interpretation of recent history, I intend to investigate their narrative of the war, themselves, and each other has an impact of their relationship.

Epistemologically, this research has the foundation of an interpretative and hermeneutic approach. A feature in the interpretive tradition, is that the researcher adopt an interpretive stance by aiming to reveal how members of society interpret the world around them, simultaneously placing this interpretation in a social scientific context. (Bryman, 2016) With a hermeneutic approach, the interpretation of the meaning of a text is central, which is relevant in a document study. This research project shows this epistemological foundation, by interpreting the two historical narratives from Kosovo and Serbia and comparing the reconciliation process between Kosovo and Serbia with theories on nationalism, large-group identity and historicism.

To answer my research question, a thematic and narrative analysis of the history textbooks from elementary schools in Serbia and Kosovo are conducted in order to identify both themes and narratives in the texts. The themes occurred during an inductive approach, using the theoretical framework as a guide to identify the themes.

Having an interdisciplinary approach, theories from historian John Tosh, political scientist Benedict Anderson's and psychologist Vamik D. Volkan are used as theoretical framework in the analysis (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). Using John Tosh concepts of uses and interpreting history. Benedict Anderson's theory is interesting because it explains how people inside states develop an imagined community based on a shared identity made by what they choose to forget and remember from history. Volkan`s theory on large-group psychology is relevant while analysing how communities are effected by traumas like conflict and war. By connecting these theories, I hope to discover just how significant the role of history is in a reconciliation process.

1.4 Structure

The structure of this thesis is constructed as it starts with an introduction of the research project in chapter 1. Here the theme and context of research are being introduced. Important terms are explained, and there is an overview of the methodology used in this study. Chapter 2, named Contextual background, consists of a thorough overview of the background of the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia and why there is a need for reconciliation.

In chapter 3, there is a literature review of former research on history education and reconciliation. Chapter 4 explains the main theories on which I base my analysis. The perspectives used in the analysis are theories on history concerning a state's identity. Benedict Andersson, Vadmik D. Volkan and John Tosh will be the leading theorist concerning this topic, where they together explain the connection between history and identity.

My methodology, which is a qualitative thematic and narrative analysis, will be presented in chapter 5, with its limits and ethical considerations.

In chapter 6, the analyses and findings in the Serbian and Kosovar history curricula will be presented.

In the end, in chapter 7, there will be given a conclusion that answer my aim of research.

2 Contextual background

This chapter will give an overview of the geographical, historical, and socio-political context the history textbooks being analysed are set. This thorough walkthrough of historical events is essential to understand why the different states in former Yugoslavia feel ownership of some parts of the area. It is also vital to understand how the borders and states became what they are today. The research is done from an anthropological and historical perspective.

The last part of this chapter is reserved for an overview of the relationship between Serbia and Kosovo today.

2.1 Becoming Balkan

Before World War One, Serbia and Kosovo were part of the Ottoman empire. The empire, created by Turkish tribes in Anatolia, was one of the most powerful states in the world during the 15th and 16th centuries. (Kent, 1996)



Figure 1- Map showing the expansion of the Ottoman Empire (c. 1300–1700). Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

2.1.1 1389

During the ruling of the sultans of Ottoman, the groundwork for what we now know as the multiethnicity of former Yugoslavia and Balkan was made. Furthermore, the conflict about the land

of Kosovo can be dated back to this period. In 1389 there was a battle on Kosovo field between an army led by the Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic and the invading army of the Ottoman Empire. This battle has become important for the Serbian people because the story tells of bravery, resistance and ultimately, loss. In the battle, the Ottoman Sultan was fatally wounded by the Serbian army, and the Serbian Prince Lazar was captured and executed; additionally, there were significant losses on both sides. Leading up to this battle, the kingdom of Serbia thrived for almost 200 years under the leadership of the Nemanjic dynasty, covering the territory from the Croatian border in the north to the Aegean Sea in the South, from the Adriatic Sea in the west to Constantinople. (Volkan, 2014a) What happened after The Battle of Kosovo is not clear, but Serbia tells the tale that the Ottoman forces fled and returned to Adrianople. The Kingdom of Serbia continued to rule this area for seven more years until the Ottomans again returned, and this time they gained control over Serbia. Today, the day of the Battle of Kosovo, June 28th, is marked as St. Vitus Day in Serbia (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000; Hermansen, 2008).

The former territory of the Serbian Kingdom, which was up to then mainly Greek Orthodox, where now getting influenced by the Ottoman empire to convert to Islam. This converting happened through a tradition the Ottoman Empire had called blood tax. Instead of money, Serbian families had to send their young sons to serve the Sultan and converting to Islam was part of this blood tax. This policy, and the fact that Muslims would be treated favourably by the Sultan, resulted in that part of the people in this area to became Muslims, especially in Bosnia. (Volkan, 2014b)

2.1.2 The Ottoman Empire and “The Great powers”

The aim of policy in the Ottoman Regime until its end was to maintain the Empire’s integrity. Nevertheless, the Great powers in Europe and nationalistic aspirations at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century would eventually end the Ottoman empire. The structure of the Empire met challenges being approximate to Europe, which now was advancing to industrial capitalism and an emerging world market. In addition, would the fact that the Ottoman Empire was a vastly multi-ethnicity and multi-religious state be a challenge in cooperating in the world market because the different groups/areas claimed more autonomy, and the Sultan struggled to keep power centralised (Kent, 1996).

At the end of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan tried to bargain with the great powers in Europe - Britain, France, and Germany- to stay as an empire. Germany was the power that they agreed with.

One of the reasons for that was that the leaders of the Ottoman Empire did not see Germany as a threat that would colonise the Ottoman empire. Unlike what they feared Britain and France would have done in reference to their colonising history. Germany and the Ottoman Empire became allies because the Ottoman was in an economic crisis. Germany saw the Ottoman Empire as an asset in a geopolitical sense leading up to WWI. The unofficial alliance agreed on a railway concession that facilitated the movement from Berlin to Baghdad. The railway was significant because Britain and France had control over the seaways. (Kent, 1996)

The Ottoman Empire's integration into the world economy resulted in some regions attaining a closer economic link to Paris and London than Istanbul. The Balkans was an example of that. This weakness in the Empire was compensated by Sultan Abdul Hamid, who then integrated local ruling groups - Albanian, Arab and Kurdish. Later this was attempted to be reduced, but then the local rulers had gained help from outside;" the Austrians interfered in Albania, the Russians in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia, and the French in Syria." (Kent, 1996)

These defeats against other nations and the groups within consequently undermined the Empire's authority. Additionally, the unique millet system contributed to the end of the Ottoman Empire. The millet system dates back to the 14th when Sultan Mehmed II conquered Constantinople. To avoid demonstrations, he guaranteed the Greek church religious freedom, and the patriarch was granted full religious and civil authority over the Greek Orthodox community of the Empire". In this way, the Sultan had a secure ally since the patriarch depended on the Sultan's support. These privileges were later also granted to the Armenian and Jewish communities.

World War One marked the ending of the Ottoman Empire; the new threat to the Yugoslavian people was either the Habsburg dynasty or the tsar-Russian Romanov dynasty. To avoid that, the Yugoslavian people seek together.

2.2 Yugoslavia

After World War One, negotiations between the Great powers in Europe concerned whether the new states in Balkan should be a kingdom under the Serbian Karadordevic-dynasty or, as Croatian exiles wanted, a Yugoslavian state with Zagreb as the capital. The latter was decided, and the it was called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The Kingdom ruled over the geographical area of

what we now know as Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and North Macedonia. (Silber & Little, 1997; Volkan, 2014a)

2.2.1 Multi-ethnic Southern Slavic

“Yugo” means “southern” in Slavic language. This language is also what the groups in this area



Figure 1 Former Yugoslavia – political map. Retrived from reserachgate.net

initially had in common; in addition, that they did not identify themselves with either Austria, Hungary or Turkey. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000). The idea of distancing them from these countries arose during the Napoleonic Wars when Dalmatia and most of Croatia were under France. In this period, the Slavic identity of being anti-Austrian and anti-Hungarian arose. An ideology called Pan-Slavism was also born during this period, containing ideas about Yugoslavia that stretched from the Adriatic to the black Sea. Russia was a power that supported this idea. However, military and diplomatic conversations between Russia, Turkey, Austria and Britain from 1700 to World War One resulted in this ideology being unattainable.

A new idea arose from Serbian and Croatian scholars in 1919, wanting a Yugoslavia based on linguistics, containing Slavic speaking people from the Alps to the Bulgarian border. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000). Even though the basis of this Yugoslavia was based on the idea of uniting Slavic-

speaking people, the territory also inhabited citizens who were non-Slavic, like the Albanians. The Yugoslavian state that arose after World War One was ethnically heterogeneous regarding religion and language. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000) Religions were Catholicism, Islam and Orthodox. The languages were Greek, Albanian, Turkish and Slavic. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000)

Between the First and the Second World Wars, Serbia was the dominating state in Yugoslavia. Croatia started to feel oppressed, which resulted in Croatia taking the German side during World War Two, thinking Germany would liberate Croatia from Serbian domination in Yugoslavia. During World War Two, Yugoslavia surrendered in April 1941 when Hitler's army attacked Yugoslavia and occupied it. The king sought exile in London, but he never returned to Yugoslavia. Croatia then gained a slight advantage and took revenge on the Serbian people. The result was that the Croatians, with Pavelic in charge, executed both Jews, rebellious Croatians and approximately 500.000 Serbs during WW2. There were two resistant movements against Hitler during the Second World War, one led by the Serbian cornel Draza Mihailovic (a Tsjetenian patriot) and Marshall Josip Broz Tito, who led the communist Partisan guerrilla. These two movements were conflicting, and it was Tito who had gained support from the Great powers like Britain since Mihailovic had the image of a traitor since he earlier had joined Germany and Italy in operations against the Tito partisans. (Hermansen, 2008). The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was officially replaced by The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 29th of November 1945, reorganized as a communist state. Tito or Josip Broz, a locksmith who was half Slovene and half Croat, became the new leader of Yugoslavia. As a communist leader, Tito had a close relationship with the Soviets, and he was loyal to them. However, since Yugoslavia liberated itself during WWII without help from the Soviets, Titos Yugoslavia had an independent position in the eastern bloc community.(Silber & Little, 1997). Yugoslavia used its unique position, being both connected to the east and West by former collaboration and its location, to secure the West's financial backing. (Little, 1997). The communist state, which also was economically affected after World War 2, had by the 1970s attained a higher living standard than most of Eastern Europe. Tourism flourished on the Dalmatian coast, and the Yugoslavian people could travel outside the country to work. In addition to Yugoslavia having a relatively good living standard, Tito prevented interethnic conflicts within Yugoslavia with his vision of "Brotherhood and unity" and actively suppressed all forms of resurgent nationalism. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000) With the Cold War ending, Yugoslavia lost this stability, not being able to use its strategic importance and what economic advantages that entailed. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000)

In Tito's last years, there was no apparent heir to be his successor, so Tito created a ruling that showed to be hopelessly inefficient. The collective head of state that was to replace him was an eight-member presidency, comprising one representative from each of the six republics and one from Serbia's two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo. The presidency of this body would rotate annually between its members. As head of state, the eight-member presidency was also commander-in-chief of the army. (Silber & Little, 1997)

When Tito's health began to deteriorate, federal institutions deteriorated with him. Yugoslavia became a country composed of eight regionally-based and separate Communist Parties, the secret police and the army. When he died in May 1980, at the age of 88, there was a genuine outpouring of patriotic grief among all of Yugoslavia's nations. (Silber & Little, 1997)

2.3 The secession wars and breakup of Yugoslavia

In the 80s, after Tito's death, the economic challenges escalated in Yugoslavia. Both because of the Yugoslavian economic model and the downfall in the international market as a whole. Croatia and Slovenia questioned the Yugoslavian model centralised in Beograd. They wanted a free election, an open market economy and membership in the European Union; Serbia disagreed with this. (Hermansen, 2008)

In Serbia, there where now a president named Slobodan Milosevic, who was very nationalistic and wanted the power to stay in Beograd. Nevertheless, on the 25th of June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared themselves as independent states, something Milosevic would not see happen without a fight. To avoid a civil war in Balkan, the European Union formally accepted Slovenia and Croatia as independent in January 1992. Before this, Serbia put up a fight but lost quickly against Slovenia, with only 64 casualties. The Serbian- Croatian war was a far more deadly one.

At the border between Serbia and Croatia, Krajina, there lived 167.000 Serbs, thereby making the majority in this area. They had lived there for several centuries, and therefore they resisted being part of the new state Croatia instead of their motherland Serbia. Krajina-Serbs made bloody resistance, and they also made strategic blockades of roads and railways to prevent people from going from Zagreb to the tourist area on the Dalmatian coast, thereby blocking Croatia's primary source of income - the tourist industry. Because of this, both sides armed themselves. With a student-led demonstration against censorship in Beograd in March 1991, Milosevic used this as an

excuse to stop all demonstrations in Yugoslavia, using the army as an effective means. The president solely supported this action in Yugoslavia (Milosevic closed allied), and the other representatives from the republics in Yugoslavia voted against it. The result was that Milosevic announced the presidency of Yugoslavia dead, and it was now no executive power in Yugoslavia. (Hermansen, 2008)

This made lawlessness and criminal forces possible to join the Serbian Radical Party's paramilitary party, led by Vojislav Seselj. With the Federal Yugoslavian Army, led by Ratko Mladic, they first marched and attacked Kijevo right outside Knin, and next, they conquered town after town in Slovenia and Krajina. This led the international community to interfere – a peace plan constructed by lord Carrington suggested that all the Yugoslavian republics would be declared independent before they started to negotiate. Everyone but Serbia and Macedonia agreed on this. The peace plan needed to be unanimous, so the Carrington Plan did not go through. (Hermansen, 2008)

By the end of 1991, the war had resulted in 15.000 dead and half a million refugees. Serbia was at the time in control of the Serbian republic Krajina, with Knin as their self-announced capital. (Hermansen, 2008)

At this time, Bosnia- Herzegovina started also pursuing independence. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, there were larger groups of different ethnicities; Muslims, Serbs and Croats, and the fear were that a civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina would be a deadly disaster (Hermansen, 2008). Still, in the fall of 1991, Croats and Muslims, who together represented 61% of the population, agreed on Bosnia-Herzegovina being an independent state. The remaining 31% were Bosnian Serbs, who boycotted this public voting and worked against a new Large Serbia. This opposition did not fan out, and the international community supported Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent state in April 1992. The remaining Yugoslavia was Serbia and Montenegro. They were excluded from the international community because of their unwillingness to accept the new states and their support to Croat Serbs and Bosnia Serb's resistance against Croatia and Bosnia.

With help from Serbs in Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Serbs would not accept that they were a minority in Bosnia Herzegovina and started to arm their armies. On the day Bosnia-Herzegovina was announced as an independent state, there was an incident of a Muslim killing the bride's father in a Serbian wedding, which fuzed the Serbian attack against the Muslims and Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Together with the Bosnian Serbs, the Yugoslavian army started to take over strategic areas on the border to Serbia, east of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Amongst the strategic areas where the

town of Srebrenica is close to the Serbian border in Bosnia. Here, approximately 8000 Muslims were systematically executed by the Yugoslavian army in 1995. Leading up to this massacre, there been ongoing fights between Bosnian Serbs and Bosnians throughout Bosnia. By 1992, the Serbian forces had fought and won territorial of around 70 % of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnian Muslims were about to lose even more power when Bosnian-Croatian started negotiating with Serbia to divide Bosnia between them. An example of the Bosnian Muslims losing their alliance with Croatia was that the Croats blew up the bridge in Mostar in 1993 and made their state near the Croatian border called Hrvatska Republika Herceg Bosna. Like the Serbians, the Croats also maid concentration camps for Bosnian Muslims. These actions made the international community intervene, and there were several attempts to make a peace agreement between Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia. These attempts were called the Vance-Owen-plan and the Owen-Stoltenberg-plan. These agreements were diminished when the conflicting parties did not agree on the territorial outcomes of these agreements.

UN came in with peace-restoring personnel, and after a while, NATO joined, intending to threaten the states to retreat and make peace.

The beginning of the end of this war was an air attack from Croatia against the Bosnian Serbs in occupied Krajina. The Bosnian Serbian fled the area, and Croatia regained power over their lost area. This win raised a new wind for the Muslim-Croat collaboration in Bosnia, and all over the country, Croats and Muslims won back territories that Bosnian Serbs had taken over during the war. The international community put sanctions on Serbia, and because of this, Bosnian Serbs lost their ally to the Yugoslavian leader Milosevic. Bosnian Serbs understood that they now had lost the war on Bosnian territory. On the 12th of October 1995, a truce agreement was set in force. In Paris 14th of December 1995, a peace agreement was signed between the three countries (official still Yugoslavia, though). This is where the negotiations of the Dayton agreement started. For Bosnia-Herzegovina, this meant that they would not become a unity-state controlled by the Muslims but a multistate federation between the Croats and Muslims, and the Serbs kept power in their area; Republika Srpska. What happened next is what would be the central theme of disagreement for the conflicting parties in this thesis.

2.3.1 The war between Serbia and Kosovo

The wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia resulted in these states becoming independent states, leaving Serbia, North Macedonia and Kosovo the remaining provinces belonging to Yugoslavia.

When the international community and the Kosovo Albanians started talking about Kosovo's future as independent, Serbia saw this as a potential loss of the heart of Serbia. Some theorists argue that the Serbian President between 1989 and 1997 Slobodan Milosevic used nationalism in the battle of Kosovo field in 1389 as a symbol of Serbian greatness and as an excuse to "take back" what belonged to them. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000; Hermansen, 2008; Mertus, 1999; Silber & Little, 1997)[shh1]

At the same time, Albanian nationalism increased. The need to be detached from Serbia was widespread amongst the Kosovo Albanians. In 1997, the Albanian regime fell apart, and their weapon storage was raided. A group that supported the independence of Kosovo called the KLA – Kosovo Liberation Army started attacking Serbian targets in Kosovo. This resulted in a violent answer from Serbia and Beograd, who systematically attacked Kosovo Albanian villages, leading to 200.000 Kosovo Albanians on the run. This did not go unnoticed by the international society, and they reinforced sanctions toward Serbia led by Milosevic. In addition, NATO became more aggressive in pressuring Serbia to an agreement with Kosovo. They used the possibility of an air force attack as pressure. Serbia and Kosovo met to negotiate, but they disagreed. Serbia wanted Kosovo to stay a part of Serbia, with a more significant presence of Serbians. Furthermore, Kosovo wanted to break out and be an independent state. A middle way for both of them was not acceptable. (Halpern & Kideckel, 2000; Hermansen, 2008; Mertus, 1999; Silber & Little, 1997)

As an outcome of the Serbian army's unwillingness to retreat from Kosovo, NATO made their threats real. It used the air force to bomb strategic areas like Beograd and the Yugoslavian infantry in Kosovo. Milosevic would not accept the defeat and continued to expel and execute Kosovo Albanians from Kosovo. After 78 days of bombing from NATO, the Yugoslavians started to retreat their Serbian forces from Kosovo. Then a multinational army came to Kosovo, and the Kosovo Albanians retreated to Kosovo. This multinational army could not prohibit the Kosovo Serbs from being forced out of Kosovo by the Kosovo Albanians.

The war in Kosovo resulted in around 10.000 Kosovo Albanians losing their lives; the casualties for Yugoslavia were somewhere between 5000 soldiers and 1000 civilians. These numbers are contested by Serbia today, they report a higher number of casualties.

The refugees from the war were also a large group, there were 240.000 Kosovo Serbs who fled from Kosovo, and many of them never returned to Kosovo. (Hermansen, 2008).

In hindsight, the root cause of conflict in Kosovo is far from simple. According to Mertus in his book “Kosovo. How myths and Truths started a war”, the conflict is more than the result of ancient hate and nationalism. Mertus claims that the conflict also has the aspect of being created over time by power struggles and economic and social institutions that lead to poverty and injustices. “On to this equation, you can add oppositional national identities and misunderstandings” (Mertus, 1999).

2.4 The relationship between Serbia and Kosovo today

Since the war ended, there has still been a conflicting relationship between Serbia and Kosovo. Simplified explained, both Serbs and Albanians claim historical rights to the province. Serbia officially still does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state, and Kosovo and Serbia regularly have conflicts concerning the rights of their citizens and land dispute.

The Universal Periodic Review of Serbia from January 2018 conducted for OHCHR reported that Serbia is making an effort to take accountability for the war crimes conducted in former Yugoslavia in 1991. They have a national strategy for prosecuting War Crimes for the period 2016-2020 and cooperate with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (OHCHR, 2018). The European Commission realised a report on Kosovo in 2020, identifying several factors that complicate their relationship with Serbia.

"The unresolved fate of missing persons from the 1990s conflicts remains a humanitarian concern in the Western Balkans."(Comission, 2020)

The report concludes that in April 2020, 10,027 people were still missing due to the conflicts in the region. Of these, 1,644 cases are related to the conflict in Kosovo. There is I taskforce led by ICRC called “Belgrade-Pristina Working Group on Missing Persons” working on this issue, but the commission ask for a more streamlined organization who can address the issue of missing persons in a more effective way. (Comission, 2020)

"In the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue, the efforts aiming at concluding a fully comprehensive and legally binding agreement between Serbia and Kosovo had been interrupted. The decision taken by the Kosovo government to lift these tariffs and the reciprocity measures by early June 2020 led to a restoration of the flow of goods with both Serbia and Bosnia and

Herzegovina. In April 2020, the Council appointed Miroslav Lajčák as EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues to assist High-Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell in taking forward the normalization talks." (Comission, 2020).

The last issue that the European commission mention in their report from 2020, concerns the Serbian and Kosovan agreements concerning trade and goods. These agreements had been interrupted since November 2018, "following the decision by the Kosovo government to impose customs tariffs of 100% on imported goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, citing political and trade-related grievances."(Comission, 2020). Since then, a restoration of the trade between them are back to normal, but these actions shows that is regularly comes up aggression towards each other.

The most recent study on the relationship between Serbs and Kosovars in Kosovo was conducted in 2020 by scholars on behalf of three NGOs based in Kosovo. The study where more in the light of transitional justice. The rapport is called "Democratizing transitional justice -towards a deliberative infrastructure for dealing with the past in Kosovo". The key findings here are that there is a lack of strategy for dealing with the past in Kosovo. It becomes visible when victims and survivors from the war have not yet received proper "representation and inclusion". There is a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) under preparation in Kosovo, but to this day, it is still not established and a working commission.

There have been political acts on both sides to normalize the relationship between Serbia and Kosovo. In 2013, a dialogue led by the EU resulted in an agreement to normalize the relationship between the two parts. This agreement resulted in and was motivated by the possibility of seeking membership in the EU. Before the former US President Donald Trump invited Serbia and Kosovo to negotiate in the fall of 2020, both parties had a setback in their relationship. The President of Serbia and the prime minister of Kosovo came to the White House to negotiate toward an economic normalization in the fall of 2020. The visit ended when the two parties signed a document recommitting to relations and that the US invested in both countries.

Ref (2020) The Kosovo-Serbia normalization agreements, Strategic Comments, 26:6, vii-ix, DOI: This recent negotiation is the last of several attempts from the international community—the leading actor being the European Union with the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue that started in 2011.

The document comments that the new aspect of this agreement is that with both parties committing to the US, Serbia, who has been portrayed as pro-Russian, now seems to collaborate with both US and Russia, China and the EU. That is written in the report. "

Today there are negotiations about a land swap. These negotiations are motivated mainly by the interest in getting into the EU. (Bami, June 16, 2020)

"In Serbia proper and Kosovo, a victim mentality has taken over. The identity of most Kosovo Albanians and Serbians is that of the suffering victim: Kosovo Albanians suffer at the hands of Serbs; Serbs have been misunderstood throughout history by the entire world. To change their attitudes towards each other, Serbs and Kosovo Albanians must first change this view of themselves."
(Mertus, 1999)

All this combined gives reason to believe that Kosovo and Serbia have not yet reached reconciliation.

2.4.1 Efforts on joint history narrative

"Those who have grown up with identities formed as a mirror to the threatening other must begin by turning the mirror on themselves." (Mertus, 1999)

In addition to several efforts to reconciliation from the international community, there have been projects on a more grassroots level like The Scholars Initiative (SI). This was an effort to make joint history books in former Yugoslavia. This initiative stemmed from the conviction that native historians and social scientists are best positioned to challenge the nationalistic narratives that have succeeded so well in dividing the peoples of Central Europe (Ingrao & Emmert, 2013). Challenges in this project were the conflict of the fate of Kosovo, and the project was in 2013 at a standstill but is continuously in the public sphere.

In 2013 the political scientist Lubov Fajfer analyzed the Joint History Project, an initiative of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) conducted in 2009. This project came from growing concerns among the region's educators and historians, who saw an increasingly nationalistic portrayal of history in this region. His analysis concluded that "How the

history of a nation is constructed and taught in school will to a large degree determine the specific components of national (or ethnic) identity, including the positive or negative perception of "the other" (Ihrig, Korostelina, & Lassig, 2013, p. 141). This project's challenges were the unwillingness of several teachers who grew up and were educated in the system dominated by nationalist ideologies to embrace the multiperspective approach the Joint history project had. (Ihrig et al., 2013). Another challenge was to get the ministry of education in the different states to implement the new history curriculum.

3 Literature review

The following chapter is an examination of existing research in the field of reconciliation and history education. This will act as a background to my analysis of the history curriculum and in that way also contribute to the theoretical foundation of the subject of research (Bryman, 2016).

First the debate of ethics and view on historiography will be presented, this is to clarify which role the history curricular have in today's society. Secondly, the link between history education and reconciliation in post war societies made by other scholars are presented. Under this there will be debated In addition to challenges posed by scholars towards history education as part of reconciliation.

3.1 Histography; truth or interpretation?

The field of histography has not escaped the discussion of legitimacy. History has undergone a development from oral ancient myths to the written word distinguishing between *poetry* and *history*, and this is also the core of the discussion; how much is interpreted by the historian itself and what consequences may this have for the legitimacy of history? (Korhonen, 2006) How can we guarantee the science of histography when it comes from the traditions of myths and poetry? This discussion has been between historians and literary scholars who saw *"literature as an autonomous field of writing that was either an alternative or a rival for historians' claims to truth."* (Korhonen, 2006). Hayden White is a historian that has made both historians and literalist upset by simplified said, putting them in the same field. the two fields; history and literature, are undoubtedly intertwined,

Hayden White questions the ability of historians to balance the use of narrative in historical writing without, maybe unconsciously, using flowery language emphasizing their values through the text.

"Stories, like factual statements, are linguistic entities and belong to the order of discourse." (White, 2020)."

Most theorists of narrative history take the view that emplotment produces not so much another, more comprehensive and synthetic, factual statement as an interpretation of the facts. However, the distinction between factual statements (considered as a product of object-language) and interpretations of them (considered as a product of one or more metalanguages) does not help us when it is a matter of interpretations produced by the modes of emplotment used to represent the

facts as displaying the form and meaning of different kinds of story. We are not helped by the suggestion that competing narratives result from the facts having been interpreted by one historian as a tragedy and interpreted by another as a farce." (Korhonen, 2006; White, 2020).

The discussion has concerned several trends like viewing literature as in realistic and naturalistic trends *"research that analyzed the same reality as historians analyzed but using methods that were capable of finding more elaborate truths than historians uncovered - the hidden experiences and structures of everyday life."* (Korhonen, 2006) Also romantic trends, who saw literature as a substitute for religious truth. (Korhonen, 2006). Distancing us from the field of literature, historiography has internally had its own discussions; the aim of being value-free and protecting an objective image, result in describing only those events that was documented, like wars and diplomacy. In this way leaving out *"Other realms of human experience - dreams, fears, and visions of marginalized people, for example - did not belong to "how it actually was."* (Korhonen, 2006). Hayden White's argument is that *"the events and persons with which historians deal are no longer present to perception, the evidence available for inspection is incomplete and contingently assembled, and eyewitness accounts of events can be checked only against other accounts, not against the events themselves."* All of this means that, historical descriptions are just components of "he said"- "she said", and is therefore hard to both prove and also disprove, saying that historical knowledge is pretty weak." (Korhonen, 2006).

Today, most historians agree that *history* contains more than just merely descriptions of events; it also tries to explain the logic and the background for these events based on empirical science. Even as early as the 60s E. H. Carr presented historiography as part of the same science as nature- and social science, meaning that they had the same goal *"to enlighten peoples understanding of their surroundings"*. (Carr, 1987; Korhonen, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006)

3.2 Reconciliation

In a scholarly context, reconciliation is a vastly researched term. Throughout the history of modern societies, there are many examples of peoples, states and societies conflicting with each other, because of this, scientist and practitioners has had the opportunity to research conflict and reconciliation for decades.

Reconciliation differs from the term peacebuilding, who is understood as the political activity that seeks to address the root causes of the conflict and enabling the conflicting parties to negotiate to find solutions. (Murithi, 2009). Theories on reconciliation seems to have in common that they claims is a process that not just the leaders in the societies go through, but the majority of the society as a whole. (Galtung & Transcend, 2003; Ihrig et al., 2013; Lederach, 1997)

Galtung, Lederarch and Muriti have all written about their experienced and lessons learned in post-conflict societies. Starting with Johan Galtung (2000, 2003), a founder of TRANSCEND, a mediator organisation, he has 45 plus years of experience of conflict resolution in a variant scale. His method trough transcend is that there is not “One” resolution, there need to be openness and dialog, and also the possibility to choose another way if it is not leading to conflict resolution in a peaceful matter. Johan Galtung sees conflict as a possibility for transitional justice. In a successful reconciliation process, both parts need to depolarize because it makes dialogue, empathy, and creativity possible. In his view, conflict is as a possibility for a divided nation to move forward.(Galtung & Transcend, 2003). Galtung and Lederarch suggest a reconciliation through building relationship and dialogue, in contrast to laws and signing peace agreements.

.John Paul Lederach (Lederach) thoughts come from his experience by participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives in 20 countries and five continents. His book “Building peace : sustainable reconciliation in divided societies” is a summary of lessons learned, and a contribution to the discussion of how to work with sustainable peacebuilding, with an emphasis on sustainable. Lederarch agrees with Galtung on the fact that in a reconciliation process, there is two conflicting goals, or in his words “antagonists” who needs to build a relationship. (Lederach, 1997) Lederarch emphasize the importance to involve grassroots levels on both sides in the reconciliation process, because lessoned learned has shown that if not every level of society is involved (meaning top-level, middle-level and grassroot) there is a larger risk for the peace process to collapse. He brings four concepts; Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace, which he got from working with negotiations between the Sandinista government and the indigenous resistance movement of the Nicaraguan East Coast. He claims these four concepts need to be equally present in order to attain reconciliation. (Lederach, 1997)

Muriti, “Reconciliation effectively seeks to overcome the hatred, suspicion and distrust of the past and to heal a society to the extent that coexistence becomes possible. In this sense, John-Paul Lederach argues that the process of reconciliation is deeply paradoxical. He argues that:

reconciliation can be seen as dealing with three specific paradoxes. First, in an overall sense, reconciliation promotes an encounter between the open expression of the painful past, on the one hand, and the search for the articulation of a long-term, interdependent future, on the other hand.” (Muriti, 2008:138).

3.3 History as reconciliation

There seems to be a rather common consent from scholars that for a conflict to reach a reconciliation, the past need to be dealt with from each side (Djuliman, 2016; Kriesberg 2007; Galtung 2003, 2008; Korestelina, 2013; Lässig, 2013) (Ihrig et al., 2013) (Djuliman, 2016). An example of that process, is what happened after WWII, were the Nuremberg Military Tribunals worked as written statement of what happened during the war, and this has also become a joint understanding of history. But how and when the truth should be portrayed is not agreed.

Peter Seixas, an historian and moral education specialist, has identified six political and educational questions students should be able to ask of difficult pasts. *1. Who were the transgressors? 2. Who should take the responsibility? 3. What does taking responsibility entail? 4. What is it we are obliged to remember from the past? 5. How can our should we judge the actions of people in the past? and 6. What can we learn from the conflict of the past for the ethical issues that face us today?”* (Seixas, 2017). By adapting these questions in an educational setting in post-conflict societies, there can be argued that this would have been a useful framework for adapting a wider understanding of the past, and possible contribute to reconciliation. According to Louis Kriesberg, a contributor in the book “After mass crime: rebuilding states and communities”(2007a), the unpleasant questions, who leads to unpleasant answers are important to pose in order to be able to reconcile.

“The truth, even how unpleasant, need to be addressed and recognized from both part of a conflict, to be able to reconcile. The problem is often that the opposing sides tend to deny what members of the other side experience and believe is the truth” (Pouligny et al., 2007a)

According to Enver Djuliman in his book “Forsoning: skilt langs veien”², writing of history should not just be a litany of the past; it should explain the past. History can be useful for a nation to make a

² Red: In English «Reconciliation: divided along the road”

foundation for peaceful coexistence (Djuliman, 2016). Djuliman (2016) say restorative truth is the closest to a reconciliation, which means that the subjective truth also needs to be addressed. By this, he means that the truth will always be an expression of interpretation and not just a collection of objective facts. His perspective is from a Bosnian-Norwegian, being a young adult during the wars in Balkan. Coming as a refugee to Norway, he has since taught peace and conflict studies at universities until he past some years ago. His thoughts about giving subjective truths a platform is questioned by Beatrice Pouligny in her book “After mass crime: rebuilding states and communities” (Pouligny et al., 2007a).

“Memory is a pre-eminently subjective phenomenon, and its moral implications profoundly ambivalent. It blurs the boundaries between reality and fiction, between “what actually happened” and remembrance of what happened. This is true of both collective and individual memories. Blind spots, ethnic amnesia and denials of historical evidence operate to cordon off unpalatable truths and magnify others out of all proportion.” (Pouligny, Chesterman, & Schnabel, 2007b, p. 167)

In here view, this can “pollute” the real truths, and are therefore a roadblock to reconciliation. “The factual truth of these events is not at issue; the moral and interpretive truth is what draws each community apart. Social identities are thus intimately connected to how the past is remembered and interpreted.” (Pouligny et al., 2007a)

Elisabeth Cole, the editor for the book “Teaching the violent past” (Cole & International); a collection of research done in post conflict areas concerning in which way history education plays a role in the reconciliation process. The research found several reasons to use revising of history books as a measure to reach reconciliation. Her findings where that after a conflict, the revision of history books can be a way for everyone in the community to own up to crimes and thereby establish a new narrative of the nation and also the former enemy. Another finding where that revised history books could promote “more inclusive historical narratives, even potentially multiple narratives, to reflect more heterogenous societies and the varied experiences of their multiple communities.” (Cole & International, 2007, pp. 20-21).

In these findings, the emphasis was on the process of revising the history curriculum and also how the education took form in the classroom, these factors were evident, according to her finding in how history education can contribute to “socio-political reconciliation”.

An obstacle for history education to contribute to reconciliation, according to Cole, is that *there need to be reached a certain stage of reconciliation in the community before authors of the history books and the teachers dear to challenge the narrative and risk controversy in the classroom and the public can accept these revisions, which challenge narratives held dear by certain sectors of the population*. Another obstacle is the balance between describing the past and at the same time give the youth a sense of patriotism that gives them an identity and will to “fight” for a better future – what Robert Fullinwider defines as “usable past”(Cole & International, 2007, p. 18).

Korostelina (Korostelina & Lässig, 2013) argues that *the process* of writing the new history itself can be reconciling if it is written together with the former enemy. In this way, the new history book can inhabit all narratives and include stories from both sides. Here view comes from evaluating This collaboration may be difficult when it comes to acknowledging own crimes, but here Korostelina argues what is forensic science and hard truths also need to be present in history curriculum. Only then will the conflicting parts foster a “positive peace” (ref. (Galtung & Transcend, 2003)) containing justice and peace. Simone Lässig, who wrote a chapter in Korostelinas book, support this view that a common history project can lay a foundation for reconciliation. Her focus on how this can foster empathy for the “others” when the history possibly get more multifaceted containing both sides rather than one (Korostelina & Lässig, 2013).

3.4 Challenges with history education with the aim of achieve reconciliation

There are several aspects of the role of history education in a reconciliation process who raises some question. Like Lässig points out; how soon after war or conflict is the appropriate time to come together and write history who contains conflicting parts perspective? (Korostelina & Lässig, 2013) E. Cole (2007) suggested that a certain stage of reconciliation needs to be reached before textbooks can be revised, In the same way, how to we then know if history education has an impact on the reconciliation or if it would have become a reconciliation because of political and security conditions is developing?

Another challenge is when it comes to what should actually be present in the history curriculum. “Balancing the need to avoid reigniting conflict or exacerbating social tensions and the need to foster solidarity without creating a falsely positive narrative is extremely difficult.” (Cole & International, 2007, p. 19). Knowing what to address, when and how is the historians, challenge concerning contemporary war history.

Elisbeth Cole’s research on history education revision, found that because of its difficulties conducting history revision in post-conflict societies, there is also not that much research done on the effect of it. In addition Cole mention that the subject of history at elementary school is not guaranteed to be a popular one, “other sites of history-learning – family, popular culture, the media, religion, political discourse – are also influential and almost certainly much more so than classroom education.”(Cole & International, 2007, p. 20).

Lässig elaborate on what role and impact history education may have when “new media” is also bringing more accessible and relevant news and stories to students. Thus, the teachers are also influential in what the students learn about the past, and that is a factor that requires a lengthy and thorough research to find out how they teach. (Ihrig et al., 2013)

3.5 Summary

The concept of reconciliation has many aspects. First, there is the aspect of healing (Galtung & Transcend, 2003; Murithi, 2009), then there is the concept of giving a closer or a representation to both parts (Djuliman, 2016; Galtung & Transcend, 2003) in the sense that the past, even how painful, should be encountered (Seixas, 2017). Here the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) plays a part. If it provides closer is not guaranteed, if we take into account the tension we can see in media and UN meetings. Galtung (2003) also speaks about the importance of dialogue between the conflicting parts. He means that history should be discussed, but in the sense of “what could we have done differently?”. The Reconciliation term also contains coexistence (Galtung & Transcend, 2003; Lederach, 1997; Murithi, 2009), and there Kosovo has a way to go if we see coexistence as interacting in a peaceful matter; in Kosovo it seems to be either no interaction, or conflict interaction between Serbians and Kosovars.

The aspect that the need to be a will for reconciliation (Djuliman, 2016; Ihrig et al., 2013) may be seen in the earlier attempt to try to reconcile. But the issue here, is the will “to move beyond

experiences of violence and conflict”(Ihrig et al., 2013) that seems to be more challenging than the will to reconcile.

For a reconciliation to happen, “reconciliation must be understood as a lasting process rather than as a concrete objective” (Djuliman, 2016; Ihrig et al., 2013; Korostelina & Lässig, 2013).

Understanding that reconciliation is a process that takes both work and time. In the end, reconciliation can also be reversible and fragile (Galtung & Transcend, 2003; Pouligny et al., 2007a), and this can seem to be the case in the earlier attempted history education projects in former Yugoslavia. They have periods that vote for optimism, but then it meets some obstacles that appear to stop the process of ending up with a common history curricular. All this views on reconciliation, comes across positive and achievable with the right method, but according to Kriesberg (2007a), a full reconciliation in a conflict is seemingly impossible.

Why reconciliations seem so hard to accomplish, can be the complexity by trying to both “encounter the open expression of the painful past, on the one hand, and the search for the articulation of a long-term, interdependent future, on the other hand.” (Murithi, 2009, p. 138). The perspective on a collective future, resonant well with John Galtung’s theory on transitional justice. In contrast to Korostelina negative aspirations of attaining a full reconciliation, Johan Galtung talks more about history as an individual truth (Galtung & Transcend, 2003). By this, he means that in a dialogue between victim and perpetrators after a conflict, you will have thousands of truths. By acknowledge every individual truth, the thoughts of what could have been done differently and hopes for the future lies. (Galtung & Transcend, 2003) (Galtung 2008:12-13). Having the future in mind during a history project in the post-war reconciliation process, is something Korostelina also agrees on (Korostelina & Lässig, 2013).

The subject of history and reconciliation is thoroughly researched, and there is a somewhat consensus on the research about the means to reach reconciliation. But the inter-social aspect of what happens between people and why, is what that is interesting to explore here.

4 Theoretical framework

The aim of this study is to investigate if the narrative in the Serbian and Kosovan history textbook is an obstacle towards reconciliation between them, answering my research question; *Is the identities*

found in the history textbooks from Kosovo and Serbia contributing to or hindering the prospects of reconciliation between them? To answer the research question, the theoretical framework is based on Benedict Anderson's theory on imagined community and nationalism, with contributions from John Tosh on historicism and Vamik D. Volkan on group identity. The thesis will argue that the conception of the large-group identity, both in-group and out-group, in post-war history textbooks is vital to explore in order to investigate possible obstacles towards reconciliation in post-war societies. The theories are both used independently and intertwined, since they bring concepts on their own but also some that underpins each other.

4.1 Benedict Anderson and imagined community

When analyzing history textbooks' impact on reconciliation, it is relevant to look for nationalism in the texts. As argued by the theories on reconciliation in the literature review, essentialism and nationalism may be the main obstacles in a reconciliation process. Benedict Anderson, in company with many other theorists, has tried to explain the concept of nationalism. Benedict Anderson has, with his book «Imagined communities» (2006) , influenced scholars and researchers to view nationalism as more than an ideology formed by politics and authoritative leaders. In Anderson's view, nationalism is a result of human's cognitive processes of imagination. When communities become larger than face-to-face relations, everyone does not know each other, yet in their mind, there is an image of the member of the community, and then it becomes imagined (Anderson, 2006). Meaning by Anderson's view, all nations are imagined. Anderson has a modernist approach because he views nations and nationalism as products of modern societies or the results of some typically modern social phenomena, such as capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, secularization and the emergence of the modern bureaucratic state (Mathieu & Bodet, 2019). Anderson meant that in addition to the development of the modern society where capitalism and the role of the monarchy were declining, cultural artefacts like language and letterpress contributed to nations becoming imagined. Here is also where the nation's history books come in. Understanding the nation as something imagined, the narrative written in the history textbook may eventually become part of the nation's identity, or as Anderson puts it, the imagined community. Anderson criticizes other modern theorists like Ernest Gellner, who see nationalism as an ideology that creates a nation where there were none before instead of it being an awakening of the nation's identity. (Gellner, 2006) referred to in (Anderson, 2006). Anderson argues that this is a "cruel" interpretation that implies that nationalism is a parade of false presentations. Anderson

claims that there is no point in dividing nations as "false and real", meaning that communities must be divided by how they are perceived (Anderson, 2006). Anderson argues that Gellner's way of understanding nationalism differs between "real" nations (nations *not* created by nationalism) and the nation or state created by nationalism. This understanding that nationalism does not have to be imposed by leaders that want more power or territory but by communities who develop their shared identity through the communication of culture and events is relevant in the analysis of the history textbooks. He calls the first "official nationalism", where the leaders knowingly impose politics to protect the state (and themselves). Anderson explains the other type of nationalism that makes people in the community willingly sacrifice for their nation (without threats from dictators) through his view on how nations' biographies develop. His view on nations takes some comparison with the biography of a person;

"As with persons, so it is with nations. Awareness of being embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of "forgetting" the experience of this continuity engenders the need for a narrative of "identity" (Anderson, 2006)

Further, Anderson points out that the difference between a nation and a person's biography is that it is difficult to determine the "birth" and death of a nation, and the story of this nation often has to make the story up after what archaeologists find evidence of, or as events happen. All of this together is what makes up the identity of that nation. Some things are also forgotten since evidence, and the people who experienced that are gone. When pictures, diaries, news and likes capture events in time, these become what Anderson calls "*identity markers*". In his view, events written down in the history books are identity markers. As with the life of persons, it is the same with nations; some things are remembered, and some are never mentioned and will therefore be forgotten. This makes Anderson's theory on identity seem related to how constructivism is described, as changing and continuously influenced by social actors (Bryman, 2016). A nation, in Anderson's view, develops its identity through these identity markers, which are influenced by social actors.

To understand the question of what makes people sacrifice for someone they never met, Volkan (2014a) describes deeper in his theory of large-group psychology, which will be explained later in this chapter. Anderson's explanation of this loyalty relates to how people identify with others in their imagined community. Being a community, and in the case of Kosovo and Serbia, a nation is, by Anderson's view, possible because of a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson, 2006). This

comradeship is also what makes it possible for the people inside to die and kill for this imagined community.

Benedict Anderson's theory on the imagined community is relevant in the analysis of history textbooks because he explains all the factors involving storytelling and the written word in a community that gives the feeling of comradeship. This comradeship is necessary to be a functional community, but it also can lean toward nationalism and the need to protect this comradeship from the other. The concept of identity, comradeship and *the other* is something Vamik D. Volkan's theory explores further (Volkan, 2014a). The role of storytelling and memorializing is what John Tosh explains in his book *The pursuit of history* (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

4.2 Identity; conceptual contributions from Vamik D. Volkan

In psychologist Vamik. D. Volkan's book *Psychoanalysis, International Relations, and Diplomacy: A Sourcebook on Large-Group Psychology* (2014a), the relationship between group psychology and conflict are explored. Volkan offers psychoanalytic theories that explain the relationship between individual and large group identity going through a trauma, drawing examples and illustrations from his experiences as a diplomat and contemporary events in the world. His experiences are relevant to understanding and detecting the type of identity found when analyzing history textbooks, but also to understand why these identities are detected. Volkan claims that the field of both cognitive psychology and psychoanalysis may contribute to understanding which influences previous historical events have in decision-making. Because it "*examines defensive alterations of early experiences, layered personal meanings of events, condensations of unconscious motivations, transference distortions, and the personality organization of decision makers.*" (Volkan, 2014a) Volkan uses Thomas Erikson's (1966) descriptions of *identity* to explain the development of the individual identity, describing identity as a "*subjective experience of a persistent sense of sameness with oneself*" This can be the different roles we have and a somewhat superficial explanation of identity. (Volkan about Erikson, 2014:18)

By adopting Volkan's view, there is arguably a link between one's *identity and one's large-group identity*, which is already constructed from childhood. Volkan claims that children develop their personal- and large-group identity through identification. Children identify with realistic, fantasized, wished-for, or scary aspects of essential individuals in their environment (Volkan, 2014a). Children also identify with investments in concrete or abstract identity markers such as physical body

characteristics, language, nursery rhymes, food, dances, religious beliefs, myths, flags, geographical investments, heroes, martyrs, and *images of historical events*. Children take in all these identity markers as belonging to them and utilize them to expand their internal worlds in relating to their small groups and, when they get older, to their large groups (Volkan, 2014a). With this perspective, history textbooks in elementary school can contribute to the development of the children's identity. The subjective experience and deep intellectual knowledge of belonging to a large-group identity crystallized later in childhood. Such sharing of sentiments also applies to those who are members of a politically ideological group, to whose ideology their parents and the critical people in their childhood environment subscribed. To become a follower of a political ideology as an adult encompasses other psychological motivations (Volkan, 2014a). Becoming youngsters, they lose their investment in the images of essential others of their childhood. The identity gets modified, and they get new or additional identifications through experiences with their group. The formation of a solid individual identity finalizes during this period, along with large-group identity. Belonging to a large group after going through adolescence endures throughout a lifetime (Volkan, 1988, 1997, 2013) (Volkan, 2014a). History Textbooks in secondary school are read during this period, thereby this theory of the development of identity is relevant in this study.

Volkan's research finds that people cannot change the narcissistic investment in their core large-group identity after adolescence, only hide it. Only rarely, though some long-lasting drastic and complicated historical events, a group of individuals may evolve a new and very different large-group identity (Volkan, 2014a). The large-group identity attains the ability to get psychologically affected by the large group's trauma, even though not being directly affected. This aspect of Volkan's research is especially relevant regarding what the historical narrative tells about trauma, victims and perpetrators of war.

In the context that experiences construct identity, it can be helpful to talk about the nature of a shared identity in large groups. Vamik D. Volkan has, during his many years assisting in diplomacy between conflicting states, explored the large-group psychology in these settings. His findings are that the role the large-group identity of the conflicting parts plays in conflict and reconciliation (Volkan, 2014a). He argues that applying a psychoanalytic insight to national and ethnic conflict can bring an important insight as a supplement to political science. This is because, in conflict, shared views, perceptions, thoughts and emotions towards the conflict can lead groups to have what he calls *a narcissistic investment* in the large-group identity (Volkan, 2014a). He differs between a healthy and an excessive degree of narcissism.

"A healthy degree of narcissistic investment in a large-group identity provides a sense of belonging and trans-generational continuity among members, and in turn supports their individualized self-esteem." (Volkan, 2014a, p. 8)

"An "exaggerated large-group narcissism" denotes a process in which people in a given large group become preoccupied with the superiority of almost anything connected with their large-group identity. Ranging from nursery rhymes and food to established cultural customs, artistic achievements, scientific discoveries, past historical triumphs, and possession of more powerful weapons than their neighbours, even when such perceptions and beliefs may not be realistic." (Volkan, 2014a)

The conceptions of narcissism are related to history textbooks in the sense that history and narratives may contribute to both healthy and unhealthy degrees of narcissism in a particular group.

Volkan developed his research from classical psychoanalysis from Freud's theory on group psychology, finding his theory lacking since it mainly focuses on regressed groups and therefore does not explain large-group psychology fully. Volkan identified that large groups share a psychological journey; this journey may initiate specific social, cultural, political or ideological processes, which have impacted the large group's internal and external affairs (Volkan, 2014a). He concludes, after his extensive research, that individual and large-group psychology of human beings, whatever large-group identity they may have, are universal (Volkan, 2014a). Volkan's interest in this study is because having insight into the mechanisms of the large-group psychology processes may help leaders cope with traumatic events to prevent further violence.

"Psychoanalytic research into the transgenerational transmission of shared trauma and its activation in leader-follower relationships may illuminate many hidden aspects of ethnic or other large-group conflicts and tell us how internal and external world issues become intertwined." (Volkan, 2014a)

Volkan suggests that the study of large-group psychology is necessary since he states that the old-type diplomacy seems outdated. It is outdated because of relatively new phenomena like widespread terrorism, modern globalization, increased voluntary and forced migration, and technological advances. All of these factors are, according to Volkan, contributing to a new type of civilization that challenges the traditional type of diplomacy in international relations and conflict,

where prejudices and shared hostility are common obstacles to peaceful coexistence. Volkan noticed that official negotiators during conflicts tended to hold on to their large-group identity due to being regressed. *“They utilize more externalization of unwanted internalized self and protect themselves more stubbornly from the return of their externalizations and projections.”* (Volkan, 2014a). This defence mechanism leads to less empathy for the opposing large-group and creates resistance to compromise. Therefore, Volkan argues that a further understanding of large-group psychology in its own right has become necessary in attempts to repair, maintain or stabilize large-group identities.

A psychoanalytic perspective in the dialogue between conflicting parts can be helpful, as it is understood that no progress will be made on present issues if past ones are not understood and explored. (Volkan, 2014a)

In the analysis of history textbooks, this theory is relevant because of the emphasis and impact a large-group identity has on a reconciliation process, according to Volkan's view.

Vamik D. Volkan explains what type of imagination Anderson (2006) refers to as building a community or a nation, explaining the socio-psychological forces present in the history textbook. For instance, Volkan speaks about the term *“chosen trauma”*. He uses this term to explain how new generations may adopt the mental image of the ancestor's trauma. This passing of trauma is a result of the former generation not being able to fulfil the tasks of taming the psychological features of this trauma. These tasks may be *“to recover from being dehumanized and victimized, feeling helpless and humiliated, survival guilt, prejudice towards “the others”, envy towards the victimizer and mourning due to significant losses.”*(Volkan, 2014a). This trauma is passed on to new generations because of the psychological term "depositing", a shared psychological DNA, in some cases a traumatized self-image, creating a sense of belonging and linking all members of a group together (Volkan, 2014a). An important finding that Volkan presents is that some chosen traumas are difficult to detect because they are not connected to a well-recognized historical event (Volkan, 2014a). This is interesting when studying history textbooks; what events have historians chosen to write about, and can they be detected on both sides?

Sharing the chosen trauma from their ancestors may also result in what Volkan defines as an *“entitlement ideology”*(2014a). This ideology refers to a sense of entitlement to recover what was lost during a collective trauma and now is experienced as a chosen trauma for the group. Since the disagreement on whom the land of Kosovo belongs to is central in this conflict, this is relevant

to look for in the text analysis. "*Chosen glories*" is another term Volkan uses when referring to shared mental representations of historical events and heroic persons. Chosen glories have the effect of linking children of a large group together, in addition to gaining self-esteem by being associated with such glories (Volkan, 2014a).

Volkan's concepts of *chosen trauma*, *entitlement ideology* and *chosen glories* can all be visible in history textbooks. Since the writers usually come from the community described the possibility of being overly empathetic for their nation is substantial. John Tosh's theory on historicism will tackle both these pitfalls and how to avoid writing a biased history, which is described in the following section (2006).

The term "*The Other*" is based on the theory of stranger anxiety, and at a large-group level, it functions for people to have a common enemy to prevent aggression from turning inward in their group (Volkan, 2014a). Volkan further explores this idea by referring to Thomas Erikson's (1966) term "*pseudo species*." Pseudo species" refers to tribes or clans and explain that it is in human evolutionary nature to dehumanize others outside the group for survival reasons. The role of "the other" in the history textbooks is very relevant to explore in this research project.

Concepts of identification and depositing, explain humans' need to have enemies and allies in the political and social sense (Volkan, 2014a).

4.3 The interpretation and impact of history: concepts by John Tosh

The pursuit of history (2006) is John Tosh's thoroughly description of history as the meaning of representation of the past in the work of historians. He brings two relevant aspects to this master thesis: *History's interpretation* and *purpose*. Tosh suggests that interpretation of history entails that the historians are *historically aware* and critical of their interpretation of history and what responsibilities lie in the pen of historians. Tosh describes that in the field of modern historicism, ideally, history is a hybrid discipline, combining the technical and analytic procedures of science with the imaginative and stylistic qualitative of art (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

Tosh uses the term historical awareness about the consciousness of experiences (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The term historical awareness comes from a psychological attribute that humans have to remember experiences and affirm our and others' identities from these experiences. Tosh differs between collective or "social memory" and "historical awareness" in a historical discipline enquiry, which is an essential distinction in the analysis as well. In his view, "*social memory*" comes from

experiences that together form the identity and direction of that society. This theory correlates with Benedict Anderson's view on the imagined community (Anderson, 2006).

Tosh continues with, in contrast to "social memory", "historical awareness" aims to sustain the broadest possible definition of memory and make the recall process as accurate as possible so that our knowledge of the past is not concerned with what is immediately relevant (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

"Historians are not the guardians of universal values, nor can they deliver 'the verdict of history'; they must strive to understand each age in its terms, take on its values and priorities, instead of imposing ours." (Tosh & Lang, 2006)

Here Tosh emphasizes the responsibility the history writer has to understand the conditions and time they describe, and they should obtain from purposing blame or verdict from their own point of view because their point of view may stem from a social memory in the historians' community. Social memory and historical awareness differ because historians may need to challenge socially motivated misrepresentations of the past and, in that process, maybe "hurt" or challenge a society's identity. Some societies use memory to serve groups' interests within democratic societies or to uphold a totalitarian regime. According to Tosh, "most historians will disagree with the keepers of social memory by insisting that that *historical awareness should guide their findings and prevail over social need.*" (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

Further, Tosh identifies three social memory features that can distort writing history. According to Tosh, each answers a deep psychological need for security, which may be relevant in post-war societies. The first feature is respect for tradition, which is an assumption that what has been done in the past is an authoritative guide to the present time. This assumption leaves little space for change and development. Traditions in modern societies can have a sentimental appeal, but they may also, in the worst-case scenario, appeal to nationalistic feelings like *essentialism*. According to Tosh, *essentialism* is "bad history", meaning that it produces a powerful sense of exclusive identity and romanticizes the past in the sense that it blurs the lines between past and present and asserts an unchanging identity. New states often risk focusing too much on tradition because of the need to legitimize themselves from the past and make their own collective identity (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The second feature is to give an escape to a more pleasant past, as Tosh describes, writing with "*nostalgia*". To explain nostalgia, Tosh uses the term "generational regret", meaning that every generation complains about the younger generation, arguing that *things* were better in the past. In a historical context, nostalgia will interpret change for the worse and look back at history with a

glorification of the past. Nostalgia may be a reaction to a sense of loss in a society undergoing rapid change. With nostalgia, the past becomes better and more straightforward than the present. Nostalgia presents the past as an alternative to the present instead of a prelude (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Tosh's objections to this distortion in history writing are that, as governing stances, they require the past to conform to a deeply felt and often unacknowledged need. They are about belief, not enquiry. They look for a "consistent window on the past and end up doing scant justice to anything else." (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

The last feature of social memory is the understanding of change for the better, also described as *progress*. As nostalgia reflects a pessimistic view of the world, progress is, on the other side, overly optimistic that improvement will continue into the future. Tosh differs between process and progress, understanding that process is a more neutral term, and progress is premised on the superiority of the present over the past. The consequence is that the past seems less admirable and more "primitive" the further back in time we go. Condescension and incomprehension are the results."(Tosh & Lang, 2006). During an analysis of history textbooks, it is interesting if it is possible to detect these different features of social memories since, as Tosh argues, this may impact the readers in different ways.

Tosh also describes the basic techniques of writing and interpreting history for historians, which is arguably relevant to detect in this analysis. He describes the different techniques as *descriptive, narrative and analytic*. The description technique is self-explanatory and aims to reconstruct historical moments with concrete, fullness, and complexity. The readers of this history should experience the illusion of direct experience of the history, meaning the writer needs to be imaginative and descriptive in their writing. Another technique is using a narrative technique. It is essentially what the word narrative in European languages means, "story". With a narrative technique, the historian conveys what it felt like to observe and participate in past events. Like other forms of storytelling, historical narrative can entertain through its ability to create suspense and arouse powerful emotions (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The last technique Tosh describes is using analysis to write history. By analyzing history, there are taken into account that particular events are connected with what happened earlier. Seeing the past in retrospect, past events become phases in continuing sequences that may be significant for the historian. An analyzing historian should ask questions like "What happened?" and "What were conditions like such-and-such time?". (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Combining these techniques is what can both describe and explain by

answering cause and consequences. This challenging task calls for intricate narrative and evocative descriptions on several levels.

On the other hand, being too approximate to an explanation requires analytic complexity (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The intricate process of analyzing means that narrative should be unlikely to be the best choice for historical explanations. The analysis can go wrong when the narrative is taking the wrong analysis connecting two events that have nothing to do with each other or if the narrative simplifies the connection between cause and consequences. Simplifications are made mainly in the case of wars and revolutions since the historian emphasizes triggering causes of conflict, leaving out those factors predisposing the societies concerned to conflict (Tosh & Lang, 2006). An example of a simplification of the narrative that the assassination of Franz Ferdinand ignited World War One. As Kosovo and Serbia are still in conflict, Tosh's view on diplomatic history is relevant. According to Tosh, diplomatic history is particularly prone to dwell on the intentions and tactics of ministers and diplomats (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

4.3.1 Impact of history

John Tosh's thoughts on *the Uses of history* are relevant in an analysis where the intent is to determine the impact history books may have. His most crucial point in this chapter is that human awareness is enhanced by contemplating vanished eras, and historical re-creation will always exercise a hold over the imagination (Tosh & Lang, 2006). At the same time, historians have a valuable role in informing. Meaning that historians should always strive to be true to the past; the question is, which past? Faced with the almost limitless evidence of human activity and the need to select specific problems or periods more deserving of attention than others, Tosh justifies that historians allow current social concerns to influence their choice.(Tosh & Lang, 2006).

John Tosh describes the challenges of writing contemporary history, which history textbooks analyzed in this master thesis can be categorized as being history that happened relatively recently. Challenges to this type of history are, according to Tosh, firstly, that the historians are too close to the events, and thereby it may influence the ability to be accordingly detached from the events described. Secondly, they are handicapped by their limited access to confidential records. How to convey the different levels of narrative, description and analysis is a fundamental issue contemporary historians face (Tosh & Lang, 2006). John Tosh still acknowledges that it is vital to write down recent history. Because "it is the recent past on which people draw most for historical

analogies and predictions, their knowledge of it needs to be soundly based on avoiding severe error." (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Tosh also claims that the recent past often is a fertile breeding ground for crude myths, especially when their credibility is not contested by scholarly work. In Tosh's view, contemporary history may be part of the evidence for writing a whole and analytic history later. In a social science view, Tosh presents history with the possibility to work as therapy for traumatized people. Historians grappling with the aspect of the recent past may face challenges in uncovering a past that we might prefer to forget. Tosh argues that a nation that cannot own up to its past will be gravely handicapped in the future. "Historical difference provides an indispensable perspective on the present, whether as an inventory of experiences, as evidence of transience of our time, or as a reminder of the profoundly alien elements in our recent past." (Tosh & Lang, 2006). He shares the idea of history as therapy with psychologist Vamir D. Volkan (Volkan, 2014a).

Tosh (2006) claims that the most important role of processual thinking is in offering an alternative to the assumptions of performance and timelessness that underpin so many social identities. A historical perspective requires us to abandon the idea that nations are organic; it is nearer the truth to regard them, in the words of Benedict Anderson (2006), as "imagined communities" .

Furthermore, Anderson's thoughts about literature and the letterpress are essential to understand the relation his theory on nationalism has to history books (Anderson, 2006). The letterpress made it possible for larger crowds to read the same. The newspapers are distributed to a specific area, so many peoples in a community receive them, and the news contributed is also chosen by someone in this community. Anderson argues that the newspaper is a cultural expression that relies on print capitalism and sales and is ultimately fictive for those reasons (2006). History books in education settings are not included in this print capitalism. However, still, someone has decided which books will educate the new generation in history, so somehow, capitalism is possibly involved in this election.

In his previously mentioned book, *The pursuit of history*, John Tosh also explores the concept of identity, like both Anderson and Volkan. He sees humans as species that use experiences, not instinct, to affirm their identity (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Volkan agrees with this explanation of the term *identity*, adding that it includes "a person's sense of bodily and emotional continuity in self-experience" (Volkan, 2014a) (Volkan, 2014a). What we experience forms our impression of others in addition to understanding our potential. The consciousness of these experiences is what John Tosh calls "Historical awareness" (Tosh & Lang, 2006). By inventing this term, Tosh differs between

history and memory in the sense that memory can be deceiving because of the influence of feelings towards that memory.

"Memory is neither fixed nor infallible; we forget, we overlay early memories with later experience, we shift the emphasis, we entertain false memories, and so on.

We will likely seek confirmation of our memories from an outside source in important matters." (Tosh & Lang, 2006)

As memories also come from lived experiences, memories contribute to making sense of an unfolding life story (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Tosh remarks, this "sense" can be contaminated by false memories. In the worst case, these "false" memories can impact our political judgement since the sense of the past initially influences them. In our political life especially, memory is highly selective - social memory can serve to sustain a sense of oppression, exclusion, or adversity (Tosh & Lang, 2006). This is also where the ideology of nationalism may develop.

"Nationalism, at its core, rests on the assertion of tradition, rather than an interpretation of history. It suppresses difference and change in order to uphold identity." (Tosh & Lang, 2006)

The risk of developing a nationalistic ideology is one reason why history as a discipline should enquiry "aims to sustain the widest possible definition of memory and to make the process of recall as accurate as possible so that our knowledge of the past is not confined to what is immediately relevant." (Tosh & Lang, 2006). To avoid social memory dominating history textbooks, Tosh argues that historians use historical awareness when writing history. It differs from social memory by having an open-ended application instead of a set of mirror images of the present. Social memory, on the other hand, reflects the collection of popular knowledge of the past (Tosh & Lang, 2006). This memory forms a collective identity with a shared interpretation of "events and experiences that have formed the group over time" (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The popular knowledge may come from empirical facts, but "sometimes this will include an accepted belief about the group's origins, as in the case of many nation-states; or the emphasis may be on vivid turning points and symbolic moments that confirm the self-image and aspirations of the group." (Tosh & Lang, 2006, p. 3). The awareness and collective memory help materialize or exemplify the abstractness of the collective. Benedict Anderson refers to this when he talks about "imagined communities" (Anderson, 2006). "Social groupings need a record of prior experiences, but they also require a picture of the past which serve to explain or justify the present, often at the cost of historical

accuracy." (Tosh & Lang, 2006). This correlates to Benedict Anderson's view; to create an identity, both as an individual and as a community, some events are remembered and may be written down while others are forgotten. The result of these stories satisfies the need for an identity-creating story. The story is then part of the nation and the individual identity. The difference between a person's biography and the biography of a nation, though, is that for a person, there is a clear beginning and an end (birth and death). For the nation's biography, the beginning is often not that clear, and the end of a nation is rarely "natural" (Anderson, 2006). By writing a nation's history, you are evaluating the history and events according to today, thus maybe leaving something out or emphasizing an event that benefits today's reality. This is also what John Tosh sees as a pitfall in history writing.

Since there is no clear end to a nation like there is to humans, Anderson argues that memorials like cemeteries, war history, assassinations and others are a way of bringing together a nation.

"To serve the narrative purpose, these violent deaths must be remembered/forgotten as "our own."(Anderson, 2006).

In this sense, Anderson`s nation-building theory relates to John Tosh`s theories on the purpose of history. John Tosh (2006) also describes that the "birth" of a nation may be eternalized in what he calls "*a foundation myth*". The foundation myth is the story about the foundation of a group of people based on versions of their origins. The origins of a nation may then be constructed by social memory based on consensus and inclusion and making semi-official versions, sometimes involving national heroes.

"Myth" does not imply that the story is entirely false, merely that it has developed into a simplistic, usually rosy, version of events." (Tosh & Lang, 2006)

Tosh (2006) draws lines to what happened in the lead-up to the Second World War to underline the importance of not just invoking the past but getting the story right independent of what is relevant at the present time. *"Under the Third Reich, those Germans who believed that all the disasters in German history were the fault of the Jews certainly acknowledged the power of the past, but we can question the extent of their historical awareness. It is not enough to invoke the past; there must also be a belief that getting the story right matters"* (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

I have chosen these three theories on the base on their professional recognition in their field, and how the theories complement each other in the analysis of the history textbooks. Tosh (2006)

providing the textual and history writing perspective, Volkan (2014a) the nature of group psychology and Anderson (2006) the nation building purposes the text has as an imagined community. Together these theories can identify how the narrative may impact the readers in the community.

5 Methodological approach

This chapter intends to clarify how I approached the task of answering my overall research question;

Are the identities found in Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks hindering the prospect of reconciliation between them?

The focus of this study was to understand how the narrative in history textbooks may contribute to a reconciliation process. Analysing history textbooks from Kosovo and Serbia, using the qualitative research traditions, thematic and narrative analysis of texts.

The initial intention in this research project was to conduct a qualitative data analysis of the history books and interview teachers on each side of the conflict to explore if there was a connection between the narrative in history books and the perception of reconciliation in post-war countries. As explained later in this chapter, the interviews were challenging to conduct for several reasons, and the consequences were that the methodology needed to change. Since the research then relied solely on documents, the methodology applied combined a thematic and narrative analysis. Since stories have different meanings in a society depending on how large the audience is, history books as curricula for public schools have the power to impact because the story or narrative reaches so many in the society.

I present an overview of my methodological approach in this chapter, starting with my epistemological foundation, continuing with data analysis and ending with strengths and limitations.

5.1 Epistemological foundation

The gathering of data is based on qualitative research. According to Bryman (2016), qualitative research is concerned with words. It is also used as a means to understand the social world through examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants (Bryman, 2016, p. 375). In the nature of a qualitative research project, the researcher is often influenced by interpretivism. In the epistemology interpretivism, the researcher intends to grasp the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman, 2016, p. 26). I am using the epistemological foundation of interpretivism and hereunder a hermeneutic approach. With a hermeneutic approach, the interpretation of the meaning of a text is central, with the goal to gain a good and shared understanding of the meaning of text or discourse (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

In interpretivism traditions, the scientist adopts an interpretative stance by both aiming to reveal how members of social groups interpret the world around them and trying to "*place the interpretation into a social scientific frame.*" (Bryman, 2016, p. 28). This research project shows this by interpreting the two historical narratives from Kosovo and Serbia and comparing the reconciliation process between Kosovo and Serbia with theories on reconciliation, conflict, and history education.

In the research, I have used a *thick description*³ and thereby emphasized the context in which the history books are taught to analyze the narratives and the possible consequences of the different narratives. Using sources from the University of South-Eastern Norway, I found the history books used in education in Serbia and Kosovo. Not being a native speaker of Serbian or Kosovan, I used native translators to translate the books into English.

Concerning this, it is worth mention that my ontological position is constructivism. Understanding that social phenomena, such as the aim of research in this thesis, are continuously influenced by social actors. This is also fitting with the theme of the research, claiming that the readers (social actors) of the history textbooks may influence the further relationship between them (Bryman, 2016).

5.2 Data analysis

This qualitative research project used a combination of *thematic* and *narrative analysis*. Since I am interested in identifying the themes of focus in the history textbooks and their narratives, which ultimately may impact the identity of the students reading them. Adding the narrative approach makes it possible to go deeper into the text and analyze which story or narrative is told in the history textbooks.

This research project started with a challenge since the data analyzed does not directly answer the question of the history textbook question leads to more conflict or reconciliation. It would possibly have been fruitful to interview the students reading or teachers teaching the history textbooks and explore their perceptions of the war and each other. Initially, interviews of teachers and students were planned to be conducted, but covid 19 and difficulty finding interview subjects sabotaged this plan. Instead, the research question presents possible outcomes of what narratives in history

³ A term developed by Geertz (1973), meaning rich accounts of the details of a social setting

textbooks may contribute to, using a combination of a *thematic* and *narrative analysis*, supported by the theoretical framework concerning the themes of nationalism, identity and historicism. In this analysis, it is understood that text is more than just a written story; it can change and impact those who read it. In this way, my positionality is constructionism, viewing knowledge as “*indeterminate and understanding that research shows a specific version of social reality*” (Bryman, 2016, p. 29). Rather than viewing reconciliation and conflict as fixed stages in which people progress, I research reconciliation as “*social constructions that are contingent on a series of experiences and on other individuals who influence the direction people and communities take towards reconciliation or conflict*”—influenced by Bryman's view on constructionism. (Bryman, 2016, p. 487)

5.2.1 A combination of thematic and narrative analysis

I started the analysis of the history text by conducting a *thematic analysis*. In this way I could identify and thematically organize how the Serbian and Kosovan texts narrate the Yugoslavian conflict in the 1990s and how they portray the war, themselves and each other. Thematic analysis is relevant in this research project to extract themes from the empires. A theme is, according to Bryman (2016), first, a category identified by the analyst through his/her data; secondly, it relates to the research focus; and lastly, a theme provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus (Bryman, 2016, p. 584). Alternatively, as Braun and Clarke describe it, a “*Thematic analysis can be described as a "method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data"* (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6).

The thematic analysis was conducted using a six-step approach inspired by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Bryman (2016). In step one, I got thoroughly acquainted with the body of material. In my case, this was reading the chapters concerning the Yugoslavian war in the Serbian and Kosovan History textbooks. In step two and three, I started coding the materials and searched for common elements in the codes. In this stage, I used NVivo, and I will explain more about the coding process in the following subchapter. Step four, in the thematic analysis, is to evaluate the themes and give names and labels to them. I used the theoretical framework to develop the names to directly relate the research material to the concepts found in the theory I chose. Step five is to examine possible links and connections between concepts and if the concepts vary in terms of features of the cases. In the

last step (number six), I wrote the findings and presented the analysis. (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2016)

"Since a thematic analysis is mainly descriptive and does not rely on researchers to dig below surface meanings within the data (Ayres 2008)" (Grant, 2018, p. 66), the narrative approach was applied in order to dig below the surface and find out the meaning behind the themes and ultimately answer my research question. Narrative analysis is, according to Bryman, "an analysis that emphasizes the story that people employ to account for events." (Bryman, 2016, p. 509). The narrative approach in the analysis of text focus on finding out "how do people make sense of what happened?" instead of "what actually happened?" (Bryman, 2016, p. 589). I found this approach relevant to my research topic in relation to what Riessman (2008) says about narrative; "in postmodern times, the identity is no longer something "natural" the identity is constructed by individual, groups and governments to fit how they want to be known." This means that narrative is essential to a "story" and has the components that make up a story; there is a beginning, middle and end; a plot and characters and, importantly, something unexpected that awakens emotions. History textbooks tell a story, and how this story is told may impact the readers' thoughts and actions, adopting Johannessen's (2018) view on how "Stories shapes how we see the world and can ultimately legitimize how societies organize it selves." Furthermore, culture and societies also shape the stories it is a part of, coming from different cultures, this mean that there is a good possibility that Serbia and Kosovo have different narratives. These narratives and how they may impact the readers, is what I wanted to explore as the next step in my analysis.

The narrative analysis contains of stories that are interpreted by the researcher. How the researcher interpreted is described from Lieblich as either to interpreted in a holistic way or a categorical (1998). The latter focus on the object of research to sort what is relevant out from the text, in this master thesis it is how they portray the war, themselves and each other in the text. This approach is similar to the thematic analysis described previously. The holistic approach may uncover how these elements, found in the categorical or thematical analysis, relate to the history, each other and the process of reconciliation between them. This makes both of these approaches in the narrative methodology equal important in order to understand the whole narrative in these to historical texts.

In this thesis, the reading and analysis of the material (i.e., history text) was conducted in several steps. First, I did a holistic reading, secondly, I categorized based on the topic of my research question, using both an inductive and deductive approach. In a narrative analysis, the aim is to find

how different narrative tools colour a message in a text (Johannessen et al., 2018). In my analysis, I used some of the questions that Johannessen et al. (2018) suggested as a framework to find the narrative in the history textbooks. These questions are:

1. What is the plot presented? What period are the stories taking place? Who are the characters, and who is in the center of the action?
2. What is the conflict in the story? Who is the enemy?
3. What is the consequence of where the story begins and ends?
4. What is the story's moral or message?
5. Are the stories fulfilling their role as academic texts? Is the code of history writing upheld?
6. What power has the story? What are ideas of reality made? What is left out of this telling? How are the stories different from each other?

Lastly, the analysis was aiming to find the narrative in the texts, based on my own interpretations as a researcher. Summarized, all these approaches resulted in the narrative plot in the stories (Lieblich et al., 1998). Connecting these questions with the theoretical framework, it is possible to write up some findings that will answer my research questions.

5.3 Coding and categorizing

Coding was necessary to highlight and find essential points in the text (Johannessen et al., 2018). To organize the themes and indicators in the Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks, I used the analytic program Nvivo. This program helped me sort out different phenomena in the text and narrowed the analyzed text to include what I was researching. Initially, I found the overarching themes "what are they saying about themselves?" and "what are they saying about each other?". Going back and forth between the data and the theory, five themes emerged; 1. Focus and main topics in their narrative. 2. Conflicting perspectives, 3. Self-identity, 4. How they portray each other, 5. Uses and interpretation of historical narrative.

Under these themes developed in the thematic analysis, the narrative analysis is applied. This approach to the data means that the analysis is conducted in a hermeneutics tradition, where the understanding of the text is often developed during the analysis. The analysis uses both a deductive and inductive strategy because the analytic model was constructed before the analysis of the empire but was edited during the analysis as a result of the analysis (Bratberg & Bratberg,

2021). The characteristic of an *inductive approach* is that it tries to discover what content areas, leading interpretative concepts, and methods of presenting the collected data offer. *"These can be codes that you have already created (deductive coding) or creating a new code to use on this section of data (inductive coding)."*(Grant, 2018, p. 48)

5.4 Documents of research and translation

The history text analysed, was chosen with the help of native Serbian and Kosovan finding which grade, books, subject and chapter they teach about the Yugoslavian war in Serbia and Kosovo schools. In Serbia they teach about this in 8th grade of primary school, and 4th grade of secondary school. In Kosovo is mainly in 9th grade of primary school. In both countries they have an educational framework which present which academical books are used, and also some learning goals of what the students should learn about each topic. I chose to focus on what was written in the history text books in this research project since by including the framework of curriculum, I believe that this should had been combined with interviews with the teachers teaching these subjects in order to get an complete picture of the practice of history education.

To understand the material in research, I used translators to translate the history books from Serbia and Kosovo. I used academical contacts at USN to get both Serbian and Kosovo scholars to translate. Some things may be lost in the translations, like nuances and meaning, so a disclaimer is that this may have impact on the analysis conducted. Although translation was necessary to help me understanding the documents, this may have influenced my perception of events and should be noted as a source of bias. (Grant, 2018, p. 89). This may have some impact on the analysis, but it is also unavoidable part of the premises of this research having a researchers positionality as an outsider. More on this role in the following paragraph.

5.5 Strengths and limitations

"Professors should hang up their values along with their coats as they enter their lecture halls".

Max Weber on value freedom and relevance (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Max Weber recognizes that in the discovery phase in research projects, *"personal, cultural, moral, or political values cannot be eliminated"*. What social scientists choose to investigate; they choose based on the values. But in the presentation phase, he insists that social science should be value-

free. I chose this theme of research based on a field trip to Balkan in 2017, where I noticed that there was still much tension between the Kosovan and Serbian people. I have no connection with either one of the groups, so my positionality is an outsider being a Norwegian growing up in the 90s when the war between them took place. My initial interpretation of the conflict between them is what newspapers in international community has written about it, with an emphasizing support for Kosovo. Doing this research project has challenged my prejudices and brought me a more multifaceted view of Serbia and Kosovo's role in the war.

I mention my positionality as a limitation to let the reader decide whether these assumptions have coloured the interpretation and analysis of data (Barbour, 2014). This is because it is challenging for researchers to enter the field as Barbour describes as "empty vessels". Explaining that researchers bring along their "cultural assumptions, and, in some cases, political convictions" (Barbour, 2014). What happened between Kosovo and Serbia during the war in the 90s might bring out feelings and compassion with one or the other part who seemingly suffers the most or the one that the reader identifies with. However, in this research project, the aim is not to pass blame; the objective is to find out the status quo between them and if their historical narrative may impact possible outcomes for their relationship. This acknowledgement is essential to be able to be impartial and for the research to be relevant. (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2016; Grant, 2018). Analyzing text has, as Grant describes, possible issues concerning quality and bias; there is a risk that the result or "truth" are not found from within the data but is created based on pre-existing knowledge and interest of the researcher. In the thematic analysis, themes are selected by the researcher to be aware of the possible bias in the pre-existing ideas and the interpretation and presentation of the data can be (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Grant, 2018). Using a narrative analysis as method, is according to theorist as Riessman (2008) not in itself applied as knowledge producing, explaining it like this; *"Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal. All we have is talk and texts that represent partially, selectively and imperfectly."* (Riessman, 2008, p. 10)

It is in the nature of narrative analysis that the researcher must convince the readers of the point they claim they have found during their research. This place the judge of validity some what over to the reader, if the reader sees enough valued points in the analysis, the research has pass the test to be a academical text. (Riessman, 2008).

This study is also limited in time and resources, so there is a natural limit on how deeply into the issue this research project can go. In addition, the year 2020-2021 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which made travel and meeting interview subjects difficult. Since my area of research

cover a small part of what scholars argue needs to be present in a reconciliation process, this is just a hypothesis of what a reconciliation process could obtain. The context of research is far more complex. In the spirit of the theme of this master thesis, where the different narrative of history is discussed, it is essential to emphasize that also this research project is based on someone's narrative, and that is a limitation in itself. Lastly, Grant points out an essential point in all social research, that ethical principles overall relate to not causing harm, either to participants or to the reputation of research (Grant, 2018, p. 42).

6 Data findings and analysis

In this chapter, the central findings of the analysis are presented. The overarching research question in the analysis was;

Are the identities found in Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks hindering the prospect of reconciliation between them?

The findings are developed through a thematic and narrative analysis of history textbooks for elementary students in Kosovo and Serbia. With this research question, the aim and purpose are to investigate if the narrative presented in the history textbooks may contribute to the conflicting relationship between these countries. With an interdisciplinary theoretical framework of political science, psychology and historicism, the idea is to bring different aspects that complement each other to form a joint theory on history as part of reconciliation or conflict. The focus of the analysis has been to identify these different aspects present in both texts and understand their relationship. The analysis will then conclude whether the books harm their future relationship.

The analysis of the text from the history curriculum will be presented thematically according to themes emerging from the theoretical framework. The following three overarching themes were found in the research; Theme 1: Identity markers, focus, predefining events and conflicting perspectives; Theme 2; Large group psychology; Self-identity, how history present "Us" and "The others"; theme 3: interpretation of history: if the texts are historical aware. The analyses entail quotations from Serbian and Kosovar history books.

This narrative analysis has two overarching themes: identity and memory. The analysis starts with a holistic analysis of the narrative plot in both history books, then analyze how they portray their own and the other (Kosovo/Serbia) identity, using Tosh, Volkan and Anderson as the theoretical framework (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). The analysis aims to understand the nature of the conflict by finding Kosovo and Serbia's narrative and identity and how memory in their history books portrays this.

6.1 Identity markers

This section will present identity markers like significant events and what is forgotten and remembered on each side. According to Benedict Anderson (2006), these identity markers are necessary for society and predefining the imagined community that the nation or state is. John Tosh (2006) states that historians must select what knowledge they want to uncover from the past.

Albanians to attain independence. Reading the whole chapter, this seems to be somewhat correct. Kosovo's history emphasizes the different political and diplomatic masseurs but also what the people had to endure for Kosovo to become an independent nation. This is *their "foundation story"*, as Tosh puts it (Tosh & Lang, 2006). In their foundation story, they must conquer an enemy and some challenges before they are victorious, with help and support from the international community, and become the nation they are today. According to Tosh, new nations tend to be eagerly concerned about forming and presenting their identity (Tosh & Lang, 2006). To form the identity of a nation, by Benedict Anderson's understanding of an imagined community, there needs to exist a sense of comradeship within the community (Anderson, 2006). The comradeship that Kosovo portray and how they fought for their independence may foster the identity of the people of Kosovo, being both a resilient and democratic nation.

The pitfall that may appear when new states try to form identity is the over-focus on traditions. Traditions for people give a sense of continuity in addition to belonging to a group with the same traditions, consequently fostering a collective identity. Traditions become bad history, as Tosh (2006) call it when the tradition appeals to nationalistic feelings like essentialism. In essentialism, there is the powerful sense that "we" are exclusive, and the past is romanticizing, blurring the lines between the identity they had in the past and the identity they have now (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006). [shh4] The analysis from Kosovo's history textbooks does not identify an overemphasis on tradition, other than a new tradition- the liberation day of Kosovo, which is marked on February 17. The pitfall is when the new nations are so concerned by this new identity that it may foster nationalist sentiments like they are better than the other and that it is crucial to protect their identity from the influence of others.

Benedict Anderson (2006) says that every nation is imagined because societies must believe that they are part of the same collective, even though they do not personally know every member of that collective. In modern societies, which contain a large group of citizens who do not personally know each other, the use of history is part of a tool to foster this notion for a community to function as a unity. As Volkan (2014a) say, in large group psychology, there needs to be a feeling of joint experiences to contribute to this society and, if necessary, fight for their collective rights.

In the Serbian world cloud, the most used words are "*Kosovo*", "*started*", "*war*", "*serbs*" and "*Yugoslavia*". Reading the whole Serbian history text, these words corelates with what seems so be

paralyzed the functionality of federal institutions and thus irreversibly disrupted the balance Yugoslavia was founded on." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 228)

Nostalgia may be Serbia's reaction to a sense of loss. The war changed their position in the region as a former leader and their position in the international community, perceived as a perpetrator and a significant force in the conflict. This identity will be explored more in theme 2; identity. Using nostalgia in history books reflects a pessimistic view of the world, and this pessimism can also be detected in the Serbian history text (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

Especially when it portray the role of the *international community*, which also is a topic which comes up regularly. They are mentioned as at the beginning the international community did not wanted to meddle or help resolve the conflict; and when they first did, it resulted in sanctions towards Serbia. Throughout the Serbian history text, the international community is portrayed as unfair, ineffective and unreasonable harsh and violent.

Concerning the focus Kosovo and Serbia have in their history textbooks, we can use Anderson's theory on imagined community and Volkan's theory on large-group identity to explain why this is their focus and narrative in the history textbooks. According to Volkan, the nations' identity is based on an internalization of shared identity markers and experiences. The experiences from the Yugoslavian war are subjective in the sense that there is always two sides in a conflict. Experiences that is as traumatic as war, becomes part of the identity of the people experienced this. To have a large group identity also means that members of the group can be psychologically affected by the large group's trauma, even though they are not personally affected. This shared trauma becomes part of the identity when new generations adopt the trauma as their own (Volkan, 2014a). With this perspective, large group psychology and social memory may impact which narrative and the imagined identity the new generation reading the Kosovan and Serbian history has.

6.1.2 Conflicting memories

The narrative analysis identified conflicting stories about the same events, comparing the historical narrative in Kosovo and Serbia. Anderson (2006) hypernets the written word as having a role in nationalism, explaining that literature, like the history textbooks analyzed in this thesis, is distributed to a specific area and will therefore contribute to a collective understanding of historical

events for the students reading the same history book. Suppose the authors of the history books describe different understandings. In that case, these different understandings may be adapted to a large society, supposedly making it harder to reconcile seeing past wrongdoings so differently. The historical narrative with this perspective impacts their loyalty and whom they see as enemies. The authors from Kosovo and Serbia have chosen different perspectives on the same events. Some are minor like, but the ones presented here are rather large and may directly impact how they understand the war and conflict.

6.1.3 The reason for war

Starting with the beginning - the reason for conflict and war between them. Kosovo sees the reason for war as necessary with the means of liberation from a Serbian occupier who seemingly had repressed the Albanians living in Kosovo for a long period.

"The Serbian repression influenced the eruption of students' protests of Prishtina University in 1997 against the regime of Serbian occupier. With the students' protests and the emergence of the KLA as an organized resistant force, a new reality was created in Kosovo and a new approach of the International Community towards the Kosovo issue." (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 168) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

Serbia presents the reason for war as a consequence of different aspirations for the future in the different provinces of Yugoslavia.

"Civil war in Yugoslavia started on June 27, 1991, and lasted until 1995. The end of the Yugoslav crisis was the conflict in Kosovo and Metohija in 1999. The conflict initially started in Slovenia, then was transferred to ethnically mixed areas of Croatia that were settled by the Serb population, and afterwards to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Metohija. The causes of the conflict were insurmountable differences between Yugoslav republics in their view towards the future of the country. These differences paralyzed the functionality of federal institutions and thus irreversibly disrupted the balance Yugoslavia was founded on."(Todosijevik, 2019, p. 228) Serbian History 8 textbook.

According to the contextual background in chapter 2, this may also be the core of the conflict and why they still are in conflict to this day. Kosovo Albanians wanted to be free, and Serbia did not understand why this must mean that what Serbia considered an essential part of Serbia, Kosovo, had to release itself from the unity that had lasted for centuries under the power of Serbian and Yugoslavian ruling. The Serbian curriculum portrays some inductive factors that resulted in the war, like the different ethnicities and views towards their future. Tosh (2006) says these factors are an essential part of writing history. Historians writing about conflict and war may forget to mention actions leading up to the conflict. They can choose to describe concrete acts of wars instead, and in that way, leaving out some essential contexts (Tosh & Lang, 2006). By including all these factors, historical events get more explained, contrary to simplifying the events. Tosh states that there is always a risk of simplifying the relations between cause and consequences in history from war and conflict since the nature of war and conflict often entail many complicated events that eventually result in conflict (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

6.1.4 KLA

Following, are the description on KLA (the Kosova Liberation Army), which is also described very different in the Kosovan and the Serbian text. Kosovo's history presents the story of the creation of *the Democratic League of Kosovo*;

“On November 28th in 1997, the Kosova Liberation Army appeared for the first time in public. They soon became the main political-military factor that further influenced the internationalization of the Kosova issue. The KLA platform for freedom and independence, for an open society and a developed democracy was supported by the entire Albanian people. “ (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 168) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

KLA is here presented as an important factor in the fight for their independence. Describing them as military, but with noble intentions like *“Freedom, independence and democracy”*.

On the other hand, Serbia uses words such as *“terrorist”* to describe the same group. KLA is here portrayed as a group of outlaws who robbed and killed civilians, seemingly unprovoked by Serbian citizens:

"During 1997, condition in southern Serbian province rapidly worsened after the appearance of Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) which started terrorist attacks on Serbian police and Serb civilians in the province." (Todosijevek, 2019, p. 230) Serbian history 8 textbook.

"Violent actions of Albanian terrorists, who called themselves "Kosovo Liberation Army", that were happening daily, robberies, clashes with police where more and more civilians were hurt or killed, have all worsened the situation in the southern province of Serbia." (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 229) Serbian history 4 textbook.

The different narrative here presents some identity markers that identify Kosovo's KLA as a force of freedom and independence, and Serbia is presented as a victim of violent perpetrators. Enver Djuliman (2016), a theorist from the literature review, speaks about the importance of identifying subjective truths after a conflict. He argues for this because this fosters dialogue, not repression. In both stories, we find these subjective experiences experienced at each side; Kosovo called themselves "Kosovo Liberation Army" in the notion that they were liberating themselves from oppression from a nation and people they felt disconnected from. Serbia described them as "terrorists". The term "terrorist" has no standard definition, states and organizations have their perceptions of what terrorism is, but the Oxford Dictionary defines a terrorist "as a person who uses unlawful violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.". This conflicting view can be legitimized with the perspective that this is what they believed at that time. However, historians have, as Tosh (2006) says, the advantages to seeing past events in hindsight and, therefore, the possibility of presenting history more multifaceted than what is represented in both narratives here.

6.1.5 NATO's involvement

Furthermore, the texts shows clearly different views regarding NATO'S involvement in the war— starting with Serbia's perspective.

"On March 24, 1999, NATO air crafts attacked FRY. The bombardment lasted until June 9 when Slobodan Milošević accepted that Kosovo and Metohija province were to be put under the control of the UN and to deploy the peacekeeping forces

under NATO command. A ceasefire agreement was signed in the Macedonian town of Kumanovo. Security Council of the United Nations adopted the 1244 Resolution, which recognized Serbia's sovereignty over the province of Kosovo and Metohija while the province was put under the administration of the UN. During the bombardment, the country suffered great casualties and destruction."

(Todosijevik, 2019, p. 231) Serbian History 8 textbook.

"After 78 days of constant bombardment, army and police retreated from Kosovo. In accordance with the ceasefire agreement of Kumanovo, the Army of Yugoslavia had to withdraw five kilometres deeper into the territory of Serbia to form the so-called "Security Zone". UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244, which guaranteed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia (later Serbia). After NATO forces entered Kosovo, a few hundred Serb civilians were murdered, and more than one thousand people were reported missing. Over 200 000 Serbs and non-Albanians have temporarily left Kosovo." (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 229)

Serbian History 4 textbook.

According to the Serbian text, NATO is using violence to pressure Serbia into an agreement. They emphasize the losses they suffered and indirectly blamed NATO; *"After NATO forces entered Kosovo, few hundred Serb civilians were murdered, and more than one thousand people were reported missing"*.

The bombardment from NATO is something that Serbia talks about this day as a violation of the international community, and they are currently not a member of NATO. This event from the past can be called chosen trauma (Volkan, 2014a). A chosen trauma in large groups occurs after a collective catastrophe inflicted by an enemy, and the self-image of the group also gets affected. Volkan (2014a) lists tasks that this affected self-image wants to tackle. From this list, a sense of victimization and feeling dehumanized is possible, which can be read from the Serbian interpretation.

The headline in the chapter recovering NATO's involvement in Kosovo's history is *"The Liberation of Kosovo and the Arrival of NATO Forces"*, and this also gives a hint at what they describe.

"From March 24 of 1999, when the NATO air bombardment against Yugoslavia began... After three months of NATO bombardments and continued actions of KLA, the Yugoslav army was forced to sign an agreement in Kumanovo (on June 10, 1999) for withdrawal from Kosovo. In Kosovo, apart from the combat units of KLA, the NATO pact forces under the name KFOR established their ground presence. Kosovo was finally liberated. The UN Security Council, with its 1244 resolution, established its civilian authorities in Kosovo, whereas the military power and the security on the ground were entrusted to NATO's KFOR⁴." (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 171) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

In Kosovo's view, NATO was their ally that contributed to Kosovo attaining its freedom. In this perspective, NATO has a role in Kosovo's foundation myth which Tosh describes as common for new states to have (Tosh & Lang, 2006). What can be questioned is the lack of criticism or critical view on using NATO forces to bomb their enemy. When weapons are used, there are usually some casualties, which are not mentioned in this section of the bombing. It can be questioned that it is a way of dehumanizing the Serbians and what happened to their enemy at war.

6.1.6 Casualties from the war

Concerning casualties during the Yugoslavian war, the Kosovan and Serbian text has chosen to leave out the other's casualties. The Serbian history text recalls that after the bombing from NATO in March 1999, *"Several thousand soldiers were killed, and civilian casualties were between 1200 and 2500, including 79 children. Around 5000 people were injured. Material damage caused was estimated to be 30 billion dollars."* (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 229).

"During February-March 1999, the First International Conference on Kosova was organized in Rambouillet, France, with international mediation. The Kosova delegation was led by the KLA Political Director, Hashim Thaçi. During this time, an agreement was reached for the formation of the Provisional Government between the subjects of the political spectrum, where Hashim Thaçi was elected mandator. After the withdrawal of the Verification Mission in Kosova (March 19, 1999), the

⁴ The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is a NATO-led international peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

Serbian army, police and paramilitary forces began to openly carry out the plan for ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosova, implementing a "scorched earth" policy. Since March 24, 1999, when NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia began, Yugoslav army forces have joined police and paramilitary units to expel all Albanians from Kosova villages and towns." (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 169) Kosovan History 9 textbook.

In the examples above, the same event is described. In the Kosovo history text, the term "ethnic cleansing" is used about Serbian violations against the Kosovo Albanians, meaning this deliberately targets a particular group and, therefore, a genocide. According to Volkan's theory on chosen trauma, Ethnic cleansing may become the Kosovo Albanians' chosen trauma. With chosen trauma, this memory of the trauma becomes part of the large group's identity, meaning that violations from the others also get imprinted in the large group's identity (Volkan, 2014a).

Serbia does not mention ethnic cleansing in their narrative of history. Owing up to own crimes is part of the reconciliation process and a way for both parties to heal. It is natural to avoid this identity marker to avoid stories that put themselves in a bad light. Historians may choose that for several reasons. Either because there is a denial of the perpetrators, they do not want to portray themselves as a state that allows these acts, or the reason is that there is not enough evidence for the contemporary historian to interpret (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

"The consequences of the war were extraordinary. Around 12000 Albanians were killed, over 2000 were being held in captivity in Serbian prisons, whereas over 1 million were violently deported. The material damage was also immense. More than 200.000 thousand apartments, local businesses, craft workshops, factories, cultural monuments – historical, cultural, religious, scientific, and some other buildings were plundered, burned and destroyed. More than 750 schools, from a total of 1200 which existed until then, were burned or demolished. The NATO alliance in Kosovo engaged more than 50.000 troops, which shows that this was the biggest operation and mission after the Second World War." (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 172) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"After 78 days of constant bombardment, army and police have retreated from Kosovo. In accordance with the ceasefire agreement of Kumanovo, the Army of Yugoslavia had to withdraw five kilometres deeper into the territory of Serbia to

form a so-called "Security Zone". UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244, which guaranteed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia (later Serbia). After NATO forces entered Kosovo, a few hundred Serb civilians were murdered, and more than one thousand people were reported missing. Over 200 000 Serbs and non-Albanians have temporarily left Kosovo." (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 229) Serbia History 4 textbook.

Comparing the two historical narratives, they both seem one-sided on the issue of causalities. There are no mentions of the number of causalities on the other sides in either of the history textbooks. According to Tosh's view on contemporary history, *"Historical difference provides an indispensable perspective on the present, whether as an inventory of experiences, as evidence of transience of our time, or as a reminder of the deeply alien elements in our recent past."* (Tosh & Lang, 2006). With this perspective, even though the Serbian and Kosovan history curriculum provides different recreations of their conflict, the different perspective still serves their role as part of a narrative that might be more multi-layers within an edited version of the events from the war later on. This is what we experienced after the Second World War, with stories and narratives coming to light almost a generation later. As the Norwegian book "Skammens historie", published in 2015, entails not-so-flattering stories from the Norwegian role during Second World War, challenging the narrative about the Norwegians being solely against the occupation from Germany (Aas & Vestgården, 2015).

6.1.7 The final outcome of the war

The last contradicting narrative worth mentioning is the consequence of the Yugoslavian war for Serbia and Kosovo. Kosovo explain this like a success story - they won their independence;

"The declaration of Kosovo's independence was an important victory for the history of our people. It was the fruit of the fights and the efforts of all generations against the foreign occupation. With the decision of February 17 2008, Kosovo's people won their undeniable right to govern freely and independently alongside other peoples in the Balkans and Europe." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo history 9 textbook.

"The declaration of Kosovo's independence is a joint victory and a merit of Albanian people, all the political forces engaged in the liberation efforts, without

excluding the role of the Albanian diaspora. February 17, 2008 marks a historic comeback for the Kosovo people because of the creation of new political conditions to develop the country in the spheres of politics, economics, education, and culture, as well as the integration of the country into the Euro-Atlantic institutions such as NATO and EU." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo history 9 textbook.

"February 17, 2008 has become a historic day of the Kosovo independence. The country's institutions also adopted the flag, coat of arms, and anthem, which identify Kosovo as an international entity worldwide." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

Kosovo's history presents the war's outcome as *"the fruit of the fights"* – they finally achieved the independence they had fought for. We may interpret that they believe they deserved independence, and in this, a sense of entitlement reading; *"Kosovo's people won their undeniable right to govern freely and independently"*. This correlates with Volkan's theory on how groups that had lost something feel this entitlement (Volkan, 2014a). Using these words, the historian may be accused of emphasizing the technique narrative at the cause of the *"widest possible description"* of the past, who also balances description and analysis in their recreation of the past (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

With narrative being a form of storytelling, a story with that focus may influence the readers since the narrative can arouse feelings through descriptions of how it must have felt to achieve independence. The narrative could have been more descriptive if the historian had applied the analyzing technique described by Tosh. By doing so, the historian may have included an analysis of the motivation behind it and used the widest possible definition of memory instead of describing the one-sided experiences of the people of Kosovo (Tosh & Lang, 2006). The narrative in the Kosovan history textbook also contains the support and acknowledgement of Kosovo's independence of the international community, describing *"..integration of the country into the Euro-Atlantic institutions such as NATO and EU." ..which identify Kosovo as an international entity worldwide."*(Rexhepi, 2014). Knowing now that most of the world has recognized Kosovo's independence, this is almost legitimate to say, but still, there are some countries left who have not recognized Kosovo as a state, and for the sake of objectivity in the text, the complicated sovereignty of Kosovo may preferably have been mentioned in this context.

The Serbian history textbooks have a different view on the consequences of the Yugoslavian war. Concerning the Resolution 1244 from the UN Security Council, which Serbia and Kosovo signed in 1999, they have different interpretations of what that resolution meant for Kosovo;

“On March 24th 1999, NATO air crafts attacked FRY and the bombardment lasted until June 9th when Slobodan Milošević accepted that Kosovo and Metohija province is to be put under control of UN and to deploy the peace keeping forces under NATO command. Ceasefire agreement was signed in Macedonian town of Kumanovo. Security Council of the United Nations adopted 1244 Resolution which recognized Serbia’s sovereignty over the province of Kosovo and Metohija while the province was put under administration of UN.” (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 231)

In the Serbian narrative, Resolution 1244 affirms Serbia’s sovereignty over Kosovo. The Kosovan narrative tells another story, narrating that they now have self-governance, avoid mentioning that they legally still are under the govern of the “Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” i.e. Serbia;

“The UN Security Council, with its 1244 resolution, established its civilian authorities in Kosovo, whereas the military power and the security on the ground were entrusted to NATO's KFOR⁵.” (Rexhepi, 2014, p. 171) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

According to the official UN papers of Resolution 1244, the agreement was “Authorizes the Secretary-General, with the assistance of relevant international organizations, to establish an international civil presence in Kosovo in order to provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people of Kosovo can enjoy, substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and which will provide transitional administration while establishing and overseeing the development of provisional democratic self-governing institutions to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants of Kosovo.” Council (1999).

According to the agreement of this Resolution, the Serbian and Kosovan narrative in the history texts, both parties are leaving out some details that makes the readers understand different outcomes. The Serbian readers may assume that this resolution confirmed that Kosovo where a province in Serbia, the Kosovan readers may believe that this resolution gave Kosovo self-governance.

⁵ The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is a NATO-led international peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

Analysing the Serbian described outcome further, the text reads:

"In February 2008, Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija declared independence that was not recognized by Serbia as well as many other states in the world. These developments did not cause any use of force, and Serbia decided to fight for its interests only by diplomatic means." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 232) Serbian History 8 textbook.

According to Serbia's history curricula, Kosovo never really achieved independence; therefore, they are still part of Serbia. Their narrative presents Kosovo as the Province of Kosovo and a part of the Serbian republic. The presentation of this event is presented relatively neutral, avoiding using negative descriptions, but the opinion of how they do not acknowledge Kosovo's independence is apparent.

"Serbia got a new constitution in 2006 after its adoption was confirmed in a constitutional referendum. The constitution is based on the statehood tradition of the Serb people and is based on the equality of all citizens, no matter their ethnic origin. Constitution also foresees that the Province of Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of the Republic of Serbia." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 232) Serbia History 8 textbook.

Serbia's perspective makes this identity marker a reason for conflict since geographical borders and culture are part of the imagined communities (Anderson, 2006). When others contradict the main elements of that identity, this may be a fertile ground for conflict about the geographical identity of their state or community.

Different narratives in the stories acting in isolation from each other, on the other hand, do not serve this purpose before it is common knowledge on each side, where the narratives complement each other and bring the different perspectives together.

6.2 Identity

According to Tosh, identity is formed by lived experience and what memories we make from it (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Volkan expands this definition, leaning on Thomas Erikson's (1966) defining identity as a *"subjective experience of a persistent sense of sameness with oneself"* (Volkan, 2014a). When it comes to developing a collective identity, it happens when a group has shared

interpretations of experiences that have formed the group. This experience of collective identity develops through childhood into adolescence (Volkan, 2014a).

With this perspective, it may be possible to detect the identity in the history text and make assumptions that this identity may affect the self-identity of children and youth reading the history texts.

6.2.1 Kosovo's narrative about "us"; Martyrs and chosen glories

During the analysis of Kosovo's curriculum, several stories about heroes or martyrs occurred. Like the Trench miners who locked themselves inside a mine in 1988 for several days, with the demand of preserve the 1974 constitution and requested that the fate of the Kosovo Albanians was revised and that their land of Kosovo was freed from other occupation. (Rexhepi, 2014)

A even more clear example of martyrs, are when they use the actual word "martyr";

"During the March and April events, a total of 30 martyrs fell for the freedom of Kosovo. A state of emergency was declared, and in the police action carried out over the night, a total of 254 Albanian intellectuals and leadership cadre were placed in isolation. Another extremely brutal form of police pressure was the poisoning of over 7000 students by using warfare chemicals during March and May of 1990." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

The persons in these stories can be understood as martyrs in their unselfish fight for the freedom of Kosovo. Using the word "martyr" and stories like these, the historian is giving value to the sacrifice the Kosovo Albanians made at that time. Volkan (2014a) says that martyrs, together with other abstract or concrete identity markers, are understood by children as their own. The subjective experience of the feeling of loss for the martyrs who sacrificed for "me" to live in an independent Kosovo will, according to Volkan, expand the knowledge of belonging to a large-group whom all have experienced this loss together (Volkan, 2014a). If this is the case, the children reading these stories may experience sentiments relating to their own loss, and this "martyr story" may become a proud part of their identity.

Anderson (2006) remarks that deaths or violent acts serve a narrative purpose in a nation's history; "they must be remembered as our own". Tosh (2006) argues that this way of interpreting history is a technique that may construct false memories because the interpretations may be different if another historian had written and interpreted the same story. The question concerning this story

choice is whether their deaths have even been mentioned if another historian were writing the story.

"At the front of this movement stood the famous intellectuals Anton Cheta and Zekeria Cana. Their names became synonymous with the rapprochement, reconciliation, freedom and unity of the entire Albanian people. As a result of this action, the hand of reconciliation was quickly extended in more than 1200 cases. Thus, the blood feud reconciliation movement exalted the work of fallen martyrs for the freedom and independence of Kosovo."(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook..

"The liberation war of Kosovo intensified and gained a more powerful momentum, especially after the heroic fight of Jasharaj family in Prekaz, between 05 – 07 March 1998. Shaban Jashari, together with his two sons, Hamza and Adem, with their wives, nephews and nieces, made heroes by facing and fighting the Serbian police, which were armed with the most sophisticated and modern weapons of the time. This war, led by the legendary commander, Adem Jashari, became a symbol of resistance and inspiration for the whole nation." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

To die for its country is the story of the ultimate sacrifice and morally greatness. This is because the nation is a community of people; you indirectly also die or sacrifice yourself for the others in that community (Anderson, 2006). Benedict Anderson talks about when the retention of own heroic act becomes a too large part of a nation's identity, they are at risk of being too nationalistic by glorifying heroic events (Anderson, 2006). Volkan (2014a) calls stories of martyrs and flattering events "chosen glories" or, as he phrases it - *"shared mental representations of historical events and heroic persons"*. According to Volkan, chosen glories link members of the group together and give new generations self-esteem by being proud of their heroes' heroic acts. Therefore, stories of chosen glories are also necessary for nations like Serbia and Kosovo to motivate the inhabitants to invest in their communities (Volkan, 2014a).

Another identity detected in the Kosovan history textbook is the presentation of the Kosovo Albanians as democratic and unified people. This can also relate to Volkan's term chosen glories. A

sentiment that serves two means: unifying the ingroup and, simultaneously, thinking less of the other (Volkan, 2014a).

6.2.2 Serbia about "us"; Victims and chosen traumas

When analyzing the Serbian curriculum, the emphasis on victimization appeared. According to Volkan, this can result from a large group going through a shared trauma (Volkan, 2014a). The war, with the violent acts and the result of that, can definitely be categorized as a shared trauma. A shared trauma that is identifiable in the Serbian history text is the bombing by NATO. Furthermore, regarding adopting the victim-identity, the text narrates how the international community consequently work against Serbia.

"European Community at that time had no means of resolving the war crisis and summoned the London Conference of Peace in the autumn of 1991. The Conference faced unaccommodating positions of the sides in the conflict, and the European Community imposed the first sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 229) Serbia History 8 textbook.

"The international community did not recognize FRY, blaming it for the responsibility for the wars. From the side of FRY, it was repeated several times that every kin state has the right to protect or support its people, in particular when the nature of help is humanitarian and when such assistance does not come from the international community. The response of the international community was the sanctions towards FRY by Resolution 757 of May 30, 1992." (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 229) Serbia History 4 textbook.

"USA insisted on the retreat of YPA from BIH, but only those officers that were originally from Serbia did that. The rest of the YPA forces in Bosnia was reorganized into the Army of Republika Srpska. The same situation was with the other sides in the Bosnian conflict. The USA deprecated about these developments, accusing Serbia of being responsible for the conflict. After USA's initiative, United Nations Security Council introduced sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. That, however, did not stop the war, which intensified throughout 1992." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 229) Serbia History 8 textbook.

"The international community did not recognize the new state⁶ because Serbia was still held responsible for the Bosnian war, so FRY was isolated from the rest of the world. The economic sanctions caused deep inner crisis and inflation in 1993."

(Todosijevik, 2019, p. 229) Serbia History textbook.

"In February 1994, an explosion on Sarajevo's market, "Markale", killed dozens of people. Even though the evidence was controversial, the Bosnian Serb side was accused of it. NATO send an ultimatum to Republika Srpska to withdraw its artillery away from Sarajevo under threat of bombardment."(Todosijevik, 2019, p.

230) Serbia History textbook.

Here the narrative is that Serbia is a victim that repeatedly are being misunderstood from the international community. Their focus is mainly on the actions the international community took towards them, which is also portrayed as being seemingly out of proportion and a violation in their view. *"International community did not recognize the new state because Serbia was still held responsible for the Bosnian war, so FRY was isolated from the rest of the world. The economic sanctions caused deep inner crisis and inflation in 1993"* The analysis also detect a sense of being abandoned with the section *"European Community at that time had no means for resolving war crisis and summoned London Conference of Piece in autumn of 1991. The Conference faced unaccommodating positions of the sides in the conflict, and European Community imposed first sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro."*

Their narrative in the history text is that the international community is portrayed as an opponent who continually works against Serbia, with the exception of Russia and France. In the Serbian text, they are portrayed as well-meaning negotiators wanting a resolution.

"The last attempt to to resolve crisis in a peaceful way was undertaken by France and Russia. The two countries suggested negotiations between two confronted sides with mediation of USA, EU and Russia. The negotiations were held in Rambouillet and Paris in France during February of 1999."(Todosijevik, 2019)

This negotiation did not result in peaceful solutions, since Serbia rejected the withdrawal of Serbian police and military forces in Kosovo.

⁶ On April 27, 1992, Serbia and Montenegro created a new state called the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

As explained in chapter two, the contextual background, the international community did intervene with both sanctions, dialogue and, in the end, arms. Being wrongfully seen as the perpetrator by the international community is a continuous narrative in the Serbian history curriculum.

These examples all describe acts that could lead to a chosen trauma (Volkan, 2014a). Describing traumas like these may, in some cases, project a traumatized self-image to new generations, creating a sense of belonging and linking all members of a group together (Volkan, 2014a). The traumatized self-image has the narrative of being wrongfully condemned by the international community and being robbed of Kosovo.

The next narrative the analysis showed was the notion that Serbia lost something during the civil war. Volkan refers to this sentiment as something that can lead to an entitlement ideology for a large group (Volkan, 2014a). The sense of entitlement will contribute to the identity of the citizens of Serbia, containing a sense of loss. The following quote from the Serbian history books are examples of loss.

"Opposite to the widespread propaganda, the Albanian political elite ruled Kosovo. Pressure on the Serb population continued, and an atmosphere of insecurity and fear was fostered through rape, destruction of property and ethnically motivated homicides. These facts just increased the drain of the Serb ethnic population from Kosovo, which in fact, lasted since the end of World War II."(Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 227) Serbia History 4 textbook.

In this example, Serbia lost territory in Kosovo, being violent and politically pressured out of an area they perceive as theirs. As analyzed as the overall focus in the Serbian curricula, there is a sense of nostalgia, longing for the time when Serbia had more territory, being a republic in Yugoslavia. Ending the chapter of the war with the following:

"Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija declared independence that was not recognized by Serbia as well as many other states in the world. These developments did not cause any use of force, and Serbia decided to fight for its interest only by diplomatic means." (Todosijevik, 2019, p. 232) Serbia History 8 textbook.

With the entitlement ideology, there is, according to Volkan (2014a), the wish to recover the losses and, at the same time, deny them. Large groups who develop entitlement ideologies feel that their ancestors suffered at the hand of "The Other». Both wishing for the territory of Kosovo back and at the same time denying the loss of Kosovo seems to be the case in the narrative in the Serbian History texts. According to Volkan, the denial reflects a complication in large-group mourning.

6.2.3 The others

The theory of stranger anxiety is described by Volkan (2014a) as a human response based on the notion that human societies need to protect themselves against other humans outside their group, like a survivor-response to prevent aggression against members inside their own group. This term is called pseudo species by Erikson (1966), based on the evolutionary theory that humans dehumanize others outside the group to protect their group. If societies view others from this perspective, we can assume that this will affect how the relationship between them will be. The narrative analysis identified several unflattering statements about "the other".

6.2.3.1 Kosovo`s narrative about Serbia

Kosovo mentions Serbia excessively in the history of the civil war. The Serbian's role in the war is thoroughly documented, and they are described as perpetrators in the following examples:

"On March 28, 1989, the Serbian Parliament in Belgrade adopted the constitutional amendments which enabled the proclamation of creating a "unique Serbia". While in Belgrade, the celebration of the "unique state" was being celebrated, in Kosovo, the Albanians were being killed because they were manifesting dissatisfaction toward this violent act."(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook

"During the period of March-May of 1990, over 7000 Albanian students were poisoned with warfare chemicals (poison)." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"To justify the mass killings and the terror in Kosovo, the Serbian propaganda exercised in Kosovo was inventing shameful lies against Albanians, presenting

them as if they were killing each other as a result of blood feud revenge."

(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

The analysis found that the Kosovan history text are placing Serbia in the narrative of being violent and ruthless perpetrator, acting with violence against a democratic, peaceful people. Connecting the incidents of Serbia celebrating to their protesting where Albanian were getting killed places the Serbians in a particular cruel light. Stories like these, presenting the enemy as someone who can celebrate, while knowing they inflict harm, is a way of dehumanizing the enemy. This kind of narrative may cause prejudice against the others, seeing them like predators. As mentioned earlier in this analysis, Kosovo does not mention the loss and impact of the war from the Serbian perspective, meaning that the texts do not predispose the readers, (i.e., the students) to too much sympathy for the Serbian people. Volkan's theory (2014a) on a shared trauma for a large group inflicted by "the other", saying that the view of the other as a perpetrator may be transformed to the next generation as well, consequently continuing the conflict. Further in the analysis of the Kosovan narrative of Serbia, Serbia is portrayed as they produce lies and propaganda those to the public.

"To justify the mass killings and the terror in Kosovo, the Serbian propaganda exercised in Kosovo was inventing shameful lies against Albanians, presenting them as if they were killing each other as a result of blood feud revenge."

(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"On July 02, 1990, 115 Albanian delegates of the Parliament of Kosovo announced the Constitutional Declaration as the key document of the independence and equality of Kosovo with the other units of the federation or confederation of Yugoslavia. This democratic act of the delegates affected the further radicalization of the situation. The Yugoslav - Serbian military and police machinery, dictated by the government of Belgrade, had received instruction to arrest, batter, imprison and kill the Albanians of Kosovo." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"Only three days after the proclamation of the constitutional declaration, the Serbian Parliament abolished the Kosovo Assembly, the government, the administrative and court bodies, took over the Radio-television in Albanian language, banned the "Rilindja" newspaper as the only daily newspaper in the Albanian language, and usurped the entire economic structure and seriously

attacked the systems of education, science, culture, health, and banking."

(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

Here, the history describes the Serbians attacking the roots of a democratic nation, continuing the narrative of Serbian people being ruthless perpetrators who use dictator means to attain power. Cultural artefacts like newspapers and cultural institutions are what Benedict Anderson say makes an imagined nation, so to attack these institutions is ultimately to attack their community and a part of the Kosovo nation (Anderson, 2006).

"During the referendum, the police authorities showed their own brutal side by preventing, maltreating and arresting many Albanians who participated in organizing the event." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"The Serbian repression influenced the eruption of students' protests of Prishtina University in 1997 against the regime of Serbian occupier." (Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

"The Serbian occupier engaged a powerful military, police and propaganda machinery, not only against the KLA structures but also against the innocent civilian population, which resulted in horrid barbaric scenes of massacres against powerless and innocent people (women, children, elderly), burning of houses, crops and mass imprisonments of youth. The biggest massacres were committed during February and March of 1998, particularly in the territory of Drenica. Such massacres continued to be committed on the civilian population during the whole year all over Kosovo."(Rexhepi, 2014) Kosovo History 9 textbook.

These are examples of especially cruel nature; massacres against powerless and innocent people (women, children, elderly), burning of houses and crops, and mass imprisonments of youth. By describing these acts, the reader gets a sense of inhuman actions. This correlates to Volkan's (2014a) description of how large group psychology works. The group may develop a sense of the others that dehumanize them by going through a shared trauma (Volkan, 2014a). This is, in a psychological term, a defense mechanism, that initially works as a means for a group to be able to defend themselves from others (Volkan, 2014a). That a defense mechanism is detected towards a former enemy here, seems natural after a conflict were citizens of the society (the ingroup), experiences violence from the outgroup - that Serbia can be describes as in this phenomena.

6.2.4 Serbia`s narrative about Kosovo

Analyzing the Serbian history from the civil war, there are only detected a few descriptions of Kosovo and Kosovo Albanians.

*"Kosovo problem - First signs of destabilization of Yugoslavia appeared in Kosovo. The burst of Albanian nationalism and separatism in the spring of 1981 marked the awaking of covert nationalism that would prove fatal for the community."
(Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 227)*

This put the blame on Albanians in Kosovo for demolishing Yugoslavia, saying that their nationalism was fatal to the Yugoslavian community, which the Serbian narrative claims functioned. Further, the narrative explains that the Serb population in Kosovo, where being chased out as the result of Albanian nationalism in Kosovo. Claiming that the Albanian political elite ruled Kosovo. Pressuring the Serbian population out of the province by *"rape, destruct property and ethnically motivated homicides."* (Dusko Lopandic, 2019, p. 227). By this view, the Kosovo Albanian are presented as the same way the Kosovo text present the Serbians - as ruthless perpetrators who uses inhuman means to get their way. The narrative of being chased out of Kosovo, supports their idea and sentiment of entitlement to the area. They are portraying Kosovo Albanians as the occupiers, which is the opposite of what the Kosovan history textbooks say.

Portraying the people of Kosovo by this view, is also how the narrative of the Kosovo Liberation Army, describing them as "terrorist" and their actions as terrorist acts. This use of narrative derails the noble cause that Kosovo claims KLA had in their narrative from the same events. Comparing this to Volkan's theory on large-group psychology, this may be a result of dehumanizing others. At the same time, it could be a result of the challenges of contemporary history writing – not having all the evidence, choosing to interpret the story, and being too close to past events (Tosh, 2018; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a).

Overall, the narrative analysis of the Serbian history text is more focused on detaching themselves from being the perpetrators than on describing Kosovo other than a rebellious terrorist who aggregated the resolution of the Yugoslavia Serbia wanted. With this attitude, it also can be claimed that the Serbian narrative, intentionally or unintentionally, downplays Kosovo`s claim to independence and in that way also un legitimize Kosovo`s sovereignty.

6.3 Interpretation and uses of History

This section of the narrative research, analyses if the text is historically aware and if the historians recall the history as accurately as possible. John Tosh describes the challenges of writing contemporary history, especially with a recent past that one might prefer to forget. Challenges the writer of the Serbian and Kosovan history probably met were 1) the inability to detach themselves enough from the recent past and 2) having limited access to confidential records dating from the period and events described (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Missing valuable data and as a historian from the nations involved makes contemporary historians extra challenged in the already complicated process of balancing the techniques of describing, using narrative and analysis to get as accurate recreation of the story as possible. (Tosh & Lang, 2006) Even though contemporary history is a challenging field, Tosh argues that it is crucial to write down since *"recent events are a fertile breeding ground for crude myths"*, especially if it is no credible scholarly work to contest these myths (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Contemporary history can be edited at a later point when more evidence is available. By this point of view, we see history as part of the process of reconciliation. *"Situating ourselves in a trajectory that is still unfolding gives us some purchase on the future allows measure of forward planning."*(Tosh & Lang, 2006, p. 40). Tosh describes this mode of historical thinking as being deeply rooted in the political culture and can be describes as *"wishful thinking"* according to Tosh. Comparing this view with the history texts from Serbia and Kosovo, the history texts are then described as *"sequential predictions"* with the view that these are based on careful research. To validate these contemporary history texts then, it is necessary to test these text against the historical records, and then if there then are found undocumented events described, replace it by a more accurate perspective (Tosh & Lang, 2006, p. 41).

An additional argument for contemporary history to be written is the possibility for conflicting nations to own up to their past and thereby also serve as a form of therapy for that nation and the citizens who lived through the war (Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). When future generations learn what their parents or grandparents experienced, this also becomes part of the healing process of that trauma. By advertising for historians to have this processual thinking while interpreting history, requires them to abandon the idea that nations are organic; it is nearer the truth to regard them, in the words of Benedict Anderson, as *"imagined communities"* (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006).

Being two decades since this war and having had several international criminal courts which have concluded with some of the violations conducted by Serbia and Kosovo during the war, it should be

evidence available to have a more similar narrative in Serbia and Kosovo's history text. The analysis, therefore, may assume that historians are influenced by the social memory of their society. Tosh differs between history and social memory, saying social memory may entail false memories, reflecting the widespread knowledge in the society of the past. Tosh emphasizes that history writers should seek the objective truth by having open-ended applications towards finding the truth about the past. Further Tosh acknowledge the difficulties for historians to be entirely objective in the sense that history is always interpreted by individuals with their own values and story that may influence how they analyze past events (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Which seems to be the case in the history textbook`s in Kosovo and Serbia. Narrative may have too much room, with wording like "terrorist" "Violence" and also how much they mention each other`s actions from war. At the same time, while writing about conflict and war it is almost impossible to not have bot perpetrators and victims on both sides. The reason why the history textbooks are not getting the highest score in being an objective text, is that in this analysis there are shown that their own perpetrating actions get downplayed or not mentioned at all. Overall, the histories focus on different events, presenting themselves as victims and each other as perpetrators. In this way, the historians of these texts can be argued to have both passed blame and verdict towards each other. In this way, it can be said that historians put their personal interpretation or social memory into their recollection of history.

In this part of the analysis, Tosh`s identifications of different techniques historian uses when constructing history was used as guiding to identify if the history texts is *descriptive, narrative and analytic*, and if the technique are used with the result of portraying the *widest possible truth*. (Tosh & Lang, 2006). John Tosh (2006) argues that every historian must ask the question "why?" to determine the motive for the actions made. This question is complex and requires the historian to be well-informed about the cultural and intellectual context of the studied period. (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Searching for the Kosovan history curriculum writer Fehmi Rexhepi, you find out that he is a Kosovo Albanian born in 1945 and grew up in Pristina. He has a doctor's degree in history and several published books on history. With this information, we can assume he is academic and well indorsed in the culture and the subject of matter (Tosh & Lang, 2006).

The historians writing the Serbian textbooks are also academics coming from Serbia. From the book "History 4", the writers are Duško Lopandić being a diplomat, Manja Milinović historian and Ratomir Milikic a academic (Dusko Lopandic, 2019). In „History 8“, Alexander Todosijevic are an history teacher and the president of „Association for social history – EuroClio ([EuroClio – Inspiring](#)

[History and Citizenship Educators](#)), Sanja Petrovic Todosijevec works at the Institute of Newer History Serbia. More than a google research on the writers may had been interesting in futher studies about the topic. Nevertheless, at first glanse, with the background of the writers of the History books in both Serbia and Kosovo has, they theoretical seems up to the task to write the history with the widest possible understanding according to John Tosh requirements of historical awareness (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Still, this analysis found that the narrative detected in both sides, may seem too much influenced by the social memory of their nation to describe the events of the Yugoslavian war without bias.

7 Conclusion

This thesis aims to understand the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia and explore if the history textbooks taught to elementary students are influenced by this conflict. Based on a narrative analysis of the Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks, this thesis sought to answer the overarching research question, "*Are the identities found in Serbian and Kosovan history textbooks hindering the prospect of reconciliation between them?*".

A thematic analysis was used to develop the following themes: 1. Identity markers, the focus and conflicting perspectives in the texts. 2: Identity; in which narrative the text present themselves and each other. 3. Interpretation and uses of history.

These themes were influenced by the theoretical framework constructed by Benedict Anderson's theory on an imagined community, Vamik D. Volkan's theory on large-group psychology and John Tosh's theory on historicism and the impact and uses of history (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). Together, this framework aimed to identify the identities and narratives that may impact the relationship between Kosovo and Serbia.

A fundamental objective was to find the focus and conflicting perspectives from the Yugoslavian war in each history narrative. Finding that Kosovo focuses on describing its "*foundation myth*", a concept that Tosh explains may inhabit stories of heroes and martyrs (Tosh & Lang, 2006). On the other hand, Serbia focuses on what they lost during the war, explained by the term "*nostalgia*" – glorifying and longing for the past when Kosovo was part of Serbia.

Further findings about the identity markers found in the history text are what their conflicting perspective was. Firstly, they had different perspectives concerning the reason for the war. Kosovo saw the reason for the war as a liberation war from the Serbian occupier; Serbia saw it as a mix of different aspirations for the future and nationalism from the Kosovo Albanians. Furthermore, the role of the KLA is contradicting – described as a terrorist group according to Serbia and a noble liberation army from Kosovo's perspective. The third contradiction is the narrative in the description of NATO's involvement in the war. Serbia's narrative is that NATO violated Serbia through bombing them, and Kosovo saw them as allies in their pursuit of independence. The last contradictions were the casualties and the consequences of war—leaving out the loss and damage of the other, focusing on their own. The most crucial difference is how they portray the war's outcome; Kosovo sees them as liberated and independent, conflicting with Serbia's view on Kosovo

still being a part of Serbia, not acknowledging their independence. These different understandings may be adapted to a large society, supposedly making it harder to reconcile seeing past wrongdoings so differently.

Findings in this thesis analyzing their group's identity and how they portray each other, found that they both present each other as ruthless perpetrators while narrating themselves as victim in the war. Kosovo describes Serbia as violent occupiers who perpetrate inhumane violence. This view dehumanizes the Serbian people as being mainly perpetrators. The Kosovan history text presents itself as both victims and heroes who combated an enemy. Observing that the Kosovan history text had more descriptions of Serbia's role in the war than Serbia had of Kosovo's role. Questioning if this also serves a narrative purpose, undermining Kosovo's fight for independence and concluding that Kosovo still is a part of Serbia, referring to their Serbian Constitution.

The Serbian history textbooks present Kosovo Albanians as being rebellious terrorists and occupiers, and they present themselves as victims and as they have entitlement to what they lost, e.i. Kosovo. According to Tosh, Anderson and Volkan, how they present themselves influences their group's identity (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006; Volkan, 2014a). Within this, there is an understanding that Kosovo has a narrative about martyrs and resilient people who fought and overcame repression and are now a proud nation. Serbia presents a narrative of them being victims of unfair treatment and being misunderstood by the international community.

Throughout this study, the challenges of writing contemporary history as interpreted by John Tosh become inherent (Tosh & Lang, 2006). Finding that how they describe themselves and each other is part of what large-group psychology describes as therapy and a natural reaction for nations who have gone through trauma inflicted by others (Volkan, 2014a). At the same time, it explains why the narrative leans towards a social memory, narrating how the society wants to see themselves and the past using Benedict Anderson's perspective of the imagined community (Anderson, 2006; Tosh & Lang, 2006).

Since the Kosovan and Serbian history texts act in isolation from each other, this thesis's central finding is that the focus, contradicting narrative and their description of each other serve a damaging purpose for the relationship between them. With the influence of the theoretical framework, a proposal towards reconciliation between Serbia and Kosovo is to combine the

narratives on each side, letting the perspective complement each other, consequently contributing to shared knowledge on each side.

Further research would be to analyze and compare the history texts, going even further back in history, and investigate what the Kosovan and Serbian narrative is concerning earlier events. Another perspective could have been to interview teachers and students using these textbooks. By doing so, there will be a broader understanding of what the students learn; here, social memory can be further examined. In addition, it would have been interesting to know how the teachers teach about the subject; is it a dialogue or a banking method (Freire, Ramos, & Macedo, 2014) and are they managing to be objective and not biased in the classroom? These aspects would have added to the conclusion that history education may or may not influence the reconciliation process in post-war societies.

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