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Education and Civil Conflict:
The Negative Effects of Intolerant Curricula in Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan

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COLIN POWELL SCHOOL FOR CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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Abstract: Education has long been used as a tool for national identity formation and social cohesion. However, in diverse communities across the globe, the question must be asked: are educational institutions creating citizens with a narrow view of “us vs. them” or an identity built on multiculturalism and acceptance? Through past research, it is obvious that education has either acted as an instigator or mitigator of civil conflict, though to what extent is still largely unknown. In this thesis, I argue that both the extent and quality of education in a country can instigate or, at least, exacerbate the outbreak of civil conflict. To prove this hypothesis, I will highlight two educational factors as causally connected to civil conflict: educational access and educational content. First, educational access can affect civil conflict since a lack of educational and, in effect, economic opportunities may lead to rebel recruitment of a country’s youth. Second, educational content can affect civil conflict, as the language, images, and facts utilized in schools’ curricula may stir up ethnic and religious divides and hatred. In conclusion, though educational access is certainly connected to civil conflict, the results are varied, thus necessitating the need to dig deeper into the curricula of countries affected by civil conflict. These factors will help to pinpoint problem areas in the educational systems of countries dangerously close to civil conflict, as well as how to reshape educational policies for the future.

Chapter One: Introduction

For my thesis, I will focus on the role of education as either an instigator or mitigator of civil conflict. On the one hand, education has been used to assuage civil conflict by fostering a citizenship that values tolerance for other religions and ethnicities, as well as non-violent political participation. On the other hand, education has been equally used to indoctrinate its citizens with ethnic hatred, fear, and a militant nationalism that breeds civil conflict. This topic is personally intriguing to me because for the past seven years, I have been involved in international education in a variety of roles — both as a teacher and as an administrator. Although I have never taught in a country undergoing civil conflict, I have personally seen how a closed-minded, intolerant educational system can affect students’ outlook towards their country and “the other.” I taught business English in the international business department at a Chinese university
for three years, and I was shocked to see an educational system that lacked critical thinking, heralded an unquestioning acceptance of what was being taught, dissuaded classroom participation or differing opinions, and promoted a nationalism that demonized other Asian cultures and minorities within China. In my role as a teacher there and in my current role as a program manager at an international school, I have seen how education is one of the most influential factors in a person’s life, identity, and worldview, and it absolutely affects how that person views and treats “the other.” In this regard, I believe that education should play a key role in international development, especially in countries ravaged by civil conflict. It is important to note that for my thesis, education will be defined as the vehicle by which systematic instruction is given to mass populations via the state or religious institutions. An educational system must first and foremost prepare trained citizens, who can enter the workforce as contributors to society; however, what is often lost within that description is the key role education plays in fostering a stable society based on peace, tolerance, non-violent political participation, civic values, and an acceptance of a variety of viewpoints. Too often, educational systems fail in this regard by breeding ethnic dissension through biased curricular content or unequal access; by dissuading critical thinking, so that citizens will not question government decisions; or by simply not providing sufficient educational and, therefore, economic opportunities. Furthermore, civil conflict will be defined as a war or internal struggle between two or more organized groups within the state.

From the research that I have done on this topic, it appears that the majority of past articles have been highly policy-oriented, focusing largely on the task of post-
conflict educational reconstruction. In *The Hidden Crisis*, UNESCO’s Education For All (EFA) Director Kevin Watkins states, “The role of education in contributing to the conditions for armed conflict has received little systematic attention on the part of governments and aid donors.”¹ Therefore, more research needs to be done from a theoretical standpoint of why education might instigate or mitigate civil conflict. In addition, though there have been several studies done on the “quantity” of education (enrollment statistics), there have been relatively few studies done on the “quality” of education (curricular content), which is where I intend to focus my research.² Thus, a few unanswered questions emerge in this field: (1) what are the effects of curricular content on civil conflict instigation or resumption? (2) Are there commonalities that can be traced cross-regionally or internationally in terms of a biased curricula? (3) When examining curricular content, what are the most important factors as they relate to ethnic or religious divisions? (4) Do educational factors play a primary role in instigating civil conflict, or are they merely used by the state to exacerbate already-present divisions and tensions?

For my thesis, I argue that both the extent and quality of education in a country can instigate or exacerbate the outbreak of civil conflict. To prove this hypothesis, I will highlight two causal factors as instigators of civil conflict: educational access and educational content. First, educational access highlights what effects poor enrollment

rates and unequal access to education based on ethnicity or gender have on civil conflict. Second, educational content analyzes the language and images utilized in schools’ curricula in order to pinpoint where ethnic and religious divides are promoted. For example, the way a state teaches its history frequently manipulates ethnicity and plays on an “us vs. them” mentality. The effects of these factors will help to pinpoint problem areas in the educational systems of countries dangerously close to civil conflict, as well as how to reshape educational policies and infrastructure for the future.

This study will utilize both quantitative and qualitative analyses to focus specifically on the civil conflict case studies of Sudan, Kosovo, and Pakistan, as well as the contrasting case of Canada. The reasons for choosing case studies in Sudan, Kosovo, and Pakistan are because of prior field work done there, the fact that I was able to gain access to portions of their curricula, the large-scale nature of their civil conflict atrocities, and for their regional diversity. Canada was chosen as the contrasting case study because of its low-level of conflict, coupled with its high-level of diversity. In terms of quantitative analysis, my study will utilize the PRIO/Uppsala conflict dataset and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (ILASA) educational dataset, as applied in the seminal studies performed by Bilal Barakat and Henrik Urdal in “Breaking the Waves?” and Clayton Thyne in “ABC’s, 123’s, and the Golden Rule.” The first part of my research will attempt to discover a causal connection between a country’s level and access to education in relation to civil conflict probability. However, in order to dig

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deeper into the correlation between educational factors and civil conflict onset, the majority of my research will focus on a qualitative analyses of curricular content, as well as data from prior fieldwork and interview transcripts. From this past research and a fresh look at various curricula, I hope to glean information on the quality of the education systems in Sudan, Kosovo, Pakistan, and Canada. When analyzing these curricula, this study seeks to identify what biases a country might instill in its students regarding its history, any language patterns or images that might be used to further divide ethnic and religious groups, and whether or not civic values and behavior are stressed through participation and discussion of a variety of viewpoints in the classroom setting.

I hope this research will help to convince governments to incorporate these findings into their educational systems. If ethnically-biased education has played a vital role in the onset of civil conflict in the past, then an understanding of this topic will be crucial to identifying early warning signs of civil conflict and human rights abuses that may not have been utilized. Therefore, educational factors ought to be a larger focus of the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review and NGO human rights and development reports. In addition, a better understanding of this topic and the root causes of conflict can equally help shape educational policy in countries either already affected by civil conflict or teetering on the brink of civil conflict. Education should play a vital role in the development of poor countries, not only in the present, but for shaping future generations of tolerant, informed citizens for a more peaceful and economically-thriving, global society.
Chapter Two: A Review of the Literature

The majority of past research on the connection between education and civil conflict either dealt with a lack of educational access as a motivator of grievance leading up to civil conflict⁴ or policy-oriented strategies related to post-conflict educational reconstruction.⁵ Beyond these articles, there are several resources that are helpful in either offering a broad perspective of educational factors that lead to civil conflict or specific qualitative case studies that have been performed in certain countries. Nonetheless, there exists little research on the effects of the quality of educational curricular content as a primary cause of civil conflict, which is where my thesis will hopefully be able to contribute to the existing literature.

In UNICEF’s original study, The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict, Kenneth Bush and Diana Saltarelli examine both the positive and negative aspects of education’s effect on past ethnic conflicts. Bush and Saltarelli’s work recognizes the importance of ethnicity for a child’s socialization and identity formation, as well as how ethnicity has been manipulated through education. Thus, an uneven distribution of education for purposes of cultural repression and segregation, as well as a rewriting of textbooks are cited as negative aspects of education’s effect on ethnic conflict. On the other hand, linguistic and ethnic tolerance, citizenship values, and equal educational opportunities are listed as positive aspects in terms of avenues by which education can be

⁵ See Ishiyama and Breuning, “Educational Access and Peace Duration in Post-Conflict Countries.”
used to mitigate ethnic conflict. The purpose of Bush and Saltarelli’s work is not to focus solely on the causes of ethnic conflict, *per se*, but to propose a peacebuilding education for the future in developing countries.⁶

Since Bush and Saltarelli’s work, the research on education and civil conflict has proliferated, eventually leading to UNESCO’s annual EFA Global Monitoring Report, as well as the book, *The Hidden Crisis*. Within this report, UNESCO identified the educational needs and pitfalls of countless countries affected by civil conflict. The majority of the book is focused on how armed conflict can act as a barrier to EFA, with a purpose towards laying out a plan for financing peacebuilding and educational reconstruction globally. Nonetheless, one chapter does highlight various educational failures that may “fan the flames” of armed conflict, such as ethnic segregation, reinforcing a culture of violence, and linguistic repression. Again, the purpose of *The Hidden Crisis* is to lay out the goals of attaining EFA, while highlighting the failures of the international community in response to global educational needs and financing.⁷ In sum, UNICEF’s *Two Faces* and UNESCO’s *Hidden Crisis* represent the overview of a much bigger problem as it relates to education’s effect on civil conflict and *vice versa*.

In response to *The Hidden Crisis* and EFA’s failures, Patrick Montjourides pinpoints an additional “failure” as a lack of education data in general. Montjourides concludes that robust data can help inform and design good policy choices, predict future trends, and monitor educational policy impact.⁸ Unfortunately, countries in conflict do

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⁷ See Watkins, *The Hidden Crisis*.
not make gathering this type of data a high priority for obvious reasons. Nonetheless, Montjourides states that “poor-quality, or completely absent, data deny millions of children the right to education,” since such data could certainly help international organizations, such as UNICEF, to lead educational reform in countries ravaged by civil conflict. Thus, a key deterrent of research in this field and this present thesis stems from a lack of data, enrollment records, and textbooks to be examined.

Beyond these chief overviews and their varied responses, several articles have been written from a much more focused perspective. For example, in “Education in Peace Agreements,” Kendra Dupuy notes the varying degrees to which education is addressed in over 100 peace agreements in the post-Cold War era. Perhaps more importantly, Dupuy examines how education is viewed as a long-term, key element to achieving sustainable peace in countries affected by civil conflict and how education has played a contributory role in the outbreak of civil conflict in countries such as Sudan and Sierra Leone through its exclusionary curriculum or segregated classroom settings.

Additionally, Lynn Davies, in her article “Schools and War,” addresses the growing concerns raised in terms of education creating situations ripe for conflict through inequality and exclusion, a perpetuation of ethnic or religious divisions, and a curriculum that emphasizes a narrow worldview. In this regard, Davies presents various remedies that include civic education and comparative educational studies that pinpoint educational contributions to either peace or conflict. In general, Davies lobbies for greater research

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9 Ibid, 85.
into the effects of peace versus war-time education, as well as why young people join fundamentalist or extremist religious movements.\textsuperscript{11}

Clayton Thyne in, “ABC’s, 123’s and the Golden Rule,” proposes two arguments: 1) that educational investment provides a sign to the people that the government is interested in improving their lives and welfare and 2) that education can generate stability by giving people the ability to resolve conflicts peacefully, which makes them less likely to violently rebel. Thyne’s findings show that educational investment lowers the probability of civil war, especially when it is distributed equitably across the country to all classes and people groups. Furthermore, enrollment rates and literacy rates were shown to increase low-level political protests, but decrease violent forms of rebellion, which shows that educated citizens are more stable in that they use the political processes in their possession to seek peaceful solutions to various problems, rather than war.\textsuperscript{12}

Gudrun Ostby and Henrik Urdal in their work, “Education and Civil Conflict: A Review of the Quantitative, Empirical Literature,” overview the research that has been done in the field of education and civil conflict, highlighting the strengths of the literature and the areas for further research. Ostby and Urdal readily admit that the majority of past research in this area has been qualitative, with scant international quantitative data available. In general, Ostby and Urdal recognize education’s role in either promoting peace or conflict; and with the quantitative data that is available, they argue that secondary enrollment statistics remain the major discriminators in terms of understanding


\textsuperscript{12} See Thyne, “ABC’s, 123’s, and the Golden Rule.”
education’s connection to civil conflict onset, since it is young males who primarily make up militant and rebel groups.\textsuperscript{13} However, Ostby and Urdal further note a serious lack of quantitative analyses on the effects of “educational quality or content.”\textsuperscript{14}

In this regard, terrorist and extremist activity is a prime example of why it is not just about educational access, but content and quality as well. It is widely assumed that terrorists are ignorant or act out of desperation in their poverty, which would lead one to assume a lack of education as the only causal factor for their joining extremist movements, but such is not the case. As Alan Krueger and Jitka Maleckova prove in “Education, Poverty, and Terrorism,” terrorists tend to be highly-educated and from more privileged backgrounds than was previously assumed, since such recruits are more likely to possess an understanding of political participation and have the luxury to strongly commit to an ideological cause.\textsuperscript{15} Furthermore, an examination by Claude Berrebi entitled, “Evidence About the Link Between Education, Poverty, and Terrorism Among Palestinians,” examines Palestinian curricula to show why educational content matters when thinking through the ramifications of highly-educated Hamas militants:

\begin{quote}
Palestine is your country… that its pure soil is drenched with the blood of Martyrs… Answer this: Why must we fight the Jews and drive them out of our land? Without blood not even one centimeter will be liberated… The oppressors [Israel] have overstepped the boundary. Therefore Jihad and sacrifice are a duty.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{13} See Ostby and Urdal, “Education and Civil Conflict.”
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, 24.
Thus, as Berrebi concludes, “These are sufficient to suggest that policy makers, when trying to reduce terrorism via education, should focus not solely on the amount of education but also on its content.”\textsuperscript{17}

Several other works have focused on specific case studies in a qualitative, interview format, especially in Rwanda. In “The Role of Education in Driving Conflict and Building Peace: The Case of Rwanda,” Lyndsay McLean Hilker studies the relationship between education, conflict, and peacebuilding in the Rwandan genocide and aftermath. Her research was based primarily on interviews commissioned by the EFA Global Monitoring Report put out by UNESCO in 2011. Hilker’s research proves that a major cause of the Rwandan genocide can be linked to educational content and access. Prior to the genocide, there were significant inequalities of access to education based on class, ethnicity, and region. Similarly, state curricula emphasized a history of ethnic differences and past conflicts between Hutu and Tutsi, which can be traced to the influence of Belgian colonial powers. This inequality of educational access, coupled with the intolerant curriculum, led to a number of young children taking part in the Rwandan genocide.\textsuperscript{18} Similarly, Anna Obura’s book, \textit{Never Again} and Elisabeth King’s work, \textit{From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda}, closely mirror Hilker’s assessment of the role that Rwanda’s educational system played in exacerbating its civil conflict and genocide, though both of their works have the added focus of creating an educational reconstruction.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, 29.

policy that builds on civic values, a shared Rwandan identity outside of tribalism, and an honest retelling of its history from both a Hutu and Tutsi perspective.¹⁹

In sum, through a review of the literature, it is evident that there are two major avenues by which countries have failed their citizens from an educational standpoint: a lack of access to education and an ethnically-charged curricula that promotes intolerance and fosters fear and hatred. Despite the influence of these works, it must be noted that the majority of past research on education and civil conflict has not focused on educational systems prior to the civil conflict. Thus, more research needs to be done from a theoretical standpoint as to why education might instigate or mitigate civil conflict, rather than focusing completely on educational reconstruction. It is my hope that my thesis will contribute to this literature by further answering the question of how the quality and content of education contributes to civil conflict onset, as well as comparing the available data across several cases to better understand the commonalities and patterns of how curricular content causes civil conflict and how it might be used to mitigate civil conflict in the future.

Chapter Three: Quantitative Analyses of the Connection Between Levels of Educational Attainment and Civil Conflict

There have been multiple studies that have focused on the connection between educational statistics and civil conflict onset through quantitative analyses. In the majority of cases, educational variables are deemed statistically significant when it comes to examining their causal connections to civil conflict onset or resumption; however, there also exists wide differences of opinion as to questions of endogeneity. Where all research can agree is the importance of secondary enrollment variables as “the most suitable discriminator in assessing the role of education in conflict.” Nonetheless, several authors question whether education is any discriminator at all, or whether their findings are simply conflating education with levels of poverty or development, ethnic tensions in general, or regime type. Similarly, research is varied on the role of higher education, the effects of religious schooling, and even the core question of why education affects conflict onset in general: whether as a grievance of lost economic opportunity or as a tool of political manipulation. In order to address these questions, my research will highlight former studies performed by Clayton Thyne and Bilal Barakat and Henrik Urdal in order to show that there is indeed a causal connection between education and civil conflict that can be proven quantitatively, but also to point out that mere statistics cannot answer this question in full.

In his seminal study, Thyne combines education variables to a previous study performed by James Fearon and D. David Laitin in 2003 entitled, “Ethnicity, Insurgency,

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21 Ibid, 21.
and Civil War,” which tested various hypotheses on civil conflict onset. Thyne’s dataset includes 160 countries from 1980 to 1999 and utilizes various control variables from Fearon and Laitin, such as prior war, population measurements, mountainous terrain or contiguous territory, and regime type, among others.\(^{22}\) The dependent variable is civil conflict onset, and the independent variables are educational in nature: investment in education, primary enrollment rates, secondary enrollment rates, postsecondary enrollment rates, and adult literacy. By performing various quantitative analyses on this dataset, Thyne finds that an increase in the following variables from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean results in the following respective decreases in the probability of civil conflict onset: 73% decrease for an increase in primary enrollment rates, 54% decrease for an increase in educational

\(^{22}\) Thyne, “ABC’s, 123’s, and the Golden Rule,” 739.
expenditures, 43% decrease for and increase in adult literacy, and 63% decrease for an increase in secondary enrollment rates. Thyne readily admits that his study could suffer from endogeneity, though he is adamant in stating that educational variables are not merely conflating questions of poverty, as some claim. He proves this by performing a further test separated by wealth and resource type to show that educational statistics are still a strong indicator of civil conflict onset probability. Thyne produces the graph shown in figure 1 above to highlight the connection between levels of enrollment and civil conflict probability, which is most drastic and progressive among male youths. In general, an increase in educational opportunities for young children and youth and further investment in education from the government will drastically reduce probabilities of civil conflict, regardless of regime type or levels of poverty.

While Thyne focuses on probabilities of civil conflict onset based on general enrollment statistics, Barakat and Urdal focus on countries with large young male populations in low-income countries (youth bulges) and a more nuanced set of educational attainment statistics as causal factors for civil conflict onset. Barakat and Urdal utilized a dataset created by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) that measures a variety of educational attainment statistics for 120 countries from 1970 to 2000, which is considered by many to be the most complete educational dataset available. IIASA’s educational data is the independent variable, and domestic armed conflict onset as covered by the Uppsala/PRIO internal conflict study is

23 Ibid, 743.
24 Ibid, 746-749.
the dependent variable.\textsuperscript{26} It must be noted that the IIASA dataset attempts to overcome past deficiencies of UNESCO’s limited educational enrollment statistics by focusing on demographic analyses through educational attainment statistics gained through past censuses. In so doing, IIASA has succeeded in discovering the highest educational attainment of each age group in a population from either (1) no schooling, (2) some primary, (3) completed lower secondary, or (4) completed tertiary.\textsuperscript{27} In this way, a better educational profile of a population can be built from simple demographic methods, which can overcome past data deficiencies of entire years or periods of enrollment numbers lost due to civil conflict or poor record-keeping in failed states. Similarly, IIASA’s data can track enrollment progression of individuals and groups.\textsuperscript{28}

Through their research, Barakat and Urdal prove that secondary enrollment attainment has a statistically significant effect on civil conflict, especially in low and

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Explanatory Variables} & \textbf{Model 1 Measure 1} & \textbf{Model 2 Measure 2\textsuperscript{a}} & \textbf{Model 3 With Education} & \textbf{Model 4 With GDP} & \textbf{Model 5 \% secondary, all} \\
\hline
\textit{Young males} & 2.058 (0.72) & 0.311 (0.66) & 1.254 (0.38) & 1.468 (0.44) & 1.047 (0.31) \\
\textit{Secondary attainment, males} & -0.439 (-0.52) & -1.533 (-2.02) & -1.703 (-2.21) & \\
\textit{Secondary attainment, all} & & & & \\
\textit{Infant mortality rate} & 0.010\textsuperscript{**} (3.25) & 0.011\textsuperscript{**} (3.57) & 0.009\textsuperscript{**} (2.21) & & \\
\textit{GDP per capita, ppp (in)} & -0.017 (-0.09) & 0.033 (0.16) & & \\
\textit{Total population (ln)} & 0.274\textsuperscript{***} (3.55) & 0.275\textsuperscript{***} (3.52) & 0.273\textsuperscript{***} (3.54) & 0.276\textsuperscript{***} (3.45) & 0.273\textsuperscript{***} (3.42) \\
\textit{Regime type} & 0.023 (1.16) & 0.023 (1.15) & 0.023 (1.15) & 0.012 (0.63) & 0.014 (0.73) \\
\textit{Regime type squared} & -0.012\textsuperscript{**} (2.52) & -0.013\textsuperscript{**} (2.71) & -0.012\textsuperscript{**} (2.55) & -0.011\textsuperscript{**} (2.39) & -0.011\textsuperscript{**} (2.42) \\
\textit{Missing regime data} & -0.457 (-0.84) & -0.482 (-0.90) & -0.461 (-0.85) & -0.379 (-0.70) & -0.393 (-0.73) \\
\textit{Time since conflict} & -0.071\textsuperscript{**} (3.17) & -0.072\textsuperscript{**} (3.20) & -0.072\textsuperscript{**} (3.18) & -0.077\textsuperscript{**} (3.46) & -0.075\textsuperscript{**} (3.38) \\
\textit{Constant} & -3.58\textsuperscript{***} (-3.48) & -3.43\textsuperscript{**} (-3.81) & -2.99 (-1.95) & -1.85 (-1.30) & -1.69 (-1.18) \\
\textit{Log likelihood} & 0.097 & 0.097 & 0.097 & 0.091 & 0.092 \\
\textit{Pseudo R\textsuperscript{2}} & 0.292 & 0.299 & 0.317 & 0.331 & 0.331 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{a}The reason for the very different parameter estimates between measures 1 and 2 is the different scales.}
\end{table}
middle income countries with youth bulges. In table 1 shown above, Model 1 captures 15-24 year old males in general; Model 2 represents the Relative Youth Cohort Size, which measures the dynamics of a working class by using a ratio of 15-29 year old workers vs. 30-44 year old workers; Model 3 adds education variables; Model 4 adds GDP, rather than mere development variables; and Model 5 constitutes secondary attainment statistics for both male and female. As can be seen particularly from Models 4 and 5, secondary attainment statistics have a strong correlation to internal armed conflict. In conclusion, Barakat and Urdal conclude that educational variables have a strong pacifying effect. In addition, a stratification model is run to answer the question of whether education serves merely as a proxy for general development, which they are able to answer in the negative; thus, education does serve as a statistically significant discriminator on its own.

In sum, it can be seen from these studies that there exists a causal connection between education and civil conflict from a quantitative perspective. In fact, past research has also been able to tentatively prove that educational variables are not merely proxies for core issues of general development. Indeed, secondary enrollment attainment in particular serves as an important discriminator of civil conflict regardless of regime type, resource type, or GDP. Nonetheless, statistics cannot tell the whole story; therefore, educational attainment, though causally connected to civil conflict, must be complemented by deeper research into the actual curricular content of schools.

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Chapter Four: Curricular Content Analyses in Countries Affected by Civil Conflict
— Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan

The Constitution of UNESCO states, “Since wars begin in the minds of men [and women], it is in the minds of men [and women] that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”31 It is no secret that education plays an integral role in forming the understandings, attitudes, and even behaviors of individuals, and it has long been seen as an important tool for fostering civic values and peace. However, what has been less understood is how education can equally foster “ethnic exclusivity,” a disdain for “the other,” and violent ambitions for the “homeland.”32 In this regard, nationalism is a way by which a people can define themselves and segregate themselves from others, and it has been used by various states to create a sense of allegiance, as well as fuel for conflict when an enemy threatens that allegiance. Within a nationalistic identity, there is a sense of preserving the uniqueness of the nation through labels, stereotypes, and categorization of those within the in-group and those without — “the enemy” — which is achieved through a standardization of culture and “nation-formation.”33 Nationalism unites people around common attributes and culture and a shared history that differentiates them from other peoples; but therein lies the problem, as nationalism throughout history has exacerbated differences to the extreme — many times along ethnic or religious lines.

31 Watkins, The Hidden Crisis, ii.
As a means of mass indoctrination, what is taught within the classroom plays a vital role in formulating and cultivating this national identity. Therefore, though understanding levels of educational attainment is important for a study of civil conflict, actual curricular content and the quality of that content are of far greater importance. In order to understand the effects of curricular content on civil conflict, this thesis will examine the case studies of Kosovo, Sudan, and Pakistan in order to pinpoint where ethnic or religious tensions are exacerbated through ideological images and language inserted in textbooks. In these countries, it becomes obvious that interest groups on both sides of each conflict utilized education as a means to instill a narrow national identity in the minds of future generations. Effective strategies include a rewriting or editing of history, a visual distortion of geography, extremist language and values, and a wide-scale homogenization of a heterogenous culture or religion through standardized syllabi.

Kosovo

The conflict over Kosovo revolved around a simple question: to whom did Kosovo belong?34 As Noel Malcom states, “All parties can agree that the issue of Kosovo is, quite simply, the most intractable of all the political conflicts in the Balkans.”35 Within this conflict, education became a unique spark point of Kosovo’s sovereignty and nationhood for both parties since Serbs and Albanians alike understood that “the control of Kosovo’s education system emerged as tantamount to control of Kosovo’s territory.”36

In fact, as Marc Sommers and Peter Buckland note, education lies at the very center of

36 Kostovicova, Kosova, 74.
the Kosovo conflict. Under Serb control in the 1970s and 1980s, Kosovo’s schools were primarily attended by Serbs and Montenegrins even with Albanians constituting around 90% of the population. Thus, from the beginning, ethnically-segregated classrooms became a focal point of the Kosovo conflict. Eventually, Albanians responded to Serbian control of Kosovo’s classrooms and textbooks by opening an underground parallel education network within homes throughout the country as a means of secret resistance in the early 1990s. It is important to note the importance of this parallel education system because it was considered the only fully-functioning arm of the Kosovo “shadow state” under Albanian rule; because of this, it had a huge role politically and symbolically for Albanians seeking independence. According to Denisa Kostovicova, the parallel education system allowed an unprecedented level of conflicting nationalisms to develop in the classrooms and curricula on both sides. In effect, Serbs and Albanians alike were free from the influence of the other to edit and rewrite vast portions of their history and geography textbooks, leading to mutually exclusive understandings of Kosovo with little room for agreement. This, coupled with total ethnic segregation within the classrooms, severely exacerbated the Kosovo conflict. In time, though the parallel education system began as a non-violent protest, it eventually devolved into violent rebellion and armed conflict. This section will examine Serb control of the education system and the response of the Albanian parallel education system as separate attempts to homogenize

38 Kostovicova, *Kosovo*, 1.
41 Ibid, 1.
heterogeneous cultures, as well as the use of history, geography, and language within the textbooks of Kosovo’s competing curricula.

Even though most societies are ethnically heterogeneous, education systems often maintain a fiction of cultural homogeneity through a common language and history, as well as a national literature. Such was certainly the case in Kosovo, where the Serbian government adopted an education policy of “assimilation,” whereby the Albanian language was eliminated in schools and Serbian standardized textbooks that minimized the Albanian “minority national identity” were introduced — “measures that many blame for the ensuing strife.” Loss of language was equated to Albanians since the time of the Ottomans as a loss of nation itself; thus, rather than ensuring unity, such a policy by the Serbs incited a violent response from the Albanians. Furthermore, in the 1980s, the communist leadership saw Albanian textbooks as a hotbed of Albanian nationalism and, therefore, an “enemy ideology.” Thus, an “Action Programme” was put into effect that would analyze all curricula according to Marxist values in order to weed out any “nationalist consciousness.” Albanian folk dances were removed from music curriculum because they were “reminiscent of national consciousness,” as was all Albanian songs in general. In the end, the Programme found the Albanian textbooks to be detrimental to Kosovar peace because of their promotion of Albanian “self-management” at the expense of Yugoslav centrality and unity. With control over the textbooks, Serbia wanted to

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43 Kostovicova, *Kosovo*, 33.
44 Ibid, 53.
46 Kostovicova, *Kosovo*, 56.
foster a sense of belonging to the Yugoslav shared identity by essentially removing any ethnic and cultural differences within Kosovo.\textsuperscript{47} In sum, the educational leadership were attempting to promote a “political socialization” of unity that transcended ethnicity through a unified educational system and a curricular common core. However, this only reinforced Albanian feelings of repression, thus resulting in the parallel education system.\textsuperscript{48} At the beginning of the 1991 school year, Albanians were completely excluded from all schools in Kosovo and, in some cases, even barred from entrance by tanks.\textsuperscript{49}

Homogenization was not just a goal of Serbs, but of Albanians as well when it came to their parallel education network. Any Albanian teacher who sympathized with Serbs or sought to include multiculturalism in the classroom were banished or even physically persecuted.\textsuperscript{50} Furthermore, any opposition to the independence movement of Albanian Kosovo was all but removed from Albanian history textbooks. In the two paragraphs that do describe any opposition, it is not clear that the opposition came from within Kosovo, but instead attributes it to Turkish and Bosnian Muslim troublemakers. Therefore, Albanians attempted to maintain the illusion of national unity in their struggle for Kosovar autonomy. Kostovicova calls this an “ironing” of factual history by smoothing out conflicts in favor of a vision of national unity and uniformity.\textsuperscript{51}

Interestingly enough, with the onset of the parallel education system, Kosovo Albanians attempted to create a unification of curricula across state lines with their Albanian

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 40-41.
\textsuperscript{49} Sommers and Buckland, \emph{Parallel Worlds}, 43.
\textsuperscript{50} Kostovicova, \emph{Kosovo}, 117-118.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid, 147.
neighbors. However, similar hardships ensued as Kosovo Albanians had to fight for Kosovo-specific content in the newly-establish Albanian common core. Thus, Serbian communist leadership asserted an ideology of shared Yugoslav “brotherhood” in its curriculum, while Albanians promoted only its national identity, exclusive of all other interpretations and other minority people groups in the area. Both were insensitive to national diversity, though in different ways, which hindered multiculturalism. In the end, everything collapsed in late 1997, when passive student resistance gave way to armed struggle and support of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In a survey conducted by a student newspaper on students’ opinions towards solving the Kosovo problem, 8 percent favored passive pacifism, 64.5 percent argued for active pacifism, and 27.5 percent called for armed struggle. These KLA soldiers were subsequently described as “martyrs” for the freedom of Kosovo. And in conclusion, one Albanian textbook states, “The freedom was won with blood, that is why it is sacred.”

Textbooks in the Albanian parallel education system were based on the pre-1989 Albanian-language curriculum. However, an underground textbook producer began smuggling in revisions and modifications in specific subjects, such as history, geography, music, and other cultural subjects, in order to include a “stronger focus on Kosovo Albanian interpretations.” When certain subjects had little bearing on aspects of nationhood, such as science or math, Albanians used the common core curriculum that

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52 Ibid, 131-132.
54 Ibid, 194.
56 Sommers and Buckland, *Parallel Worlds*, 45-46, 86.
was developed in Serbia’s capital, Belgrade. In light of this double standard, it becomes obvious that nation formation was at the center of the Albanian parallel education system, which was most effectively implemented through history.

Albanians and Serbs each possessed a distinct understanding of the history of Kosovo, which can be seen from the multitude of differences in their respective textbooks. Indeed, Buckland and Sommers note that the majority of their interviews highlighted primarily differences in history. For example, Albanians in Kosovo claimed their descent to Illyrian ancestry, thus reinforcing the right to Kosovo land by way of “first occupation.” In effect, by linking their origins to a predecessor established in the land well before the arrival of the Slavs in the sixth century, Albanians could invoke prior claim over the Serbs. In addition to espousing Illyrian origins, Albanian textbooks depict Serbs as “colonists” or “occupiers,” as a means to represent Serbs as an external oppressor, rather than a settler in the territory alongside Albanians from early history. On the other hand, in a Serb eighth grade textbook, Albanian presence in Kosovo is downplayed and explained as such:

Even though Kosovo, Metohija, and Rajka were inhabited by a Serbian population back to the Middle Ages and were indisputable centres of Serbian statehood and spirituality, great demographic changes, to the detriment of the Serbs, occurred there during Turkish rule, and especially in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. As cattle-breeders, Islamicized Albanians gradually occupied the mountain pastures in Kosovo and Metohija and

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57 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 130.
58 Sommers and Buckland, Parallel Worlds, 35-36.
59 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 138; Cf. Sommers and Buckland, Parallel Worlds, 38.
60 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 152.
in Rajka and then descended into the fertile Kosovo valleys and lowlands, forcing out the native Serbian population.\textsuperscript{61}

Thus, neither side recognized the other as rightful claimants to Kosovo, and both utilized harsh language within their textbooks to not only make their own claims unquestionable, but to downplay the presence of the other and even to demean the other as either a colonist, an immigrant, or a backward nomad with no claim to the civilized centers of Kosovo. In fact, both accounts of history in the competing textbooks fail to account for the fact that Serbs and Albanians coexisted for over a millennium, thus deemphasizing their “shared experience” of centuries-long domination by outside forces.\textsuperscript{62}

For both Serbs and Albanians, the Battle of Kosovo of 1389 remains integral to their competing national identities, but for different reasons and with different emphases. In this battle, a Balkan, multiethnic alliance fought against the Ottoman Muslims outside of Pristina. While the Balkan alliance lost this battle, it has been mythologized as a “spiritual victory” for both Serbs and Albanians, as it was thought to have played a key role in slowing the Ottoman advance throughout the rest of the Balkan peninsula and even Europe.\textsuperscript{63} While such a momentous event could have acted as a connection point for both people groups, it instead incited feelings of separate national identities through differing interpretations of the circumstances. Because of the central importance of Serb King Lazar in the battle, Serbs recognize the Battle of Kosovo as their defining moment and see Kosovo as “Heavenly Serbia.”\textsuperscript{64} The Serbian heroism of this battle is

\textsuperscript{61} Zivkovic and Radovic Gacesa, \textit{Istorija za II razred cetvorogodišnjih strucnih škola,} 64 as quoted in Kostovicova, \textit{Kosovo,} 163.
\textsuperscript{62} Sommers and Buckland, \textit{Parallel Worlds,} 38.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid, 35-37.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid, 35.
remembered through a particular flower native to the area. According to a Serbian teacher, “The flower that grows on Kosovo Polje lives on human blood [of the slain Serbian martyrs], so it can’t grow anywhere else.”65 Within this Kosovo myth, there exists a call, even an obligation, to return to reclaim what was lost.66 And on the memorial at the site, there also exists a curse: “Those who are Serbian and have a Serbian heart and do not come to battle for Kosovo will not have children, either male or female, crops or wine. They will be damned until they die.”67

However, in Albanian schools, the Serb King Lazar was present, but not ultimately the hero. The hero, according to an Albanian history textbook, was “one Albanian from Kosovo called Millosh, hidden among the dead, [who] attacked the Sultan and killed him with a knife,” thus glossing over the Serb centrality in the standard myth.68 On the other hand, Serbian textbooks do not even mention Albanian participation.69 Regardless of which case is true, neither text recognizes the multiethnic nature of this battle, nor the complementary roles of either people groups. Indeed, Kostovicova notes that when it came to the Battle of Kosovo, curricular input gave way to political maneuvering on both sides. Serb communist textbook writers were given free reign to interpret it according to the political agenda at the time, while the Albanian parallel education system followed suit.70

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65 Ibid, 37-38.
66 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 2.
67 Sommers and Buckland, Parallel Worlds, 37.
68 Graceni Kuri, Te njohim historine e popullit tone 4, 51 as quoted in Kostovicova, Kosovo, 152-153.
69 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 161.
70 Ibid, 58.
Similarly, it must be noted the emphasis that Albanians placed on their national hero, Skanderbeg, who epitomized the struggle against the Ottoman and “served as a source of inspiration for unification of Albanians in the struggle to regain freedom.”

Indeed, textbooks in many countries worship heroes of war and martyrs, rather than heroes of peace. Thus, the advance of civilization through peacetime is diminished, while war and struggle become a central focus as movers of history. Therefore, violence is legitimized as an “expression of political power.” In this case, the defense of Kosovo required the ultimate sacrifice, much like Skanderbeg. Therefore, it is no wonder that one Albanian textbook extolls Albanians to “not to give a single inch of the homeland of Albanians to a foreign state. [They] would fight to the last man.”

However, the reality is that Skanderbeg and the mythic heroes of the Battle of Kosovo were fighting against the same Turkish occupiers, eliciting “shared victimization.” However, resistance against outside forces is not the purpose of these mythologies in both sides’ curricula. Rather, both sides compete with “myths of the recovery of the same lost land.”

Historical claims through words must be backed by geography as a visual depiction of nationhood. When writing geography textbooks, Kostovicova notes that there are various strategies of “spatial seduction” that can be used, such as visual distortion and misdirection. In general, Kosovo is portrayed in Albanian textbooks as an

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71 Ibid, 138-139.
73 Xhufi Jubani, *Historia e popullit shqiptar per shkollat e mesme*, 154 as quoted in Kostovicova, *Kosovo*, 140.
75 Kostovicova, *Kosovo*, 23.
76 Ibid, 26.
independent nation since the early 1990s. Albanian cartographers even resorted to using bold lines to clearly delineate the borders of Kosovo as an independent state; whereas with Serbian maps, Kosovo was oftentimes not represented at all or given a dotted-line boundary in order to render the illusion that it had always been a part of the Serb republic. Thus, the territorial grievance of Kosovo for Albanians was a main motif of both history and geography textbooks as the “biggest historical injustice.”

Finally, Albanian’s textbooks use vivid language to describe their victimized history in light of Serbian “brutality,” juxtaposed with Albanian “martyrdom.” For example, one passage from an Albanian textbook states, “The conquering Serbian army committed large massacres. Tens of Albanian villages and towns were turned into ashes. Thousands of Albanian men, women, children, and the elderly were killed in a barbarian manner.” By using terminology such as massacre and barbarian, the Albanians utilized extremist language in order to incite fear and hatred. Similarly, Albanians describe the conflict with religious undertones, saying that Serbs implemented “forced conversion from Islam and Catholicism to Orthodoxy.” They also frequent such terms as “genocide” to describe Serb oppression, while martyrdom is a key aspect to describe the struggle in general. For example, in the struggle that created the Serbian state, the Albanian textbooks state that “thirty martyrs fell for the freedom of Kosovo during the

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78 Ibid, 142.
79 Latifi Kuri, Historia per klaxon VI te shkolles fillore, 121 as quoted in Kostovicova, Kosovo, 148-149. Italics mine.
80 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 149. Italics mine.
demonstrations.” In effect, through the textbooks, martyrdom was given more legitimacy than other forms of resistance that did not cost lives.

Furthermore, by omitting any other casualty other than Albanians in the civil conflict, the parallel education curriculum gave the sense of “exclusive victimhood.” Oftentimes, high casualty numbers were used with no reference, and “a frequent use of words like ‘massacre’ and ‘genocide’ precluded any questioning of Albanian victimhood in Kosovo.” On the flip side, Serbian textbooks explain that “Separatist and nationalist Albanian groups were active in Kosovo… They conducted terror against the Serbian people, burnt the Serbian villages and forced the Serbian settlers to emigrate.” Thus, through one-sided history, Albanians are portrayed as the sole instigators of violence in Kosovo. Finally, the derogatory term, Siptar, is commonly used by the Serbs in their textbooks at this time to refer to Albanians as less than human.

If we are to understand the effects of the Albanian curricula in practice, we need look no further than the assignments that students turned in while studying in the parallel education system. Kostovicova includes several poems written by Albanian children in the latter half of the 1990s, which covered the period when fighting between Serbian security forces and Albanian armed guerrillas broke out. This is the moment when resistance was no longer passive in terms of the parallel educational system, but active in

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81 Xhufi Jubani, Historia e popullit shqiptar per shkollat e mesme, 381 as quoted in Kostovicova, Kosovo, 149. Italics mine.

82 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 149.

83 M. Perovic and R. Novakovic, Istorija za III razred gimnazije, 170 as quoted in Kostovicova, Kosovo, 162. Italics mine.

84 Kostovicova, Kosovo, 163.

85 Ibid, 165.
armed conflict, and these poems reflect that transition of resistance as well.86

Interestingly enough, poems without a nationalistic topic, such as family or activities, are few. Instead, the themes most discussed are “homeland, emigration, freedom, schools, resistance, and repression.”87 These poems closely mirror what has been discussed in the previous sections. For example, on martyrdom, one student states, “Hundreds of thousands of martyrs for you, freedom, gave a life.” Another says, “I am not little, I am telling you the truth, if there’s a need for Kosovo, I’d sacrifice life.”88 In terms of the importance of knowledge and education connected to freedom and Kosovar independence, another student advises, “Let’s learn, oh friends, because only with knowledge will we crush the enemy, can we win freedom, liberate the fatherland.”89 Similarly, essays written by students are filled with hateful language, especially when the fighting broke out: “Your heart fills with hatred towards the Serbs, because the Serbs are brutal, blood-sucking, treacherous, merciless people who have no drop of mercy in their unfortunate heart.”90 From these examples, it is obvious that the Albanian nationalism and demonization of “the other” present in the parallel education system incited feelings of hatred, fear, and a longing for glory in martyrdom and violence.

In conclusion, the case of Kosovo shows that an attempt at homogenization of a culturally-diverse territory through systematized education does not result in unity, but resistance and even violence. At the same time, completely distinct curricula on both sides of a conflict, especially in history and geography, that not only refuses to recognize

86 Ibid, 168.
87 Ibid.
88 Ibid, 172.
89 Ibid, 173.
90 Ibid, 177.
“the other,” but demeans and demonizes them as well, certainly incites an equal amount of hatred. Interestingly enough, Sommers and Buckland recognized a common theme from both Albanian and Serb interviewees alike: the desire for the researchers to tell an “objective story” in their curricular analysis. In other words, both sides wanted their sides to be represented and understood, which must be the starting point for building a curricula in any conflict-torn country. Still, the question must be asked: did the educational situation in Kosovo contribute to the violence? Bush and Sartarelli conclude: “There can be no doubt that the schism in education in Kosovo was a major contributor to the upsurge of violence that reached its horrifying zenith in 1999.” Similarly, when the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) took control, their initial response was that teachers should use the existing curriculum, but “should avoid content or teaching that may inflame conflict.” Thus, it was understood from an outside perspective that education had a very real effect on the civil conflict. In sum, the case study of Kosovo is useful for this thesis as education was not only a primary focal point of the conflict, but also a primary instigator of ethnic and nationalistic differences.

Pakistan

Unlike other countries oftentimes cited in the education-civil conflict literature, Pakistan’s problem does not lie in enrollment statistics or access to education — areas where it tends to do comparatively well. Rather, the Pakistan “educational anomaly” stems from the extreme polarization between the madrasah system and the public

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91 Sommers and Buckland, *Parallel Worlds*, 34.
93 Sommers and Buckland, *Parallel Worlds*, 75.
system. Nonetheless, both systems overlap in their propensities for instilling a repulsion towards Hindus, while simultaneously portraying Pakistan as completely and unquestionably Sunni-Muslim with no room for differences. The Pakistani state-sponsored curricula and textbooks further this policy through its depiction of history and geography, as well as its use of extreme or one-sided language and images. Of particular note within the Pakistani public school system, the infamous Gilgit “textbook controversy” relates a conflict that emerged precisely over biased curricular content and a lack of minority representation. In terms of Pakistani religious education, it is no secret that the *madrasahs*, through their unobstructed extremist views, have supplied *jihadists* in the fight against Hindus and Shia Muslims within Pakistan for years now.

Much has been made in recent years about the extremism originating from Pakistan’s *madrasahs*; however, as A.H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim note, *madrasahs* are not the only educational institution breeding hatred within Pakistan: “the educational material in the government run schools do much more than *madrasahs*. The textbooks tell lies, create hatred, inculcate militancy, and much more.” This is accomplished through the creation of a narrow Islamic identity. Therefore, it can be said that the main problem within the Pakistani public education system is its homogenization agenda along Sunni Muslim lines, at the expense of Hindu and Shia minorities, who are oftentimes violently discriminated against as a result.

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96 Ibid, 2.
The genesis of this homogenization can be traced back to General Zia-ul-Haq’s coup in 1977 and the military government that followed. Throughout the 1980s, Zia-ul-Haq introduced a policy of “Islamization” in Pakistani culture and history, thus portraying Pakistan as a “besieged state that is under threat from a Hindu India on the one hand and an anti-Islamic West on the other.” Such a policy has given younger generations “an inherently paranoid outlook” towards ethnic and sectarian differences, leading to oftentimes extremist ideologies. This period of Islamization particularly affected Pakistani textbooks through “a distorted narration of history, factual inaccuracies, inclusion of hate material, a disproportionate inclusion of Islamic studies in other disciplines, glorification of war and the military.” To make matters worse, governments since then and up until present day have “either failed to check these harmful deviations, or willingly perpetuated them.” National curricula and textbooks are designed by the Curriculum Wing of the Federal Ministry of Education and the regional Text Book Boards, and it is this centralized system of education formation that is “perfectly suitable for ideological indoctrination.”

In general, the public education system has been used to downplay religious diversity in Pakistan. A common principle that appears in the Pakistani pedagogical documents throughout every grade is the following: “In the teaching material, no concept of separation between the worldly and the religious be given; rather all the material be

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98 Nayyar and Salim, The Subtle Subversion, i.
99 Ibid, v, 4-5.
Not only does this learning outcome leave little room for civic engagement outside the religious realm, but it also discriminates against non-Muslim minorities, who undoubtedly feel excluded from the classroom and society. In order to implement this Islamic understanding, textbooks utilize recitations of creeds and statements, as can be seen in a class 6 English textbook on “Our Country”:

“Who am I? I am a Muslim. I am a Pakistani. I love my country and I love my people… You know that you are a Muslim and your religion is Islam.” Thus, Pakistani students are told exactly who they are and are coerced into agreeing with such statements.

Not only do textbooks homogenize along Muslim lines, but they instill hatred towards Hindus through extremist language and images, as can be seen from a class 5 Urdu textbook: “Hindu has always been the enemy of Islam.” Similarly, a different class 5 textbook attempts to describe the Hindu religion as inferior to Islam with the following imagery: “Hindus worship in temples which are very narrow and dark places, where they worship idols. Only one person can enter the temple at a time. In our mosques, on the other hand, all Muslims can say their prayers together.” By utilizing negative terms such as “narrow,” “dark,” and “idols,” this particular textbook paints a picture of the Hindu religion and culture as backwards. Thus, textbooks are clearly utilized to instill a hatred towards Hindus through such negative statements.

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Historical inaccuracies are similarly used to create hatred towards Hindus. Consider the following comments about Pakistan’s violent past: “The British, with the assistance of the Hindus, adopted a cruel policy of mass exodus against the Muslims to erase them as a nation.” Similarly, “[The Muslims] were not allowed to profess their religion freely.” Later on, this same textbook states, “Hindu nationalism was being imposed upon Muslims and their culture.” Again, Pakistani textbooks highlight Hindus’ role as the enemy of Muslims without giving due regard to Muslims’ role in similar conflicts. In this regard, another textbook attempts to portray how much more civil Muslims have been in times of conflict as such: “The Hindus in Pakistan were treated very nicely when they were migrating as opposed to the inhuman treatment meted out to the Muslim migrants from India.” Thus, the educational establishment has been able to shift any blame away from the Muslim majority’s own discriminatory policies and instead identify themselves as the innocent victims in a historical struggle. They have also been able to maintain the morality of their own policies towards other people groups as a superior civilization.

After examining the history textbooks of Pakistan, Salim states that “students don’t learn history. Rather, they are forced to read a carefully crafted collection of falsehoods and fairy tales. History has been used to churn out a mythology about the struggle that led to the creation of Pakistan.” For example, in describing the

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104 National Curriculum English (Compulsory) for Class XI-XII, March 2002, 6, 13, 31, 45, 7, 25, 8, 46, 48, 50 as quoted in Nayyar, “Chapter 2: Insensitivity to the Religious Diversity of the Nation,” 61.
partitioning of the subcontinent and the struggle with India, Pakistani understanding is that Hindu and Sikh enemies “killed and dishonored thousands, nay hundreds of thousands of women, children, the old and the young with extreme cruelty and heartlessness.” However, such a message fails to take into account the fact that Muslims were also aggressors at this time and stand condemned for slaughter, rape, and other atrocities.\textsuperscript{107} Finally, an examination of the “Civics for Pakistan” for classes 11 and 12 presents a history of violence by Hindus against Muslims without any retaliation.\textsuperscript{108} Thus, through a biased history and extremist language embedded within their textbooks, the Muslim establishment is able to build national unity founded on hatred towards Hindus.

It is interesting to note that such a one-sided portrayal of history was not always the case in Pakistani education. Pakistani textbooks in the 1950s and 1960s, before the coup of 1977, regarded Hindu history and culture in an “appreciative manner.” For example, the textbooks of this time tend to recount the “grandeur” of the early Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms “without any element of denigration.”\textsuperscript{109} In fact, these textbooks were able to present a critical eye towards their own checkered past:

We have a high regard for Mohammad bin Qasim. He laid the foundation for the Muslim rule in India. But the first brick of the foundation was defective… Had Mohammad bin Qasim and the conquerors that followed relied less on sword to increase their numerical strength and more on preaching and other methods, we would have been spared events because of which we are presently facing tribulations.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid, 65-66.
Thus, it can be seen that the new mentality of hatred towards Hinduism stemmed from the Islamization following the coup. Since then, the accounts of Muslim kings have been falsified, distorted, and glorified to fit the program of Islamization. In the new curricula, anytime the word Hindu appears, it is usually always joined to negatively-charged adjectives such as “conniving” or “manipulative.”

In Pakistan’s new understanding of its creation, Muhammad-bin-Qasim, who appeared in the previously critical quote, is considered the first Pakistani citizen, who overthrew the “infidel,” “cruel,” and “despotic” Sindhi King Raja Dahir. The people in the region, “who were tired of the cruelties of Raja Dahir, joined hands with Muhammad-bin-Qasim because of his good treatment.” Textbooks further go on to say:

For the first time, the people of Sindh were introduced to Islam, its political system, and way of government. The people here had seen only the atrocities of the Hindu Rajas… the people of Sindh were so much impressed by the benevolence of Muslims that they regarded Muhammad-bin-Qasim as their savior… On his departure from Sindh, the local people were overwhelmed with grief.

In sum, the Pakistani textbooks attempt to present a smooth, unified history of Pakistan that excludes any notion of the “two nation theory,” while firmly denying any examples of a history of mutual co-existence between Muslims and Hindus.

Furthermore, violence and jihad are common learning outcomes for the Pakistani public education system. Several curricular directives and textbooks advise activities in the classroom that include making speeches on the importance of jihad and for teachers

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112 Ibid, 67.
114 Ibid, 67-68.
to “judge their spirits” while students make such speeches.116 In this regard, war and martyrdom are glorified through images and anecdotes of Pakistani heroes of war. In effect, Pakistani textbooks completely exclude “heroes from civil society” as role models or inspirational figures.117 As Nayyar and Salim note, “Peace is the biggest and the most urgent need for Pakistan.” However, learning outcomes call for a portrayal of enemy images, a glorification of war and the use of force, and encouragement towards jihad.118 For example, a class 1 social studies textbook’s cover is full of military images such as missiles and soldiers being trained, and a class 4 social studies textbook includes several pictures of battle and captions calling students to “always be ready to fight.”119 Several textbooks urge students to become martyrs, to recognize the importance of jihad, with a learning outcome to “create yearning for jihad in his heart.”120

Not only has education been used to instill hatred and violence towards Hindus and outsiders, but it has been equally used to cause divisions within Muslim sectarianism. In the Gilgit textbook controversy, particular images within state-sponsored Pakistani textbooks promoted only Sunni understandings of the Islamic faith. Thus, it is argued that these textbooks were utilized to further homogenize an Islamization program along even-narrower Sunni lines at the expense of Shia minorities. According to Nosheen Ali, “In

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119 Ibid, 88.

official curricula in Pakistan, the idealized and authorized Pakistani citizen is assumed to be the Sunni Muslim, while other ways of being Muslim are silenced.”121 As will be seen, this occurs through visual depictions of religious faith and practice, as well as through a singular viewpoint of Muslim key figures and authorities.122 The textbooks in question covered the major disciplines of Islamiat, Urdu, and social studies, and were developed by the Punjab Textbook Board, which was composed of four Sunni scholars. These textbooks were considered particularly egregious at the primary school level for their lack of Shia representation, as well as their strong assertion of Sunni rituals on the impressionable younger students.123

122 Ibid, 3.
123 Ibid, 1.
For example, on the page shown above from a grade 1 textbook, the prayer rituals favor a Sunni representation, since Shia typically keep their hands loose at their sides, rather than folded in front as the image shows.\textsuperscript{124} This is especially problematic as children see different practices at home and school, which disgruntled parents argued could lead them \textit{gumrah} (astray).\textsuperscript{125} Similarly, the picture to the right is taken from a grade 7 textbook, which is designed to help students imitate calligraphy of the four \textit{caliphs}: Abu Bak, Umar, Usman, and Ali, which is not in line with Shia beliefs, who question the caliphate system and, instead, view Ali as the first \textit{iman}.\textsuperscript{126} The calligraphy exercises are particularly important, since a similar exercise caused a student to tear the page out of his textbook, thus prompting the student boycott that led to the conflict.\textsuperscript{127}

The conflict ensued due to the fact that 75\% of the Northern Areas of Pakistan are Shia Muslim, which is not the case in the majority of Pakistan. For a state attempting to homogenize along Sunni Muslim lines, “the Shia-majority Northern Areas thus constitute a significant source of anxiety.”\textsuperscript{128} Leaders in the Northern Areas argued that they should have their own textbook board to revise their own curricula like other areas of Pakistan. However, such a demand was seen as an assertion of regional sovereignty, which was a threat to the unified Pakistani state, thus causing the government crackdown on this particular issue.\textsuperscript{129} In the end, the controversy resulted in a violent confrontation between

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid, 3.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid, 11.
Pakistani state authorities and Shia protestors in the region. In total, over one hundred people lost their lives in the Gilgit textbook controversy. Victims included Shia children traveling on buses, who were singled out as non-Sunni through their ID cards and killed accordingly. In general, the controversy was engineered as a symbol of a history of religious suppression in the Northern Areas and has further intensified the sectarian differences in the region. The results in the short term have been further sect-specific segregation throughout schools in Pakistan with no long-term solutions in sight.

Another form of education in Pakistan is the religious schools known as the madrasahs. These are located all over the country and provide free education, as well as free food, housing, and clothing. Because they are privately-funded and outside state supervision, they are free to spread a “narrow and violent version of Islam.” In addition, madrasahs only offer religious instruction, thus ignoring math, science, and other important subjects needed to function in society as a well-rounded citizen. In so doing, graduates cannot find work because of a lack of practical education and are, therefore, encouraged to fulfill their “spiritual obligations” by engaging in guerrilla warfare and martyrdom against Hindus and other sects of Muslims throughout Pakistan. It is estimated that 10% to 15% of Pakistan’s thousands of madrasahs teach such extremist ideology. And because they are free, these schools are able to attract poor families, who believe that the free education, food, and training will lead to better

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130 Ibid, 1.
131 Ibid, 4.
132 Ibid, 16.
133 Ibid, 4.
135 Ibid, 119.
136 Ibid.
circumstances in this life and the one to come. Pakistan’s interior minister Moinuddin Haider recognized the dangers the madrasahs pose when he said, “The brand of Islam they are teaching is not good for Pakistan… Some, in the garb of religious training, are busy fanning sectarian violence, poisoning people’s minds.” Thus, Haider announced reforms that would require madrasahs to register with the government, expand their curricula, and end the militant training camps. Nonetheless, these schools continue to flourish across Pakistan, and their curricular content and practices have even been exported to terrorist and guerrilla groups across the globe.

Christine Fair represents a counter-study to the recent focus on madrasah by surveying 141 families of slain militants or shaheed (martyrs) and determines that the majority of Pakistani jihadists are highly-educated, but not from the madrasahs as has been assumed. In her study, she notes that only 12% of her respondents attended madrasah, of whom only 7% actually obtained a certificate, which would take at least 2 years of religious education. She concludes that such research shows that only about 4% of Pakistanis actually attend madrasah full time. Similarly, she finds that only 22% of respondents had less than a “matriculation,” which would be the equivalent of passing the 10th grade; however, according to the 1998 Census of Pakistan, only 32% of males reached the matriculation stage, thus showing that Pakistani militants tend to be more highly-educated than the population and more educated than the majority of the countries

137 Ibid, 122.
138 Ibid, 119.
139 Ibid, 123.
studied in the education-civil conflict literature. Also of note, the majority of these slain militants were between the ages of 17 and 25, and 26% claimed to have been recruited directly from an educational institution, whether madrasah or public, thus highlighting the role that education has played in not only promoting jihadist ideology, but actively pushing students into military action. Fair concludes:

> When one considers that throughout all of Pakistan fewer than one in three males are matriculates, and when one considers further that the bulk of this sample was derived from the Northwest Frontier Province where educational attainment is among the lowest in Pakistan, the males in this sample are extremely well educated, again underscoring the need to interrogate common assumptions that Pakistan’s militants are all uneducated, madaris products.

Thus, madrasah reform is not enough for Pakistan, since both public and religious schools stand condemned for fostering feelings of jihad and intolerance. Since the majority of these martyrs came from public schools, reforms must begin there.

In sum, the case study of Pakistan further proves that homogenization through biased curricular standardization can lead to societal divisions and violent outbreaks. The textbook controversy represents a unique example in this thesis in that the curricular content not only incited sectarian differences that led to conflict, but the very nature of the conflict itself was waged over revising the curricula. Pakistan would do well to learn from the textbook controversy and incorporate a plethora of viewpoints in its textbooks, not only to ease sectarian strife, but to silence the hatred towards Hindus as well. On the other hand, the madrasahs are an example of the damage that can be done by an

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141 Ibid, 98.
142 Ibid, 98-100.
143 Ibid, 100.
educational institution free from all state restraint, while demonstrating the fact that governments should provide free education, as well as food programs to all primary school-age children at the least. Finally, Pakistan further proves that enrollment statistics alone do not tell the whole story, since Pakistani militants tend to be highly-educated.

**Sudan**

The main reason why peace talks failed between the North and the South until 2005 in Sudan was because of the Northern-based government’s unwillingness to recognize the country’s ethnic and religious diversity. Prior to South Sudan’s independence in 2011, the Muslim Arabs in the North maintained control of the government and the country’s policies, even though they represented a minority of the Sudanese population. Their plan throughout their rule was to establish an Islamic state based on *sharia* law, which included a subordination of rationality and modernist discourse in favor of a literal, dogmatic interpretation of the *Qur’an* and its influence over all areas of life. Anyone opposing such a plan was seen as opposing the very will of Allah. This “Islamization” effectively marginalized all other beliefs and religious faiths by drawing a sharp distinction between “believers and infidels.” As a key proponent of this ideology, the educational system in the North was thoroughly Islamized as well, resulting in an attempted homogenization of a heterogeneous culture. By rewriting the educational curricula along Arabic lines in history, geography, and intertwining Muslim beliefs in all other subjects as well, the Northern government split the Sudanese state

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145 Ibid, 38.
146 Ibid, 38.
along ethnic and religious lines, thus playing a key role in instigating the military
resistance movement and separate education system in the South that followed.

It is important to begin with Sudanese history prior to independence in 1956, as it
was during this time that deep lines were drawn between Northern Arabs and Southern
African tribes. In 1879, a British officer named Charles Gordon took over the Sudanese
governorship in the employ of the Egyptians with goals of ending the slave trade.
However, he was killed in 1885 by Muhammad Ahmad al Mahdi, who sought to
implement an Islamic state. He and his successor, Khalifa Abdallah succeeded in this
endeavor and ruled Sudan for thirteen years, thus laying the foundations for the future
Arabic-Muslim nationalism that was to later influence Northern Sudan’s Islamization. In
1898, Lord Kitchener defeated Khalifa Abdallah, thus establishing a period of
complicated colonialism known as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. In short, prior to
independence, Islamic groups promoted their ideology in the North, while British
colonizers spread their Western, Christian influence in the South.¹⁴⁷

During British colonialism in the South, education was “intentionally
underdeveloped to maintain the perceived ‘purity’ of the Southern Sudanese and [to]
simplify administrative responsibilities.”¹⁴⁸ Christian missionaries, who largely did the
instructing during this time, placed an emphasis solely on evangelization at the expense
of a well-rounded education. Thus, education was not meant to teach children to read,
write, or critically think and contribute to society, but to prepare the way to the Christian

International Institute for Educational Planning, 2005), 16.
religion and British culture. Indeed, the British government and Christian missionaries agreed that “a literary education was dangerous,” due to the threat of revolt or violent independent movements. These trends led to extremely poor educational quality in the South prior to independence, which would play a key role in formulating the South’s education system. More importantly, these trends also had an effect on creating a largely Christian South Sudan that was distinct in every way from the North.

The government of Khartoum at the time of independence in 1956 believed that establishing a Sudanese nationality along Islamic lines would create a sense of social unity based on a “superior civilization.” Therefore, in 1957, President Ibrahim Abboud nationalized all schools in Sudan, which led to the closure of numerous Christian missionary schools and African rural schools. Even now, Southern Sudanese see this action as the beginning of the Islamization that would slowly pervade all aspects of Sudanese life and politics. South Sudan was left with a Muslim education that was purposefully “inadequate,” due to a fear that an educated Southern population would be more likely to rise up against the nascent government in Khartoum. These policies culminated in 1990 when President Bashir pushed educational reform to revise the national curricula on solely Islamist values; therefore, new textbooks for all schools and universities were to be produced with the goal of phasing out all non-government schools and integrating all students into the new Islamic state-sponsored schools.

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149 Ibid, 47.
152 Ibid, 96.
This curricula was created and assessed by the National Curriculum Center in Khartoum (NCCER), which was filled with government appointees who fell in line with the Sudanese government’s ideology. Anders Breidlid interviewed a member of this education board and asked about the wisdom of imposing an Islamic curriculum on a culturally-diverse country. The interviewee “insisted on the inherent unity between the South and the North and said that multiculturalism was taken care of and subsumed under the umbrella of Tawhid or the oneness of God: ‘Sudan is one country based on cultural and religious unity.’” Thus, the NCCER refused to recognize the diversity present in Sudan by creating a biased and intolerant curricula.

In general, the Islamic state that Northern Sudan was attempting to implement was seen as superior to all other states and ideologies, as “something stable, universal, unchangeable, and protected by firm principles of law and morality.” Therefore, any perspective that did not coincide with Islamic principles were discarded. This is why philosophy was largely absent from the education system since it gave too much weight to reason, rather than faith. Similarly, African tribal culture and epistemology were eliminated as they were seen as “inferior and uncivilized” and a threat to Islamic identity. In sum, the Sudanese government believed in the importance of cultivating a unified nation-state through education, even though Southerners and many in the international community recognized South Sudan as a distinct cultural and religious


\[156\] Breidlid, “Education in the Sudan,” 249-252.

\[157\] Ibid, 260.
entity.\textsuperscript{158} But as Breidlid concludes, “The Islamists’ homogenizing efforts, however, often had a negative effect: they created a fierce reaction which in many ways solidified and cemented identities along ethnic and cultural lines rather than creating one hegemonic identity.”\textsuperscript{159} Therefore, a deep resentment was created in South Sudan that eventually transformed schools from a “refuge from conflict” into a platform to “express resistance.”\textsuperscript{160} Similar to the case in Kosovo, the Southern education system was seen as an important form of identity formation along non-Arabic, non-Muslim lines.\textsuperscript{161}

In response, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) in South Sudan “fiercely resisted the imposition of an Islamist ideology in the education system.” Because of this, the SPLM’s Ministry of Education introduced a secular, Western, modernist educational system in the South as a counter-movement to the Islamization efforts of the North. The goal of the new curricula was to be more “inclusive” and to build a cohesive, Southern Sudanese identity across ethnic divides, rather than focusing on individual tribal identities. However, even this had its flaws as it often homogenized a diverse tribal community along a narrow, Western framework, while devaluing indigenous values and culture.\textsuperscript{162} Breidlid further notes that the development of SPLM-backed education system as a tool for the “resistance struggle,” as well as the West’s financial support of the Western discourse, made bridging the ideological gap between the North and the South all but impossible.\textsuperscript{163} Indeed, such a reaction solidified identities

\textsuperscript{158} Sommers, \textit{Islands of Education}, 45.
\textsuperscript{159} Breidlid, “The Role of Education in Sudan’s Civil War,” 39.
\textsuperscript{160} Sommers, \textit{Islands of Education}, 16.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid, 46.
\textsuperscript{163} Breidlid, “Sudanese Images of the Other,” 571.
along ethnic lines. “For Southerners, Christianity is now both a religion and a political weapon against Islamization and Arabization.” Therefore, it can be said that both the North and the South utilized homogenization to the detriment of peace and reconciliation.

The main strategy of the Northern-based Islamic curricula is to unify Sudan through Arabic language and history and Muslim religion and culture. In an interview, a Southern politician stated that Southern Sudanese students “suffer” because they are unable to pass the national examinations due to the fact that their Arabic is not good enough. Similarly, he stated, “Our children do not learn where they come from. They do not learn anything about our history, culture, and language.” The Sudanese history textbooks in particular purposefully exclude other viewpoints and discriminate against those who do not speak Arabic and do not identify with the Arabic-Muslim culture. The following example of a simple statement in a textbook before and after the period of Islamization shows how Islamization has pervaded all aspects of Sudanese life: prior to Islamization, this textbook stated, “Today I will go to school. Tomorrow I will go to the dentist. Friday I will go to the cinema.” However, this statement was replaced by: “Today I will pray five times. Tomorrow I will read in the Qur’an. Friday I will go to the Mosque.” Along these same lines, each chapter in the math textbooks open with a Qur’anic verse in order to further the idea that not only is Sudan a Muslim country, but to recognize Tawhid in that religion pervades all aspects of life. Furthermore, all textbook images portray men and women as Arabic with Arabic clothing and Arabic names, thus

164 Breidlid, “Education in the Sudan,” 254.
166 Breidlid, “Sudanese Images of the Other,” 566.
167 Breidlid, “Education in the Sudan,” 255.
168 Ibid, 255.
furthering the illusion that Sudan is only Arabic-Muslim.\(^\text{169}\) According to a UNESCO report compiled by G.L. Arora, of the 59 textbooks developed by the NCCER for grades 1 to 8, only three have been produced in English, with the rest being in the Arabic language, while “the mother tongue of the child is not taught at any stage of school education.”\(^\text{170}\) Arora further notes that Arabic classes receive 22% of school time, while 20% of lessons are related to religion in some way since the inclusion of religion as a compulsory area of curricular content falls in line with the goal of the national education policy to instill religious thinking in every aspect of life.\(^\text{171}\) Therefore, through language and images, South Sudanese students were discriminated against within the Sudanese education system. Besides the one-sidedness of the subject matter, Sudanese education in the North also left little room for a well-rounded, civic curricula apart from Islam.

The Arabic-Islamic overarching narrative was also furthered through history. In an equivalent of a social science course called “Things Around Us” for grades 1-4 and “Man and the Universe” for grades 5-8, Arab history is dominant without hardly a hint of tribal history and African ethnicities. One particular chapter is called “Man’s Advent to the Sudan,” and it begins with the coming of Arab Muslims to Sudan without even mentioning the fact that Christianity had been present in Sudan centuries prior.

Conspicuously missing as well is the Arab slave trade in the interior of present-day South Sudan.\(^\text{172}\) Thus, Sudanese identity through history focused on a Northern Arabic perspective alone. In sum, after an analysis of 41 textbooks created by the NCCER,

\(^{169}\) Breidlid, “The Role of Education in Sudan’s Civil War,” 39.
\(^{171}\) Ibid, 11.
\(^{172}\) Breidlid, “The Role of Education in Sudan’s Civil War,” 39.
Breidlid concludes that “the Arab-Muslim bias is overwhelming… South Sudanese history, religion, and culture are almost entirely left out.”¹⁷³

On the other hand, it is equally important to examine aspects of the South Sudanese education system in order to present a full picture of the connection between education and the various conflicts that have affected Sudan. Indeed, after South Sudan’s independence in 2011, a further conflict erupted in 2013 within South Sudan, which has been fought along dissenting political and tribal lines. In this regard, Merethe Skaras and Breidlid performed a study on South Sudanese education post-independence by examining classroom teaching from 2014 to 2015 to see how South Sudanese schools teach their violent past. Skaras and Breidlid conclude that national unity is attempted by demonizing the Arab North, while smoothing over any ethnic tensions among the South Sudanese through lecture-based instruction with little room for discussion. In terms of demonizing the Arab North, one teacher stated to the class:

That ill feelings or hatred or distrust is still existing. Even though we are now two separate countries. Even though we are now two separate countries, ok. That ill feelings, that hatred, that distrust is still existing, ok. Between the southerners and the northerners. Why? Because during the war the Arabs who were here in the south killed and mistreated the southerners, ok. So that was the reason why these ill feeling is still there existing today. Good.¹⁷⁴

Furthermore, another teacher was recorded as teaching the students:

If you learn the way your people suffered and the question you should ask is always: who was responsible for that? Ok. Or who inflicted that suffering on our people. Definitely, the answer is the Arabs and it makes

¹⁷³ Ibid.
you not to love the Arabs. Yeah. It makes you to look the Arabs as the immediate enemy, the first enemy of South Sudan, you know.\footnote{Ibid, 108.}

These feelings of resentment can be noticed first-hand in student essays that were examined within Skaras and Breidlid's study. In an essay written about the causes of the war, all of the 69 respondents state that “marginalization” and “exploitation” by the North were the key factors that led to the civil war, and the culprits were the “elites” of the North within the Khartoum government. Thus, feelings of resentment are reinforced, legitimized, and even carry over to the current conflict.\footnote{Ibid, 110.}

In the current conflict, it appears that the South Sudanese curriculum attempts to avoid discussion of ethnicity in order to create a “unified past narrative and collective memory” as a form of national unity.\footnote{Ibid, 111.} For example, in one classroom observation performed by Skaras and Breidlid, when a student asked a question about the ethnic tensions in the South, the teacher gave a “superficial” answer to the question while completely avoiding ethnicity.\footnote{Ibid, 110-111.} Skaras and Breidlid conclude that disproportionately blaming the Northern Arabs, while discarding any notions of ethnic tensions in the South may be “counterproductive.”\footnote{Ibid, 112.} By minimizing or completely avoiding the recent civil war, the South Sudanese curriculum has resorted to historical inaccuracies, a lack of discussion and critical thinking, and removing the voice and perspective of those who have experienced loss.\footnote{Ibid, 113.} This has played out most prominently in the Nilotic vs. non-Nilotic tribal divisions. In interviews with teachers and students, the Nilotic tribes are
“described as different people with different mentalities, not well civilized and totally behind in terms of development.” Therefore, Skaras and Breidlid note that though avoiding the topic may be “pedagogically sound,” not addressing the divisions only serve to reinforce the narrative circulating in the South that describes the Nilotic tribes as backwards and aggressive, thus furthering the ethnic divisions causing the current civil war. In general, the South Sudanese curriculum fails to address the “structural causes of conflict or the role of Southerners as active participants in the war,” while painting an exclusively negative stereotype of the Arab Northerners and sweeping any divisions among Southerners under the rug to the detriment of reconciliation and healing.

In sum, education systems in Sudan certainly exacerbated conflict through a homogenization along Arabic-Muslim lines, as well as a lack of honesty in the South Sudanese curriculum. A policy of Islamization, though seeking to unify Sudan, in fact widened the differences between the North and the South, “escalating the conflict between them and giving it a racial and religious dimension that eventually reached genocidal proportions.” Without a diversity of perspectives, Sudanese education systems may continue to aggravate tensions along ethnic, tribal, and religious lines on both sides. The case of Sudan also highlights the fact that independence is not a panacea for ethnic conflict. Indeed, peace and coexistence must be predicated on a recognition of Sudanese diversity, and educational policy and curricular reform could be a necessary step towards achieving such goals.

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181 Ibid.
182 Ibid.
183 Ibid, 115.
Chapter Five: A Contrasting Case Study — Canada

Canada is considered by many to be one of the most diverse among the Western nations, and it has had relatively little internal conflict in recent history. Thus, in light of the previous case studies examined, the question must be asked: How has Canada maintained peace with such diversity? And how has Canada utilized its education system to mobilize informed, global citizens who appreciate differences, rather than fearing them? In their study on ethnic diversity and multiculturalism in Canada’s current curricula, Carla Peck, Alan Sears, and Shane Donaldson state that “education has been one of the principle vehicles for accomplishing the paired goals of accommodating diversity while maintaining social cohesion.”\(^{185}\) However, it is important to note that this was not always the case. Prior to World War II, Canada’s policy was to bar immigrants who did not fit the “dominant White, British culture,” and to assimilate already-present non-White people groups into that culture as best as possible. A change occurred in 1947, however, with the Citizenship Act, which was key in shifting “Canadian Identity” towards multiculturalism, rather than assimilation.\(^{186}\) These shifts in Canadian politics eventually trickled down to the education system as well. Prior to this time, Canadian schools and curricula were designed to “homogenize a diverse population” built on “a common English language, a common culture, a common identification with the British Empire, and an acceptance of British institutions and practices.”\(^{187}\) This changed throughout 1965 to 1975, when a “tidal wave” of revisions in the educational systems

\(^{186}\) Ibid, 65.  
\(^{187}\) Ibid, 63, 67.
began to focus on accommodating ethnic differences.\textsuperscript{188} Thus, Canada represents the ideal contrasting case as it possesses similar features to the cases of Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan: ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity; questions of first occupation to a “homeland”; and a complicated, conflictual history. Despite these insurmountable topics — topics that Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan failed to address — Canada’s curricula excels in being honest, critical, and open-minded to the many distinct viewpoints represented within Canadian identity. This contrasting case study will examine the social studies subjects represented in the Ontario Curriculum due to the fact that Ontario represents one of the most diverse regions of Canada.\textsuperscript{189}

Before delving into the curricular content, it must be noted that the Ontario curriculum promotes learning through a variety of methods, which it terms “disciplinary thinking,” which is important for students to come to their own conclusions. Mastering the skills of this type of thinking includes investigation, evaluating evidence, collaborative discussion, and the creation and use of appropriate materials, including technology and visuals such as maps and graphs.\textsuperscript{190} Such an emphasis on diverse learning methods puts a priority on critical thinking, rather than simple rote memorization or lectured-based instruction. Similarly, because of the collaborative nature of Canada’s learning process, students learn to consider and respect other’s perspectives.\textsuperscript{191}

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid, 68.
\textsuperscript{189} It must also be noted that themes of diversity are not only present in the Ontario Curriculum, but in virtually all other provinces as well, as was highlighted in a curricular survey performed by Jack Jedwab, President of the Association for Canadian Studies. See Jack Jedwab, “Diversity and Inclusion in Canada’s Provincial History Curriculums.” The Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration (June 2016).
\textsuperscript{190} The Ontario Curriculum (revised): Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8 (Ontario Public Service, 2013), 6.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, 10.
the simplified goal of the curricula’s social studies is to help Canadians recognize the advantage of their multicultural diversity and role as global citizens.\textsuperscript{192}

The Ontario Curriculum for grades 1-6 Social Studies and grades 7-8 History and Geography were revised from the 2004 curriculum and went into effect on September 2014.\textsuperscript{193} The Ontario Curriculum for Grades 11-12 Canadian and World Studies were revised from the 2005 curriculum and went into effect on September 2015.\textsuperscript{194} All social studies subjects share a common vision and goal, which is laid out as follows: “The social studies, history, geography, and Canadian world studies programs will enable students to become responsible, active citizens within the \textit{diverse} communities to which they belong.”\textsuperscript{195} Thus, as opposed to Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan where diversity was sacrificed for the sake of unity, Canada recognizes diversity as the foundation upon which civic engagement and social cohesion can be built. This is reflected in its curricula as can be seen from the way it shapes Canadian identity, the way it deals with its difficult past, and the way it accommodates ethnic and linguistic differences.

First, Canadian identity is built on diversity and recognizing “the other.” In the opening paragraphs of the Ontario curriculum, it is stated that “students develop their understanding of where they came from by studying past societies, analyzing connections between the past and present, and exploring the contributions of past societies to Canadian heritage.”\textsuperscript{196} Furthermore, the curriculum encourages teachers to select topics and resources that reflect the diversity within the classroom as a way of recognizing the

\textsuperscript{192} Ibid, 9.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid, 3.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid, 5.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid, 6.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid, 11.
“diversity and complexity of Canadian society.”197 Therefore, rather than homogenization, Canada’s classrooms celebrate diversity. For example, a lesson for grade 2 includes the following:

Identify some different groups in their community (e.g., various religious and ethnocultural groups), and describe some of the ways in which they contribute to diversity in Canada (e.g., different languages, foods, music, clothing, holidays; ethnic neighborhoods with specialized shops and restaurants).198

From these discussion questions and learning outcomes, it can be seen that Canadian curricular content places a priority on understanding Canadian diversity from a plethora of platforms: religious, cultural, linguistic, etc. For grade 3, a similar lesson includes the following discussion topics as a means by which diversity is recognized through Canada’s multiethnic history:

Describe some of the similarities and differences in various aspects of everyday life of selected groups living in Canada between 1780 and 1850 (e.g., First Nations, Métis, French, British, Black people; men and women; slaves, indentured servants, habitants, seigneurs, farmers; people from different classes)… Identify some key components of the Canadian identity (e.g., bilingualism, multiculturalism, founding nations, religious freedom), and describe some of the ways in which communities that were in Canada around the early 1800s have had an impact on Canadian identity.199

Similarly, in grade 6, a lesson encourages students to “evaluate some of the contributions that various ethnic and/or religious groups have made to Canadian identity.”200

Finally, in grade 8, lessons in diversity and Canadian identity become more hands-on with students examining and investigating ethnic groups other than their own:

197 Ibid, 12-16.
198 Ibid, 78.
199 Ibid, 86-87.
200 Ibid, 120.
Gather and organize information and evidence about perspectives of different groups on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or Canadians during this period, using a variety of primary sources.\textsuperscript{201}

Through these activities, Ontario’s curriculum encourages students to not only appreciate Canada’s diversity, but to investigate the “how” and “why” behind Canada’s origins and ethnic makeup. It is also important to note that in Canada’s classrooms, the teacher is not simply lecturing students on diversity. Instead, students are encouraged to discuss, think critically, and utilize historical understandings and inquiry.

Diversity themes are furthered in grades 11 and 12 through the history curricula, whereby it is hoped that the lessons will “convey a sense of the dynamic nature of Canadian and world history. Students learn that the people of the world have many stories and that each one is significant and requires thoughtful consideration.”\textsuperscript{202} In fact, a key course within the the grade 11 social studies curricula is a project called “The History of a Canadian Ethnic Group,” whereby students work together to examine how diverse people groups comprise Canadian identity by “analyz[ing] the historical development of key social structures and trends,” “describ[ing] some ways in which social factors in their countries of origin influenced people’s decisions to emigrate,” and by “analyz[ing] challenges and opportunities associated with preserving cultural diversity in Canada.”\textsuperscript{203}

Therefore, as students progress through their social studies, they grow from a simple acknowledgement of Canada’s diversity towards a thoughtful consideration of the social structures that have influenced and created such diversity.

\textsuperscript{201} Ibid, 149.
\textsuperscript{202} The Ontario Curriculum (revised): Grades 11 and 12, Canadian and World Studies — Economics, Geography, History, Law, Politics (The Ontario Public Service, 2015), 15.
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid, 341, 348.
Second, accommodation is made within the classroom to all types of people groups through not only including diverse cultural perspectives, but through a priority placed on helping those who have the added challenge of “language-learning.” In order to seek “fair, transparent, and equitable” assessment for all students, the Ontario curriculum provides support for those with special education needs and those who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction, which is either English or French, depending on the area. Such provisions are especially made for immigrants, as well as First Nation, Metis, or Inuit students. Thus, “All teachers share in the responsibility for these students’ English-language development,” as well as general development. Such an enormous task is not seen as arduous or a hindrance to learning, but rather such students are seen as a “cultural asset” for the “rich diversity of background knowledge and experience” that they bring to the classroom. In fact, the Ontario curriculum recommends for teachers to encourage parents of such children to continue in their first language and even to “find opportunities to bring students’ languages into the classroom, using parents and community members as a resource.” Therefore, as opposed to Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan, whereby thousands of students were discriminated against based on their language, Ontario instead encourages and celebrates linguistic diversity. The most important aspect for such an inclusive education system is that “all students see themselves reflected in the curriculum.” Indeed, the Ontario curriculum calls for bringing attention to the contributions of women, the cultural traditions of the

204 The Ontario Curriculum (revised): Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 27.
205 Ibid, 40-41.
206 Ibid, 40-41.
207 Ibid, 40-41.
208 Ibid, 45.
First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, as well as the perspectives of various ethnic and religious communities throughout history.\textsuperscript{209} Along these lines, injustices and inequalities are critically examined. But as opposed to the Kosovo case, for example, that focused on victimization experienced within injustice, Canada’s curriculum looks at such tragedies from the perspective of how those who have faced injustices have “acted as agents of change and can serve as role models for active citizenship.”\textsuperscript{210} For example:

> Explain how various groups have contributed to the goal of inclusiveness in Canada (e.g., the efforts of women’s rights, civil rights, First Nations, or labour organizations, or of advocacy organizations for immigrants, disabled people, or various religious or ethnic groups), and assess the extent to which Canada has achieved the goal of being an inclusive society.\textsuperscript{211}

Thus, rather than focusing on “enemies,” “the other,” or identity formation within “victimization,” Canada encourages social justice as a primary responsibility of citizenship within Canada’s diverse communities. Furthermore, Canadians value honesty and sensitivity about the hardships that immigrants have faced in terms of relocating to a new country, culture, and language. Such is the case in a grade 11 activity: “Analyze some challenges that Canadian immigration policies have presented to some ethnic groups, with a particular focus, where applicable, on the selected ethnic group.”\textsuperscript{212}

Third, as has been seen from the case studies examined in this thesis, ethnically-diverse countries tend to whitewash their past by providing a smooth fabric of history, thus refusing a voice to the oppressed. Canada, on the other hand, is honest about its

\textsuperscript{209} Ibid, 45.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid, 46.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid, 121.
\textsuperscript{212} \textit{The Ontario Curriculum (revised): Grades 11 and 12, Canadian and World Studies — Economics, Geography, History, Law, Politics}, 345.
historical wrongs. For example, consider a grade 7 activity on displacement: “Analyze the displacement experienced by various groups who were living in or who came to Canada between 1713 and 1800… and compare it with present-day examples of displacement.”213 The purpose of such an activity is not to simply dredge up such injustices, but to “think critically about global inequalities.”214 Rather than rewriting history in order to present a seamless, conflict-free Canadian origin mythology, as has been attempted in Pakistan or Sudan, the Ontario curriculum recognizes the injustices that Canada’s original inhabitants have suffered. In sum, through studying history and Canadian identity formation, as well as through its inclusive system that promotes diversity and accommodation for language-learners, Canada encourages citizenship and collaboration, rather than conflict or segregation.

In conclusion, Canada represents an even more culturally-diverse country than any of Kosovo, Pakistan, or Sudan, with an equally complicated history, though extremely low levels of conflict. Though this most likely is due to the stability of the country in general, the fact that the government took such great pains to invest in a multicultural education revision proves the importance that Canada places on continuing that stability through education. Canada reverses all of the trends seen in the case studies of Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan by celebrating diversity and heterogeneity as an important foundation for national unity and social cohesion; by being honest about its history; and by accommodating ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences.

213 The Ontario Curriculum (revised): Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 139.
214 Ibid, 44.
Chapter Six: Conclusions and Implications

*The Hidden Crisis* clarifies the education-civil conflict connection as follows:

“Education is seldom, if ever, the primary motivation for armed conflict… Perhaps that is why the role of education in contributing to violent conflict has been so widely neglected.”215 Indeed, in all cases examined in this thesis, education was clearly not an afterthought in connection to civil conflict. In both Sudan and Kosovo, education was seen as a vital part of the resistance movements’ identity formation and political legitimacy, which is the reason why parallel education systems were formed early on. In Pakistan, the education system is much stronger and consolidated in the central government; yet still, the textbook controversy shows that educational representation was important to minorities and evoked a violent response. Therefore, education is vitally important for an understanding of causes of civil conflict. Nonetheless, the question must be asked: is education merely something that is fought over, or do educational institutions actually contribute to violence through the nationalistic messages that they propagate?

Based on my research, I would argue that education does contribute towards the instigation or exacerbation of civil conflict through the homogenization of a heterogenous culture, as well as through the careful manipulation of language and images in textbooks.

Through a study of Kosovo, Pakistan, Sudan, and Canada, it becomes readily apparent that governments see value in homogenizing identity and language in order to create a sense of national unity and shared values. However, especially in the three negative cases, what was less understood at that time was how a system of assimilation

provoked a response of resistance and even violence from the out-group. Establishing a centralized language in a linguistically-diverse society naturally excludes minorities. In these cases, demonization of “the other” are created in the minds of the majority, while minorities experience discrimination, exclusion, and linguistic repression. Especially in the case of Sudan, students who were not fluent in the primary language could not partake of educational and, in effect, economic advantages that were afforded the majority. In this way, governments, especially through language, have furthered unequal educational access, thus indirectly sparking conflict. In all three cases of Kosovo, Pakistan, and Sudan, linguistic homogenization in the state-sponsored curricula sparked non-violent educational resistance movements that eventually transformed into full-fledged military contestations. Similarly, homogenization of identity seeks to create a singular sense of nation that excludes minority viewpoints in order to falsely instill a shared sense of what it means to be Kosovar, Pakistani, or Sudanese. But rather than include diverse viewpoints, the educational systems of these countries smoothed over complex, divergent histories and relationships. In so doing, entire people groups and their culture were left out, thus necessitating resistance to save ethnic heritage. It is interesting to note that it is not always the students who feel such dispossession and lack of representation, but it is oftentimes the parents and other educational actors who respond for the sake of furthering their own culture and history in the coming generations. In sum, all three of the negative case studies show how homogenization in an education system for the sake of national unity more often than not creates the very opposite outcome that is hoped for. In the case of Canada, on the other hand, a policy of accommodation, rather
than assimilation, has created an accepting environment for all languages, identities, and experiences.

By way of more specific examples of how identity matters, all of the case studies examined highlight the importance of history and homeland to education systems. Much research has been done on the topic of history as formative for a national or ethnic identity. History not only informs people who they are and where they come from, but where they are going as well. Thus, when such a crucial aspect of identity formation is taken away or covered up, feelings of repression must follow. History can equally evoke feelings of pride, as well as victimization, in creating a sense of self. In the case of Kosovo specifically, Serbs and Albanians have learned through their own histories to hate one another for historical wrongs. In Pakistan, history is utilized to instill hatred for their enemy, the Hindus; while in Sudan, a different approach is taken whereby the centralized government smooths over conflict in the country in order to falsify a seamless, conflict-free history. In Canada, on the other hand, history not only includes many facets and perspectives, but teachers are not afraid to discuss openly the low-points of Canada’s own history in a critical way. Thus, it becomes obvious that the way educational institutions handle history is crucial for instilling a sense of identity, as well as a correct view of “the other.” Identity is further connected to the homeland, since as has been noted, geography, space, and boundaries create a physical representation of what it means to be Kosovar, Pakistani, or Sudanese. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the civil conflict of Kosovo. As Kostovicova notes, in times of conflict, education not only becomes about
reading and writing, but about an understanding of the “fatherland.” Thus, feelings of dispossession are evoked when the homeland is infringed upon through historical and geographical manipulation of textbooks.

In conclusion, it is apparent from these case studies that there is a connection between education and civil conflict, both in terms of access, as well as content. However, not enough evidence exists to state whether or not educational content represents a primary instigator of civil conflict. Nonetheless, it can be said that curricular content has been utilized by warring parties to exacerbate already-present ethnic or religious divisions. In this way, governments and resistance movements have utilized education to form competing national identities that instill a sense of hatred towards “the other.” Such identity formation is vitally important towards the provocation of civil conflict, and there is arguably no better medium by which such a large-scale message can be spread **en masse** than through education. However, it is impossible to say with any certainty, for example, whether or not the Kosovar conflict would have reached its horrifying climax with or without the impact of education. Are civil conflicts established merely through political or economic reasons, or could social factors such as education play a vital role as well? While there are greater aspects that need to be addressed in order to deal with the root cause of civil conflict, educational factors must be included in any analyses of civil conflict in order to not only deal with the ethnic or religious tensions present within a country, but in order to reshape a people’s thinking and policies for the future.

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