



From Guerillas to Cabinets

**- A Study of the Development of Post-War Political Parties in
Kosovo**

Master Thesis

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Abstract

The fourth Yugoslav war, the war in Kosovo, was fought between 1998 and 1999. The Kosovo Liberation Army and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo, fought the Serb police, military and paramilitary forces, but also at some points each other. The war was a battle between a Kosovan guerilla uprising, against a far superior Serb military power. The game changed as the international community, and most importantly NATO, intervened to put an end to the war.

The KLA was a rapidly growing, sporadically organized guerilla movement. It was established as a result of increasing oppression from the Milosevic regime against the Kosovo Albanians, as a more radical faction than the pacifist Albanian resistance movement, LDK. Despite of their problems, the KLA became national heroes, and their political successors are still in 2017 dominating the political arena. This thesis main research question is; *"How has the war legacy affected the development of political parties in post-conflict Kosovo?"*

To answer my research question, I conducted 22 qualitative interviews with Kosovan ex-combatants and politicians, in addition to an extensive document analysis. Through five different theoretical frameworks, each highlighting different important aspects affecting the development of political parties in a post-conflict state, I tried to uncover which processes and actors have been decisive in this regard. The five theories yield important results on their own, but when combined, it becomes obvious how these processes are not linear and multidimensional.

The results of this thesis, show that Kosovo's political parties are strongly affected by the war-time structures in which they operated. Well-functioning parties were expected to develop in a state with few of the necessary preconditions. They also operate in a political framework which is largely frozen along the lines of the 1999 war settlement. The result has been leadership centered, regionally concentrated parties, where those who have been successful have accepted the international community's demands about "standards before status". Several promising developments have taken place, but the ambivalent relationship between different actors have often led to standstills, creating severe problems of accountability and normal functioning within and between the parties. These results can help develop our understanding of party development in post-conflict cases without one clear winner due to external intervention.

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Abbreviations

AAK – Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (Aleanca për Ardhmërinë e Kosovës)

AKR – New Kosovo Alliance (Aleanca Kosova e Re)

CPY - Communist Party of Yugoslavia

EULEX - European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo

FARK – Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo (Forcat e Armatosura të Republikës së Kosovës)

KFOR – Kosovo Force (NATO-led peace keeping forces)

KLA - Kosovo Liberation Army (Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës)

KCEC – Kosovo Central Electoral Commission (Komisioni Qendror I Zgjedhjeve)

KNRP – Kosovo New Roma Party (Kosovaki Nevi Romani Partia)

LDK - Democratic League of Kosovo (Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës)

NPK – Initiative for Kosovo (Nisma Për Kosovën)

PDK - Democratic Party of Kosovo (Partia Demokratike e Kosovës)

SFRY – Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

SL – Serb List (Srpska Lista)

UNMIK – United Nations Mission in Kosovo

VV – Movement For Self-Determination! (Lëvizja Vetëvendosje!)

VAKAT – The Vakats Coalition (Koalicija Vakats)

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1.0 Introduction

Kosovo was ruled as a Serb province, from the end of the Balkan wars which ousted the Ottoman empire, until the Kosovo war of 1998 - 1999. Kosovo never achieved the status of a republic like most other Yugoslav entities, where a republic corresponded with the majority ethnicity, such as Croats in Croatia. The reasoning behind this was that unlike the other South Slavic people of the country, Albanians had an external motherland in Albania itself. However, Kosovo Albanians saw the 1912 establishment of the Albanian state as a fraud, as more Albanians were left out than included within its borders (Ker-Lindsey, 2010, p. 8). As an autonomous province, Kosovo did have certain rights such as their own constitution and parliament, but these rights were withdrawn when Milosevic came to power. What followed was deep social unrest, due to Albanians being fired from their jobs, restrictions on Albanian education and language, and efforts to alter the demographic composition of the province. Two movements responded to Milosevic's brutal oppression, in opposing manners. The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), led by Ibrahim Rugova, carried out a peaceful Gandhi-inspired protest, and created a parallel Albanian society with their own improvised institutions (Martinsen, 2005, p. 40). As this approach was not generating enough progress towards the goal of succession from Serbia, the militant Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged. The LDK government in exile, led by Bujar Bukoshi, also established their own army, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo (FARK), and tensions between the two made it difficult for the Albanian movement to portray themselves as a unified front against Serb oppression. Neither side managed to pull off a complete victory in the war, which ended after NATO intervened with a 78-day bombing campaign, and the international community took de facto control over Kosovo through establishing institutions such as UNMIK, KFOR and EULEX. The ambivalence surrounding what the outcome of the conflict had actually been, had severe effects on the antagonism that followed between the parties involved. Nine years after the war ended, Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008. Actors from the war have since dominated the political arena, through establishing different political parties (Pettifer, 2013).

1.1 Clarification and Research Question

Because of the qualitative, explanatory nature of this thesis, I want to have a guiding research question which is as open as possible, but which also captures the essence of the thesis. Due to the important interaction of the time leading up to the war, the development during the

war and the engineering of a new political system in the post-conflict setting, this interaction effect must also be accounted for. My research question will therefore be:

"How has the war legacy affected the development of political parties in post-conflict Kosovo?"

The theories I've used to answer my research question are; 1) Rebel group organization and transformation, 2) The importance of winning, 3) The inclusion-moderation hypothesis, 4) The role of the international community, and 5) Party origins and functions seen in a non-Western setting. These five theoretical frameworks look at different important elements related to the post-conflict development of political parties, and can combined provide a nuanced explanation. To answer my research question, attention was directed towards some key groups of actors, the first being KLA members - both those who joined the assumed political successor, The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) which is dominating Kosovan politics, but also those who to perhaps a surprisingly high degree joined or created other parties instead. The second group is the oldest Albanian political actor, LDK. The party has gained much legitimacy through simply being those who have fought for the Kosovo cause the longest. This has been a double-edged sword however, since they were accused of being weak and Serb-friendly enough to avoid extinction in the 1990s. The third group is other relevant, Albanian parties. This group includes VV (Self-Determination), NISMA (Initiative for Kosovo), AAK (Alliance for the Future of Kosovo) and AKR (New Kosovo Alliance). These parties are catch-all parties to the same degree as the PDK and the LDK. They have done quite well in elections, and have shown both capability and desire to form their own coalitions at the PDK and LDK's expense. These six parties are the major, relevant actors of party politics in Kosovo. The last group is the minority parties. Five minority groups have been recognized; Serbs, Bosnians, Turks, RAE (Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, different Gypsy communities combined into one group) and Gorani (Slavic Muslims). These parties are organized along ethnic lines, and due to reserved seats and decisive veto rights, their influence far outweighs their numbers.

Name of Party	Established	War connection	Post- War Electoral results
PDK	1999	Direct	25, 7 % - 34, 3 %
LDK	1989	Direct	22, 6 % - 46, 65 %
VV	2005	Indirect	12, 69 % - 13, 59 %
AAK	2001	Direct	7, 83 % - 11, 04 %
AKR	2006	No	4, 67 % - 9, 6 %
NISMA	2014	Indirect	5,15 %

The table provides an overview of the six major, relevant parties in Kosovo, with their year of establishment, and post-war electoral results. Direct connection means that the party is

founded by a KLA branch. I have also categorized the LDK as having a direct connection, due to their decade long fight for the Kosovo cause prior to the war, and the establishment of their own armed forces, FARK, although it didn't gain momentum anywhere near the same degree as KLA. Indirect connection means that the party consists of several prominent KLA actors, or have broken away from another party formed by a KLA faction. AKR is the only party which is then in no way connected to the war.

Work on the KLA tends to conclude with the organization being loosely organized, divided and difficult to categorize, and that the PDK is its political successor (see for instance Manning, 2007, Hedges, 1999 or Martinsen, 1999) I want to examine whether something has gone missing in this understanding. The KLA was without doubt characterized by a massive and diversified recruitment over a short time-period, without clear, undisputable leadership. They did however organize a country-wide war operation, and were the first ones to establish any kind of system when Milosevic's forces started to withdraw. Several dimensions surrounding the war and its political aftermath, have in my opinion been understudied and underestimated, such as the roles played by LDK and FARK, the dialogue with Serbia, and the character of the international presence. Dynamics between these different powerful actors have played an extremely important role in shaping the post-war political landscape, but a few actors seem to have monopolized the space in both academics and the media. I hope to offer some insight as to how a spontaneously organized and rapidly growing organization like the KLA was perceived and organized by its members, and how its central members have come to dominate post-war politics as well through different political parties, not just the PDK.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 provides a short background history which clarifies the context in which the Kosovo war was situated. I will then present the theoretical framework in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents the method of the single case study, and qualitative interviews and document analysis as strategies for data collection. Chapter 5 analyses the empirical findings piecewise, before chapter 6 provides a discussion of the findings and a conclusion.

1.3 Why Parties?

When investigating political development in post-war Kosovo, other aspects than political parties could have been utilized. Parties however, are extremely important in developing politics in a positive direction in a post-conflict society. In these cases, parties can

be indispensable in other ways than just their traditional roles, such as organizing and aggregating interests, and offering the electorate programs to choose from. In a post-conflict setting like Kosovo without true democratic experience, they also have an important educational role. With a political history consisting for the most part of communism and / or oppression, democratic norms and procedures start from scratch. Parties are objects of citizen loyalty, mobilizers of voters and key actors in democratic politics (Montero and Gunther, 2002, p. 4). They represent different segments of society and their interests. To many Kosovars, this was the first time their interests were organized and represented at all. Parties are also a key element of free and fair elections, which is a mile-stone in any democratizing country. Examining who and what stands behind the different political parties, therefore seems like a fruitful dimension to utilize when investigating the political development in post-conflict Kosovo. According to Brinkerhoff (2005, p. 5), there are three main tasks that need to be accomplished in a post-war setting. These are (1) reconstituting legitimacy, (2) re-establishing security and (3) rebuilding effectiveness. While facing many of the same challenges as any other state regarding institutional engineering, in post-conflict settings this is particularly salient and there is a sense of urgency. Things need to be improved, and they need to be improved quickly, often with a critical lack of resources. To achieve progress, well-functioning political parties can be of great help. In these settings however, the actors within political parties are often the exact same people who were fighting each other in the actual war to begin with.

2.0 Background and Historical Context

To cover Kosovo's history adequately is a task impossibly far beyond the scope of this thesis. A summary of important époques and Kosovo's role in these however, is necessary to understand how the country came to be what it is today, and the 1998-1999 war.

2.1 The Establishment of Albania and Tito's Yugoslavia

"At this point we know more about the moon, than about this state in the Balkans" (Augustsson, 1977, p. 10). Although this quote may have been exaggerated for the sake of amusement, it carries a lot of truth, as the Albanian state isolated itself from the outside world during the 40-year communist regime of Enver Hoxha. As the Ottoman Empire was becoming increasingly more fragile after having ruled in South East Europe for six centuries, it was completely eliminated in the Western Balkans, when attacked by the Balkan League in 1912 (Ker-Lindsey, 2010, p. 8). Following the 1912 war, the Balkan borders had to be completely

redrawn, and ethnicity was politicized. The London Conference was to manage this transition, where several powerful actors had competing demands. Austria-Hungary and Italy were intimidated by Serbia's growing strength, and wanted to unite all Albanians in one state. Russia, a longtime supporter of Serbia and Orthodox ally, and France, argued that all members of the League should be given their war conquests permanently. The compromise reached, greatly favored the latter. The League members for the most part kept their conquests, in return for the creation of a tiny Albanian state (Ker-Lindsey, 2010, p. 8), Albanian-majority Kosovo being one of the territories left out. As time passed by, Albania became increasingly isolated. President Hoxha's strict communist regime was characterized by a paranoid hostility towards outside influence, and even resulted in banning foreign communist literature and cutting off ties with communist regimes such as both China. This was combined with a borderline extreme personality cult around Hoxha himself, and his harsh crackdown on his opponents, which would frequently "disappear" (Sjue, 1979). This landscape was then, for many reasons, not the most fruitful for approaching a unification of Kosovo and Albania. The typical Albanian has lived in rural family-extended patriarchal enclaves where loyalty was first and foremost to the extended family. Combined with being geographically placed in an area consistently hit by invasions, counter-invasions, massacres and counter-massacres, the Albanians faced severe challenges in the new era of state- and nation-building in South East Europe (Sluzki & Agani, 2003, p. 480).

After being left out of the Albanian state, Serbia kept the war conquest Kosovo as a part of its own territory. Kosovo had been a vilayet, a significant administrative unit in the Ottoman empire. Albania, which became an independent state, had had the same status (Malcolm, 2008). Kosovo from then on followed Serbia as an integrated region in all subsequent territorial organizations. This acknowledged integration was a consequence of the London treaty. There was however one big problem ignored for a long time. Kosovo had never been legally incorporated into Serbia, with the annexation being legally disputable both according to Serb and international law (Malcolm, 2002, p. 264). It was therefore a rather roundabout case that was made for Serb sovereignty in Kosovo, but the situation remained unchanged for decades. Some of the explanation for why the Kosovo Albanians never made a stronger case for unification with Albania, lies in the policies of Tito. Even though the people of Kosovo had no interest in being under Serb domination, they were for most of the time part of another project - the Yugoslav one, which made Albania and Kosovo develop in different directions.

Few leaders have been criticized less for ruling in an authoritarian manner, than Tito. Tito was an extremely charismatic and strong leader. After WW2, he transitioned Yugoslavia

from a monarchy into a socialist, federal republic, SFRY (Heradstveit, 1984, p. 232). Tito, half Croat and half Slovene, was declared president for life, but managed to achieve a reputation of being a "kind dictator". His vision was to build communism, in a Yugoslav manner. His greatest legacy, is probably how he managed to suppress nationalist aspirations under his parole of brotherhood and unity. He did this by creating a strongly centralized one-party state, although federal, where everything was organized around the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY). Local governance was just yet another branch of the party, which all were to serve. This authoritarian focus on the communist project, moved focus away from ethnicity. The fear was that if a multi-party system was allowed to develop, new parties would be based around ethnic and religious lines, which would mark the beginning of the state seizing to exist (Johansen, 1967, p. 83). Although Western leaders criticized Tito's authoritarian tendencies, they probably agreed with this conclusion. For the most part he was therefore left alone, and even awarded with nearly a hundred international orders for his achievements.

When it came to Kosovo, Tito balanced on a fine line between acknowledging the region's Albanian character, and at the same time making it clear that it would stay within Yugoslavia. Despite of his strong leadership, Tito was always fearful of the potential danger lying within Serb nationalism. Some Kosovo Albanian protests occurred in the aftermath of WW2, where Hoxha's Albanian partisans had helped the Yugoslav partisans drive the Germans out. Tito made it clear to Hoxha that although Kosovo was overwhelmingly Albanian, the potential Serb reaction to a transfer would make the idea impossible (Beloff, 1986, p. 192). The Serbs were by far the largest ethnic group in Yugoslavia, and had a long history of large political and territorial ambitions. Some of the reason for Tito's decision to federalize the country to the extent he did, undoubtedly was his belief that this would reduce Serbia's chance to dominate. Even when it was discovered that his Vice President Rankovic, had planned a plot against him, Rankovic was not put to trial, but was reprimanded and quietly removed from his duties (Johansen, 1967, p. 14). In Tito's Yugoslavia, people were sent to concentration camps for far less than trying to overthrow him. Fear of Rankovic's punishment being interpreted as an insult from the Serbs is believed to be a central factor in this decision (RFE Research rapport, 1983).

Tito's attitudes towards the Kosovo Albanians have been described as relatively inclusive. However, the more he federalized the country, the more authoritarian he became. The SFRY constitution of 1974, gave the federal units self-determination to the extent that even old time party comrades were becoming skeptical. In Kosovo's case, this involved changes such as legalizing use of the Albanian flag and making the Kosovo CPY branch independent (Pula,

2006, p. 75). Tito's mix of authoritarianism and democratization, to varying degrees in different areas of social, economic and political life, created much uncertainty regarding how the regime would develop. Tito was declared president for life, but the CPY had a more liberal stance on internal debate, elections, unions and the press than most of their communist counterparts (Johansen, 1967, p. 34). These shifting dynamics and political uncertainties, also affected Kosovo. During WW2, Tito was steadfast on the Leninist idea of every nation's right to self-determination. When a CPY regional Kosovan group publicly endorsed the union of Kosovo and Albania however, his response was harsh, and the official vision for Kosovo became; *"The entire population of the district is to join a federated Serbia as a constituent part"* (Pula, 2006, p. 74). A clear understanding of the region's final status was however never achieved, due to signals being given in so many different directions. The leader of the CPY Kosovo branch, Serb Blazo Radonjic, fiercely criticized Belgrade for not letting the region's majority Albanian culture openly blossom, while it was encouraged in all other entities, alongside the development of one common Yugoslav identity (Johansen, 1967, p. 74). At the same time, Tito's later to be removed right hand Rankovic tried to revive a 1938 treaty between Yugoslavia and Turkey to expel 50 000 Muslims, which would mean mostly Kosovo Albanians, from Kosovo to Turkey (Pula, 2006, p. 94). It was in this ambivalent situation Tito died in 1980. No one managed to pull Tito's weight and carry his Yugoslavia into the future. In the midst of this chaos, as Tito had feared, several political figures saw their chance to use the nationalist card to achieve their own political ambitions. The man who took this the furthest, and who became the very symbol of the devastating ethnic wars of the Balkans in the 1990s, was Slobodan Milosevic.

2.2 Slobodan Milosevic, Ibrahim Rugova and the KLA

In 1987, Milosevic formally gained control of the Serb Communist Party. After years of political chaos and uncertainty in the country, combined with an economic crisis, he also managed to become the president of the SFRY. The Yugoslav economy had started to develop in a more market oriented direction, and there was no turning back. Combined with growing demands for democratization, Yugoslav communism was dying alongside their Eastern European counterparts (Thomas, 1999, p. 1). However, it soon became clear that Milosevic had few intentions of following up the initiated democratization process. Political pluralism never developed, as Milosevic got the country's TV stations, courts, police, army and electoral commission filled with his own supporters. All major state institutions became loyal to Milosevic himself (BBC, 2002). Initial promising measures were quickly replaced with extreme nationalism and state centralization. This included measures such as state-wide elections of

federal government instead of elections in each constituent republic, a policy greatly favoring the Serbs who made up near half the SFRY population (Røssum, 1992, p. 53). Tito's worst fear was perfectly realized under Milosevic. As multi-party elections were installed, extreme nationalists rose to power. The Kosovo question was to a large extent lost in the SFRY chaos which then erupted in the early 1990s, with three wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, while simultaneously losing its traditional autonomy, becoming completely integrated into Belgrade rule (Martinsen, 2005, p. 37). When Milosevic finally gave up on continued rule in the SFRY inherited from Tito, he created his own "Third Yugoslavia", consisting of Serbia and Montenegro. The Kosovo Albanians' opinion was never asked for, and the decision had fatal consequences for them. Intense Serbification of the province spanned through all sectors of society. Albanians in public positions were replaced with Serbs, and private business owners intimidated into shutting down. The new army had gotten rid of what was considered soft liners from the three previous wars, and replaced with a younger generation loyal to Serb interests. The Kosovars voted for their own leader and chose LDK's Ibrahim Rugova as their president. Rugova's answer to Belgrade's brutality and suppression, was non-violence (Pula, 2006, p. 82).

Kosovo had continuously been the least developed SFRY region, with per capita income peaking at 30 % of the national average (ibid, p. 75). When the economy slowly started to develop from agrarian to industrial however, thousands of Kosovo Albanians started working in mines and in public administration and received better education than earlier. Milosevic therefore faced a better educated and organized Albanian population than he had anticipated, and both students and miners protested his regime's injustices. This was portrayed as a betrayal of Yugoslav socialism in Belgrade, not as demands for a better life where the Kosovo Albanians were more included. In the middle of this, Rugova led the Kosovars through peaceful protests and civil-disobedience, and created the parallel institutions (Martinsen, 2005, s. 40). Although some advocated war early on, it was obvious to most how slim the Kosovars chances were, if armed conflict broke out. Rugova believed that by monitoring his people's behavior when faced with brutal Serb oppression, international support would grow, and would not provide Milosevic a justification for full blown war. By showing the international community Kosovo's ability to create their own de-facto state through their parallel institutions, in a peaceful manner, the request for full independence would appear reasonable and legitimate (Thomas, 1999, p. 399). The Serb state's aggression however only intensified, and the Kosovo situation became desperate. By 1991, 90 % the Albanian workforce had been laid off, most notably in the sectors of health care, education and the police, and Albanian university students were dismissed (Pula,

2006, p. 85). Strikes were therefore no longer a problem, and the unions lost their political power. The Kosovo Albanians from that point on carried out teaching and health care in basements, private homes and whatever was offered to them. Milosevic's reasoning was that Kosovo was an integral part of Serbia, and any attack on the state's territorial integrity had to face a brutal response. Ancient myths about the Serbs in Kosovo became revitalized and used in political propaganda. As the years went by, the isolation and police violence only got worse. The political atmosphere was now open for someone willing to take more drastic measures.

In late 1997, as Serb police tried to enter the village of Vojnik to collect taxes, they were shot at by gunmen in the surrounding hills. When they returned the next day, a gun battle lasting several hours took place, before the police had to leave the village again. While leaving, they fired at nearby buildings, including the local school, and shot to death Albanian teacher Halit Geci. His funeral was attended by thousands of people, including three masked men with automatic rifles, identifying themselves as KLA fighters. The men said at Geci's graveside that they were now the ones truly fighting for Kosovo's liberation, and received supporting chants by the audience. The KLA was no longer a mysterious organization in village hillsides, but manifested in public (Thomas, 1999, p. 404). As Serb aggression in Kosovo only intensified, Rugova's pacifist campaign was not generating enough results. There were hopes that Kosovo would be an extension of the negotiations in Bosnia. Instead, the Kosovo Albanians witnessed an international society exhausted by the Bosnian war, and the recognition of Radovan Karadzic's gangster statelet within Bosnia - Republika Srpska, was the final straw which made it obvious that a campaign based on non-violence and parallel institutions wouldn't work. The KLA met international resistance to their program in the beginning, despite of growing support at home - being labeled by the U.S. Special Representative in the Balkans, Robert Gelbard, as a terrorist organization in 1998 (Martinsen, 2005, s. 42). The KLA however, experienced an explosive development, and just one year after being labelled a terrorist organization, they managed to become a legitimate negotiating actor of the Kosovo Albanian side during the Rambouillet peace talks. After the last failed peace talks in Paris, Serb forces launched a new military offensive in Kosovo. Four days later, NATO air strikes began (Pettifer, 2013, p. 202). Milosevic was first removed in a domestic Serb uprising in 2000.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Rebel Group Organization and Transformation

The literature on rebel group transformation, looks at how rebel groups manage to perform the complex procedure of transforming themselves from armed groups to political parties, if they do at all. How the former belligerents respond to the framework of democratic politics, is crucial to the survival and development of a new system (Manning, 2007, p. 253). In addition to the normative desire to establish a democratic multi-party system, this transition is also imperative for the rebel group members' perception of the benefits of peace, contrary to those of war (Kovacs and Hatz, 2016, p. 991). The transition secures former rebels power, in peace-times. Motivation of the rebellion, together with organization and leadership, are important factors influencing the transformation. Out of all the theoretical frameworks included in this thesis, this is probably the least explored one, despite its importance, and can greatly benefit from more case studies (de Zeeuw, 2008).

Clapham (2008, p. 6-8) distinguishes between four types of rebel groups, depending on their motivation; Liberation movements, separatist groups, reform movements and warlord insurgencies. The KLA falls into the category of separatist groups, which strive for the complete secession from a state or some special autonomous status. The motivational aspect reflects why the group was created, but is not a perfect tool for understanding the post-war transformation. Some clues are nevertheless implied (de Zeeuw, 2008, p 8). Reform movements for example, have an alternative political vision in place from the beginning, within the existing state. Their chances of functioning well as political parties are therefore quite good, since they already have an ideology and program in place. Liberation movements and separatist groups may agree that the territory should be liberated or separated, but not necessarily on anything else, and warlord insurgencies thrive best, if not only, in war. Post-conflict development will also depend on how much of the group's original goal was achieved. If and to what extent the wartime appeals are still available and attractive to the electorate, depends on whether the major wartime cleavage remains relevant, is reduced, or not significantly present at all. (Manning, 2004, p. 59). The transformed movement will have to take this into consideration.

Rebel groups also differ in their organization and leadership. They need an organizational structure that turns goals into action, and a leadership able to guide and oversee the actions taken. Most rebel movements therefore have several armed units under the command

of different leaders (de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 8). The scope and strength of the organizational structure however, varies extensively between these groups. Some are disciplined and centralized organizations with clear top-down decision-making procedures, and an impressive organizational capacity. These can inherit a relatively strong bureaucratic apparatus when transforming themselves to political parties (Ishiyama and Batta, 2011, p. 371). Others have more of a cell structure, where different units operate more or less independently, but all under the umbrella of a single group. This has implications for both war-time unity and discipline, but also for how the group manages the rebel-to-party transition. If parts of the group, or some units, had a nonviolent starting point, this can also be helpful in the process (de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 9). Who came out most dominant of the military and civilian wing within the group, will also affect the transition, as well as the degree to which the internal power struggle was resolved before elections (Ishiyama, 1995, p. 159). This internal struggle has not received a significant amount of attention, even though it's imperative regarding who establishes parties, why, and how the parties function. Drawing from literature on post-communist states, Ishiyama and Batta (2011, p. 371) distinguish between "standpatters" (those clinging to the former ideology), "liberals" (those who accept limited reform, abandoning some of the original ideology), and "reformists" (those embracing something new, and competitive elections). Although communism and separatism have different goals, Ishiyama and Batta's distinction remains relevant. The more competition a post-conflict party faces in the electoral arena, the more likely it is that the "reformists" will come out strongest. The type of leadership within the rebel group, is also important for the transition. In addition to guiding the troops, key actors within the leadership also help influence the group's strategic direction. Aspects such as leaders' background, training and education, skills, leadership style and personal charisma are important elements (de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 9). These personal qualities can also help sustain support, and attract new supporters after transitioning. There's also a possibility of a reverse effect, if the personal authority of a leader or the leadership is extremely high. As decentralization of decision-making procedures and internal debates are important when transitioning, excessive control and authority at the leadership level, may disturb the development necessary for a political party to function properly.

Some key changes need to take place for a rebel-to-party transformation to be possible, both structural and attitudinal (ibid). Structurally, the group needs to lay down their weapons and abandon military tactics. This will also need to be assisted by some type of DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) process of the former combatants. This can

include job-creation and housing to secure their reintegration into a post-war society. They can also be reinserted in the new national security forces and police. The group also needs to develop a political organization capable of representing popular interests, placing candidates for elections, organizing election campaigns and ultimately taking on government responsibilities. A party program needs to be formulated, and the organization needs to be staffed with skilled and capable people. The relationship between rebel elites in different branches needs to be adjusted, reflecting their new positions. Attitudinally, there needs to be a shift from top-down to bottom-up decision-making, reflecting the character of popularly representative institutions. Internal democratization will be more acute, due to the militant legacy, but this can also heighten competition between internal factions and negatively affect the political stability as a whole (Sindre, 2014, p. 1). Decentralizing decision-making and creating a more inclusive internal governance should take place, but will not necessarily be enough. Rebel leaders are in a unique position to lead by example, and if they reject extending power beyond themselves and their inner circle substantially, other changes are difficult to achieve. Post-war, the domestic, regional and international context will usually be drastically different from when the war started. The group therefore needs to justify their existence again, by meeting popular demands in the post-conflict era as opposed to the war-time, in order to be seen as a credible political organization. Based on these characteristics, former rebel groups may achieve a successful, partial, façade or failed transformation (de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 16).

H1a: Due to lack of agreement on other issues than the territory's status and declined relevance of the major war-time cleavage, the initial motivation of separatism has impacted rebel-to-party transition negatively through a lack of vision of post-conflict governance and basis for party establishment.

H1b: The hierarchical rebel group structure is maintained during the rebel-to-party transition, leading to highly centralized party organization.

3.2 The Importance of Winning

In many ways, no rebel group initially seems well equipped to run, maintain and develop a modern state; *“During the war, insurgents often are violent, fractious, and supportive of all-or-nothing policies, characteristics that make them unlikely candidates for the management of successful peacetime regimes.”* (Lyons, 2016, p. 167). Some rebel groups manage this transition, some never make it. The way a conflict ends, is assumed to be of importance. Lyons finds a strong connection between rebel victory and strong post-war authoritarian parties –

which is the situation today in his study of Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia. This happens via two main components, the war legacy follows the group, and the transitional dynamics following victory, creates opportunities for power consolidation. Four mechanisms take place in these two components; Coherent leadership and solidarity, wartime governance, initial legitimacy from victory and power consolidation rather than power sharing. Through these mechanisms, victorious insurgents build institutions and processes generally thought of as positive for post-war democratization, but they use them for consolidating their own position (ibid, p. 180). These parties gain legitimacy through being effective, and will often bring about important progress in their respective states. This happens both because of internal discipline, and because a genuine opposition isn't allowed. Victory then leads to effective party organizations, but also authoritarian regimes as a whole, long after wars are ended. Whether weaker party organizations would be conducive for democratization, or just possibly lead to renewed violence, is unclear (personal communication with Lyons, August 2016).

Some scholars see these types of outright victories as a great advantage. Luttwak (1999) argues that when the fighting parties either get exhausted, or one outright wins, it resolves political conflicts, reduces uncertainty and eventually leads to *real* peace. However, due to third-party involvement, wars between weaker parties no longer run their natural course until someone wins or all actors are exhausted. The international norm has gone from international security to human security. Security has gone from states being protected from each other, to human groups and individuals being protected by the international community (Kovacs and Svensson, 2013, p. 8). Instead of letting wars go all the way until one side declares victory, it's now considered ethically unacceptable to sit on the sideline and do nothing as innocent civilians are being massacred. The injustice and horror of war is nothing new – the prominence and authority of human rights are. This is considered a positive development, but does run the risk of simplifying the picture and making traditional conflict management tools difficult to utilize. The result may be a conflict never being resolved, but prohibited, causing a territory to end up in a never ending-grey zone. Some wars could have been over in a matter of weeks, but ethically the result would be intolerable.

Due to the nature and aftermath of civil wars, Fearon and Laitin (2007, p. 2) also suggest a military victory to be most stable, as rebel groups fight for all or nothing. They will not disarm and leave the scene once there has been a promise from the central government to look into policy x. Despite the risks connected with eliminating the loser completely, power-sharing appears worse in their game theoretic model. They point to foreign intervention and leadership

changes as the most significant shocks to terminate a civil war, especially a rapid change in the type of foreign intervention. Walter (2002) problematizes the all-or-nothing image of rebel groups, and argues that much of the literature doesn't consider that insurgents are capable of looking down the road, and calculate their post-war destiny. She acknowledges the difficulties of making negotiated settlements work, as opposed to clear victories. However, she finds that elements such as third party guarantees and power-sharing agreements will secure the rebels respectively short-term physical survival and long-term political viability, making negotiated settlements a good option. Unlike Luttwak, she finds the arrival of peace-keeping forces on the ground important for the continued functioning of the war-to-peace process, whereas Luttwak finds peace-keeping forces to be weak, poorly equipped and more concerned for themselves than the victims of war (2009, p. 38).

Separatist conflicts tend to get ugly fast, even more so than civil wars over central government. Of all possible disputes that can occur within a state, self-determination disputes are the ones most likely to escalate to war, and the least likely to end in compromise (Walter, 2009, introduction). Only 25 % of all separatist groups were given independence or autonomy, and separatist wars rarely end in power sharing (Fearon and Laitin, 2007, p. 16). Kovacs and Hatz (2016, p. 996) also find that key provisions often found in peace agreements securing the post-war stability in conflicts over central government control, are seldom included in territorial conflicts. Quinn, Mason and Gurses (2007, p. 179) conclude that ethnic civil wars differ from ideological civil wars in that the demands are less negotiable, and are therefore less likely to end through negotiations. Loyalty towards ideology can be fluid, but to ethnicity extremely rigid. Furthermore, civil wars tend to be a game of all or nothing not only from the rebel side, but also from the government side. Walker (2009, p. 200) sees this in the light of the theory of reputation building. The government is placed in an extremely difficult strategic situation. Giving in to a separatist demand, may not have great consequences in itself, but governments fear the potential message it sends. Remaining challenges within a state, will be decisive for its response to a rebel group. Rebel groups take this into consideration, and are far more likely to challenge a government that has previously backed down to another group's demand. The present-future tradeoff will be decisive for how a rebel group is dealt with. Walker shows how Indonesia, with many ethnic minorities, have relatively few demands due to harsh crackdowns on those who have presented separatist demands before – whereas the Philippines, where the government has been more willing to negotiate, have had many demands despite having few ethnic groups.

The importance of victory however, has received some criticism. Quinn, Mason and Gurses, (2007, p.188) find that negotiated settlements followed by peacekeeping forces are more stable than both government and rebel victory. Many countries continue a stable political path without having had a clear winner if peacekeeping forces are present, often even more so than where there is a clear winner. Kovacs and Isaksson (2013) sees the new trend of increased militarism and military victories in as alarming, because the long-term prospects are found to be worse in these cases than in negotiated settlements in their dataset. One important element to consider, is that placing a civil war terminations into the categories of either negotiated settlement or victory, is not always straightforward. Fearon and Laitin (2007, p. 3) therefore propose to code outcomes on whether the rebels achieved their goal of central government control, or control in the region they were fighting for, instead of necessarily searching for a formal settlement or truce. The grey zones matter, and conflict terminations are far from always black or white. The losing side can continue to cause problems and retain power in many other ways, or end up receiving certain benefits. A winner might also walk on eggshells on certain issues in fear of possible backfires. A third option is fighting to a standstill, without an official solution, thereby creating de facto states although not de jure. A very few cases, are the result of the international community effectively ending the violence and / or remaining in charge. Kreutz (2010, p. 243) also emphasizes that conflicts don't exclusively end with decisive outcome, but often under unclear circumstances where fighting simply ceases. When breaking down the UCDP-PRIO Armed Conflict dataset into different categories, "other outcome" is found to be the most common form of conflict termination.

H2a: The development of modern warfare will make it difficult to classify the war termination, which will influence the political parties on both sides post-war.

H2b: The ambivalence surrounding the war termination, affected the development of political parties associated with Kosovo's liberation.

3.3 The Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis

The inclusion-moderation hypothesis' most essential point, is that political individuals and groups will become more moderate as they're included in pluralist political processes (Schwedler, 2011, p. 348). Radical groups can achieve a more moderate stance towards democratic ideals and processes through their own interaction with democratic institutions and electoral politics. This interaction will lead to an incentive-based transformation, where in the game of democratic bargaining, old ideals will be reinterpreted in the light of new ones (Gurses,

2014, p. 646). The hypothesis investigates how beliefs and practices change over time, and under which circumstances. Different scholars disagree somewhat when it comes to where the moderation occurs, and which processes and events that cause them, but three elements are consistently seen as decisive: 1) the behavioral moderation of groups, 2) the ideological moderation of groups, and 3) ideological moderation of individuals. As a radical group enters electoral politics, they become more visible and open to more repercussions, and is therefore rendered as more vulnerable. Individuals in the party will then realize that radical standpoints and lack of will to compromise will scare off many potential voters (Tezcur, 2009, p. 71). The process is an elitist one, focusing on choices made by elite actors. Radical organizations will at certain key points need to make choices about what they demand, and how they will go about to achieve it. Parties are conservative organizations, and change does not “just happen” (Løvlie, 2013, p. 573). Internal change of dominant factions and / or leader, and external shocks can both contribute to change, but the latter is considered more salient.

It's impossible for an insurgent group to overthrow the ancien régime overnight and obtain power without loosening up their demands at all. No stable democratic regime has ever been born this way (Bermeo, 1997, p. 306). Lasting (democratic) institutions are the result of negotiations and compromises between elites, where they calculate their own desires and preferences (Huntington, 1984, p. 212). Elites may prefer moderation and compromise because they hold high ideals of how they want their society to be governed. Often however, it will also be a means to achieve other goals, such as prolonging one's own rule, or achieving international recognition. Support may be superficial, and last only as long as the insurgents are in power. Elections may be a mere façade, electoral platforms a poor indicator of actual change in ideology and behavior - and the true normative commitment to democracy in these groups may be questionable (Gurses, 2014, p. 647). The commitment is often provisional and conditioned, and sensitive issues avoided or postponed. When and where a movement moderates, is decisive for its entire development. The degree to which a group should moderate and on what, has been researched by several scholars, who all end up somewhere in the middle. Valenzuela (1989, p. 450) argues that the ideal mix, is to have high mobilization at certain key moments of the authoritarian breakdown, followed by restraint when the political agenda turns in their favor. Repression of the insurgency will prove difficult in the long run if intense mobilization continues. Without any sign of compromise and moderation in later phases however, this may lead to a backlash for the insurgents both from regime hard-liners and international actors, as the cost of meeting their demands will become too high. The classical definition given in Dahl's

Polyarchy, is that the cost of suppression needs to rise and the cost of tolerance needs to decline (Dahl, 1971, p. 36). Elites are according to Bermeo (1997, p. 317) thought to possibly accept change if they foresee either that moderates within the opposition group will end up victorious, or if they themselves will still hold some power. If they foresee a complete radical victory, they will reject all demands. To achieve their main goal, several minor goals must be dropped or postponed by the radical group. At the same time, they must stay true to certain key elements of their vision, in order not to lose their legitimacy, and in turn popular support.

As a process, moderation can be defined as moving away from a rigid world-view to a more tolerant and open one (Gurses, 2014, p. 647). The first of the three elements considered essential to a groups' moderation, is the behavioral moderation of groups. As post-revolutionary groups enter institutionalized politics, they face an arena they have little to none experience with. When faced with a system they have previously been denied access to, these new constraints of the democratic, electoral system are thought to make the group abandon radical tactics and play by the book (Schweidler, 2011, p. 352). Incentives to participate, makes the group adapt to the new system and bargain, to take advantage of the political opening. Important events in this phase may include ending the use of violence, ending commitment to a revolution, accept certain economic, social and political existing institutions and work through the channels of elections and parliament. Accept for certain key ground rules of the political transformation needs to take place, where different groups need to acknowledge that none of them will be able to monopolize the process (Huntington, 1991, p. 170). Moderation can be accepted, as the key to victory. Power struggles and local context can be extremely important in this phase (Schweidler, 2011, p. 355). As a group has entered the democratic game, going back to a radical agenda will prove difficult (Tezcur, 2009, p. 71).

Sequencing is key. Incentives alter strategic choices, which leads to behavioral moderation of groups, which again leads to ideological moderation of groups – the hypothesis' second element. Ideological moderation entails abandoning, postponing or revising radical goals, to be able to function in normal democratic give-and-take politics. A shift towards a more genuine accept for the democratic rules of the game will occur, including peaceful alternation of power, and accept for political pluralism (Wickham, 2004, p. 206). Democratic norms become internalized instead of superficial, often because of experience with the crises and frustrations of authoritarian rule. Sometimes radical groups moderate quite substantially, without ever fitting into a traditional Western characteristic of moderate. Some bridges won't be crossed. For old deal-breakers to become imaginable or justifiable, some degree of internal

debate needs to be taking place (Schweidler, 2011, p. 359). The more closed a group is, the less likely a subsequent, genuine ideological moderation will be. The debates necessary might be intense and uncomfortable, and force the members to go back on certain things they swore they never would. However, the content of these debates is not the most important, what matters is that they take place at all. When analyzing ideological moderation, Wickham (2004, p. 206) suggests that changes in the statements and views of the group and its leadership, relative to their positions in the past, will provide helpful clues. It's important to remember however, that moderation may be uneven across areas. Success is most likely when all relevant actors, friends or foes, manage to find the smallest common denominator they can all accept, a consensus where the benefits exceed the risk of "selling out" (Huntington, 1991, p. 167).

The third phase through which moderation occurs, is the ideological moderation of individuals. Here, the analysis advances the moderation debate beyond the focus on parties (Schweidler, 2011, p. 363). Individuals with different perspectives and experiences, and internal power struggles are here under scrutiny, instead of the group as a whole. This phase is inspired by the model of political learning. As radical individuals interact with more established and moderate actors, as a consequence of them being invited to join the pluralist political system, their own perspectives will change as a consequence of broader experience. Incidents in reference states may provide an incentive for new ideas and knowledge, and similar earlier groups can provide lessons both from their success and their mistakes (Huntington, 1991, p. 174). Through the democratic electoral system, they may find themselves interacting with different actors to reach similar common goals. A harsh language without any reference to compromise and collaboration, becomes friendlier. Statements will gradually stray away from what was said in the original document or manifesto. An individual member's desire for compromise and moderation does not result solely from one's own experience, but from witnessing and learning from the experience of others. In a desire for change and reform, actors may begin to cooperate with other actors they once shun. All in all, interaction with "the others" is decisive for successful deradicalization. Browers (2009) warns against the focus on groups and parties at the expense of individuals, stating that; "*Political parties do not work for moderation, individuals within and outside of parties do*" (quoted in Schweidler, 2011, p. 367). Moderation may also indicate that some moderate individuals were present from the beginning, and become more visible, as opposed to more numerous. The moderation process is also not always as straightforward as shown here, and Wickham (2004, p. 206) points to the possibility of an uneven moderation development. Even after quite some time a group may have moderated

on many important issues, but hold radical views about others, especially the ultimate end goal, even if this is a utopian one.

H3: The KLA moderated behaviorally and ideologically as a result of their inclusion in political processes and institutions.

3.4 The Role of the International Community

The dilemma the international community faces regarding intervening in foreign conflicts, is according to Ottoway (2003, p. 321) that; “*accepting different standards for different countries violates the idea that human rights are universal, while upholding the same standards everywhere violates common sense*”. In short, not intervening is problematic and intervening could be even worse. In the 1990s the world faced a war scene where most conflicts were within one state, and 90 % of the casualties were civilians (Paris, 2004, introduction). International leaders could morally not do nothing as war tactics such as ethnic cleansing, genocide, mass rape and mass executions were taking place. Understanding the context of the wars and areas the international community felt obliged to intervene in however, was immensely difficult. But the choice of an international actor to enter, and the character of the intervention, can prove decisive for both ending an armed conflict, and the development of a post-war state. Ottoway examines the content of what has been labeled *the democratic reconstruction model*, whose goal is to build durable peace in post-conflict societies. The liberal internationalist paradigm posits that market democracy and democratic institutions and structures, are key to sustainable peace and reconciliation (Lyons, 2009, p. 91). Democratization should make the actors move their conflict from the battleground to the arena of electoral politics. Many of the countries recovering from intra-state war, were under authoritarian or semi-authoritarian rule before the eruption of war. Whatever little institutional infrastructure for democratic development may have existed, has often been shattered by intensive conflict (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 261). Democratization is seen as the most crucial element to prevent a future outbreak of renewed violence.

The democratic reconstruction model includes several elements. Elections are essential - the new legitimate form of authority and power needs be validated through free and fair multiparty elections. (Lyons, 2009, p. 91). These elections are seen as a clear marker that a transition has taken place, the old is replaced with the new. The case study evidence is mixed. In some cases, elections genuinely do initiate an era of peaceful, democratic transition of power. In other cases, elections have sparked new rounds of violence, been of secondary importance

to where power really resides, or functioned as a mechanism for authoritarian leaders to consolidate their power. The international community assists countries preparing for post-conflict elections technically, practically and financially. It also helps frame election laws and regulations, supervise and monitor the elections, and make the losing parties accept their defeat (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 262). In some cases, the international community took this even further. In the case of Kosovo, it basically took over the entire administration of the territory. If these efforts are to be fruitful, key steps in the demilitarization of politics need to have taken place prior to the vote. A big enough incentive should be in place for the former warring factions to see the value of shifting their strategies from violence to electoral policies (Lyons, 2009, p. 92). A peace keeping mission which is to effectively not only end the war, but keep the peace, needs to identify and alleviate the underlying issues in the state that could cause the return of violence. The numbers of the 1990s spoke for themselves, over 50 % of civil wars saw the return of violence. In the context of holding post-conflict elections, the importance of one element became clear; That of political parties. Parties can play an instrumental role in conflict management and democratic peace-building, but often lack the capacity and skills to do so in war-torn societies (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 262). The international community would therefore assist them in drafting party rules, recruiting candidates, writing election manifestos and carrying out campaigns. Opposition parties routinely find themselves in an extreme disadvantage compared to the incumbents, and will be in particular need of outside assistance. A set of minimum rules and regulations need to be developed to facilitate multiparty competition, since many of these countries lack a legal and regulatory basis for this type of competition to take place at all, not to mention in a free and fair manner.

Although cases differ with respect to socio-cultural cleavages, economic development, ethnic cleavages, institutional structure and devastation caused by the civil war, some general conditions of political parties and the environment they operate in can be identified (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 262). The law and order situation is usually horrible, and not conducive to the growth of political parties. Gangs of criminals, unemployed, uneducated and ex-combatants roam around. A subculture of impunity can hang on for years, due to inefficiency and corruption in law enforcement agencies, and state presence in different areas of the country may differ greatly. The economic infrastructure is devastated, and many rely on humanitarian aid or black markets (Lyons, 2009, p. 93). There is also vast social disorganization. Social and political trust is eroded, particularly in countries which underwent ethnic conflict. Frustrated youth lacking opportunities in an already weak institutional framework, combined with the return of refugees

and internally displaced people also add to the cumulative result of civic trust and mutual understanding fading away. A key goal for the international assistance should therefore be to establish trust, not just between former warring factions but between political parties.

Originally, the democratic reconstruction model was a relatively simple affair, consisting of two main elements; The demilitarization of politics and the construction of a democratic system where finally, elections would be held (Ottoway, 2003, p. 316). The international community learned from these early experiences, and consequently the model grew ever more complex. Attention and resources became aimed at a complete reform of the entire security sector, from the military to the police, building up civil society, promoting an independent media, ensuring the rule of law and strengthening regional and local government. The states in which the international community had intervened had so grave problems that these reforms all needed to be implemented, but they couldn't implement them because their problems were so grave. Implementing everything at once was extraordinarily difficult even if the political will was present, which is not always the case. In some cases, it may seem more reasonable to initially focus on ending the violence and demilitarize politics, than to expect a large-scale democratization (Lyons, 2009, p. 93). Change in every area of public administration is desirable, but far from always realistic. There has however been an increased focus on what is necessary to make political parties function well. The international community now also assists in developing of party laws and regulations. Party registration and organization, election and campaigning laws and regulations for political party financing are all important elements to pay close attention to when engineering a new system (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 267). Regulations have been put in place to avoid nationalist and militant politicians getting into parliament, and secure a representative distribution of parliamentary seats with regards to the general demography. But there is some disagreement over how strict these regulations should be. International experts have feared the rise of parties that could reignite ethnic conflict, but also that legal restrictions on parties could benefit authoritarian governments by handing them an excuse to undermine opposition parties, especially where rule of law is weak. Incumbent regimes often manage to manipulate the rules to their advantage regardless of what these rules are, in the absence of external and internal pressure. This can be reinforced by an international community often more concerned with stability than adherence to the installed democratic laws.

Earlier peace keeping projects were lightly armed and were specifically designed not to interfere with domestic politics. Some key changes in the international political community at the beginning of the 1990s, changed all this. Perhaps most important, is the end of the cold war,

for two reasons. One is the practical side. After the cold war, the US was practically the only superpower left, and could maneuver more freely according to their own preferences, without fearing a direct clash with Moscow (Luttwak, 1999, p. 37). The other side, is the ideological, with the US now being able to use their new position to a larger extent, to steer international development in its preferred direction. This new world order is sometimes just referred to as the Pax Americana (Kovacs and Svensson, 2013, p. 4), with an international community ready to interfere, and spread peace through democracy. These international interventions seem to Luttwak however, to be more interested in protecting their own staff, than actually doing what they came for. Disinterested warfare, troop degradation and lack of means and information can become a lethal combination. Troops may become spectators to crimes and massacres, such as in Rwanda and Bosnia, or even end up helping the perpetrators, such as when Dutch U.N. troops helped Bosnian Serbs separate men of military age from the rest of the Srebrenica population. Even when operations successfully end wars, they often fail to address important underlying issues, causing the conflicts to freeze, and cause deep animosity between the warring factions. Creating functioning institutions such as political parties is challenging, when to many the war never really ended. Some of the pressure to establish a specific kind of political and economic organization, is eased by the fact that many of the actors involved in party development assistance, are independent bodies, even though they are mostly government funded. Some of the assistance is based on ideological lines, creating sister organizations abroad or through party internationals such as the Liberal or Socialist international. Other actors include organizations such as the UN and OSCE (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008, p. 267). Still, these missions have not been merely technical, but promoted a particular model of political and economic organization, for the most part that of a liberal market economy. When external actors favor a certain outcome, it may disturb the democratic process as a whole (Manning, 2007, p. 269). The desire to help may not have been the problem, but rather the methods used (Paris, 2004, introduction).

H4a: The promotion of liberal democracy and market economy during and after the war has shaped political parties, through the ideologies and economic systems they promote.

H4b: The international intervention stopped the fighting, but did not solve the underlying issues that led to war, causing a freezing of the conflict which will be detectable in the political parties and how they interact with each other.

3.5 Parties – Origins and Functions in a Non-Western Setting

There is great consensus to the view that political parties are an indispensable part of a well-functioning, democratic political system. Parties aren't usually included in the definition of democracy, but the emergence of some form of multi-party system, is generally seen both as an unavoidable consequence of basic democratic rights such as freedom of organization, and as a necessary component of democracy as it is practiced in real-world politics (Randall and Svåsand, 2002, p. 2). Their importance in both democratic transitions and consolidations is widely acknowledged, but the existing literature doesn't necessarily pin down just what this contribution is. They "come around", in the time leading up to the founding election.

Parties are traditionally thought to serve two main functions. They provide candidates for democratic competition, and agendas for politics. How candidates are provided and elected varies across political system, but through lists or individuals, voters can choose their preferred representatives through the parties. By articulating their ideological views and goals, the parties can be held accountable for their actions both by fellow elites and the electorate (O'Neill, 2015, p. 158). Ideological commitment and ideas come down to political platforms and programs, which offer voters an ideological, but also practical, menu to choose from. Ideally, parties are homogenous enough to create majority rule, but heterogeneous enough to prevent "majority tyranny". A central claim is that a democratic system induces governments to be responsive to the will of the people. And due to the everyday political organization parties perform, some claim that parties are precisely what induces governments to be responsive. Others are more skeptical. If almost anyone can enter the political scene through joining or creating a party, extremist and deviant voices can gain momentum, which in turn lowers the responsiveness of government to the citizenry (Stokes, 1999, p. 243). This risk can be minimized through for instance election thresholds or regulations regarding party establishment.

Different scholars look at political parties at several levels, such as parties in relations with the electorate, parties as organizations and parties in government. Randall and Svåsand (2002, p. 4) see them as mostly operating at an intermediate level. They identify a series of functions to which the analysis of political parties should be based on; 1. Electorate-related (representation and expression of demands, simplifying and structuring the electoral choice, integrating voters into the system and political education), 2. Linkage-related (aggregating and channeling interests, recruitment and training of leaders), and 3. Government-related (making government accountable, implementing party policy, exercising control over government

administration and organizing opposition and dissent). These elements combined ensure the broader system-level functions of political parties; conflict resolution, institutionalization of democracy and contributing to the stability and legitimacy of the regime (ibid, p. 5).

There is no modern democracy without parties. Classic scholars have pointed to their indispensability in institutionalizing political competition, from de Tocqueville to Schnattschneider to Lipset. Lipset (2000, p. 47), sums up their importance by concluding that; *“Democracy in a complex society may be defined as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office - that is, through political parties.”* A country such as Kosovo however, does not belong to a category of advanced, consolidated or complex democracies, although every single political leader states this as their goal. Aspirations to join the EU and other international organizations, have largely been evaluated along improvements related to democratic ideals, such as improved rule of law, fighting corruption, normalizing relationships with neighboring countries and so forth. The political parties have played a key role, and have integrated these goals in their programs. I am however interested in how these aforementioned functions and purposes of parties have been interpreted and practiced in a non-Western state without a gradual path towards democracy and no democratic experience. Observers of new democracies in Eastern Europe and Latin America, blame the shortfalls of these democracies largely on the absence or weakness of political parties (Stokes, 1999, p. 244). The rise to power through elections of a military leader such as Chavez, has been attributed to the two dominant parties losing touch with the electorate (Randall and Svåsand, 2002, p. 5).

A common problem in much of the literature on political parties, is the European or Western bias. By testing these theories in a non-Western setting, there is a risk for conceptual stretching. Parties have emerged to perform some common functions at various stages of political, social and economic development – they have organized public opinion and communicated demands to the center of government (Lapolambara and Weiner, 1966, p. 3). The broader community is analyzed within a party, which develops their own concepts and meanings. Political parties tended to emerge as the political system became more complex, to the point that it was perceived that the general mass public needed to participate in a controlled manner. Parties are then the outgrowth of development processes, not what initiates them. In Western Europe, political parties and their development have been affected by the importance of earlier elite settings, the relationship between politics and economics, the reach of democratic

parties versus other power holders and cleavage lines (Daalder, 1966, p. 43), all elements we tend to think of as essential regarding political parties. Parties are then viewed as responses to modern circumstances (Epstein, 1967, p. 351). They have come to function in accordance with a pluralist democratic framework, where parties are large and strong organizations able to mobilize electoral support for programmatic policies which can be enacted when in government, or fought for in opposition. In Western democracies, parties have emerged alongside the gradual extension of the suffrage, and changes in social and economic structures.

In non-Western settings, these characteristics are largely absent. Still, political parties in post-conflict states such as Kosovo, are trained to create similar organizations and are evaluated by the same indicators as their Western counterparts. Some key characteristics should therefore be common. This runs the risk of stretching the concept, by adding additional attributes, or nuancing and grading those already present (Goertz, 2006, p. 71). If attributes of the concept are treated very strictly, the concept is clearer, but fewer cases can be included. Despite the virtue of clarity, concepts need to be broad enough to say something about several different cases. With this in mind, I'm curious as to how the concept of parties is perceived among the Kosovan politicians, especially regarding to attributes such as functions, responsibilities and ideology. Despite of the "travelling problem", some traditional functions should be expected to be in place, two decades after war, with extensive aid and training. This would include presenting at elections, and being capable of placing candidates in public offices through these elections (Sartori, 1976, p. 57) and generating symbols of identification and loyalty, as well as and simplifying voter's choice, in addition to mobilizing them. Ability to organize both majority and coalition governments should also be present (Løvlie, 2013, p. 571). I am curious to see who the parties of post-conflict Kosovo represent, and what their chances are of representing them in public offices and institutions.

H5a: Political parties in Kosovo after the war have developed substantial ideological profiles and political programs, that distinguish the parties from one and other.

H5b: Political parties in Kosovo after the war have developed a significant representative function, and their core group of voters should be identifiable.

H5c: Political parties in Kosovo have a reasonable chance to enter the government, and a clear accountability function when in opposition.

4.0 Method

This thesis uses a qualitative methodological framework, based on a single case study. To gather the data necessary for answering the case study's research question, data was collected through 21 qualitative interviews, in addition to document analysis. The comparative element in a single case study like this, is over time, and between theories.

4.1 The Single Case Study

This thesis compares the same units of analysis over time, and evaluates different sources of information. Since I've chosen to focus on one country, the design is as a single case study. The case study is a qualitative study that explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). This thesis is marked by all three situations where Yin (2014, p. 2) suggests a case study to be the preferred method; 1) The main research question is a "how" question - How has the war legacy affected the development of political parties in post-conflict Kosovo? 2) I as a researcher have little or no control over behavioral events, 3) The focus of study is a contemporary (as opposed to entirely historical) phenomenon, basically meaning that I can find respondents who are still alive, but I can't manipulate the relevant behavior I'm looking for. Out of the different reasons suggesting the use of a case study, I relate most to the need for an in-depth description of "how something worked", in order to answer my research question. I'm studying how a war that erupted 19 years ago have affected the development of the political parties that constitute the Kosovan political landscape today. When doing so, I want to get the actors who experienced it first hand to communicate their own thoughts and experiences to me. In a research process like this, one has to focus on the participants' own opinions. The analysis is to reflect the participants' different perspectives (Creswell, 2013, p. 47). No survey questionnaire would allow me to get under the skin of a guerilla soldier gone professional politician the way I needed.

The case study's goal is to establish an operational link between one set of conditions (causes) and their effects. The driving force is a wish to uncover causality, by disclosing the mechanisms which made a certain set of relations come to be (SEERC, 2010). Due to my wish to uncover such causal mechanisms, and not simply describe or explore a phenomenon, this case study is an explanatory case study (Yin, 2014, p. 9). I need to trace operational links over time, not just look at certain incidents or frequencies of incidents. A case study allows for a better understanding, when the boundaries of and relationship between the phenomenon being

researched, and the context in which it resides, is unclear or ambiguous. It is also fruitful when studying variables that are not easily measured (Creswell, 2013, p. 48). When asking questions such as; “How was the KLA organized?”, the feedback would not be as helpful if respondents were to range it from 1 to 5. When answering a research question like mine, nuances and details matter, and the chosen method needs to enable this to come out. My respondents’ perceptions and opinions of the developments in question, are my main source of data in addition to document analysis, and the method needs to accommodate this open scene of data collection.

A case study always examines a case of something (Yin, 2014, p.31). From a theoretical perspective I am, through different theories, exploring political parties in a post-conflict state. The Kosovo war, with its dynamics and developments, is the independent variable. The political parties, which have been affected by this, is the dependent variable. Kosovo is the case, a case of a post-conflict state, in which parties operate. I am curious as to how the Kosovan context affected the development of its political parties, after the conflict settlement of 1999. To be more specific, I could say that the case is the post 1999 Kosovan political regime. I believe that the case of Kosovo is rich enough to stand on its own in this master thesis. The value of what is added, must be weighed against what is lost by including more. In a case study like this, internal validity is more of a concern than external validity. The best I can do as far as external validity goes, is to ensure that the theoretical framework is solid, and that questions are theoretically driven. Considering how much more theoretically driven and methodologically self-conscious good qualitative research have become, its potential for contributing to the accumulation of knowledge on its own is solid (Levy, 2008, p. 2). The focus of a case study now, is not an individual narrative, but a contribution to the construction and validation of theoretical propositions.

I classify my study as a *typical* single case study, a case study providing insight into a broader phenomenon which it must be representative of, due to the Kosovo conflict representing a general trend in the development of conflict termination. Wars for the most part no longer end with one party militarily beating the other, but through international mediation or intervention, where gaining the support of a third actor might prove more important than winning on the battle field (Aarebrot and Evjen, 2014, p. 373). The findings related to the development of Kosovo’s post-conflict political parties, should therefore be able to provide lessons for other post-conflict societies, where most now experience the interference of a third actor. This third actor may be another state, or the international community, but rarely will one of the two warring factions be able to declare complete military victory. The typical case study’s objective

is to capture the circumstances and conditions of a repeated / common situation. The lessons learned, are assumed to be informative regarding the average similar situation (Yin, 2003, p. 41). Gerring (2007, p. 89) defines the typical case study as a typical example of some cross-case relationship, which uses hypothesis testing, which is how I have designed my study in order to gather empirical results related to the theoretical frameworks.

Kosovo isn't the only case which could've been chosen due to this rationale. However, to study the development of political parties in a post-conflict situation, the case should have experienced a meaningful amount of development and democratization, for parties' role to be of meaningful relevance. Cases such as South-Sudan and Eritrea would therefore fall out, due to state collapse and highly authoritarian regimes. Other de-facto states such as Transnistria, South Ossetia, Abkhazia or even Palestine and the Sahrawi Republic, fall out due to their limited recognition, making it more problematic for political parties to perform traditionally meaningful roles. Due to limited recognition, among other aspects, these cases are neither as resolved, and many are still, to varying degrees, violent. They therefore don't capture the post-conflict aspect as well, where the situation might still be tense, but there shouldn't be systematic, continued organized violence. Kosovo was also an early case in the new era of international interventions, and the conflict was solved on paper near two decades ago. It's therefore possible to find more solid findings which are evident over time.

The case study aims at establishing causality. When analyzing qualitative data, the most important job is to discover significant linkages of events, and properties which characterize them (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 110). Regarding the theories tested, the analysis is to strengthen or weaken support for a theory, narrow or extend their scope conditions, and demonstrate which theory better explains the case (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 109). The analytic process is grounded in the data, meaning both interpretation of data and checking these interpretations when gathering more data, such as when I made the decision not to interview more opposition candidates, as a saturation point was reached. Data can be evaluated based on the extent to which it answers the research question (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 118). When doing this, Yin (2014, p. 142- 168) lists several analytic strategies. I categorize my analysis as *explanation building*, which is a natural technique to use in an explanatory case study. Causal links need to be established, and the "hows" and "whys" stipulated (Yin, 2014, p. 147). The approach can contribute to theory testing and building. It's a quite open technique, as it requires specifying a theoretical pattern and matching the observed pattern, but is open to the final explanation not having been fully anticipated from the beginning, thus strengthening

internal validity while also being open to nuances and the importance of negative findings as well as positive. The possibility to trace change over time is a great strength of the case study. In a chronological sequence, the dependent variable is affected by many different events and developments, and it's expected to find some important before and after, based on theory. Interruptions, changes and shocks affect the timeline. Keys to causal relationships often lie here.

4.2 Field work

When collecting data, I conducted three and a half weeks of fieldwork in Kosovo. *Fieldwork* is the act of inquiring into the nature of a phenomena by studying it first hand in the environment in which it naturally exists or occurs (Georges and Jones, 1980, prologue). Qualitative research in general necessitates some type of encounter with the real world, and according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p. 3), qualitative research interprets phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Research generates knowledge through real-world encounters with the studied phenomena. Based on this, not going in the field would make this case study rather thin. I could have gained substantial amounts of knowledge by not going into the field, but this would've been already processed information, showing only some sides of the story, not necessarily the one's most important to answer my research question. By going into the field, I could ask exactly those I wanted exactly what I wanted. Meeting respondents in person in their own environment also created a better bond, an element of great importance. While in the field, respondents would feel comfortable, introduce me to other relevant persons, and provide me personally with their own material in Albanian. One respondent for example, gave me an organizational map over KLA operative zones, hierarchically arranged from zone commander to battalion medic. I've never seen a similar document during my literature review.

4.2.1 Preparing and Sampling

Timing fieldwork can be challenging. Kosovo is experiencing a deep political crisis, the worst since the end of the war, with opposition parties joining their forces against the government (Delauney, 2015). The crisis has been fueled by allegations of endemic corruption within state institutions and the passing of controversial legislation under the table. Tear gas has been fired off both inside the parliament and at the latest presidential inauguration (RT, 2016). It seemed like the worst time ever to go, with an opposition boycotting parliament, respondents put in house arrest and the biggest governing party being difficult to get in contact with. Knowing the current circumstances surrounding the individuals the researcher wants to

meet, is an important step in preparing for field work (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 19). Therefore, when I had to find my respondent's house myself because she was in house arrest, the dialogue became more natural as I already knew about her circumstances, and how she could get there without a verdict in the first place. As a blessing in disguise, many respondents seemed beyond ready to talk openly, in the current frustrating political environment.

When inviting people to be respondents, I chose them based on two criteria. They had to be either current politicians or former KLA members. Many are both. A few experts in relevant fields were also interviewed, such as the Director of the Prishtina Institute of Political Studies and a local analyst. I would initially get in contact with my respondents through e-mail or phone, after finding their information through official websites. Former KLA members could be a bit harder to track down, but news articles or publishers would sometimes list their current workplace etc., which gave me a base for trying to establish contact. After arriving in Kosovo, I would also visit public buildings and party offices. Buildings in Kosovo are poorly numbered, and several political parties don't have functioning websites. Eventually, navigating through Prishtina became easier, after asking directions from both respondents and local residents. Most respondents were directly contacted, and the snowball strategy was only effective a couple of times. In a post-conflict setting like this, one has to be a bit more careful with the gatekeeper strategy and snowballing. It became obvious that many of my respondents didn't particularly like each other. I was once asked why on earth I would be interested in interviewing such a loser, or told that my other respondents were low profile, including people such as former vice prime ministers and party leaders.

I ended up getting respondents from all six major Albanian parties, and three minority parties. More than half are directly connected to the war, such as commanders, soldiers, and a political advisor. Other respondents had been young refugees during the war, but had been involved in for instance fundraising abroad. Most people were glad that interest was shown in them. Mostly, I never got the feeling that I had to be aggressive or intrusive, people were for the most part willing to participate. Common sense and courtesy goes a long way in a setting like this, and people seem to open up and accept you once they realize that you are really just committed and interested (Georges and Jones, 1980, p. 47). All in all, I am happy with my range of respondents. The only significant problem, was getting respondents from PDK. Eventually I turned down offers with politicians from other parties. Although their insight was always fascinating and valuable, nothing substantially new was added. I had to focus on finding PDK respondents, as they are the biggest party, in government, and a KLA successor. During my last

week of field work, I e-mailed and called PDK members all day and haunted their parliamentary group office and anyone I knew with connections to the party. I finally got a breakthrough when I visited their main party office in Prishtina, and got a meeting with the Party Secretary, who in turned called one of their MPs to come and meet me afterwards. Still, I only got 3 PDK members, whereas from a smaller party such as VV, every person asked agreed to meet me. This does create a possible problem of skewedness. All I can do now, is to have this problem in mind, and make the best out of it. I also had an informant who had left the PDK, and as such had valuable insights. Additional PDK material and documents were also helpful.

4.3 Data Collection: The Qualitative Interview and Document Analysis

As a young Norwegian student, the gap to older Albanian guerilla soldiers and politicians, mostly male, is a quite big one. But through qualitative interviews, they would see me, hear and trust me. The face to face relaxed communication, made the conversations run easier. The need to see and hear my respondents, led me to choose qualitative interviews. The method resembles a guided conversation. An interview conducted in this manner, is supposed to be more natural and egalitarian in the relationship between the interviewer and respondent (Skinner, 2012, p. 8) Information is gained through the respondent's perception and memory of what happened, and what was important. Their thoughts, experiences and opinions are my data, so therefore interviews were the best strategy to follow. Christie (2015, p. 41), explains how he chooses interviews for data collection when he needs relevant actors to explain to him how something could happen. Understanding a phenomenon through a research question like mine, requires closeness to the relevant incidents and actors that shaped them. I had to ask the right questions to get the information I wanted. The theories I worked with, guided the interview guide I designed before doing field work. I wouldn't have gained the information I was interested in by for instance observing them in their daily life. I wanted answers regarding specific developments, such as how the KLA changed during the war and why. Case studies mostly look at human affairs and actions, and respondents with relevant knowledge provide extremely important material about these affairs and actions (Yin, 2014, p. 113).

Document analysis is undertaken to collect additional information and to gain a deeper understanding of specific details (Yin, 2014, p. 107). Document analysis is also valuable when researching the same phenomenon from different and opposing perspectives. In addition to crucial documents such as the 2008 constitution and formal settlements, I analyzed documents such as news articles, chronicles, agendas, announcements, statements, evaluations and political

programs. Various documents gave me valuable insight in addition to my interviews several times. For instance, KLA's program and Kosovo's constitution are contradictory in extremely important aspects, giving me important clues as to which dynamics of the war and post-war era to research. Another example was party programs, which made me more aware of which additional questions to ask the respondents when their answers regarding for instance ideology were unclear. If their answers and programs regarding this aspect did not match well, what were the reasons for stating a certain ideology in the first place? Document analysis allows the researcher to describe and track discourses, themes and meanings over time and between approaches (Altheide, Coyle, DeVriese and Schneider, 2010, p. 127). The dynamics between interviews and document analysis, was often what gave me much-needed breakthroughs when trying to make sense of the development of parties in this specific post-conflict context.

4.3.1 Conducting the Interviews and Considerations

Several ethical issues need to be dealt with when doing field work (Fangen, 2008, p. 362-283). Regarding informed consent, 20 out of 21 respondents were satisfied with the e-mail I sent them, and the project description signed by my supervisor. One interrupted me as I started asking questions, wanting to know who I really was and what this project was actually about. A field worker needs to have some type of speedy self-introduction ready for situations like this (Georges and Jones, 1980, p. 51). He was not particularly impressed with my next answer either, and gave me a speech on Kosovo starting in the 16th century. Some of the interviews also happened spontaneously, as people agreed to see me as they walked in on other interviews, or were called by other respondents. In these cases, informing went much quicker, but they received the same information as others had done in advance. In general, I always got the feeling that the respondents and myself were on the same page regarding what I was researching. That however, doesn't mean they would all appreciate or agree with the results, and that's where their influence must stop. I didn't perceive confidentiality as a goal. These are public persons, most of them portrayed in the media weekly. All are part of the country's top elite, having held high positions in the KLA, their political party and / or the government. They would've been easy to recognize even if they were anonymous. Often, respondents in qualitative research come from vulnerable groups we know little about, and authors such as Woliver (2002, p. 667) emphasize the importance of respecting their feelings and doing no harm to them. When I was sitting next to these former guerilla soldiers and commanders in Kosovo, I don't think the respondents' security was the one to be questioned. Also, in addition to taking notes, I recorded all interviews. No respondents had any problem with being recorded, they instead seemed to

find it fancy. The main reason for recording is easy, the sorting problem and the remembering problem (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 95), and this is what I pointed out when asking the respondents to tape them. My mere memory and notes, wouldn't have been sufficient to properly analyze 40+ hours of conversation. Sometimes it's also inappropriate to take notes, such as when respondents shared great personal loss, frustrations and anger. Some researchers find the tape recorder to be intrusive and damaging for the natural conversational flow (Woliver, 2002, p. 678). I however, never found this small gadget that doesn't make a sound and is hardly visible, to be a problem.

Large parts of the literature on qualitative methods, presents the distanced researcher which keeps a healthy distance from what she examines, as the ideal (Solberg, 1994, p. 123). To put it mildly: This did not happen. The respondents, because of my own background, were curious about what was foreign, and comfortable with what was similar. And as the Albanian way goes, one is expected to deliver a complete life history within the first five minutes of meeting someone. Occasionally, staying on topic was challenging, but for the most part, the interviews went according to plan. I tried to meet them in friendly and familiar environments, and made sure to show them respect and friendliness. I'm still surprised with how few dilemmas occurred when conducting the interviews. The respondents were open and interested, and could stay and talk for hours. The Kosovo Albanian political culture has been plagued with intimidation, threats, political violence and especially right after the war, politically motivated murders (see for instance Marzouk, 2010, or ICG Rapport no. 78, 1999). I still experienced their level of honesty as striking, in a political atmosphere slowly changing. Authors such as Yin (2014, p. 106) lists respondents' tendency to answer questions based on what they believe the researcher wants to hear, to be a common problem. I did not relate much to this. My respondents both embraced me, and put me in my place. Many invited me to meet again for various events, and a positive connection was achieved. But this openness was also showed the reversed way, such as when I asked one of my respondents if I had forgotten anything important, and he said everything. Once, when I asked if the people of Kosovo vote for ideology, program or individuals, the respondent made it clear that this question was so stupid in this national context that it didn't even deserve an answer. Luckily, he gave me one anyway, and negative findings are also important findings. There is a risk in that some of the given information is about sensitive, behind the scenes events. Some of it is hard to find neutral and accurate counter-information about. The best cure for this, is to investigate alternative sources of information as much and as far as it is possible.

The researcher also needs to be aware of how she represents herself in a given context. I was conscious about not appearing to be supporting one party over another, and emphasizing my role as a curious and neutral academic. The distance between what I do and what they do, seemed to make the respondents more open, and less restricted and defensive, even when talking about sensitive issues. Also, some saw foreign academics and public officials as people who personally gain something, professionally or financially, from the sad state the Kosovan political situation has been in. They come, work, and either get something exciting published or a good job. It was important to let them know that I was not one of them. A couple of respondents substantially altered their attitudes towards me when they found out I was paying for the trip with my own money, for the sole reason that I was genuinely interested and curious. In some ways, I embraced the role of someone subordinate to the respondent due to their incredible stories – although this is my project. At the same time, I would not under any circumstances play dumb or overly needy.

5.0 Empirical Analysis

The following empirical analysis will connect the collected data material piecewise, to the theories reviewed the and hypotheses generated in chapter 3.

5.1 Rebel Group Organization and Transformation

H1a: Due to lack of agreement on other issues than the territory's status and declined relevance of the major war-time cleavage, the initial motivation of separatism has impacted rebel-to-party transition negatively through a lack of vision of post-conflict governance and basis for party establishment.

It started as a mysterious organization in hillside villages. One grenade here, one Serb policeman shot there. By the time of late 1997 / early 1998, the KLA is publicly manifested, but little is still known about them. Because of their motivation of separating from Serbia, I classified the KLA as a separatist movement, although some of their members will perceive it more as a liberation movement, liberating their people from an illegitimate external regime. As reviewed in the theory chapter, separatist movements often have no shared ideology, other than secreting the territory from another territorial entity. Kurti (March 2016, interview) who worked for Adem Demaqi, General Political Representative for the KLA, agrees that individuals may have had ideologies, but the KLA did not. He describes their vision as; “*Liberation, a national liberation struggle. Anti-Serbia, anti-colonialist*”. The concern when this type of rebel group

transitions from war to peace, from armies to parties, is that the group may well agree that they will not accept being under someone else's governance, but not on how their own should be conducted. Near all my respondents felt strongly that the KLA had no other ideology than liberation. As Shala reminisced, he wouldn't have left a safe life in Switzerland behind, to fight for a battle between right and left (March 2016, interview). War was deemed inevitable, as their people were living in conditions that had become completely unbearable, and many were getting by at the mercy of money and help coming in from the diaspora.

Whereas the KLA itself had no ideology in the sense of one unified image of how to govern their society, apart from not being part of Serbia, they faced allegations of being both Islamist and communist. Bardhyl Mahmuti, KLA's Diplomatic Chief, have written extensively about these allegations and their roots. The Serb government claimed to have evidence linking the KLA to among others Al-Qaeda, and that large groups of radical Islamist foreign fighters from all over the world, were present in the KLA structure (White Paper on Albanian Terrorism and Organized Crime in Kosovo and Metohija, 2003). This was seen in a wider perspective regarding Muslims in the former Yugoslavia, and linked to the war in Bosnia, where foreign fighters were present to fight for the Muslim Bosniaks. Mahmuti strongly denies any such links, and sees it as an attempt to link the Albanian insurgency to general fears against Islamists, by framing the war as a religious one, scaring those without much knowledge of the actual history of the country. However, even a little bit of research will dispute many of the concrete claims in the White Paper, including basic elements such as places and dates (2015, p. 389). While going through organizational maps and so forth, it's near impossible to find a non-Albanian name. The leadership of the KLA, who have later become politicians, are not particularly religious. KLA icon Haradinaj is one example, who in a panel discussion stated that; *"For four generations my family were Catholic Albanians. I don't know why I am Muslim, because I never went to a mosque in my life"*. Haradinaj sees Islam in Kosovo as a legacy from the Ottoman organization (Columbia University, 2013). These were the men accused by Serbia of conspiring with Osama bin Laden. Sources claiming otherwise do circulate, but most of them provide original Serb documents as their sources, or link to no sources at all. Albanians belong to different religions – Islam and Catholic and Orthodox Christianity, but society has been rather secular. Except for minarets in the skyline, it is difficult to immediately detect that Kosovo is a Muslim-majority country, as it has culturally always been linked to Europe (Totten, 2008). There wouldn't have been much of a mobilization foundation for an Islamist uprising. Kurti (March 2016, interview), quoting author Fan Noli, says that; *"Albanians are essentially pagans"*

with three religions". Mahmuti (2015, p. 390) points to the irony that at the same time as the group was labeled as Islamist fanatics, they were also labeled communists, with its negative view on religion. He, and other prominent KLA figures including those I interviewed, strongly dismiss this claim as well. This is substantiated by the fact that all the immediate post-war political parties established, were parties promoting liberal economic policies, and no communist party has been established until this day. All initial post-war parties have also been extremely pro-Western, and pro-US.

Some are skeptical, and do see somewhat of an ideology behind the KLA. Severe tensions took place between the LPK, which KLA's initial cells most likely stem from, which was openly Marxist-Leninist and LDK. Later, this culminated in tensions between KLA and FARK, the armed wing of Bukoshi's LDK government in exile, such as serious clashes in the north of Albania (Gorani, March 2016, interview). LDK MP Salihaj (March 2016, interview), therefore thinks there was an ideology behind it because of the group's LPK background. He describes the organization as working against the right-wing LDK, and that the KLA saw LDK as a disturbing element once Kosovo was liberated, and power would be re-delegated. He remembers severe tensions both during and after the war, with political murders and threats; "*A number of people, good people, LDK-people, were killed. People who wanted to help, they were killed*". When Kosovan independence was completely ignored at Dayton, Agani (2015, p. 6), says that not only was this a chance to say that the LDK failed, but that their right-wing ideology failed as well. But for volunteers like Derguti, who had never touched a gun before, this was irrelevant. She joined because she saw no way back, whether they won or lost (March 2016, interview). Kurti shares this impression from what he saw on the ground – soldiers represented the entire political spectrum from right to left, no one ideology dominated over another. But they were unified as a front, based on the fight for liberation (March 2016, interview).

Whatever tensions there were, over ideology and Kosovo's future, seem to have taken place at a leadership level. The thousands of men and women fighting on the ground, had one thing drawing them to war, often from safe and comfortable lives in Western Europe, and that was liberation. Debates about religion, communism or financing, wasn't important on the ground, even if it was or wasn't at the leadership level. Derguti describes the conflict within the Albanian leadership as the most painful part for her. She thinks they could have had a better and more effective war, had the Albanian leadership managed to come to some sort of agreement, instead of fighting each other over personal issues, whether the struggle should go militant or not, and initiating elections in the middle of war; "*It can't be like this. If Drenica is*

in war, all of Kosova is in war, all Albanians are in war!” (March 2016, interview). She met many LDK supporters in the KLA, who joined because they saw armed resistance as the only possible way forward, although respecting Rugova’s attempts at pacifist resistance. Gorani, thinks the KLA can be placed ideologically only within the context in which they operated. Academically, as a workable narrative, a homogenous system of ideas, which would keep an organization well-functional and cohesive, it wasn’t present. The narrative was only the idea of liberation, a grand ambition for a small society to liberate themselves (March 2016, interview).

It therefore seems realistic to conclude that the KLA as a whole didn’t sympathize with any one ideology, or even had much of a detailed vision of post-war governance. The organizing and recruitment happened at such a rapid speed, and attracted people from such a wide variety of backgrounds, that these discussions for the most part seem to not have had much space to develop at all. The reasons stated for joining among my respondents would go along the lines of whether they won or lost, life had become so unbearable, that fighting back was the only option. No one stated any ideological reason for joining, other than the idea of liberation. The conflict took place at elite levels, with ideology not being the sole source of disagreement. My respondents state that both material / financial goods, territory, and pure personal conflicts were present within the KLA, but also more broadly, within the entire Albanian leadership. Many predicted intense post-war confrontations and conflicts, months before the war had ended (BBC, 2003, Pettifer, 2013, ch. 10). When it did, there was no obvious foundation for what the subsequent parties should be based on. The parties established post-conflict, seem to have operated in their own vacuums, being a mix of highly personalized organizations, with bonds to certain groups in society somehow related to the party leadership. When new parties were formed, it was often due to loyalty to a specific individual, or discontent with certain individuals. AAK MPs Berisha and Lekaj, both feel that the AAK today stands for a program which separates it from other parties, not appealing to the voters via emotional war charged rhetoric. When it comes to the establishment of the party however, they both see the same founding reason; party leader Haradinaj. Berisha sees nothing in particular separating AAK from other parties initially, as near all the post-war parties were similar organizations, working the same way. What made the AAK special, was; *“Haradinaj, who contributed a lot to the freedom of Kosovo (...) And has proven himself to also adequately meet the demands of the new time. I know his love for the motherland, the price he has paid for freedom, and his pro-Western orientation”*. Lekaj describes the party’s establishment as initially being a branch of the war and the guerilla transforming to a party, by successful forerunners such as Haradinaj. He sees

this as less important now, but as the focal point of their establishment (March 2016, interview). NISMA was also founded at least partly due to personal conflicts between individuals, which lead to political confrontations (Botapress, 2016). As MP Shala confirms when discussing why they created NISMA, without mentioning names, it was a backlash against certain groups within the PDK, and what he labels as “political suffocation” within the party due to a closed authoritarian leadership. Only by creating something new, they saw a chance to work and develop from below and take part in open discussions, instead of constantly fighting the leadership (March 2016, interview). Although my respondents didn’t mention names, it’s widely assumed that intense conflict has taken place between PDK’s Hashim Thaqi and Fatmir Limaj, who broke away from PDK and formed NISMA with Jakup Krasniqi, another KLA veteran. Shkullaku (2012) concludes that if Limaj and Krasniqi eventually were to break away from the PDK to start a new party, which they did, it would not be a new political offer. It would in its entirety be a product of internal PDK personal conflict, discontent and anger.

Based on these findings, I find hypothesis H1a to be supported. As the war ended, Belgrade didn’t directly rule over Kosovo anymore. The moderated demand of independence was seemingly near being accomplished. There was no unified rationale of what a new political party should be based on, after the KLA demilitarized. Nothing in my research that suggest that the KLA had any other alternative ideology than liberation. It may well have been initiated from a Marxist-Leninist diaspora organization, but what the KLA ended up being, both on the ground, and at the leadership level, was far from an organization trying to install communism in Kosovo. The alternative ideologies ascribed to them are personal conflicts, not ideological. Sometimes over the nature and pace of the war, sometimes territorial or material disputes, or just personal resentments - not ideologies in any meaningful sense of the concept. The declined relevance of the major war-time cleavage, may have been confirmed too quickly, to too large a degree. Those who were willing to operate within the de facto situation and possibilities, ended up in power, supported by the international community (Gorani, March 2016, interview). However, Kosovo’s biggest opposition party VV, is largely based around the resurfacing of these cleavages, such the question of national unification and the dialogue with Serbia and the international community (VV program, undated). VV was however established 5 years after the war, and entered parliament 12 years after, making the renewed attention to war-time cleavages not present in the immediate post-conflict situation.

H1b: The hierarchical rebel group structure is maintained during the rebel-to-party transition, leading to highly centralized party organization.

The organizational aspect of the KLA is not straightforward, which is an important factor related to the post-war fragmentation. As GPR Demaqi's secretary, VV MP Kurti participated in meeting with high-ranking individuals, but explains that; *"I knew that there were general headquarters. That there were KLA commanders in different operative zones. And I knew different commanders. I knew some of the political representatives, not all of them. But for a very long time, the General Commander was not known. For a while it was Azem Syla. And then Sylejman Selimi. Then Agim Ceku. But it took time, when I found out about Azem Syla being the General Commander, it was like the end of 1998. Not earlier"* (March 2016, interview). If late 1997 is then conservatively marked as the group's public manifestation, this means an entire year, without knowing who your own army's General Commander is. Commander Shala's views on the KLA's development is twofold. First, many small units merged and formed bigger units, in a classic guerilla manner. Second, the groups got to know each other and started to operate as a single unit. At this point, the military structure KLA became a reality, in mid-1998. Until then, there wasn't a vertical line of command (March 2016, interview), meaning that for at least a year, KLA didn't have complete oversight as to who were actually wearing their uniform. Muja thinks the rebel group was in general, not well-organized. He describes them as being revolutionary and morally organized, fighting for a change that had to come, and what was morally just. But the disciplinary command structure was halting, and people were mostly disciplined under the command of small sub-units (March 2016, interview).

All my respondents say that the KLA was, in the traditional sense, not well-organized. Pantina, who met the KLA on several occasions as part of her OSCE job, describes the army as not well structured and organized, and FARK / Rugova and KLA also fought with each other. It was more of a self-mobilizing more so than self-organizing, of families protecting their neighborhoods - to see when Serb forces were coming, to go back and tell people to leave, rather than actually stopping them; *"Because you just can't stop an army with a rifle, it's impossible. They would come with tanks, with armored vehicles, heavy artillery, you can't fight with a rifle when they bomb you! They survived more than 70 days of NATO bombing, I mean, come on"* (March 2016, interview). Based on this context in which the group operated, most find the organizing to have been as good as it realistically could have been, especially within such a short time-frame. PDK Secretary General Musmurati's conclusion is that, circumstances taken into account, it was quite well organized. By no means resembling a functioning state army, but organized enough to actually expand a war (March 2016, interview). Commander Berisha estimates that to form a functioning army, one would need at least three years of training

and organizing, to make the entire chain of command functioning, and that's in times of peace. The KLA however, was established rapidly in war times, often separated between themselves with poor communicative and logistical opportunities, and it was problematic to establish a fully functioning chain of command. Only at the end of the war did he as well see this starting to appear (March 2016, interview). But as Kurti and other respondents conclude, this was more a question of what was realistically possible with the Serb army and paramilitary forces being all over, rather than skills and willpower (March 2016, interview). Hadergjonaj shares his view, but has a positive view on the group's development, stating that despite of not being anywhere near the Serb military capacity, they managed to win support for conducting a clean war, by a group basically driven by goodwill (March 2016, interview). Commander Ibishi also highlights this point, recalling that even in the chaotic environment in which the KLA was founded, they spent time initially on planning how the guerilla army would adhere to war conventions and rules, such as protecting civilians (March 2016, interview). Derguti (March 2016, interview), was impressed with the organization, considering it was a military force comprised of volunteers, under occupation. Never having held a gun in her hand, she came from Switzerland and received about two weeks of organized training, before participating in the "Operation Shigjeta", a harsh confrontation in the Pashtrik operational zone (Sharri, 2015). She felt there was a system waiting for them, and she knew the command chain of her unit. Gorani (March 2016, interview) describes the organizational aspect as a whole, as largely dysfunctional, although the outside image may have been different; *"People in the mountains, were getting to know their positions by watching CNN. Aha, this is what we think?"*. He describes that not only was there a lack of a prevalent ideology which would comprise a homogenous attitude, there was also no one clear organizing force. There were village brigades, comprised of individuals and groups from all sorts of background, in addition to diaspora Albanians coming from the West. All in all, he sees it as; *"Really a rather dysfunctional mixture which was kept united by very generalized notions of national liberation"* Some of these challenges are related to the fear of for instance espionage, and several members used code names instead of their real names. It does however still cause structural problems, seen in a theoretical framework.

The paradox which became clear during the interviews, is that the higher the respondent's position within the KLA, the weaker the respondent regarded the organizational aspect of the group. This, I believe, is caused by the KLA not having one chain of command, but several. On the ground, one's own unit may have appeared perfectly well-organized, but the organization as a whole was challenged in this regard. It was more of a rural than an urban

phenomenon, and as Kryeziu and Pantina recall, they didn't experience KLA recruitment and presence in the big cities (March 2016, interview). Pantina saw through her missions that there was not a vertical line, or a pyramid. Different regions appeared somewhat self-organized, and would give different statements, indicating structural and organizational problems. She describes discussions going on until this day, about who were the actual founders and who were in the General Headquarters. Berisha sees the scattered organization as somewhat unavoidable. Unlike the other ex-SFRY entities, Kosovo didn't even have a minimum amount of territorial protection in the form of even a minor independent police force before the war broke out. It started with Albanians wanting to protect their homes, neighborhoods and villages, with individuals having had enough of continued oppression and abuse. Only after quite some time, did these scattered organizations come to organize as defined units and brigades; *"There were different organizations. We were all in KLA-uniforms, but some were organized from the directory of Hashim Thaqi, others were from Bujar Bukoshi's Ministry of Defence. But there were also people who didn't belong to any of them"* (March 2016, interview). KLA's control was scattered, with different strongholds, and they took effective control of up to 40 % of rural Kosovo (Özerdem, 2003, p. 80).

Communication and logistics were challenging, and members on the ground did not always feel like the outside image was representative of what was the real situation within the organization. Commander Quni recalls the discrepancy between public press releases and the actual conditions; *"During the war, communications were released, where the KLA's war was exaggerated and presented beyond what's rational. It was propaganda games"* (March 2016, interview). Over the different operational chambers of the operative zones, there was the General Headquarters. These were the people who released information, and are the ones who in general became politicians, especially in the PDK. Gorani (March 2016, interview), who was responsible for much of the media outlet, does not deny Quni's perception, the idea was to produce an image of a unified front, there was no time to actually make it into one. The KLA was not a unified military organization subordinated to a political party or civil authority. It operated as a guerrilla movement, although becoming better organized in time, fighters were lightly armed and organized in small compartmentalized cells rather than a single large rebel movement (Özerdem, 2003, p. 87). Only a few hundred members were professionally trained, and had a military career behind them. Ibishi (March 2016, interview), recalls the General Headquarters as more of a formal title, not a full fit functional one. People were assigned to all sorts of jobs and units, but to actually do their job proved difficult when surrounded by Serb

police and paramilitary forces. They started from nothing, invited people to join, and he and others in his operational zone provided some basic training, but only had access to light weapons who were also old and not always fully functional. Ibishi was in the Llap operational zone, and describes communicating with other zones as challenging. As Milosevic's ethnic cleansing continued, recruitments increased. The numbers speak for themselves. During the war's last three months alone, 10 000 people were killed, 850 000 Kosovars took refuge outside Kosovo, in addition to 600 000 internally displaced, out of a population of less than two million (Özerdem, 2003, p. 81). Despite poor organization, the desperate situation made the logic of joining the KLA and the war as inevitable, take hold.

Despite of the scattered organization, I find hypothesis H1b to be supported. There is however not one centralization process, but several. The result of these scattered loyalties, are several parties, but all of which are highly centralized, evolving around central individuals, especially the leader. All my respondents see internal party democracy as a serious problem. The tendency is clear. LDK, which was the first resistance party, and KLA-successors PDK and AAK, choose their leader through delegations. The parties formed later, VV, AKR, and NISMA, use one member one vote. Kryeziu (March 2016, interview) gave the example of one man who seems to work as a counter-candidate by profession, but who admitted that not even he voted for himself. She sees many of the parties more as family clans, than real political parties, despite of having formal procedures in place. Ibrahim Rugova's daughter received 30 000 votes in the last elections, although Kryeziu states that what she represents is unclear, people just see her father. Teuta Rugova issued a public statement after winning her MP seat, stating that; *"A vote for me, is without doubt a vote for President Rugova"* (Gazeta Express, 2014). Aged 23, she received more votes than several LDK strongmen such as Ibishi, only outdone by LDK leader Mustafa, and Vjosa Osmani (Koha Ditore, 2014). Derguti (March 2016, interview) sees the same interconnected issue, regarding internal party democracy, family bonds and social structures; *"We cannot deny, that we are a patriarchal society. And this is also reflected in the political parties. The leader is the father. And until they die, they won't be replaced. If Rugova was alive, he would still be president of LDK. That's why LDK is in a continuous crisis, because they can't find a replacement for Rugova"*. Derguti's point is reflected in the current leadership situation. None of the major Kosovan political parties, except VV, have changed leader since their establishment, except for in the event of death, or the leader constitutionally not being able to combine being party leader with other offices such as the presidency.

Former AKR parliamentary group leader and MP Selmani, chose her party much for the very reason that it was not directly related to the war; *“These other parties, they depend on two or three people (...) PDK came from KLA soldiers, AAK is the same thing. AKR was something new, focused on the citizens, Albanian or Serb, and on the economic development. True leaders will be leaders for everyone, not just say, ‘it’s me, and no one else’”* (March 2016, interview). Kurti (March 2016, interview) immediately points to the leadership focus when discussing how the Kosovan parties do their jobs; *“They do the leadership thing, they are very much parties of the leader, extended shadows of the leader (...) you have people who belong to all categories of voters, but mainly I think that people vote for a specific name”*. Therefore, although there’s not one strict hierarchical structure remaining from the war, there are several. Despite of some positive developments, parties are largely centered around the leader and a few individuals. This leadership fixation has both a popular aspect, their name is widely known and dear to many, related to their personal charisma, achievements and sacrifices. But there is also a very real political consequence of this fixation, what Shala (March 2016, interview), calls political suffocation, it’s impossible to breathe freely in the organization. KLA member and PDK member Muja’s decision to leave the PDK’s parliamentary group followed the same thought. When he disagreed with his party’s development, he was not listened to, or given a chance to enter dialogue in their disciplinary commission; *“They don’t give me a space to speak (...) I’m not in politics just for some personal profit, I don’t wake up in the morning to say thank you, oh my God, I am in the PDK, and I have my oxygen inside here. The problem is the structures inside. In all parties here”* (March 2016, interview).

Regardless of these challenges, the KLA is among the rebel groups which have managed to transform to political parties at all, and have managed to remain politically relevant. This was possible through among others, an effective DDR process, where the goal is to secure that thousands of former combatants are not walking around potentially armed and dangerous in a tense post-war situation, and to socially, politically and economically reintegrate the soldiers and their families into society. In Kosovo, DDR has been assisted by the war veteran pensions, which is in Kosovan standards quite generous, and takes up a substantial part of the country’s limited national budget (World Bank, 2016). A large part of the soldiers have also been enrolled in the country’s new police force and the Kosovo Protection Corps. My respondents also explained that many simply went back to their old lives. This may have been a possibility due to the short time frame of the war. As the KLA ceased to exist, and the political descendants such as PDK and AAK, have built up organizations capable of providing candidates for office,

without returning to armed conflict based along the cleavages of war, the transformation is judged as a successful one, in line with De Zeeuw's distinction between successful, partial and façade transformations (2008, p. 17). Although the centralization of decision-making processes and vast powers of the leadership obscure the categorization of successful, the parties have included a civilian leadership as well even if the final say may lie with the leader, they have denounced violence as a means for political goals, are not connected to organized armed militias and have fully respected and implemented the terms of the cease fire. They have had candidates taking part in all relevant offices, such as parliament and government, and although ideologically immature, they at least work within programs and platforms. Despite of the post-war unrest, which included assaults on both minorities and between political opponents (IGC Balkans, 1999), this violence was often sporadic and between private individuals, and as such is not enough to categorize the rebel-to-party transformation as partial or a façade.

5.2 The Importance of Winning

H2a: The development of modern warfare will make it difficult to classify the war termination, which will influence the political parties on both sides post-war:

The type of war termination is thought to have important consequences for the post-war political development. The case of KLA neatly underpin the point of Fearon and Laitin (2007, p. 3), that the outcome is however not always black or white. Kosovo's war termination is one big grey zone, and this still haunts the political arena today. Searching for one formal settlement or truce, won't give a realistic image of the country's post-termination situation. The war was between Serbia and Kosovo, but neither defeated the other militarily on the battle field. NATO air strikes were the war's biggest game changer, but the KLA fought on the ground. Serbia didn't beat Kosovo, but on important aspects Kosovo didn't beat Serbia either. This has resulted in a never-ending status-related limbo, with Kosovo operating as an independent country, without the international recognition necessary to fully function as one¹. Article 182 of the Serb constitution still firmly presents Serbia as one unified state where two provinces have the right to autonomy within the state, Kosovo being one of them. The Serb government's official documents, 18 years after the war, still ascertains that; *"All subsequent resolutions on Kosovo-Metohija adopted by the Serb parliament are based on Serbia's state policy, according to which*

¹ 114 out of 193 UN member states have recognized Kosovo.

Serbia will never recognize the unilaterally proclaimed independence of Kosovo” (Government of Serbia, 2017).

The war termination itself, didn't even accomplish the moderated goal of the KLA, independence. Negotiations were characterized both by Serb disinterest in compromise, and disagreements on the Albanian side. The biggest victory de facto on the ground in 1999, was that NATO had driven the Serb forces out. Considering the indescribable atrocities carried out against the Kosovo-Albanians, this was perceived among many as a victory in itself. The Serb forces being driven out however, did not solve any of the most imperative demands that started the war in the first place. It did not solve the question of national unification, nor the question of independence. As a result, there was no victory neither in the sense of a military win, nor in accomplishing the original goals. Kosovo was liberated in the sense that people could return to their homes, and Milosevic did not directly rule over them anymore. But it was not liberated in the sense of sovereign statehood, and the referendum debate was never finished. Independence was first unilaterally declared 9 years later. When evaluating the Rambouillet Document, Gorani sums it up as being; *“Not very favorable to the Albanians, but extremely damaging for the Serbs”* (March 2016, interview). The same statement can be applied to most aspects of the post-war situation. What seems to be agreed upon among my respondents, and general work on the topic, is that although Serbia still has enormous leverage on Kosovan politics, it lost the war. It lost the war through NATO's 78-day air campaign, which ended with the Kosovo Peace Accords in June 1999, or what Martinsen (2005, p. 133) describes as Serbia being bombed to their knees, and Milosevic being forced to withdraw his forces. Although the NATO intervention was not intended to be the air force wing of the KLA, that's exactly what it in practice became. Commander Quni describes the NATO contribution as an air campaign, which helped the KLA who fought on the ground finish the war (March 2016, interview). In a situation like this, who are perceived as winners, and how will they try to capitalize on the win?

A clear-cut answer to the trichotomy of military victory, negotiated settlement and power-sharing is hard to pinpoint in the case of Kosovo, much due to developments in modern warfare in general. As Luttwak (1999) describes, wars no longer “run their natural course” until one or both parts are exhausted. Based on the enormous differences in fighting capacity between the Serb and Albanian side, the Kosovo war could have been among the wars possible to finish in a matter of weeks. Had the Serbs utilized their full fighting potential against the Kosovo Albanians undisturbed, a clear victory could have been achieved, but it would have been achieved not only through fighting insurgents, but through ethnic cleansing, mass rape and little

to none differential treatment between combatants and civilians. Far more civilians lost their lives in the war, than soldiers in uniforms (Kurti, March 2016, interview). This has caused the intervention in Kosovo to be labelled as very well possibly illegal, but legitimate (Koskenniemi, 2002). The Ahtisaari Document, and the Military Technical Agreement of June 9th 1999 who formally ended the war, were characterized both by military victory, negotiated settlement and power-sharing. It was a military victory in the sense that NATO bombed Milosevic into submission, and although Serbia remained sovereignty over Kosovo in name, real control over the province was handed over to the UN (BBC, 2002). The Military Technical Agreement (1999) makes it clear that NATO air strikes will be suspended only when Yugoslav forces have provenly complied with relevant paragraphs. It also states that the KFOR commander is the final authority regarding interpretations of the agreement, and his determinations are binding on all parties. Which again, may not be the ideal desired outcome for the Albanians, but a disastrous defeat for the Serb authorities. It was negotiated in the sense that Serbia was always in the picture, and ended up signing important documents ending the hostilities, such as the Ahtisaari plan. The implementation process depended on a collaboration, which the Serb side took part in, willingly or not. Substantive power-sharing has also been taking place, ever since the war and until the present day. Serbia still exerts massive control over the Kosovan economy, and the ambivalent situation is preventing Kosovo from functioning as a normal state.

Power-sharing is manifested in Kosovo Serbs currently being guaranteed 10 seats in the Kosovan Assembly, where two thirds of their votes are necessary for important legislation to be passed. 4 Serbs can therefore block the entire state from even creating some of the most fundamental institutions for having a functional state, in a minimalist definition, such as an army (Haskuka, March 2016, interview). The last time the Kosovan Assembly tried to push further for the creation of an army, Serbia sent a train from Belgrade headed for Mitrovica in Kosovo, with the inscription “Kosovo is Serbia”. Parliament is currently considering gradually expanding the competencies of their “Protection Corps” through normal legislation, to avoid the consent of two thirds of the Serb deputies required for a constitutional change. Serbia’s response has been to open up the possibilities of employing armed troops to protect “their citizens” if necessary (Lajmpress, 2017). This situation is further polarized by the coalition making up these 10 reserved seats, 9 of which are from the Serb List (SL). The SL is near impossible to track down information about, such as programs. They are closely connected to Belgrade authorities and Serb prime minister Vucic. Moderate Serb MP Rasic, describes the relationship between the SL and Belgrade, as an imposed one - not a coordinated. Members are

told what to vote, regardless of their own opinions (March 2016, interview). Official SL statements reveal their absolute loyalty to Belgrade and Vucic personally, such as; *“The situation in Kosovo is calm, thanks to Vucic. Kosovo Serbs know that they have no greater friend than the government of Serbia, and in their fight for rights and survival, they can rely on no one, but the government in Belgrade”* (Blic, 2017). Rasic explains the Serb institutions as having near full control north in Mitrovica, and that a lot of this leverage comes from still being the number one employer of Serbs in Kosovo, a leverage utilized before the last parliamentary elections, creating an image of economic disaster for the Kosovo Serbs if the SL with its ties to Belgrade did not fill up the Serb quota. Haskuka (March 2016, interview) elaborates on how this control takes place, through production imports, controlling strategic natural resources, policy blocking and threats; *“At the present, SL does not recognize Kosova. Their ministers go up, and they say Kosova-Metohija (instead of Republic of Kosovo, rem.) The Vice Prime Minister from SL said, if Kosovan authorities do not allow Serb elections in Kosovo, there will be problems, and there will be violence. So, the Vice Prime Minister of the state, is threatening the state”*. Salihaj (March 2016, interview) sees similar developments; *“The Serbs, who don’t recognize Kosovo, are in the government of Kosovo. They keep Serb symbols in their offices, not ours (...) They are guaranteed a percentage of seats that far surpasses their percentage of the population. I don’t know of any other European countries, where a minority is this privileged compared to the majority”*.

Extensive power-sharing with the Kosovo Serb community is therefore a fact, and through among other SL’s ties with Belgrade, Belgrade is calling the shots for multiple important decisions and legislative procedures in the Kosovan parliament. Regarding issues such as creating an army, Vucic could just as well have showed up himself to tell Prishtina that they were not allowed to do so. The creative ambiguity from the days of terminating the war, with both Milosevic, NATO and the KLA declaring victory, is still very much alive, with both Vucic and Thaqi going home describing negotiations as being successful. In the middle of this, PDK was born as the political offspring of the militant KLA, declaring themselves as a; *“Party founded on the values of the liberation war”* (PDK statute, 1999). And based on Fearon and Laitin’s (2003, p. 13) definition, the KLA are winners, since they conclude that; *“If a separatist rebel group gains de jure or de facto autonomy by successfully driving government forces from the region, then this is also naturally described as a military victory (even if the government forces are not disarmed)”*. According to this more minimalist definition, the KLA can claim victory, regardless of the fact that victory came along together with NATO, and that Serbia still

exerts leverage on different parts of Kosovan politics. However, the termination could also fit Fearon and Laitin's other definitions, but mostly resembles that of victory. I choose to analyze it along the lines of a grey zone victory. In most aspects, Kosovo is a lost cause to Serbia. The Kosovo war was do or die for Milosevic after his past humiliations, and he didn't succeed.

Milosevic's reactions closely match the reputation pattern described by Walker (2009, p. 200). Giving in on Kosovo would be political suicide. The Serbs were humiliated from their earlier experiences, and hadn't proved that they for the most part had control. The rest is reversed in my findings, as Walter suggests that being an early mover can be a disadvantage. The early movers, such as Croatia, were also met with resistance, but it also made Milosevic ever more steadfast to not negotiate with other entities. Serbs were encouraged to move to Kosovo through among others economic incentives, and orthodox churches were built at a high speed. Reputation building was at its most intense in the last of the ex-Yugoslav conflicts. There was not much left to fight for, except for some minor unrest in the Sandzak and Vojvodina regions. Several respondents reasoned that they simply couldn't understand his persistence on the Kosovo issue, willing to go against the entire world because of it. Kosovo was poor, and had a near 90 % Albanian, predominantly Muslim population. There was not much to gain, except for this being Milosevic's last chance to "Fight for the Serbs". One of his policies in this regard, was to remove Kosovo's autonomy, thereby making it part of the group of cases most likely to turn to armed struggle; Those who lose once granted autonomy. Today still, the Serb state is actively trying to alter and reframe the memory of these wars. Financial aid to veteran's organizations have been largely limited to those accepting a certain agenda (David, 2015), emphasizing the history of Serb victimhood. Only in recent years, have some Serb voices raised the opinion that it's time to let Kosovo go, due to the hopelessness of the endeavor, and the harm it's causing their own development, such as the possibility of EU membership (Pantelic, 2010). Moderate political candidates have burst the painful bubble, such as liberal candidate Cedomir Jovanovic – but at a high price. Jovanovic and his entire circle, including his small children, have received several concrete death threats (B92, 2011).

Based on these findings, I find Hypothesis H2a to be supported. The war-termination is complex to categorize, which made it never fully end to many. The Kosovo Serb political arena is dominated by parties refusing to accept the war's outcome, perceiving it as an illegal international bombing campaign supporting domestic separatist terrorism. This is most obvious in a party such as SL directly connected to Belgrade, but even liberal Serb party leader Rasic (March 2016, interview), concludes that; *"I don't believe that I either, would ever recognize*

the Republic of Kosovo. I never say the Republic of Kosovo, I'm just saying it to you now". All other political topics, big or small, have to a large extent disappeared in the shadow of the dialogue with Belgrade, and other major status-related issues, for all political parties (Agani, 2015). This is the one thing they all must deal with, often at a cruel expense of other important issues. Kosovo's third biggest party, VV, is based largely on opposition to the dialogue with Serbia. Therefore, although I apply Fearon and Laitin's modified definition of victory to the KLA, the difficulty of classifying the war termination at all seems to have been an important element in what type of parties were established on both sides, especially the Serb one. On the Albanian side this is not equally clear, but 19 years after the war, all parties must spend extensive amounts of time and energy on issues such as if the country is fully independent with the right to establish an army, and how to accommodate the Kosovo Serbs within the state. For example, SL refused to accept a government including VV after the last elections, due to their view on the negotiations with Belgrade as illegitimate, and not accepting the compromises reached when the war ended (Gazeta Express, 2014). Without Serb approval a government can't be formed, and the SL occupies 90 % of the Serb parliamentary seats, meaning that no matter how many votes VV received, and how much their message resonated with the public, the very structures they criticize have the power to prevent them from entering any government coalition at all – because the Serbs are also guaranteed seats in the government. Meaning that VV could never enter a government the Serbs didn't approve, because the Serbs have to be in government, and with 9 out of 10 Kosovo Serbs being from SL, there are not even enough moderate Serbs to choose from. The Kosovo Serbs in parliament favored a PDK-LDK coalition, which also became the result. PDK Party Secretary Musmurati admits that being in power means being the one having to deal with this dialogue with Serbia, and that it has cost the party a lot (March 2016, interview). What many thought would be a transitional phase of making compromises to the Serbs and the international community, is still the de facto situation today.

H2b: The ambivalence surrounding the war termination, affected the development of political parties associated with Kosovo's liberation.

Several prominent PDK figures who have been in the party from its creation, are also senior KLA figures. In much of the work on rebel-to-party transitions, PDK is listed as KLA's successor (for instance Kovacs and Hatz, 2016, or Manning, 2004). In the party's founding statute (2000), it declares that; "*PDK is created at an important moment in our history, after the heroic war of the KLA and the expulsion of the Serb invader, and the deployment of international forces*". The program then states that the PDK is the successor of KLA's political

structures, and that they identify with the same values. As a successor of the KLA's war, they want to fight for KLA's goals in times of peace, and they will respect the support given to the KLA by the people at this crucial point in time. PDK Party Secretary Musmurati, reasons that based on the leading structures created in the beginning, PDK can be seen as the KLA's successor. PDK was developed by KLA people, who constitute the bulk of the leadership today as well, despite of many others now being in (March 2016, interview). PDK MP Muja sees the PDK as the legitimate successor of KLA, with the PDK being established directly from its political directory (March 2016, interview).

As reviewed, KLA was developed in a very short time, and characterized by a cell structure, with different units experiencing communication problems. Internal divisions and lack of a clear command chain left its mark on the army, although the ideas and achievements of the KLA are still held in high regards in the country. Based on the love, respect and gratitude the KLA had from the population, linking one's party to the army, would mean being able to connect to a wide pool of sympathy. However, when the PDK is portrayed as the successor of KLA in the current research, something important seems to have been left out. Many respondents found it controversial to call the PDK KLA's successor, but agree that they are the successor of a specific branch of the KLA. Commander Quni (March 2016, interview) explains the link between the KLA and PDK as; *"There were units, zones and regions. Above the Headquarters, there was the Political Directory. From this directory, came the information and the propaganda. Because of the love the citizens felt for the uniform, the cause, for the sacrifice, the Political Directory were accredited with the results. PDK came from this directory"*. Former Thaqi advisor Gorani, doesn't consider PDK as KLA's successor, and sees a need for historical revision in the future. But he does agree with Quni in that; *"PDK is of course compromised of a group of people who capitalized on the fact they comprised the KLA leadership at the moment the conflict was over. That capitalization was crystallized through the formation of PDK. But what PDK stands for today, is a typical Balkan based political organization"* (March 2016, interview). Kryeziu also points to important KLA individuals joining PDK in its establishment, as important for the legacy it has achieved as the successor of KLA. Although many have later left the scene, formed or joined other parties, the legacy created in the PDK's formation still remains (March 2016, interview).

The PDK to a large extent monopolized the KLA legacy through strategic efforts in the immediate post-conflict situation, and it was the first new party to be established. Gorani ascribes their success in being portrayed as war heroes, historical personalities and political

icons, as a combination of clan interests, regional alliances, but also the interests of external players in the international community. Although he feels that individuals like Thaqi were far from the right individuals to be portrayed as heroes after the war, he sees them as being the ones able to maneuver the political game of the time the best; *“To the international administration, people like Thaqi and Haradinaj, were considered as simple, workable, cooperative, people who could deliver (...) There was a point at which Thaqi started to be really stubborn, she (Madeleine Albright, rem.) went to him and said, ‘Listen boy, there is a very thin line between a freedom fighter and a terrorist, so you tell me, do you want to be the future Gerry Adams, or the future Abdullah Öcalan?’”* (March 2016, interview). However, even in their founding statute, PDK never claims to be the successor of the KLA as a whole, but of its political structures. Some of the oversimplifying image of the link between KLA and the subsequent formation of political parties, Gorani ascribes to the need for a navigational political chart, something foreigners can use to make sense of the confusing situation in the country.

One of the major links missing from the current information on Kosovo, is the role of AAK, which among my respondents, and in Kosovo in general, are accredited with being just as much a KLA successor as PDK. Even a respondent such as AKR’s Selmani, who has grown skeptical of the war actors’ influence on politics, states that; *“We can consider the PDK a party coming from the KLA, and AAK is the same, it’s one dough split in two”* (March 2016, interview). AAK Vice-President Lekaj (March 2016, interview), sees AAK’s establishment as an aftermath of the war, a part of the war leadership establishing their own party. He thinks the time for playing the war card has passed, but they should not forget that this is what the party was born from (March 2016, interview). In certain aspects, AAK and Haradinaj seems to enjoy even more respect with regards to their KLA legacy. Perhaps not being equally polished as the PDK, Haradinaj is accredited for his presence in the frontline, by members from the entire political spectrum; *“If it’s about war heroes, I admire Haradinaj more than Thaqi, because Ramush was in the frontline. He was wounded 2 or 3 times, his brothers were killed, while Thaqi spent more time in Switzerland, and Albania, as a political representative. He ran to Rambillet, talks and stuff, never in the frontline. And I don’t think he was, as they say, the strategist, the brain of the war anyhow, because the war was so uncoordinated”* (Pantina, March 2016, interview). Kryeziu (March 2016, interview) describes Haradinaj in the same way, as a man carrying dead bodies on his shoulders, sacrificing everything in the frontlines. The AAK’s image of being more comprised of those on the ground, especially people such as the Haradinaj brothers, has given them a high degree of respect among many, but they have not

managed to monopolize the heritage internationally as well as the PDK. They were later movers, established a couple of years after PDK. More controversies surrounded the leadership, such as Haradinaj being accused of several grave war crimes. The ICTY later acquitted Haradinaj of all charges (Hague Justice Portal, 2005), but he has later been arrested in both Slovenia and France, based on warrants from Serbia (BBC, 2017). This hasn't done much damage for Haradinaj's national image, on the contrary it has even been strengthened, with a new AAK slogan being "Haradinaj is Kosovo", and people from around Europe travelling to support him while arrested. The party has however had a rockier development than for instance the PDK, which is occupying the same ideological space both as a war party, and a center-right party. As Ishiyama (1995) suggests, at the end of conflict, internal power struggles may seem resolved, but in reality this may not be the case. Several parties may be occupying the same ideological space, which is the case in Kosovo today, and not just PDK and AAK which at first glance are the parties most obviously linked to the war. The literature portraying the KLA as one rebel group transforming into one political party, PDK, is oversimplified and somewhat misleading.

Following the end of the war, with the political atmosphere of the time, it would be reasonable to assume that the PDK as the successor of KLA, would take home a solid victory in the important founding elections, such as was the case with for instance the examples listed by Lyons (2016). However, they did not. Instead, it was the LDK who won a landslide victory with 46 % of the votes (B92, 2001). PDK came second, with 26 %. With the massive attention given to the KLA and their central figures in the post-war political scene, it somehow went under the radar how much love the general population had for both sides, both the military and pacifist wing (Kryeziu, March 2016, interview). Although the KLA had become inextricably linked to the liberation of Kosovo, the loyalty of much of the population towards the LDK remained powerful. When asked who won the war in Kosovo, several respondents stated that whoever started the war, won it. But there is no one consensus on who started the war, or who won it; *"The war in Kosovo, first of all, started with a pen, from President Rugova. Before him, nobody knew anything about Kosovo (...), as the Serb repression intensified, the first KLA cells got set up, who fought for the liberation of Kosovo. But we cannot forget Rugova, nor NATO and the US"* (Selmani, March 2016, interview). Although the tactics of peaceful resistance against an indiscriminate oppressor was seen as completely hopeless by some, Rugova's memory is cherished, also among KLA commanders, such as AAK's Berisha; *"We won the war, thanks to the wise politics of Rugova, the spilled blood of the contributors of war, and the*

help of our international friends, especially the US. This I believe to be the formula, leading to our freedom today” (March 2016, interview).

One of the strengths of political parties originating from a successful rebel group, is their image as liberators, as war heroes (Lyons, 2016). However, most respondents found it somewhat inappropriate to characterize any former KLA leaders gone politicians as such. KLA Commander Quni, now an LDK MP, responded; *“No, I do absolutely not consider them as heroes. They did a normal job. Nothing supernatural or superhuman” (March 2016, interview).* Former KLA and Thaqi advisor Gorani, sees the whole nexus as meaningless; *“Far from it. Absolutely far from it, they are probably the most wrong and the most mistaken characters to even try to resemble anything of the sort” (March 2016, interview).* Several respondents perceive the PDK as descending from a KLA branch more active in participating in meetings than in fighting heroic battles. Those who acknowledge and appreciate their members’ war contribution, often conclude that the post-war behavior and policies, damaged the war hero image further; *“I really will never forgive him for what he (Thaqi, rem.) did after the war. All this corruption, all this state capturing, having his people placed in every institution, it’s because of him, and the way he runs this party, this is unforgivable (...) I’d like to see him in jail for corruption” (Pantina, March 2016, interview).* Gorani (March 2016, interview), who saw some positive developments initially, shares the post-conflict skepticism; *“I couldn’t have any effect what so ever on what Thaqi and the group became afterwards. No one could”.* Selmani states that *“As for the time of war, I wouldn’t say anything, they fought. But after the war, I thought they would withdraw as war veterans. However, this did not happen” (March 2016, interview).* Both the aspect of being victorious, and the aspect of being the true KLA successor, has therefore been a challenging image to sell. When asked who won the war, none of my respondents, across the political spectrum, answered only KLA. Haskuka (March 2016, interview) was the most pessimistic, pointing to Serbia getting all they could essentially hope for. Serbia pushed the agenda of Kosovo ideally receiving more than autonomy, less than independence, and in several respects, this is where Kosovo is today. VV MP Kurti, elaborates that; *“What Serbia did not achieve quickly during the war, they wish to achieve slowly post-war” (Gazeta JNK, 2016).* Perceptions of who won varied tremendously. But the most common response, is the threefold formula given by Berisha above. Rugova put the question of Kosovo on the map, KLA took the question to the battle front, and NATO and in particular the US became the final answer. Those perceived as heroes, are the commanders and soldiers who died.

On New Year's Eve 2015, the satirical comedy group Stupcat contributed to the evening entertainment with a new sketch. Following the traditional light entertainment, Stupcat's sketch left many in silence and confusion. The sketch portrays KLA fighters drinking tea in the forest, dividing post-war Kosovo between themselves, while NATO airplanes are doing the actual fighting in the air, dropping bombs throughout the sequence. As one soldier confronts them with degrading the values of the liberation war, refusing to take part in the corruption, he is shot from behind. Although sparking major controversy, the sketch had people thinking, and their main points are relevant. First, not everyone in the KLA were fighters, second, they were not alone. LDK's government in exile, led by Bujar Bukoshi, set up their own army, FARK. Here, the writing of history gets complicated. Gorani (March 2016, interview) describes FARK as a small and undertrained army, but well-equipped and well-financed. Descending from LDK, which promoted an entirely different political view than the KLA's mother organization, LPK, Gorani describes the two group's world views as mutually exclusive regarding political methodology, although both had internal factions. LDK veteran Salihaj (March 2016, interview) explains how the pacifist LDK was also preparing for war, and that Rugova was open to the idea if necessary. He describes KLA as an army for the most part provoking Serb forces, not beating them. The provocations led to such grave and indiscriminate responses from the Serb side, that the international community eventually intervened. Salihaj criticized these tactics for putting civilians in enormous danger. He describes FARK as being active on the ground, and contributing in the armed insurgency. During the war, there was harsh conflicts between the KLA and FARK. Salihaj elaborates that the KLA thought they had a monopoly over the war its accomplishments. He saw LDK being placed in an extremely difficult position, as the internationals urged Rugova to continue his pacifist policies, while simultaneously eventually accepting KLA. He further elaborates on the militant aspect of the LDK; *"Looking back, we can see the mistakes. I also thought we couldn't win without war. We had soldiers ready to fight, but the orders never came. The KLA however, didn't wait, and started anyways. We wanted a war, but not an unprepared one. And now we have thousands that died, women and children, and a million Albanians who fled Kosovo. Without NATO, we wouldn't be here, and a NATO intervention wasn't guaranteed. Also, a huge percentage of KLA's soldiers were LDK people. Not the Commander teams, who were in the mountains, and faced no opposition"*. The traditional pacifist vs militant dichotomy between LDK and KLA isn't problem free, and a more correct and nuanced image is that there was a diplomatic and military aspect to both, although FARK didn't gain the same momentum.

A substantial amount of KLA soldiers, were LDK-sympathizers. And amongst those who came out most powerful after the war, were individuals mostly connected to KLA's political activities. Some have monopolized the heritage, and to a large extent, FARK has disappeared from the history books, and many were surprised when asked about them. Gorani (March 2016, interview) describes serious clashes between the two in Northern Albania, with people being killed, potentially causing an internal mayhem. Commander Berisha (March 2016, interview), describes the two as never achieving any sort of cooperation or coordination, and that these animosities still persist today. Commander Quni recalls some moments of cooperation, and many of tension. No formal agreement ended the hostilities between the two, and the KLA Headquarters still don't recognize FARK as contributors to the war. He believes some are still angry about this, and like most other respondents, he thinks some of the current political conflicts in the country stems from these disagreements, both between and within the two groups (March 2016, interview). Commander Shala says he never saw them with his own eyes, and therefore can't say much about them. To his information, FARK was not present in Kosovo, but was a phenomenon based in Albania (March 2016, interview). The story of FARK amongst the Commanders and respondents in general, varies from their near non-existence, to them being a serious rival force, with whom the KLA faced deadly clashes.

"I think the successor of KLA, prior to PDK, is the Kosova Protection Corps, which came out of KLA. And second, it's the organization of war veterans. And then it's PDK, and then it's AAK, and then it's also VV I must say. Because many people who fought in the war is in our movement" (Kurti, March 2016, interview). Kurti's quote points to two interesting developments. First, the two new left-wing parties also have their share of KLA history. LPK, characterized by many as the organization that gave birth to the KLA, merged their remaining structures with VV, not PDK or AAK. Due to the post-war developments of needing to accommodate both Serb and international interests, many have come to see VV as the party best representing the original values of the war. VV refuses to accept Kosovo Serb autonomy, changes in the border to Montenegro, and widespread international executive powers within Kosovo. The party has also put the question of national unification back on the political agenda, saying that if that is what the citizens want, they have every right to do so. Commander Shala joined NISMA, and doesn't think it's correct to refer to PDK as the "war party", even if that's what they have become known as. Most of the political leaders coming from KLA, he never saw on the ground, and sees them as for the most part being busy in Albania, arranging supplies (March 2016, interview). There are KLA links to NISMA's leadership, such as Fatmir Limaj

and Jakup Krasniqi, high-profiled KLA members. Kurti's other point, is that in many respects, the successor of KLA, is no political party at all; It's the Kosovo Protection Corps and the new Kosovo Police Forces. Commander Ibishi, who had a long police and military career before joining the KLA, describes his post-war job as one of mostly demilitarizing the KLA, and then getting people into the new police and security forces. He estimates that about 40 % of them went on to the new police service (March 2016, interview). With no such institutions of their own before the war, the creation of a new police force and security body, were two ways of reintegrating the KLA soldiers in society.

As Quinn, Mason and Gurses (2007) find, a dual sovereignty needs to be established for a new movement to be seen as a credible competitor to those in power. The KLA did this when they received support for a more radical response, as opposed to LDK's. A dangerous climate can appear when both parties have some sovereignty after the war termination, and the organizational capacity is intact on both sides. The post-war wave of political murders made it clear that these animosities had not ended. LDK proved themselves as winners in the first post-war elections, but PDK came to dominate the political scene in the years to come. In addition to the death of LDK's iconic leader, LDK MP Ibishi describes a series of catastrophic decisions; Former party leader and President of Kosovo, Fatmir Sejdiu, took LDK out of the first governing coalition with PDK, not long after the war, due to among others practical problems with overlapping positions which broke the constitution. As a result, PDK continued to govern alone, and this is where Ibishi sees their rise to dominance; By filling their people in every institution, employing thousands of people, basically being alone in the system, able to do whatever they wanted (March 2016, interview). Pantina shares his opinion, seeing the party's absolute manifestation of power as a result of the closed manner in which PDK is lead, and by having loyal sympathizers placed in every institution (March 2016, interview). Due to these developments, several respondents think the PDK dominance will not end anytime soon. Although their image both as winners of the war and as the successor of KLA has been disputed, the PDK has still been successful in the four mechanisms Lyons (2016) describes as decisive for victorious rebel parties to establish control in the post-war political situation; A coherent leadership has been established with solidarity bonds both within the party and to outside institutions, legitimacy has been achieved through the wartime governance, legitimacy from victory has been achieved through a real or perceived monopoly on the achievements of the war, and finally, power consolidation has been taking place more so than power sharing. Based on these findings, I find H2b to be supported. PDK has entered the history books as KLA's

successor, even though they present themselves as the successor of the Political Directory. 5 out of 6 parties are directly or indirectly related to the war. Important war figures are spread across the political party spectrum, and as Pantina (March 2016, interview) describes, there is no one consensus on who are the true representatives of KLA, this is still a disputed issue. Furthermore, the legitimacy stemming from being associated with KLA, might have passed its peak. The only relevant party not associated with KLA in any way, AKR, advertises themselves largely on the basis of the era of both war and Rugovism having outplayed its part, and not being constructive for handling current political issues, such as economic development. Selmani made it clear that; *“We are post-war. Without concrete developments and improvements, this independence is useless”* (March 2016, interview). Although heavily criticized by other parties for corruption and power abuse, the PDK themselves ascribe their success to solid performances and strong, trustworthy leadership. Although their development is coherent with that of other post-war authoritarian parties, it’s also necessary to remember before drawing strict conclusions, that they keep winning elections. Far from every person voting for them have been paid to do so, or receive benefits via public employment or pensions for veterans.

5.3 The Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis

H3: The KLA moderated behaviorally and ideologically as a result of their inclusion in political processes and institutions.

Most previous research using the inclusion-moderation hypothesis, has focused on groups with radical opinions within existing states, such as Marxist parties evolving into social democratic parties, or Islamist parties which have moderated (Tezcur, 2009, p. 72). When using the hypothesis on an insurgent group, it’s important to note that KLA itself never ran for elections, and was therefore not in a position where radicalism threatened to scare off voters, but domestic and international support. The parties operating in the war’s aftermath, were the ones having to deal with how they appeared in front of a national electorate. The KLA seemed to come as a surprise to many. Small, sporadic groups challenged the LDK / Rugovian monopoly on Kosovo Albanian politics, and were the antithesis to their pacifist resistance, believing that independence could only be achieved by force (Özerdem, 2003, p. 79). After a long period of mysteriousness, the KLA General Staff shared their program in a political statement in April 1998. It states that Kosovo’s people are living in great peril from the Serb foe, who is working towards the complete destruction of the KLA and the Albanian people.

They want to prove to the democratic world that they're able to fight for their freedom and win. 9 points are released in the program, including elements such as the KLA representing the totality of the armed forces of Kosovo and all occupied Albanian land, and that its objective is to liberate and unite Albania's occupied territories. It refers to all Albanian majority populated areas as one country, and it is their obligation to assist the parts of that country which have been occupied. The KLA wishes to accept international assistance and co-operation, and is only willing to negotiate with the foe under international mediation, and only once occupation forces are withdrawn. They appeal to international decision-makers, in particularly the US and EU, to exert pressure upon the occupants and support their just war. Any agreement reached without KLA's approval, will be deemed invalid (Program of the KLA, from Pettifer, 2013, p. 277).

The KLA initially struggled to gain legitimacy both domestically and internationally. As late as in 1998, the US state department still classified KLA as a terrorist organization (Özerdem, 2013, p. 80). Whatever support the movement may or may not have had in the beginning domestically, people were afraid of what a full-blown war would entail. The former ex-Yugoslav conflicts, had left little doubt as to how far Milosevic was willing to go. The KLA had to gain support for their claim that armed conflict was both necessary and justified. The standard label put on any Albanian opposition, had been "criminal", ever since the Tito era (Pettifer, 2013, p. 32), so this label itself, wasn't enough to strip KLA of legitimacy. But the critique went much further. They were labeled as organized criminals, involved in drug dealing, prostitution, extortion, robberies, and later accused of organ smuggling during the war (Özerdem, 2003, p. 80). Their LPK background was also used against them, as the militant offspring of a radical Marxist-Leninist organization (Pettifer, 2013, p. 42). However, not even a year after being registered as a terrorist organization, KLA went to the Rambouillet peace talks in February 1999, as a legitimate negotiator for the Kosovo Albanian side. With such a drastic transformation taking place, substantial moderation is expected to have taken place, both behaviorally and ideologically.

Commander Ibishi however, didn't see any change within the KLA. He explained that he doesn't know what happened in the international diplomacy, but there was nothing new inside, except for the fact that the army increased its capacity and number of fighters, alongside increased domestic support. A support he thinks made the international society realize that the people were with KLA, as they left their homes and lived with neighbors, just to make place for KLA soldiers; *"The international community, they understood we were serious on our part of the conflict. And we're not a terrorist group. We don't fight civilians, we fight Serb troops,*

military police, special forces and paramilitary groups” (March 2016, interview). Kurti shares his view, that external actors were the ones changing the most, not KLA: *“the US noticed that there were a lot of freedom fighters ready to die for this country. And they started to get their second thoughts (...) I think it’s more that the US changed. They noticed that they had rushed when they labeled KLA a terrorist organization. And that’s why Robert Gelbard (former US Special Representative for the Balkans, rem.), was replaced”* (March 2016, interview). Muja also gives the KLA’s growing strength much of the credit for the eventual support, with the international community seeing that the KLA was really oriented to go till the end. They would not stop what they had started (March 2016, interview).

Organizational strength and proving that they were not willing to back down, is therefore seen as an important event in KLA’s development. But this alone, didn’t legitimize the cause, as there are several militant groups not willing to give up for decades, without gaining domestic and international support. The eventual support seemed to surprise even some of the KLA members themselves. Commander Shala (March 2016, interview), describes the NATO-support as initially unimaginable, both due to how the KLA was at first perceived, but also Serbia’s close ties with several important countries. He recalls the whole development as being somewhat strange, and believes that in the end, as the crimes committed by the Milosevic regime became impossible to deny, the international community needed a partner to prevent a second Bosnia. Bill Clinton emphasized this when describing the motivation to enter the conflict; *“I felt very strongly that we had to move quickly, we couldn’t have another Bosnia, where the international community, and Europe, and NATO in particular, kind of fiddled around for two and a half years”* (BBC, 2002). Whereas Milosevic’s tactic was to scare off any further attempts to rebel, the KLA became more powerful after each massacre and each violation; *“We were faced with really, a regime which made no difference between civilians and combatants (...) so, in many ways, Milosevic made it extremely easy for us, to wing up as an organization defending its own kin, holding its ground, and crying out loud for some Western, European liberty based value system. So, it was an easy exercise (...), Serbs and Milosevic simply put themselves in the position of being the most hated regime in the world at the time. Why they did it remains an absolute mystery to me. Waging war against Albanians and Croats is one thing, but defying the entire planet and taking a great pleasure in that defiance, has probably been one of the most ludicrous and suicidal state policies I have ever come to experience”* (Gorani, March 2016, interview). If a village had one KLA member, the entire village could get surrounded, bombarded and looted. Sexual violence as a weapon lead

to organized rape of what's likely thousands of people, both women and men (Chick, 2016). When retrieving bodies from wells after the war, Martinsen and his team recovered both men, women, children, elderly and handicapped people who had been murdered and disposed (Martinsen, 2005). Gorani believes that Washington wasn't prepared to see Milosevic get away with what he had done, and become a legal president right under their noses, not having to face the consequences of his actions, and were therefore open to explore other actors since the pacifist Rugovian way was not going anywhere. KLA then became a possible partner. Reduced international support for the enemy, was therefore critical to gain support for their own cause. The more illegitimate Milosevic's position became, the more legitimate the KLA's became.

The sudden massive international support is probably the most important external shock changing the game in the Kosovo war. In addition, another external shock occurred around the same time, with the state collapse in neighboring Albania, a state collapse which benefitted the KLA; *"The Albanian disaster was very quickly utilized by us. Because you could buy a Kalashnikov for 5 Deutsche Mark."* (Gorani, March 2016, interview). Ibishi (March 2016, interview), also highlights the importance of weapons from Albania. KLA's Xhavit Haliti explained that they were a little too late to get the weapons entirely for free as Albanian military depots were looted, but that they got them for a very reasonable price, and set up three depots to export them into Kosovo (BBC, 2002). As chairman of the Socialist Party in Albania, Fatos Nano, was released from prison and decided to run for Prime Minister, a mutually beneficial relationship emerged between Nano and KLA; *"His electoral campaign was predominantly KLA-financed. So Nano felt he should be close with this upcoming political military entity which had a very clear deal with him. We will be present in the north of Albania, and you will turn a blind eye on that. And we'll pay for it, dearly. And Nano was interested in this last part of the sentence. So, KLA got itself a base, or a set of makeshift military bases"* (Gorani, March 2016, interview). Several external shocks therefore altered the development of KLA, lending support to the assumption that external shocks are more decisive than internal change. By March 1999, as Milosevic was intensifying his operations in Kosovo, it became clear that the international community was turning against him. As civilian casualties increased, and Milosevic still refused to negotiate, the intervention could be labelled as humanitarian. Despite most respondents not seeing much internal KLA change, there was a quite dramatic ideological shift, namely changing the end goal; *"Naturally, a vision existed. In the beginning, maybe this was even excessive. In the beginning, there was talk about "Ethnic Albania", afterwards this was reduced to a free Kosovo within its boundaries"* (Quni, March 2016, interview).

Whereas the initial end goal was national unification, creating an “Ethnic Albania”, the moderated goal was to establish an independent, multi-ethnic, democratic Kosovan state. The denouncement of irredentist claims, made the KLA possible to work with for the international community. Achieving the dream of “Ethnic Albania”, entails both Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Macedonia losing parts of their territory, in addition to unifying Kosovo with Albania. With regards to how this would be received both regionally and internationally, it’s not hard to understand why Gorani describes the original end goal as being; *“So politically stupid, and so unacceptable at the time”* (March 2016, interview). In the Preshevo Valley in Serbia, another Albanian guerilla movement was formed (Pettifer, 2013, p. 230), and in Macedonia an Albanian insurgency broke out in full force in 2001. Albanian fighters from different states circulated throughout these insurgencies. The fear of the conflict spreading, was obviously a reasonable one. However insistent the KLA was in the beginning to correct a historical wrong, this existential foundation changed. Kurti, who saw most of the change happen outside of Kosovo, had one thing to say when it came to the internal change; *“I think the change within KLA, was that the Political Director, Hashim Thaqi, started to change the goal. From national unification to independence for Kosova”* (March 2016, interview). Muja thinks that the emergence of the KLA probably gave the international community a serious headache. Because they knew that supporting the Kosovo cause, could have a spillover effect in Montenegro, Serbia, Greece and Macedonia. Territorial disputes in these countries, could potentially also bring a country like Bulgaria into the conflict (March 2016, interview). Ukraine helped Macedonia fight down their Albanian insurgency. What started out as a discussion between a few people in Switzerland, had the potential to stir up several massive conflicts all over the Balkans. Quni explains that altering the end goal, was a result of understanding with time that the mission to create “Ethnic Albania”, was impossible. On the ground, their energies were consumed with fighting a militarily superior enemy (March 2016, interview). The Albanian insurgencies happened sequentially, not simultaneously. Kosovo came first, and the respondents made it clear that at some point the end goal had to be changed to push the Kosovo cause further at all. It was not enough for the legitimacy of the enemy to be weakened, they also had to make their own vision compatible with the international community’s preferences, to establish their own legitimacy. At this point, the group as a whole shows ideological moderation due to international pressure and preferences. However, the genuineness of this shift is questionable, and the decision seems mainly strategical. Individual politicians I spoke with from every single major Albanian party were open to the idea of Kosovo possibly joining Albania. Gorani sees the question of national unification as the one ideological pillar of the Albanianist narrative nobody can be against, and

as the ultimate ideological reference, similar to what Jerusalem would be for the Jews. He thinks this will remain the same, unless Kosovo experiences a genuine socio-economic improvement for their own citizens. During the war, it had to be changed to achieve support; *“Jakup Krasniqi, who was appointed in this completely uncoordinated manner over night as a KLA spokesperson, came up at this press conference (...) in front of CNN and BBC and everyone, and said, ‘we’re fighting for the unification of Albanian lands’. Then we had to do the spindoctorship which lasted for weeks and months (...), finally we succeeded in convincing Washington and Brussels and anyone that what Mr. Krasniqi basically meant, was an independent Kosovo. He was misread and badly translated”* (March 2016, interview).

Negotiations and compromises between elites became cumbersome, as Milosevic was not moderating anywhere. He refused to sign the Rambouillet Agreement, referring to it as no real negotiation taking place. He described the KLA’s delegation as a separatist movement, favorizing Albanians, wanting to be the masters of the rest of the population. He also stated that he had no problems dealing with the group, until the US came and made an alliance, with these; *“killers, rapists, kidnappers and drug dealers, who were collected from the underground around Europe, which was then organized as the so-called KLA, which never existed – this was Hollywood”* (Milosevic, 1999). Milosevic’s refusal to cooperate on anything Kosovo-related, made the endeavor of making the KLA perceived as moderate and reasonable easier. They moderated and gave in at decisive moments. The Rambouillet agreement for instance, was no sweeping success for the Albanians, but it was extremely damaging for the Serb side (Gorani, March 2016, interview). The agreement would respect the Yugoslavian territorial integrity, and did not grant the Kosovars independence (UN Peacemaker, undated). It’s a document which in no way resembles Albanian national unity or victory, but portrays a multi-ethnic, free and democratic society for all national communities (Rambouillet Accords, 1999) Kosovo did not get its independence or unification, but in practice a level of autonomy which would have been unprecedented. Milosevic refused to sign, the Kosovars cooperated. This is seen as the final turning point, where the international society decided to go to war in Kosovo. The agreement was never even implemented², but turned the tables in KLA’s favor, and proved that they were possible to work with.

The agreements also made divisions within the KLA visible. US Secretary of State Albright turned her attention to Hashim Thaqi, the delegation’s leader. She described him as a

² The agreement was not signed, and therefore never implemented. However, it has been given effect by Security Council Resolution 1244.

young, tall and handsome urban man – a natural leader. She felt the delegation would accept autonomy, at the expense of independence. Thaqi and the delegation trying to achieve any sort of progress in Rambouillet in return received a phone call from back home. Commander Mustafa told the delegation not to dare sign the document without the possibility of a referendum of independence, in which case they would use all their anti-aircraft rockets on the Serbs but one, which they would use to shoot down the delegation's plane home (BBC, 2002). But there was no mention of a referendum. If the KLA refused to sign, many within the group were afraid that they would no longer be considered cooperative, and thereby forgotten. The price to pay for remaining relevant, was continuous moderation and adaption. Here, the model of political learning finds ground. One of the KLA's worst scenarios was to end up like the Kurds; *"The idea was to produce the image of a unified movement, not to really involve in making that into one, because there was no time, we were not thinking of waging a 25-30-year war like the Kurds"* (Gorani, March 2016, interview). Thaqi saw the same risk; *"I knew that if we said no to the document, we would lose all international support. The Kosovo problem would be forgotten, like the Kurds"* (BBC, 2002). This was no small problem. All my respondents believed that the Albanians wouldn't have a chance to win, without international intervention. What was on the line, was who the international community would blame for the breakdown of the possibility of solving the conflict through negotiations. If the KLA signed, and the Serbs refused, the fault would be on Serbia. But Serbia would never accept a referendum for independence. Italian Foreign Minister Dini summed up the international community's final hesitations before intervening in the conflict; *"Sure, creative ambiguity is needed in the phraseology of agreements. But, we must decide whether or not to bomb Serbia. We have to be absolutely certain that the fault is Serbia's, and not Kosovo's"* (BBC, 2002). Finally, as the document included a paragraph stating that the will of the people would be consulted at a later point in time in deciding the ultimate status of Kosovo (UN Peacemaker, 1999), the Albanians signed, and it became apparent whose side the world was on. Gorani describes it as a process of creative ambiguity, lasting up until this very day, basically meaning that any solution adopted regarding Kosovo and Serbia, is free to be interpreted in a way which fits the mood of the day in both camps (March 2016, interview). Rambouillet and the war that followed, was favorable to the Albanians, but Milosevic declared Serb victory after the NATO bombardment (Milosevic, 1999), since territorial integrity and sovereignty was intact on paper. In practice, he would never rule over Kosovo again. This ambiguity however, made progress possible on the Albanian side. Also, it gave Thaqi and his supporters an upper hand over resistant gunmen back

home, causing an animosity which is still relevant. However, at Rambillet and since, moderate individuals managed to get the upper hand, at expense of the more radical.

As the war ended, although not under the exact conditions the group may have wanted, the KLA officially ceased to exist. The formal demobilization went through without delay, and General Jackson's strict timetable was followed. The process ended in a victory parade as early as September 1999, just two months after the war ended (Pettifer, 2013, p. 225), even earlier than the UN's three-month requirement (The Guardian, 1999). Ibishi (March 2016, interview) remembers the demobilization going through quickly and smoothly. In cooperation with the internationals, they collected guns, ammunition and other items at their respective bases in different operational zones. They made lists of equipment and personnel, and in addition to the formal disarmament tried to create a system for helping the displaced people coming back, often to find their houses burned to the ground. They also started conversations on how to transform the KLA forces into something else. Some went into the new police force, some into the KPC (Kosovo Protection Corps) and later KSF (Kosovo Security Forces), and some in the civil administration. Some elements within the KLA were reluctant to disarm completely, and interpreted disarmament as still opening the door to keep some of the arsenal for the new local police (The Guardian, 1999). Many also hoped for the KLA to turn into the future Kosovo Army, although possibly scaled down, including Thaqi. KLA spokesman Pleurat Sejdiu said that he saw the agreement as demilitarization, not disarmament. Some units would be dissolved, others transformed into a military branch (Stephen, 1999). In the end however, the KLA agreed to disband, but on the ground, an armed group seemed to be replaced by an armed people (Pettifer, 2013, p. 228). Some individuals kept their weapons from their time in the KLA, former Yugoslav military depots were looted, and guns were brought in from Albania. Small arms possessions in households was common, whereas the arsenal of the Liberation Army was officially handed in, and the international administration saw the KLA as formally demobilized in the late summer of 1999.

Based on these findings, I find hypothesis H3 to be supported. It was a different vision that won the war, than what started it. The KLA did increase their strength and persistence. They also managed to create a point of no return, war was deemed inevitable, despite the popularity of Rugova's pacifist approach. Correlating with the theory, external shocks played a decisive role in their development, such as the state collapse in Albania and the eventual international support. The KLA lost their terrorist mark, and made it clear that they were fighting a just war, attacking militant forces and not civilians, although individuals from the

group are accused of serious war crimes³. The image and legitimacy of the enemy was destroyed, and furthermore the KLA made their own vision compatible with what the international society could accept and work with. This change does not seem to have been genuine, but it took place, and the group moderated at key points such as Rambouillet, while their opponent did not. Moderate individuals managed to get the upper hand, and were the ones who got to power after the war. The moderation process was completed behaviorally as the KLA laid down their weapons once the war had ended in terms of the agreements they had accepted, although some of the arsenal went into private hands. The political parties stemming directly from the militant KLA, also stayed within the moderated framework through their programs and policies. If there was any doubt left of the prevalence of the moderated goal, the Constitution adopted after the unilaterally declared independence should cast this aside. The Constitution's first article declares that; *“The Republic of Kosovo shall have no territorial claims against, and shall seek no union with, any State or part of any State”* (Constitution of Kosovo, 2008, art. 1, §3). Moderation at key moments, and on key issues, made the KLA get the upper hand in the war. Moderation, as a consequence of inclusion, can be positive for several developmental aspects such as dialogue and compromise, skills that are needed for political parties to function in a democratic electoral arena. When the moderation is not completely genuine or agreed upon however, it may stir up problems even far later down the road. VV has put the question of national unification back on the political agenda, arguing that it should have never disappeared in the first place, since this was not due to the will of a free people, but international preferences. Those in power on the other hand, can justify their policies by their hands being tied, due to the treaties signed.

5.4 The Role of the International Community

H4a: The promotion of liberal democracy and market economy during and after the war has shaped political parties, through the ideologies and economic systems they promote.

As the Albanian movement convinced the international community that they were oriented towards democratic and liberal values, the same values were adopted in the post-war political situation. The Kosovo conflict is timewise placed both after the end of the Cold War, and before September 11th, both events that have dramatically altered the view on how to deal with other countries' conflicts. US dominance played a decisive factor in ending the conflict,

³ Several individuals from the KLA will face trial, in the «Gjykata Speciale», the Special Court. Charges include crimes against minorities in Kosovo, and political opponents of the KLA.

and the post-war development. In Prishtina, a gigantic Bill Clinton statue has been raised on the Bill Clinton Boulevard. Several cities have named streets after both him, and other presidents such as Woodrow Wilson. This new world order, with the US as the only de facto superpower in the world, was encouraged in Kosovo both ideologically through liberal democracy, and economically, through the establishment of a capitalist market economy, both seen as complementary and mutually dependent to establish peace and democracy. No longer fearing reactions from Moscow played an important part in the general development in international relations, but even more so in Kosovo. Russia has been Orthodox Slav Serbia's biggest supporter and protector, and tried to intervene in the post-conflict situation by seizing Prishtina airport with 200 deployed soldiers, and demanding their own sphere of influence in Kosovo. This was ignored by NATO, who divided Kosovo into five control zones controlled by the US, France, Britain, Italy and Germany. US military representatives called the Russian presence militarily insignificant, and Supreme Commander General Wesley Clark made it clear that it was NATO'S KFOR Commander, General Mike Jackson, who had the authority to direct all operations on the ground and to control all facilities (Wintour and Traynor, 1999). A split across the Atlantic was clear, with the US seeing Kosovo as the final phase in the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and that this should lead to the rapid fall of Milosevic. Some of their European counterparts saw neither as an immediate priority (Pettifer, 2013, p. 207). To the KLA's and Kosovo's advantage, the US got the upper hand in this power struggle. As Muja (March 2016, interview) made clear, Kosovo's biggest problem today is possibly even more so Russia than Serbia itself, since Serbia is by no means a superpower, but Russia has again gained a more dominant position. In 1999 however, this power balance was greatly tilted in favor of the US.

Had the Kosovo conflict intensified only a couple of years later, it could have proved very problematic to attract international support and attention after the September 11th attacks, due to focus being directed to other places seen as more important, but the KLA could also have been more vulnerable to Serb allegations of "Islamic terrorism". As Gorani points out; *"The Balkans was back then the only game in the planet. There was no Middle East. There was no war on terror. It was a rather peaceful world, with the Balkans pretty much serving as what, unfortunately, the Syrian tragedy is serving today. Everyone from the Western media was willing to get Milosevic (...) Ready to actually serve as the media wing of anyone that would be sufficiently bold to confront Belgrade. So you had the world's most powerful media centers on your side"* (March 2016, interview). Ambitions for Kosovo were bold and encompassing; A free, liberal, market-oriented, multi-ethnic democracy to be born on the remnants of the former

Yugoslavia. This was no simple version of the democratic reconstruction model, disarming KLA factions and holding elections were just two out of many reforms and processes initiated. Elements such as security and police transformations, civil society strengthening, rule of law and transforming the economy were all undertaken. The direction of this development, was largely one-sided, both politically and economically, a right-leaning, liberal / conservative, US / EU-inspired model. The political left disappeared in Kosovo both due to communist connotations nationally, and admiration for the Western political hemisphere, which in Kosovo has been practically synonymous with a center-right ideology. The international society has had an enormous presence in Kosovo since the war, through establishments such as KFOR, UNMIK and EULEX, covering the whole range of government policies, such as security, rule of law and economic development.

This Western admiration is still evident in the positions and programs of major political parties today. LDK's last program was titled "For the European Perspective", and its introduction states that; *"These principles are inspired by the values and the experience of LDK, by the national needs and priorities in Kosovo, as well as by the principles of the European People's Party"*. They want a European Kosovo, a Kosovo integrated in the EU and in NATO. To be a productive member of this family, values such as expanding and developing the free market are seen as essential. The program states that LDK appreciates the EU's efforts to build a European Kosovo, and makes it clear that they're committed to achieve the EU criteria put on Kosovo, in order to push for further integration and cooperation. Europeanization of Kosovo, should go hand in hand with Europeanization of the political parties, institutions and society. Most of the values and policies the program promotes, are consistent with a classic center-right ideology, including an open market, free trade and private initiatives being perceived as the most important aspects to secure economic progress (LDK, political program, 2012). Although somewhat socially conservative, such as respondents emphasizing the importance of family values and the belief in God, the party has a clear liberal economic framework. There are continuous references to Europe and the US throughout the document, as an ideal and as inspiration. The program encourages cross-state Albanian partnership and collaboration, but makes no irredentist claims, or plans for a national unification.

PDK also embraced a right-wing ideology, and promotes many of the same solutions as LDK to the Kosovo's challenges. PDK MP Hadergjonaj explains that as a center-right party, their mission is to create favorable circumstances for businesses, and embrace their development through suitable taxes, to speed up the economic development. They're committed

to a free market economy and liberal policies, because this will both; *“Make us develop economically faster, and give us a greater perspective for European integration”* (March 2016, interview). Party Secretary Musmurati, says the PDK differs from other parties in clearly being most for an open a market economy, and then delivering suitable policies when in power. Being a right-wing party he says, is connected to many things, but certainly; *“related to the national economy, the market economy, freeing ourselves from the past system which contributed to the current situation, and opening up to the rest of the world”* (March 2016, interview). Ever since the party was created shortly after the war, their programs have had a European perspective. One of the first PDK programs released in May 2000, concludes that the end of armed conflict in the region, can only be achieved when all nations are respected with tolerance and solidarity, in a democratic European Union. The program also states that PDK are committed to privatization of the economy, a free and open market economy, integrated in Euro-Atlantic institutions, and that this perspective will define their political, legislative and administrative orientation. The party’s 2014 government program, listed the European agenda as one of their top 5 priorities (Lajmi, 2014).

AAK’s political program encourages economic competition in all aspects, and supports the development of a free market-economy, and development and protection of private property. They want to effectively conclude the privatization of the economy. They also want to adjust taxes and other incentives, to encourage foreign investment in the country. The program states initially that the party’s direction is Europeanization of Kosovo, with the US as a strategic partner on this journey. They want the end goal to be a state model of the future, a; *“modern democracy, and a historic example of establishing justice in the world of Western civilization”* (AAK program, 2010). The program states early on that the citizens of Kosovo have a choice; Isolation or Europe. The party is also committed to becoming a part of the European People’s Party (Agani, 2015, p. 9).

AKR, although more centrist and liberal than rightist and conservative, are also headed for Brussels. AKR is led by Behgjet Pacolli, the world’s richest Kosovar, a man who has succeeded internationally, in an environment Kosovars want to be a part of. Kryeziu (March 2016, interview) states that the party’s ideology has been weak, but that people vote for Pacolli because they see their hopes of a better future reflected in him personally. AKR respondents also stated Pacolli’s personal achievements as reasons for joining the party, and trusting the movement and its vision; *“He’s an internationally renowned businessman, who can develop Kosovo financially. He’s had his personal success, so the people have embraced him”*

(Gerbeshi, March 2016, interview). Pacolli is portrayed as a well-travelled cosmopolitan, modern and liberal, with an ability to negotiate and compromise with just about anyone. Selmani (March 2016, interview) thinks that if the old political elite would go home, Pacolli could make Kosovo as developed as Switzerland where he created his own success. The program refers to local AKR success, and states that today, everybody emphasize the idea they had in the beginning, that of economic development needing to proceed everything else. However, the other parties have copied their ideas, and they have done it without understanding what they are copying, whereas the AKR consists of well-travelled experts, well-trained in the economic field, who have proved their integrity and skills before entering politics. His introduction to the last AKR electoral program states that; *“We can’t be integrated in the EU by extending our hand, but through dignity, by achieving higher living standards, well-being and development. This way, they will welcome us in the European family to which we historically belong (...) We can’t invent economic development in Kosovo based on a Kosovan model. The US didn’t invent their own success initially, but borrowed it from Europe, then ended up where it is today (...), we know how to make Kosovo as the world, to see the world as a whole, and Kosovo as a part of it”* (AKR program, 2014). Some of the measures suggested, are free financial zones, removing barriers to trade and investment, and pushing for visa-free travel for Kosovan citizens, although the party is open for government involvement where the market falls short. Getting closer to the US and EU is mentioned throughout the program, and a common statement is that the isolation of Kosovo from the world, needs to end.

All center-right parties have adopted liberal economic programs, with a heavy emphasis on either becoming more similar to the US and the EU, or getting closer to them. This is perceived as an important ingredient in solving Kosovo’s problems, and is a strong indicator of the Western influence on the country’s politicians. Although these parties have different histories, iconic figures and some differences in their concrete and detailed policy suggestions, they are not programmatically very different. Without knowledge of the specific parties’ historical base and characteristic rhetoric, it would be hard to tell which one is which without knowing, by simply reading their programs. However, in 2005, this dominant narrative was shaken to its core by the establishment of VV. VV was both an ideological attack on the dominant ideological narrative, and an attack on the actual power distribution in the country. VV is commonly labeled as radical, nationalist and dangerous. VV strongly denies these accusations, but are clear on one thing. They are different from the other parties and have a

fundamentally different outlook on how the Kosovan political scene has developed since the war ended.

“It’s a different weltanschauung, not about having a different answer, but posing a different question (...), the questions are about official status, negotiations with Serbia should decide the status of your territory, your country (...), but every territory in the world has a status. Maybe that status is not the one that we desire. But it must be there, so what we are lacking, is not status, it’s freedom. Others say Kosova is a problem, a problem that should be resolved by dialogue with Serbia. But we said, Kosova is not a problem (...), rather Kosova has a problem. And this problem is Serbia, plus UNMIK, a non-democratic, authoritarian, technocratic bureaucracy” (Kurti, March 2016, interview). VV sees both state building and socio-economic development from a different perspective. They regard the fundamental precondition for successful state building as being a truly sovereign and republican state. Their program states that the will of the Kosovan people need to be the source of sovereignty, and that the state needs to be in service of this will – not the will of various international and supranational organizations. As long as these installed, rather than elected, organizations have executive power, the country will not be able to function as an independent, and thereby functioning, political unit; *“There can be no republic if there is a ruler of the republic”* (VV program, undated). VV sees these institutions not as inspiration, but as institutions established according to the principles of colonialization. One occupant, has been replaced by another. VV MP Pantina, sees the dialogue with Serbia and the international community, as one of the most important reasons why she joined VV. She sees the dialogue with Serbia, a pre-condition to further EU-integration, as a never-ending dialogue Kosovo is not getting anything out of. She thinks it’s beyond due time that Belgrade stops influencing decisions taken in Kosovo, regarding issues such as for example Kosovo Serbs; *“We say no, we don’t need to talk to Belgrade about our citizens, it’s our responsibility (...) What they want, I think is the same as the Albanian wants; jobs, rule of law, normal life. But no one asks them, they ask Belgrade* (March 2016, interview). Pantina says she understands that no country in the world is fully independent on all matters, but that in Kosovo, internationals are involved even in the day-to-day issues, and that this should end. She is also among the respondents which felt that the international community was a heavy influencer behind PDK / LDK government, and that this is an important reason behind their ability to establish a government. As long as the US doesn’t support the opposition, she sees their chances as slim. She sees a blind trust in the US, and their recommendations; *“We’ve had some cases of corruption also with the internationals. So, we*

say to people, ambassadors are no angels, they can also be corrupted – but no (...), and this goes back to the war. Because of the NATO intervention. So now, anything that internationals say, we have to obey”.

VV wants a mixed economic system, combining public and private enterprises, as long as the private enterprises show social responsibility and guarantee of development. The party wants the state to be active in the economic development, subsidizing where necessary and actively reducing import and increasing exports, and installing laws prohibiting monopolistic tendencies. The party also fiercely attacks Kosovo’s initiated privatization process. Open to the idea of privatization at a later point in time, as a part of the mixed economy, VV however sees privatization as no possibly way to initiate economic development, but as a possible consequence once development has taken place. Until the country is fully sovereign, rule of law has been substantially improved, together with an improved infrastructure and long-term social and economic development, they see privatization as damaging the well-being of Kosovo’s citizens (VV Program, undated). They claim the country’s privatization was hasty and corrupted, and has replaced a public monopoly with a private one – thereby not even achieving the stated goal of increased liberalism. Social democratic NISMA, are enthusiastic about the EU project just as their right-wing opponents, but are also, as VV, skeptical of the right-wing parties’ ability to bring about development and European integration, despite their pro-EU and US sentiments; *“Today, no European population has more of a will to be European, than the Albanians. Whereas Europe is rapidly moving towards a new global reality, Kosovo is moving too slowly (...) With the current incapacity and bureaucracy, our EU-integration process will see no end. Someone in our country, 15 years after freedom and 6 years after independence, should feel responsible for this gap, with political leaders having their mouth full of European integration, but a lack of political will”* (NISMA Program, 2014). The program states that it is one thing to be in search of European values in universities and institutions, another to search for it in the most insecure places of the country, in villages haunted by unemployment and extreme poverty. They state that filling the gap between grand European ideas and the actual situation on the ground, is far overdue, concluding that; *“Europe is our vision, but before this our vision needs to be a free, sovereign and democratic Kosovo”*. The party also strongly supports state intervention into the socio-economic landscape, with equality as an imperative goal; *“We are convinced that charity just to survive, is not enough to live a dignified life (...), equality is a right to ensure equal opportunities among people”* (NISMA Program, 2014).

Based on these findings, I find hypothesis H4a to be initially supported, but with a severe backlash initiated by later counter movements. As Kryeziu (March 2016, interview) points out, one of the strongest incentives to claim a center-right ideology in Kosovo, is to avoid resemblance to the communist past, and open the door to connections with the West. This incentive is further strengthened by the perception that the Western world is solely a conservative and liberal political arena, and that the same ideological orientation would be a necessity to achieve a similar level of development. The initial four major Albanian parties (LDK, PDK, AKR and AAK), have taken this perception to the core of their programs. Whereas later parties such as VV, but also NISMA, look at the actual progress made since the war, and suggest a social democratic model to be more conducive. A large part of these suggestions, are based around the very term of self-determination, that the Kosovan state should be free to develop its own preferred policies in all relevant aspects. It does not reject the international society as a partner, but they want the executive nature of this relationship to seize its existence, and does not see EU integration as the cure for all the country's ills.

H4b: The international intervention stopped the fighting, but did not solve the underlying issues that led to war, causing a freezing of the conflict which will be detectable in the political parties and how they interact with each other.

The international community's role was imperative both in moderating the Albanian movement's demands, and in ending the war. Peace-keeping forces and programs have been installed in a near unprecedented manner. KFOR, UNMIK and EULEX are or have been, responsible for peace keeping forces, police, civil administration, implementing and overseeing the rule of law, in addition to the informal role played by the influence of big embassies, such as the American (Kurti, March 2016, interview). The international community has also been heavily involved in the very institutional and constitutional foundation and design of the state, through important documents such as the Ahtisaari Plan, and the UN Security Council resolution 1244. Having played a decisive role in ending the war, and influencing political discourse as seen in H4a, has the international society also managed to solve the underlying issues which led to war in the first place?

Ethnic tension, oppression and violence led to the war of 1998 – 1999, through Serb domination of a territory consisting of an overwhelming Albanian majority, combined with unbearable living conditions. For these underlying issues to have been improved, ethnic and socio-economic relations should have seen a genuine improvement. As VV's establishment is

largely based around Kosovo's relationship with Serb authorities and the international community, their responses are interesting in this regard. Whether one agrees with their platform or not, something has gone wrong in this regard when the opposition to the nature of the relationship with Serb and international authorities, manifests itself in the establishment of a political party, which gains substantial support. Haskuka (March 2016, interview), sees the Serb domination of Kosovo, as being far from over, and sees the current situation as exactly what the Serbs campaigned for two decades ago; More than autonomy, less than independence. By having partial control and ownership over important natural resources, he sees Serbia as dominating Kosovo, without having to face an accountability function from its population. If the Zajednica proposal (Autonomy for Kosovo Serbs) would go through, this strategic control would be intensified; *"They're keeping Kosovo through interests, markets, resources and products (...) Zajednica would give them control of even more strategic resources. They sell their products to Kosovo, but they don't allow Kosovan products. Well, we don't have any production, but anyway"*. MP Derguti sees the Serb agenda in Kosovo as extremely damaging for the already challenging task of state building in a post-conflict society; *"We have continuous problems with Serbia which undermines the stage at which we are now, with their proposals continuously leading to internal division. Through ethnic division, they are building a new Republika Srpska, which would give them executive power. The Serbs of Kosovo are instrumentalized, and Serbia owns resources such as coal and water resources, and this will be an obstacle for true economic development in Kosovo"* (March 2016, interview). VV MP Kurti sees the reserved seats as a ridiculous solution, which has installed and fabricated a Serb elite, calling important shots in the Kosovo's politics (March 2016, interview).

Surprisingly, other parties didn't differ that much from VV in their view on the influence of Serbia and the international community. LDK MP Quni, directly blames the international community for the country's ethnic divisions after 1999, the consequences of which they are living with today. He sees the Ahtisaari package as greatly favoring the Serbs, with their rights to block necessary laws in parliament (March 2016, interview). PDK respondents, which most of my respondents see as the party which has gained the most out of the international society, are also ready for their role to drastically shift. MP Hadergjonaj (March 2016, interview) says that the executive role should end, and that the international community has not delivered the expected results in the sectors in which they have been dominant. AAK vice-president Lekaj, also sees the strategies of the international community in Kosovo as having gone in the wrong direction; Not just functioning as an advisory body, which is needed, but an executive body

which takes away the national politicians' responsibilities; *"If someone takes care of your family more than you do, something is clearly wrong"* (March 2016, interview). He sees Kosovo as being isolate and severely restricted. He sees this in a geo-political connection, with the Western world fearing what could be a stronger Serb orientation towards Russia, if the Serbs are provoked. Gorani, although sympathetic of the enormous pressure put on Ahtisaari from all sides, sees the Ahtisaari plan pushing Kosovo into constant ethnic demarcations. He describes Kosovo today as being a prisoner of this document, in which the corner stone of society is that it's based around ethnicity (March 2016, interview). This, he sees as an impediment towards an actually functioning multi-ethnic society, and democratization in general.

The consequence of the Ahtisaari package and the following political organization, is that every party needs to have an ethnic profile to be registered (Law 03/L-073 on General Political Elections, § 15.11). All parties must be register their ethnic belonging, regardless of which ideological foundation it has otherwise. All Albanian respondents saw some form of minority representation as necessary, but not in its current design. The current arrangements, they see as a result of Ahtisaari and other related documents, but their effects are causing standstills and tension. Ibishi (March 2016, interview) understands these quotas as a result of the war, guaranteeing minorities representation, but after two decades, they block legislation and thereby development, and creates a tense situation between people. The anger and frustration directed towards a lack of socio-economic development among my respondents, are backed up by available data. Kosovo has a staggering unemployment rate which is the 19th highest in the world, at 35,3 %. There has been economic progress, but not enough to deal with the country's problems (World Bank, 2016), and actual GDP growth has consistently been lower than estimates launched by organizations such as Trading Economics (2017). This is pointed out by Pantina (March 2016, interview) as well, that on paper a 3 % annual growth may look good, but for a country like Kosovo it's far from enough. Some have gotten very rich over the past years, much like what has happened in other post-communist societies, but the population in general live their lives, if not in outright poverty, then in somewhat humble circumstances. Most indicators of well-being are low. The latest HDI results, showed that a third of the population is living below the poverty line of €1.72 per day. GNP per capita was \$3,579. Despite of improvements, both numbers are among the lowest in Europe, and in the Balkan region. The country's educational system is severely flawed, with Kosovo being ranked third last in the latest PISA global scores (PISA, 2016).

De facto differences on the ground as the war ended, have been effectively institutionalized. The 1999 demands leading to the war and documents such as the Ahtisaari Plan, have largely been frozen, two decades later. All Albanian respondents still perceive the dominating influence of Serbia as intolerable, which undoubtedly upholds resentment. Also, the once appreciated help by the international community, has developed into resentment against the executive, as opposed to advisory, role it's playing. Political parties, and the discussions and disagreements among them, are largely based on how to best deal with these dynamics. All agree that the current arrangement is not desirable, where they differ is whether it needs to be fiercely addressed immediately, or if it's a "painful compromise" they must live with for the time being. Ethnic tension is reduced in the sense that there is no war, but political activity is largely based on ethnic divisions. All political parties must have an ethnic profile, which determines their voter base. Many Albanian respondents saw it as very unnatural that the 90 % + Albanian population was continuously blocked by small minorities, and felt that the Albanians were discriminated against by privileged national minorities. In addition to this "frozen" political arrangement, socio-economic development has not reached its expected level, causing many to feel like this is not the Kosovo they fought for. Within political parties, the physical confrontation has ended, but the mental and verbal one is still alive. Based on these findings, I find H4b, to be supported.

5.5 Parties – Origins and Functions in a Non-Western Setting

H5a: Political parties in Kosovo after the war have developed substantial ideological profiles and political programs, that distinguish the parties from one and other.

The programmatic resemblances and differences between the parties have already been reviewed, but my interest here is to see if they are meaningfully interpreted by those professing them. When interviewing my respondents, it became clear that ideological concepts connotated a different meaning in Kosovo, than what it traditionally has in the West. FJALA MP Kelmendi, former member of PDK's electoral coalition, said their center-right conservative ideology, was a borrowed model from the EU countries. As conservative parties have entered government in Germany, Britain etc., there's an impression that these parties are successful; *"For that reason, we in our party, decided to be conservative"* (March 2016, interview). Imitation was found to be an important factor with several respondents, when choosing their ideological base. If there was an impression that a certain ideology was gaining momentum in the West, and was more conducive to get into power, that ideology would be stated for their own parties.

Ideological orientations have also been quite flexible. PDK originally declared themselves as a leftist party. That changed quickly, when the party announced via a press conference, that they would instead become a center-right party. PDK MP Muja, now independent in parliament, is harsh in his verdict on the transformation, saying that he no longer understands the ideological basis of his own party. The sudden right-turn, he sees as a consequence of fearing people's reactions, due to the possibility of being associated with the communism of the past (March 2016, interview). He saw no changes in the party's policies, after this rather dramatic and sudden shift. Former Thaqi advisor Gorani, is equally skeptical about the authenticity of the party's ideological shift and its reasons. Nor he, can see any substantially meaningful changes in the party's policies. He points to the paradox of the two major parties which are now in government, LDK and PDK, claiming to be right-wing, while the methods they use to govern the state institutions, are; *"Extremely leftist, bureaucratically leftist, with a huge state apparatus, such as this enormous dependency on the public service"* (March 2016, interview). VV MP Pantina, finds the same disconnection between ideology and policies; *"The leaders just said, now we go right. But during their government (...), administration is the biggest ever, government is large, which is normally leftist, not right"* (March 2016, interview). She also finds the same tendencies when it comes to policies on pensions and benefits. However, she is more open to some of the change making sense. PDK for instance initiated a largescale privatization process during their governance, which gradually made some aspects of their policies more right-wing, in the time leading up to the declaration of an ideological shift in the complete opposite direction.

LDK has also experienced some ideological confusion the past years. Agani (2015, p. 4) explains that the LDK chose a right-wing ideology, partly to adjust with major European currents, but also to confront Milosevic. As he became the national enemy, his ideology of communism had to be rejected as well. Anti-communism became a general anti-leftism. The KLA rose, partly, as a response to LDK's pacifist strategy not being enough and borderline cowardly. The LDK on the other side, have accused the KLA's warfare for being risky, provocative and uncoordinated, and have steeply criticized the alleged political successor PDK for its corruption and its strongman base. However, the two ended up forming the government coalition after the last elections. LDK MP and party veteran Salihaj, strongly opposed the coalition and voted against it. He partly blames a lack of clear, undisputable principles within the LDK for this being able to happen. He thinks the party needs internal adjustments, and some respected, clear guidelines and standpoints, which are not to be broken or overly flexible. He

points to the irony of LDK having been focused on the fight against organized corruption, accusing the PDK of being corrupted thieves, bandits and criminals, only to enter a coalition with them (March 2016, interview). The party has suffered somewhat of an identity crisis after the war, and the process of recreating the party after the death of their iconic leader Rugova, has been harsh. This process may best be summed up by what LDK MP and former KLA commander Quni said when he went to take a cigarette during a parliamentary session; *“Listen. We are old, but we are not dead yet”*. The controversies surrounding the PDK / LDK coalition, indicates that ideological differences, are not the most important. Judging by the two parties’ similar ideological standpoints and political programs, there’s nothing that would indicate that they could not form a functioning government coalition, as they are near identical on several important aspects, as reviewed previously. The resentment is largely historical and personal, such as Salihaj’s resentment against the post-war KLA/SHIK/PDK treatment of LDK supporters. VV MP Pantina elaborates that; *“After the war, a lot of LDK activists were killed. And the perpetrators have never been found. They believe very much that behind these killings, were PDK and SHIK, which is the intelligence service unit, which was illegal and totally PDK. The head of this organization was Kadri Veseli, head of the parliament and PDK. So some of the LDK MPs didn’t even vote for the government, because they said we can’t go into a coalition with people who killed us. We have 1 LDK MP whose father was killed, and she said she joined politics just because she wants to find out who killed her father”* (March 2016, interview). MP’s with a KLA background, such as Berisha and Quni, thinks a lot of people are genuinely angry over events that took place two decades ago (March 2016, interview). This has an impact on which parties one is willing to work with today, regardless of ideological similarities regarding important aspects such as economic development.

Although VV has a quite clear ideological profile, which the respondents’ answers and perceptions closely match, some contradictions are also pointed out in their case. Gorani, although sympathetic towards VV, reasons that; *“VV, which claims to be left-wing, actually fights for a dynamic and effective and rather small apparatus of the state. Which would make it superficially liberal”* (March 2016, interview). VV MP and former leader Kurti states that; *“I wouldn’t be able to tell you what I am doing concretely theoretically, because we are quite eclectic if I may say so”*. Pantina points to the dilemma of the party trying to fix everything at once, and thinks they should possibly narrow their scope (March 2016, interview). A lot of the attention around VV, is also due to their desire to let the people decide whether they should join Albania or not, another subject not easily placed ideologically. There’s no guarantee that uniting

two states, both plagued by corruption, poverty and political instability, would solve Kosovo's most pressing problems. Kurti furthermore points to the dilemma of how left-wing politicians are characterized in the country. He feels like the dominant right wing belittles the entire socialist / social democratic ideology to concentrate around a few issues, such as LGBT rights and the environment. The left-wing has been portrayed as a total failure after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He says they will certainly deal with LGBT rights and the environment, but that at the same time; *"We have a lot to say about the big four in life and the world - the nation, state, economy and freedom (...) They say that these are concepts of the right, but I think that I can give, and we can, give a great contribution to the debate"* (March 2016, interview). With a PhD in cultural theory and discourse analysis, Gorani is more than familiar with political definitions and concepts, but said that when it came to make peace with their meanings in the Balkans, he wouldn't even go there (March 2016, interview). While agreeing with much of his anti-essentialist views, there are some common traits in how the different concepts are understood and processed with the respondents.

Some also saw choosing ideology as a mere necessity needing to be done. When Serb PDS MP and former Minister of Labor Rasic, talked about the first political party he co-founded, he said; *"Autonomous Liberal Party, liberal you know, we don't even understand what liberalism is. But anyhow, ok, it's a name. You need a name, and you have to find one"* (March 2016, interview). He attributed this to the character of politics in the Balkans, as a more hands-on affair for short-term goals, rather than grand ideas and long-term ambitions. People vote for those who can provide them the means to survive, expecting something concrete in return, making ideology irrelevant. Muja shares this view, that when people practically don't know how to eat tomorrow, they don't have the luxury of thinking 50 years ahead in terms of what's going to happen to the state (March 2016, interview). NISMA MP Shala, sees ideology as not having been a very relevant aspect of political parties. Instead, he sees them as organizations which have been working mostly for themselves and their associates, making ideology a mere statement, and causing the parties to not understand their actual role. Had any of them done so, he doubts the country would be in its current political crisis. Much of this results from the educational and institutional breakdown before the war, where many at best received some improvised schooling in private homes. He sees an educated population, which knows what to expect, as a key to developing functional parties, but thinks this will take time and require parties which are less centered around the leadership (March 2016, interview). LDK MP Ibishi, when asked about the most important jobs and responsibilities of political parties, pointed to

the context of Kosovo being something completely different from Western countries, and that the country's overwhelming amount of unemployment, corruption and organized crime, is the most important issue to tackle. When he chose to join LDK, he explained that he made this choice because he had some friends there, and found it more free and open to new ideas, not because of a certain ideology (March 2016, interview).

The general findings about ideological profiles of the Kosovan political parties, is that the choice is based on imitation, necessity, or that when there is an explanation and meaning behind the choice, those meanings are quite different from the traditional connotations. The short version is that being right, means being pro-Europe, and pro-US, which is a powerful sentiment after the assistance offered to Kosovo by NATO, and especially the US, during the war. Being left, is associated with communism, whether that association has any truth to it or not. After the fall of the communist rule in Yugoslavia, being labeled communist could mean political suicide. There are however refinements in the making within the Kosovan left wing. Being liberal, basically means being Behgjet Pacolli in Kosovo. The country's richest man is the leader of liberal AKR, and is seen as someone who knows economics, and his professional background is his strongest card in his campaigns. Their program states that, this is his ideas for development, together with those who work for him. Pacolli then writes that; *"I have succeeded in entrepreneurship, and I have reached a level of well-being for my family that I don't want to enjoy alone (...), therefore, I have returned among you with my family"* (AKR Program, 2014). Pacolli then points out that his fortune isn't enough to develop the entire country alone, and that fundamental change needs to take place at all levels of the economy. But his own success is heavily present in the program. When none of these three ideological reasonings were present, joining a party would be the result of knowing people they had faith in within the party, or wanting to fight for cases like corruption and community rights, which are not easily placed along ideological lines. Minority MPs such as Bajrami and Paqaku stated their parties as being respectively center and left-oriented, but their major focus is on the rights and protection of their national communities (March 2016, interview), with little to detect along traditional ideological lines.

Based on these findings, I find H5a not to be supported. Personal and historical conflicts may pose a greater danger to cooperation than ideological differences. A few major issues have captured the political debate, which are not centered around ideology. In addition to these big issues, there are the small and practical; how to eat tomorrow, how to agree on the lowest common denominator in order to establish political cooperation. There are positive signs, such

as the left's programmatic clarity which has concrete alternative suggestions to the right-wing. Some right-wing politicians such as LDK MP Quni, also states several clearly conservative views, when explaining his party's stand on several issues, such as adherence to traditional family values, the belief in God and the importance of private property (March 2016, interview). The overall image however, is that although some individuals have meaningful ideological preferences, and improvement seems to be underway, it disappears in the day-to-day political arena. Regarding this practical aspect, Gorani (March 2016, interview) explains that representatives of different camps, even long-term enemies, will end up working together to meet the demands of the day, since ideological concepts have not really taken hold. In a recent interview, NISMA MP Shala declared that prior to the next elections, the social democratic party is entering an electoral coalition with right-wing AAK; *"This is based on the political terrain, not my preferences. This is a winning coalition, and the return of Haradinaj will strengthen this even more. After the elections, anyone who wants to join us will be welcome"* (Klan Kosova, 2017). Here, Shala summed up most of my impression in 10 seconds; The demands of the day determine coalitions, winning is the most important aspect, and anyone willing to support the winner, can join on their terms – regardless of original ideological differences. While there is nothing sensational about intense negotiations prior to establishing coalitions, or the desire to win, the absence of meaningful ideological arguments is uncommon in a traditional framework.

H5b: Political parties in Kosovo after the war have developed a significant representative function, and their core group of voters should be identifiable.

As ideological commitment is important for the accountability function towards political parties, something goes missing when seeing Kosovo in a traditional theoretical framework. Political parties are held responsible by those who vote for them, and those who vote for them, should have something in common, corresponding to some part of the party's ideology, platform and program. But if the ideological aspect is blurred, the question remaining is one of representativeness. Who do the different parties represent? What do the thousands of voters standing behind a certain party have in common? All my respondents were clear in their verdict; People vote for individuals. Programs, platforms and ideologies have not played a relevant part, although some see a rebirth of the ideological aspect, both due to the new leftist movement, but also, the right-wing response. Nevertheless, this seems to have played at best a secondary role; *"Mainly I think that people vote for a specific name. Which could be the leader, but which could also be someone they like on the list"* (Kurti, March 2016, interview). Not

voting at all and political apathy was also described as a serious problems, evident in the voter turnout of the last elections being 42,6 % (Kosovo Central Election Commission, 2014).

Traditional cleavages such as economic cleavages (Aarebrot and Evjen, 2014, p. 303), are hard to detect. As reviewed, economic development has in general been too low. The latest poverty headcount ratio was 29, 7 %. The country's latest available GINI score from 2013, was 26, 7 (World Bank, 2013). This indicates that the level of economic inequality is low, and this score is about the same as in countries such as Iceland, Norway and Denmark (Kiersz, 2014). The difference is, obviously, that most Kosovans have low incomes. There is therefore not much of an economic cleavage to base a party on, except for poverty alleviation and job creation being a top priority for all parties, with somewhat different methods suggested to achieve them. There is an urban intellectual elite, especially in the Prishtina area, but oftentimes they are unemployed or employed in jobs they are overqualified for. A popular joke in the country, explains Kosovo's coffee being so wonderful, as a consequence of most of the waiters having an MA-degree. A university degree, is no guarantee for a job at all. There are no parties based around for instance sectors such as the agrarian, or post-modern phenomena such as the environment, or religious parties. It's difficult to see the parties representing a certain cleavage based on class, economy or profession. Gender is not a decisive factor. All parties must ensure that 30 % of their candidates are women, and there are several women's associations across the political party spectrum, without any one party known as "the women's party".

There is however a strong regional tendency, for the most part not based around the cleavages mentioned above. Kryeziu, director of the Prishtina Institute of Political Studies, sees the regional perspective as decisive. She explains inter-party friction largely as the result of wanting to control territories, with AAK being a party from the Dukagjin region, PDK being a near exclusive Drenica region party, and LDK winning most of the Llapi region (March 2016, interview). These regional sentiments, often coincide with where the leader is from, supporting Gorani's claim that electoral votes are largely the result of region, family and clan (March 2016, interview). Hashim Thaqi is from the Drenica region, and PDK won the elections by a landslide in corresponding municipalities like Klina, Mitrovica and Vushtrri. In Glogovac and Skenderaj they completely cleared the table, receiving up to 90 % of the votes (KCEC, 2014). AAK was branded as the Dukagjin party by several of my respondents, and this is where party leader Ramush Haradinaj, is from. Whereas many of my respondents were skeptical towards the credentials of the war-time achievements made by former KLA-leaders turned politicians, Haradinaj is often exempted from this. He is widely renowned for his achievements and

sacrifices during the war in the frontlines, although he too has been surrounded by controversy. Kryeziu (interview, March 2016), skeptical of the KLA's political aftermath, also shifts her tone when talking about Haradinaj; *"Ramush, he has given all for this country (...), Ramush was a guy who carried his dead brother for kilometers out of the border"*. His region of origin seems to agree. AAK won the elections by solid margins in the corresponding municipalities of Gjakova, Decan and Junik (KCEC, 2014). NISMA's leader, Fatmir Limaj, who broke away from PDK and founded his own party, is from Malishevo, so are all but one of their MPs. Malishevo was also the only municipality where they won (KCEC, 2014). The LDK has had its stronghold in the Llap region. It has also been an intellectual phenomenon, mostly dominant in bigger cities. Combined with KLA being mostly a rural phenomenon, the LDK dominance continued in cities through the war, which can explain the vast and continued LDK support in these areas. This becomes clear in the electoral results, with LDK winning big cities like Peja and Gjilan, and the capital of Prishtina, together with other Llap municipalities like Fushe Kosove and Podujevo (KCEC, 2014). For VV, the picture is different. Although its founder and former leader Albin Kurti is a highly charismatic leader and somewhat personified the movement, the same focus on specific individuals and political icons isn't present. It's also the only party that has changed its leader under normal procedures, as opposed to death and the illegality of holding dual offices, which was the case with LDK and PDK. This also becomes evident in their electoral results, by coming third in total, but not winning a single municipality (KCEC, 2014). This decisive tendency is to a large extent lost at first sight, due to the country's PR system where the entire country is treated as a single, multi-member electoral district (Kosovo Election Law, Article 110), and the fact that regionalism isn't present in party platforms and programs. When breaking down the electoral results to the municipality level however, the picture is clear.

The other main reason stated for voting behavior amongst my respondents, is the promise, or perceived anticipation, of personal benefits. There's the direct effect of benefitting financially from a certain party being in power. Many of my respondents pointed out PDK's unique position in this aspect, among other when it comes to public hiring. Kryeziu (March 2016, interview), believes that this position alone will bring them 20-something, if not close to 30 % of the votes for a long time. She also points to patriarchal village structures; *"I'll tell you how people vote here. You have a small village. And then you have this old man of the village. And you go and talk to that guy, and then he says you have to vote for this candidate. And the entire village votes for the candidate. As simple as that. In smaller villages, you can push your*

influence to that extent". PDK has also gained support for its war veteran pension program to former KLA-fighters. The numbers are however disputed, as Pantina (March 2015, interview) points out; *"When the war ended, there were around 20 000 fighters registered. Now, this number has tripled. We have people, that during the war, were 14 or 15, so not even on the age to be a soldier, and now they are war veterans"*. The World Bank (2016) calls the high number of recipients of war veteran benefits "unanticipated". When fully implemented, this benefit alone will amount to 2 % of GDP, and put severe pressure on the national budget. Several respondents refer to this as outright buying of votes. However, PDK has continuously done well in elections and participated in governments since the end of the war. In that sense, it's quite natural that new legislation on public hiring and benefits for veterans, is conducted by them. PDK MPs Hadergjonaj and Musmurati, explains these actions as evidence that they are being pro-active in creating progress and well-being, and that the electorate therefore continues to trust them (March 2016, interview).

Outright threats have also taken place, both directly related to elections, but also in broader terms, to attract and maintain support. Before the 2014 parliamentary elections, Serb MP Rasic (March 2016, interview) recalls the pressure put on local Kosovo Serbs by Belgrade. Groups of people in dark vehicles visited people's homes and businesses, telling them to vote for the Belgrade-directed SL, to avoid losing their jobs, incomes and pensions; *"Even though it's a secret vote, when they go in they are alone, the pressure that is made on them, is too high, they simply give up. They understand, it's too risky to vote for me"*. The problem of radical parties entering parliament, has still been less of a problem in Kosovo than the other ex-Yugoslav entities, which have many times voted extreme nationalists to power. Several elements have prevented the establishment of extreme and destabilizing parties which lowers responsiveness, such as a 5 % electoral threshold and several restrictions and regulations regarding party establishment and behavior. This has reduced the number of parties able to enter the Assembly. Minority parties are however in a unique position. With 20 reserved seats, they are guaranteed to make up 17 % of parliament, whereas they constitute 5 % of the population. The stated goal behind this, is to secure representativeness, and combatting ethnic discrimination, after the horrors of the 1990s. The minority parties are seen among my respondents as parties with strictly limited agendas. Quni (March 2016, interview), thinks that maybe it's too early for them to be represented in mainstream parties, and see them as; *"Ethnic parties, not ideological parties. They see it as a guarantee for their security (...), for the moment, they are mostly interested in their national causes"*. The minority deputies interviewed

do not deny this. Although they are too concerned with the most pressing issues on the general political agenda, they all list community concerns and rights as their most important job. This is perfectly understandable, as the parties are based around ethnic identities. Several respondents however, have doubts about the genuine representative function of these parties, and see them more as an easy way out for those wishing to enter the Assembly with few votes; *“They can become deputies with very few votes. We would need 10 000 votes, they would need maybe 800. This is in their interest, to be represented in parliament, and obtain a solid position and good status”* (Salihaj, March 2016, interview).

Two facts however, make this picture more complicated. The first is the legal requirement of parties having to state which electorate / ethnic group they are pursuing. The international framework demanded some form of guaranteed minority representation after the war, a compromise that the Albanian leadership agreed to. Desirable or not, a new political order would require extensive amendments in several legal aspects. For minorities to be represented without quotas, this would also mean that the electorate would have to be willing to vote for individuals of another ethnicity than themselves, a scenario several respondents did not deem very likely at this point; *“Some would probably vote for them, but not to the extent that they would be elected deputies”* (Salihaj, March 2016, interview). None of the minority deputies interviewed, believed their communities would be adequately taken care of and represented within the Albanian mainstream parties. Bosnian MP Bajrami, believes the reserved seats will be indispensable for at least the next 20 years to come, as they are fighting for basic rights that have not been respected for over a century, during the Yugoslav and Milosevic era (March 2016, interview). He does describe his coalition as a centre-oriented party, meaning that they support democracy and rule of law. Other than this, national rights occupy the agenda, and he sees their fight as the same as those of the other minority parties, regardless of which. Neither Serb MP Rasic sees it as a realistic scenario that the big Albanian parties would go the necessary distance to represent and protect his community. He does however agree with the problem of representation, as the dominating SL is ruled from Belgrade, making them not represent the Kosovo Serbs, but Belgrade. This in turn makes the Albanians regard the Kosovo Serbs with suspicion, creating a hostile environment (March 2016, interview).

Roma representative Paqaku also sees the reserved seats as necessary. He sees it as a requirement for democratic development that the national minorities are not only a part of the state, but a serious, respected and equal part of the state, at the same level as the majority (March 2016, interview). The negative perceptions associated with the reserved seats, substantiates his

concern; *“At the moment, they are perceived, even from the government, as just a voting machine for them. They even insult them during speeches”* (Haskuka, March 2016, interview). Paqaku recognizes the “voting machine” aspect, where the minorities are constantly asked to vote in favor of legislation initiated by bigger, mainstream parties. Despite the low number of seats, minority deputies can have an important function in tilting the voting balance. Haskuka sees this as possibly having serious, damaging effects for the minorities down the road; *“This is bad for them as well, because they will be targets in the future, because it’s creating a sense of injustice in the population. And they can become scapegoats in the future”* (March 2016, interview). Kryeziu also relates to the notion of minority candidates being perceived as second-range deputies, exemplified by a former Serb mayor now driving a taxi, due to a lack of education and professional training; *“These are just tough guys, close to someone, ready to take over an be there”* (March 2016, interview). Although most respondents saw the reserved seats in its current design as far from ideal, most understood their purpose. Ibishi and Kelmendi list concrete examples of how the minorities need an extra voice. Ibishi the ethnic violence against Serbs which took place after two Albanian boys were found dead in the Ibar river, without there being final proof that Serbs were behind it, and concludes that; *“We didn’t pass the test during 2004. We didn’t protect minorities”*. Kelmendi says that he is sorry to say, that the situation for the Roma in Kosovo, is terrible when it comes to for instance housing, education and the job market. He sees their rights as not being respected, and that they lack even elementary things for living a dignified life (March 2016, interview). Kelmendi is among the Albanian respondents who do see the minority parties as having a genuine representative function, and there are incidents showing genuine commitment to their respective communities. In late 2016, Paqaku stood before parliament with a clear message after two MPs had spoken about his community in a derogatory manner; *“I am standing before you as a Roma member - belonging to the Roma community – not to the Magjup community, or the Gabel community (Degrading term used against Romas, rem.). I will not leave this podium, before one of you Albanian deputies give me an apology”* (Kosovapress, 2016). Paqaku is heavily involved in numerous organizations, working on a wide range of issues related to the Roma community. As Bajrami (March 2016, interview) emphasized, minority candidates also fight in elections, among different similar political subjects, to win enough votes to get into the Assembly.

Based on these findings, I find hypothesis H5b to be vaguely supported. It’s not supported along traditional cleavages, or for that matter desirable cleavages. There are however identifiable voter groups behind the different parties, although the question of how

representative the parties are with regards to these exact groups is disputed. Region is the clearest indicator, associated with the geographical background of the party and its leadership. There is also a certain urban / rural dimension, in that the oldest party LDK, has had continuous support in bigger cities. Real or perceived personal benefits are also important. Furthermore, ethnicity is a decisive indicator, as all parties must state an ethnic belonging which determines which voter group they can aim for. Bribes, threats and outright violence has also been stated as an unfortunate factor by my respondents when analyzing voting behavior.

H5c: Political parties in Kosovo have a reasonable chance to enter the government, and a clear accountability function when in opposition.

Kosovo has adopted a PR electoral system for electing candidates for the 120 parliamentary seats. 100 of these are won through sheer numbers, although required that women make up 30 % of the seats (Law No. 03/L-073 on Kosovan General Elections, § 27.1). The additional 20 seats are reserved for the different ethnic minorities in the country, also elected through a PR system based on the allocation of votes by their respective voter bases. Both government and president must be accepted by parliament. After having completed five parliamentary elections since the war, four of the six major parties have entered government; PDK, LDK, AAK and AKR.

In the first parliamentary elections in 2001, LDK, PDK and AAK combined won 81 parliamentary seats (B92, 2001), and all three formed a government coalition. Serb Koalicija Povratak (KP), was the third largest recipient of votes. Although being dependent on a specific amount of minority votes on several issues, and limited by the fact that KP was ideologically not much different from the current SL, this government coalition had 81 % of the ordinary seats in the Assembly. In the 2004 elections, LDK was again the winner as in 2001, with PDK second, AAK third (Mircevski, 2004). The new government coalition included LDK and AAK, leaving PDK an opposition party for the first and only time. LDK and AAK then had 56 seats combined in the Assembly, with the Albanian opposition holding 44, minority seats excluded.

In 2007, the LDK dominance had suffered tremendous setbacks due to Rugova's death, and the following tensions which caused the party to be split into two different parties; LDK and LDD (Salihaj, March 2016, interview). The LDK's voter base was also caught in this confusion, causing the two different units to place respectively second and fourth in the elections. PDK was then manifested as the dominant force of Kosovan policies, with 34,2 % of the votes (KCEC, undated). What followed was a government coalition consisting of PDK and

LDK, which was disturbed after the controversies surrounding then leader Sejdiu not being able to hold multiple offices simultaneously, causing the PDK to govern for the most part alone (Ibishi, March 2016, interview). The relationship between the position and opposition was seemingly becoming more balanced at this point, with the governing parties still being backed by more than 50 % of the deputies, but nowhere near the complete dominance seen in the immediate post-war situation. In the fourth post-conflict parliamentary election in 2010, PDK's dominance continued, as they won the elections and went into a government coalition with AKR. AKR however, finished last among the Albanian parties above the 5 % threshold, despite convincing 6 minor parties and movements to join their electoral coalition (KCEC, 2011). There was little doubt as to who was the dominant faction within this government coalition. Two interesting developments occurred after the 2010 elections. LDK, which had for over two decades been the very manifestation of Kosovo Albanian political activity, became an opposition party for the first time. Also, the Assembly consisted of an opposition much more numerous than earlier, which actually outnumbered the governing parties' share of Assembly seats. This was due both to LDK going into opposition, but also VV's entry into electoral politics. Ideologically, this also meant a wider spectrum of political parties represented within the Assembly, with the rebirth of the Kosovan political left.

The more balanced relationship between the position and opposition in terms of sheer numbers, and the broader spectrum of ideologies and programs represented after the 2010 elections, should be expected to lead to a more vibrant and dynamic accountability function within the Kosovo Assembly. VV went to elections, focusing on fighting corruption, and policies such as Zajednica. They also fiercely criticized the liberal economic development undertaken by previous governments, claiming it had made the economic situation for most Kosovans, if not worse, then certainly not much better. The strategy worked. The increased focus on elite corruption, bonds between powerful actors and important legislation being passed without much debate, made VV attract votes from all over the country, where votes have traditionally been regionally centered. Since VV's entry to the Assembly, all other Albanian parties have received fewer votes in the following elections, suggesting that VV has managed to either attract voters from several other parties' voter bases, and / or managed to attract a new group of voters to the polls.

What initially seemed as a continuous positive development, instead ended up with a severe political crisis after the fifth post-conflict election in 2014. PDK again became the biggest party, but their share of votes had decreased from the previous election. LDK again

came second, whereas AAK and AKR saw their share of votes decrease, in the case of AKR to the extent that they did not manage to get above the 5 % electoral threshold. VV did somewhat better than in the 2010 elections, and were this time accompanied by a new alternative to the left; NISMA, which just managed to get into the Assembly with 5,15 % of the votes (KCEC, 2014). This time, the other political parties were determined to end PDK's political dominance. Out of the five Albanian parties getting over the 5 % threshold, four of them combined their efforts to try to stop another PDK government from being established. NISMA, VV, AAK and LDK came up with a coalition alternative, leaving the PDK to stand alone. These four parties combined were backed by 53,9 % of the votes against PDK's 30,4 %, the remaining 15,1 % were shared amongst minority parties and Albanian parties below the 5 % threshold. The coalition would be backed by 65 % of the Albanian MPs.

The coalition however, failed in creating a government. What caused the broad coalition to initially fail, is somewhat unclear. There were some legal challenges regarding the timing of announcing the actual coalition proposal (Ibishi, March 2016, interview), and the four party leaders undoubtedly had their differences. What was anyhow the final nail in the coffin for a LDK / AAK / VV / NISMA coalition, was the Constitutional Court of Kosovo's decision that it was the biggest party's right to establish a government, which was the PDK (Verdict K0103/14). Standing alone against all four other parties proved challenging, but in a sudden turn of events, LDK once again accepted a government coalition with their long-time rival. The result was a government backed by 70 % of the regular deputies, guaranteed seats excluded, enough to secure both a simple and absolute majority on most issues. AAK, VV and NISMA who then ended up being a small and quite powerless opposition, didn't hesitate to make their opinion of the new government visible. The Kosovan Assembly's day to day functioning became a hot topic in the Balkan news, with images surfacing of deputies throwing rotten eggs, throwing water in the Prime Minister's face, blowing whistles for entire sessions, and most famously; throwing tear gas in the Assembly's main hall during plenary sessions.

Based on these findings, I find H5c to not be supported. The first four elections, seemed to indicate an impressive development; All four major parties had been in both government and opposition – and although these processes had their share of controversies, the turnover of power did not see the eruption of political violence. As the political spectrum broadened after the elections of 2014, the assumption of political parties having a reasonable chance to enter the government, is severely weakened. Not even a proposed coalition of all four major parties but one, managed to be approved to form a government, a task that theoretically should've been

rather easy to perform in a PR system. There are a couple of plausible and possibly interconnected reasons for this. Opposition politicians see the PDK, because of their long-term political dominance at key points in time, as having obtained control of several major institutions, preventing them from operating completely independent. This includes institutions such as the Constitutional Court, which gave the biggest party the exclusive right to form a government, and important international actors, such as summed up by Kurti (March 2016, interview) as; “*EULEX, and the quint embassies, these big five. The American, British, French, Italian and German, who have a great role in influencing our politicians*”. The international community’s goal in Kosovo has been stability and predictability. When a political subject such as VV enters the scene, with a completely different point of view on national politics than what has been present before, the assumption of having a reasonable chance of executive power falls short. Despite the positive tendency of all four major initial parties having been in both government and opposition, these four parties have largely been similar on major issues such as the dialogue with Serbia and the international society. A second option is therefore that it was only a reasonable chance for political parties *of a certain orientation* to enter government – when new parties arrived with substantially different attitudes, not even a coalition of all but one major parties stood a chance. The minority veto rights also play an important role, as no government can be formed without the approval of a majority of Serb candidates. An opposition party demanding a new type of dialogue with Belgrade, is therefore basically chanceless, when 90 % of the Serb deputies rule on Belgrade’s behalf.

As for the accountability function, the same weakened support for the hypothesis is found after 2014. The opposition candidates have not been afraid to speak their minds, but this has at times come at a high price, including prison and house arrests. As the relationship between the government and opposition became worse, the opposition boycotted the Assembly, leaving the Assembly without an opposition at all, let alone a functioning one. The number of MP’s behind the government, also makes the opposition quite powerless. The surprising PDK / LDK coalition, resulted in a government backed by about 70 % of the regular deputies. LDK MP Salihaj, which opposed the coalition, sees this as a grave problem; “*When the two main rivals go together, there is no true opposition. And as such, you can’t have a real democracy – there is no one that effectively controls the government*” (March 2016, interview). The opposition’s methods can also be seen as problematic. Tear gas and whistle blowing doesn’t invite to open, constructive dialogue. The VV MP’s position on this was however clear. The elements of frustration listed by Haskuka, Pantina, Kurti and Derguti are many, but include

among other things ignoring their parliamentary questions, petitions and protests, passing important legislation under the table, implementing laws with parliament in recess, changing transcriptions and hearings to alter legislation and legal verdicts passed that fundamentally contradicts the principles of parliamentary democracy (March 2016, interview). Kurti thinks that in the situation Kosovo is in, only radical responses would be normal. Being the third biggest party is not enough. After having thrown rotten eggs and water, there was the tear gas; *“It’s me who brought the tear gas inside in my pocket. They were throwing hundreds of tear gas canisters on us in the protests, and dozens of them didn’t blast, so I took them inside. And you know, when they throw tear gas on people at the protests, they never problematize it. When you throw it at the millionaires in parliament, they say; ‘Oh it’s toxic poison! It’s a chemical weapon!’. Suddenly it gets all these dangerous connotations for life and death. This is not true, it’s gone in 20 minutes”*. Whether the governing parties truly disagree with VV’s and the opposition’s policies, or if they feel like their hands are tied without the possibility of reaching more compromise, is unclear. No PDK or LDK respondent was happy about a policy such as Zajednica. They would however see it as a painful and necessary compromise, in order to abide by the treaties signed with the international community after the war, and to maintain a somewhat normal relationship with Belgrade, a criterion for the possibility of further negotiations with the EU. LDK MP Quni admits that the state agenda has put the governing party in a position where they must make decisions which in the public’s eyes are unpopular and unacceptable. He thinks only powerful actors had the ability to go through with this, and therefore sees the controversial LDK / PDK coalition as a rational choice, as better options were missing. He sees the opposition’s demands for sudden and profound changes as a very dangerous ambition (March 2016, interview). Kosovo undoubtedly has an opposition which makes a lot of noise, but in no traditionally meaningful way, are they being heard.

6.0 Discussion and Conclusion

This table provides an abbreviated overview of theories, hypotheses and indicators correlating to independent and dependent variables. A value of 0 indicates that the hypothesis is not supported, 1 indicates conditional support and 2 indicates a strong degree of support.

Theory	Hypotheses	Indicators	Support of hypothesis
Rebel Group Organization and Transformation	H1a: Initial motivation of separatism negatively affecting rebel-to-party transition.	IV: Perception of KLA’s ideology. DP: Basis for post-conflict party establishment.	Yes (2)
	H1b: Hierarchical structure maintained when transitioning.	IV: Organizational structure, DDR, intra-party democracy. DP: Party structure	Yes, but several hierarchical structures (1).

The Importance of Winning	H2a: War termination difficult to classify, affecting political parties.	IV: Perception of who won, correspondence between political arrangements and theoretical categorization. DP: Parties' views on the war termination, and corresponding policies.	Yes (2).
	H2b: Termination ambivalence affecting parties associated with liberation.	IV: Perception of who is KLA's successor, image of war actors gone politicians, Albanian movements' degree of fragmentation. DP: Parties' relation to the KLA and liberation heritage.	Yes (2).
The Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis	H3: KLA moderation as a result of inclusion.	IV: Internal and external change / "shocks" affecting the KLA's ideology and behavior, KLA program vs. later documents related to KLA actors, war settlement documents. DP: Ideological and behavioral moderation	Yes, but the genuineness of the moderation is questionable, and did not include all aspects of the group (1).
The Role of the International Community	H4a: Party ideologies affected by the promotion of liberal democracy.	IV: International actors' vision for Kosovo and parties' reactions to these. DP: Parties' / party programs and their references to the West.	Yes, but with a severe backlash by later counter-movements (1).
	H4b: International community freezing the conflict by ending the fighting, but not underlying issues.	IV: Degree of improvement regarding war-time conflict dimensions, conflict settlement documents' solutions for peace and local institutions' responses to these. DP: Parties' attitudes towards these underlying issues and their solutions.	Yes (2).
Parties – Origins and Functions in a Non-Western Setting	H5a: Parties have developed substantial ideological profiles.	IV: Party programs and documents. DP: Party members' perception of their own ideologies and responsibilities, correlation between ideologies and policies.	No (0).
	H5b: Significant representative function.	IV: detection of relevant cleavages, parties' foundational basis, party membership base. DP: Voter behavior.	Yes, but in no way along traditional cleavages (1).
	H5c: Reasonable chance to enter government, and clear accountability function in opposition.	IV: Electoral results, electoral laws, coalition negotiations. DP: composition of government and opposition.	No (0).

6.1 Who's in Charge?

As the table shows, the only theory achieving its full potential explanatory value, with a value of 4 out of 4, is the importance of winning. The grey zone war termination has led the political development in a complete deadlock on several occasions, both domestically and

internationally. This standstill is caused by what Aarebrot and Evjen (2014, p. 373) refers to as the problem of lack of mutual recognition. Older states have had their borders recognized after winning military victories, consolidating both their external borders and eliminating internal rivals. When modern wars such as the Kosovan, end in what more resembles cease fires than peace agreements, the warring parties have not finished their battle, in this case neither beyond Kosovo's borders, not within them. The documents ending the Kosovo war, do not promise Kosovo independence and recognition of state sovereignty, but effectively ends de facto Serb control over the territory. The guns may have been laid down, but the parties have taken the battle into the political institutions, where they're now fighting many of the same battles as in 1999. The KLA could proclaim a modified version of victory by driving the rival forces out, but their rivals are still present in every important institution. Kosovo's government and Assembly include individuals loyal to Belgrade only, refusing to accept Kosovo's independence. Parties such as SL have entered both the Assembly and government due to the reserved seats, where their only main cause is to represent the vision of Belgrade. Their veto powers also effectively put a stop to policies such as creating a Kosovan army. Old tensions between different KLA factions, are also still present, and the role played by LDK / FARK in the armed uprising has largely slipped history.

This is related to another theory with considerable explanatory power, the role of the international community, with a value of 3 out of 4 possible. It's no controversial statement that the KLA couldn't have won without NATO, although the war wouldn't have gained momentum without KLA members initiating it and exposing themselves to what initially appeared as their certain deaths, when facing a far superior military enemy. The international community gained an enormous influence in Kosovo. The result has been political parties which perceive imitation of the West as the key to prosperity and development. All initial post-conflict political parties allocate considerable amounts of their programs to admiration of the EU countries and the US, and their plans largely concentrate around how Kosovo can achieve the same, together with further integration into organizations such as the EU. The goal has been for political parties in Kosovo to develop into ideological, representative organs capable of placing candidates for various offices through elections, like their Western counterparts. Still, the theory with the lowest explanatory factor, is that of parties operating along traditional origins and functions, receiving an explanatory value of only 1 out of 6 possible. The parties are ideologically weak, and policies and statements do not correspond with their stated ideologies. Stated ideologies are largely the result of imitation or necessity, although there has been detectable

improvements. These developments are at the current point however, too weak and sporadic to count as a substantial improvement.

Weak ideological and representative functions, together with a lack of reasonable chances to enter government or a functioning opposition, is also related to the “freezing effect” caused by the war termination and the international community’s role. The current institutional and constitutional framework in which the political parties operate, is largely based on the 1999 de facto situation on the ground. The result has been continued decisive Serb influence over the new state, both from local Kosovo Serbs and Belgrade directly. The international community’s vision for Kosovo was for it to be a multi-ethnic democracy which would eventually be a part of European and international organizations. As Ottoway (2003, p. 220) points out however, this may not be what the current politicians, or the people for that matter, want. SL, holding 90 % of the reserved Serb seats and substantial veto powers, don’t want to live in a multi-ethnic democratic Kosovo, they want Kosovo to be ruled as a Serb province. All initial major Albanian parties have accepted minority protection and representation. But no individual Albanian respondent sees the current solution as fair or desirable. Kosovo Albanians constitute 93 % of the total population. The Serb minority consists of less than 2 % of the population, and can still block most important legislation. This makes it near impossible for the Kosovan politicians to have the necessary degree of autonomy needed to implement basic policies, such as creating an army, or having their legitimacy respected in all territories of the state. This incongruity is what a party such as VV is largely based around. Even if the question of independence and status are put on the sideline, Kosovo Albanians’ *volonté générale* is not expressed through their elected politicians, because their elected politicians can’t freely implement what they want, even policies which in a traditional sense are in no way controversial.

A common phrase in Kosovan political discourse has therefore become “Duar të lidhura”, tied hands. The political parties in general, have all realized that they are not autonomous to decide their policies based solely and their own and popular will. The difference between the parties, is more related to how to deal with this discrepancy between being an independent country and not being able to decide their own policies, neither day-to-day issues nor big ones. In a recent debate, President Thaqi talked about pressing issues facing Kosovo, and made it clear that his personal preference was irrelevant. Not going through with the certain policies such as settling the border dispute with Montenegro, which would cause Kosovo to lose 7000 hectares of land, could harm the process of liberalization of visas, and further Euro-Atlantic integration. He sees going through with these kinds of controversial policies, as the

key to stabilizing relations, which again is a demand of important documents such as the Ahtisaari Plan and the Vienna negotiations, and current negotiations with Brussels. His hands are tied, and if this doesn't go through; *"we will all pay the price"* (Thaqi, panel discussion "Fol Hapur", April 7th 2017). The response of opposition parties such as NISMA and VV, is that unless the current political and social circumstances in Kosovo change, EU-integration won't help. The international presence still has an executive nature in several institutions and areas, through for instance restrictions on legislation in order to comply with international documents, or facts such as the country's Constitutional Court consisting not only of Kosovan judges, but also imported foreign experts (Constitutional Court of Kosovo Webpage, undated).

The most unfortunate development of these dynamics, which affects political parties to a large degree, is the lack of accountability. Everyone's hands seem to be tied, not just Hashim Thaqi's. The Kosovo Albanian leaders cannot implement their own desired policies, as it would disturb the international society's paradigm of "standards before status" and stabilization. The international community won't change their presence until the Kosovo Albanians have proved themselves able to govern alone, but they are not given the chance to govern alone either. Holding the "international community" as an institution responsible for local unfortunate developments, have proved difficult, such as failed attempts to go after former US ambassador Christopher Dell for corruption (Pantina, March 2016, interview) Serbia continues to play an important role in Kosovan politics, but at the same time have no responsibility towards the Kosovo Albanian population. The result is no one clear person or party to blame for what's going wrong. My respondents made it clear that they do mean what their programs state, but they have no chance of implementing all of it. These are the same programs they promote during elections, and in theory should be held accountable for. It has however proved to be difficult to hold them accountable, when they find themselves in institutional arrangements where they have no chance of implementing their programs, even if they wanted to. All respondents stated that they appreciate the international society as an advising actor, but that the executive nature has outplayed its role. Where they differ is whether this is a painful compromise the parties must accept in the foreseeable future, or if the time has come to demand change. LDK MP Quni sees the older, bigger parties as the ones able to lead the country through these painful policies necessary to stabilize the political situation enough to advance with European integration (March 2016, interview). The opposition has had enough, and characterize the current negotiations as endless, and as painful compromises they're not getting anything out of anyway, evident in poor results on various developmental indicators such as education and income.

6.2 Shell Parties

The modus operandi of Kosovan political parties can somewhat resemble what in economics are labeled shell companies, companies with the same design as a regular company, but which does not possess the same assets or operations as a normal company. Within the political parties in Kosovo, assets and operations would include elements such as ideological clarity, experience and functioning internal democratic procedures. They are currently not based around traditional cleavages and internal procedures. This is related to the rebel-to-party transition, a theory with an explanatory value of 3 out of 4 possible. There was quite clearly no coherent foundation on which to establish the post-war political parties, as the KLA was rapidly and sporadically organized in a desperate situation, with one goal in mind; Liberation. The inclusion-moderation hypothesis' explanatory value is rated at 1 out of 2 possible. If looking exclusively for specific incidents of behavioral and ideological moderation, the KLA fits the theory very well, except for the chronology being reversed – with ideological moderation proceeding behavioral. However, it's beyond doubt that the moderation was largely tactical, agreed upon to go forward with the war at all, and it was not agreed upon by all factions of the group. These animosities persist until this day, and the issues related to moderation are still causing tension on the political arena, such as the question of the relationship with Albania.

The hierarchical structure has been maintained in the post-war parties, such as PDK. Most other parties are also leadership centered, exemplified by LDK being the party which has in relative terms has lost the largest amount of votes over the last years, largely as a result of their iconic leader passing away. When a party leader dies, replacing him should be a relatively easy task, regardless of the emotional aspect. The party policies should also still be clear. Without Rugova, the party collapsed and split in two, before the rejoining of LDD and LDK in the 2014 elections. They were however still far from accomplishing their previous political dominance. AAK and AKR are also largely centered around the heroic story and personal accomplishments of their respective leaders. Later opposition parties such as NISMA and VV, have taken measures to create more inclusive and democratic party structures, such as the one member one vote procedure. They are however also connected to specific individuals and their stories. Although Albin Kurti is no longer VV's leader, he is still without doubt the personification and front figure of the movement. It's the same story told across the political spectrum; The heroic leader which has sacrificed everything, been incarcerated for years, or managed to be successful against all odds. This focus is clearly understandable; Their sacrifices were enormous and they have showed extraordinary bravery. However, respondents such as

Quni (March 2016, interview), points to this tendency having gone too far, and warns against seeing them as super-human. Several respondents couldn't imagine questioning their war-time efforts which they deeply respect, but are extremely skeptical of the measures taken after it ended, and argues that war-time achievements shouldn't automatically mean the right to monopolize post-war politics.

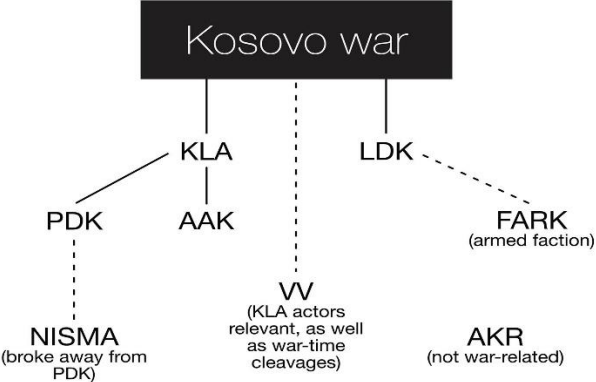
A typical Kosovan political party is therefore perceived as a closed circle, focused around the leader and his associates, and groups related to and profiting from connections to the party. This can be hard to detect, when reading impressive programs and platforms, and witnessing free and open debates and plenary sessions. Kryeziu's experience substantiates this paradox. When her sister ran for elections, they experienced an inclusive initial process with interesting open debates throughout the campaign. In the end however, several members of the same family wound up in power (March 2016, interview). Salihaj concludes that; *"In Kosovo's parties, the leader is absolutely dominant, and he creates a structure which embraces him. All electoral procedures within the party, embraces his needs. That's why we always have the same leader, and no real internal democracy. LDK used to have it, but is now also flawed in this regard"* (March 2016, interview). Pantina points to nepotism, and "state capturing" by those who profited from the initial war-to-peace transition as one of the biggest problems the young state is facing, with leading politicians having friends and supporters placed in important institutions (March 2016, interview). This finding is substantiated by the mismatch between those the parties are supposed to protect and represent, and their actual conditions. In a liberal, right-wing political paradigm, public employees are paid far better than those in the private sector. Minority parties are based around representing and improving the conditions of their ethnic groups, but Romas and Turks are poorly integrated in society according to several respondents. Kosovo Serbs have become scapegoats due to the perception that they block development towards a functioning state, and have continuously fled Kosovo since the war ended. The initial post-war attacks on ethnic minorities, were fueled by anger and hopelessness, and carried out by frustrated individuals, with a poor prospect for future improvement and worthless diplomas, after being raised in suppression. Several respondents point out, that unless major socio-economic improvements take place, no political party can improve the country's conditions, a paradox related to traditional parties being the outgrowth of development, whereas in post-conflict states, they are encouraged to create it. People frankly don't care about gender quotas and one member one vote, when they don't know how to eat tomorrow.

6.3 Conclusion

To achieve a nuanced explanation of what affects political parties' development post-war, this thesis used five theories, each emphasizing different important aspects. Based on these theories, I constructed 10 hypotheses. The data material collected to research them, was gathered through 21 qualitative interviews with actors both directly linked to the war, and actors who became politicians later, in addition to document analysis. Important documents include war settlement documents, Kosovo's constitution and party programs. Fieldwork was conducted in March 2016. The thesis' main research question became: *"How has the war legacy affected the development of political parties in post-conflict Kosovo?"*. Different theories had varying explanatory value, but their interaction is perhaps what's most interesting.

Regarding rebel group organization and transformation, the lack of agreement and vision on other aspects than that of liberation, is found to be decisive for the post-war fragmentation, resulting in several parties being established. These parties were largely similar in their ideology and organization, but were different war factions. This lends support to the assumption that the rebel group hierarchical structure is preserved, however not through one political offspring, but several. Parties not directly linked to the war, and not related at all, were the first ones to establish procedures such as the one member one vote, in order to increase internal democracy. The importance of winning, has the highest explanatory value. The assumption that the grey zone war termination would affect the political parties established on both sides, is supported. Both the Serb and Kosovo Albanian side has seen the establishment of parties refusing to accept the conditions putting an end to the war. The ambivalent war termination has also affected the political parties associated with Kosovo's liberation, by there not being any one clear winner, and no one clear political successor of the KLA. Pacifist LDK won the important first post-war elections, and their armed faction, FARK, has largely slipped away from history – a situation still causing tension. PDK and AAK descended from different KLA factions, and PDK's ability to monopolize this heritage, seems somewhat coincidental. They were early movers and benefitted from establishing the KLA-connection immediately post-war, but they've never claimed to be the successor of the entire organization themselves, but of its political directory. Important KLA figures have later joined NISMA and VV, and due to VV's renewed attention to the war-time cleavages, some see them as now better representing the KLA's vision. The current image portrayed of the Kosovo war having one insurgent group, with one political successor, is oversimplified and misleading. Only by going deeply into the

organizational structure of the war, an accurate image of post-war legacy is shown. An accurate and nuanced image of the links between the war and political parties, would look like this:



The inclusion-moderation hypothesis shows that inclusion did moderate the KLA, but that this moderation was largely tactical as opposed to completely genuine, and this caused intense internal KLA friction. The compromises reached through moderation, are still causing problems, 18 years after the weapons were laid down. The international community’s role has been extremely influential. With the war termination placed timewise after the cold war, with US power at its peak, it was a bold and encompassing vision that was put in place for Kosovo by the international community, and no simple version of the democratic reconstruction model. The idea of capitalism and liberal democracy gained enormous momentum. All four initial parties declared a center-right ideology, and their programs are filled by references to the EU and US throughout. The key to prosperity, is linked to getting closer to the West, and doing as the West. This influence however experienced a severe backlash through later counter movements, such as VV – which attacks the paradigm for not being constructive in an immediate post-war situation. Together with NISMA, they argue that negotiating with the EU is fruitless unless substantial socio-economic progress is made at home. The international intervention also largely caused a frozen political scene, where current arrangements mirror the de facto situation on the ground, as the war ended in 1999. The underlying issues which led to war in the first place, are still causing trouble, and the political actors are largely fighting the same battles in today’s institutions as they did on the battle field two decades ago. This is causing severe tensions, due to elements such as Serb veto powers, and poor developmental results. The underlying issues of Serb dominance and dire living conditions are therefore still present. The parties are not found to have reached a point where they operate along traditional

origins and functions. Stated ideologies are found to be at times inconsistent with statements and policies, and are often the result of imitation or necessity. Improvement have been made, but the meanings given to ideologies, often differ substantially from their traditional connotations. Ideologies are also pushed in the background due to the massive focus on a few issues such as the dialogue with Serbia and fighting corruption, policies not easily placed ideologically. Combined with dire living conditions, causing people to vote for whoever can make them eat tomorrow, the biggest and smallest issues are in focus. Somewhere in between, regular day-to-day policies such as education and health care, play a secondary role. The parties are found to have a certain representative function, with identifiable voter groups behind them, but not along traditional cleavages. Region is the clearest indicator. There's also no clear correlation between electoral results, and different parties' chances of entering government, after the ideological spectrum broadened before the 2014 elections.

Even near two decades after the war, its ghost is still haunting the political parties, both directly and indirectly. A typical post-war political party in Kosovo has been a leadership centered, regionally concentrated offspring of some type of war faction, willing to work within the framework laid down by the international community – thereby becoming weak in traditional ideological terms, due to an overwhelming focus on a few major issues. Due to the requirement of stating an ethnic belonging in the electoral law, they have also been ethnically homogenous. The strained relationship between the parties, is impossible to ascribe to ideological disagreements, as they have all for the most part adhered to similar Western-inspired programs. Resentments can be traced to disagreements all the way back to before the war broke out in full force. Something else explains large parts of the tension which culminated in a full-blown political crisis in 2016. Some political parties were no longer willing to have their “hands tied”, and demanded radical change. A change the international framework and Serb veto rights do not enable. LDK and PDK veterans see their demand for change as dangerous, and admits that abiding within the current framework is costly, not ideal and unpopular, but they are doing it for the sake of stability and progress. With all parties feeling suffocated within the framework, the framework itself is clearly causing problems, most notably that of a near non-existing accountability function. In practice, Kosovo has experienced a two-decade transition, which is not showing signs of being over any time soon. Designed as a typical case study, these findings are expected to be relevant for parties developing in similar post-conflict states, where a third actor has intervened and there has been some degree of democratization. To substantiate these

findings, similar cases should be researched, to see if the same aspects are found to be decisive. Such cases could include political parties developed post-conflict in Bosnia and Mozambique.

Two weeks before this thesis was submitted, the PDK / LDK government fell as a result of a vote of no confidence, and the government eventually dissolving itself. PDK leader Veseli blames the dissolution on having lost faith in Mustafa's ability to bring the country forward economically and to speed up Euro-Atlantic integration. LDK leader and now dismissed prime minister Mustafa, says the PDK's criminal and corrupted structures led to state capture and degradation, and that by dissolving the government they are no longer contributing to this, and are now freed from the claws of crime. The two parties dissolved the unpopular government, and blame the other party and the very framework they work within. Mustafa made it clear, that voting them out, wouldn't change a thing as long as they work within the current foundation. In a parliament usually characterized by a lot of noise, not a sound was made as my respondent, KLA commander and LDK MP Anton Quni gave the government his final words, especially directed towards President Thaqi and PDK leader Veseli, linking their efforts from the war until this day; *"I did not trust you to lead a government. I told you to be careful with whom you establish a government. I considered withdrawing from political life after this mandate was established. I know many of you from the war, from the front lines, from dangerous situations. And in those situations, you failed. To the public you are heroes, but in fact you are cowards. I doubted the choice of House Speaker, of coalition and President. Mr. Veseli and Mr. Thaqi, you are the reason I stayed in this parliament. You may feel like you won this battle. I would have liked to see you in front of the guerillas. This is not a vote of no confidence from the opposition, but from your own. When the deputies were tear gassed, you only cared about getting a mask for yourself, this is how you were during the war as well. You thought you could lead the country with the same methods you utilized during the war and post-war era, but you are wrong. You, your friends and your colleagues will be demasked. We will fight you. Don't think you have won. In the end, you will lose"* (Koha, 2017). Kosovo will now face early elections, with new and surprising coalitions already taking place.

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

1. The war time legacy / Armed fractions:

- Who won the war in Kosovo?
- How was the KLA organized?
- Most sources say that the KLA did not have much of an ideology. Do you agree with this?
- Was your impression of the Albanian movement that it was unified or fragmented?
- Are the controversies of today linked to controversies from the time of war?
- The KLA went from being labeled as a terrorist organization, to negotiating at Rambouillet within a year. What changed? Internal and external change as a follow up question.
- Do you consider the PDK the rightful political heir to the militant KLA?
- Do you consider former KLA fighters gone political leaders to be war heroes? (Especially prominent leaders such as Hashim Thaqi, Fatmir Limaj, Ramush Haradinaj etc.).
- Where are the thousands of former KLA fighters today? Has the state done a good job reintegrating them into society?

2. Political party /regime questions

- In your opinion, what are the most important jobs of political parties in general? Main responsibilities?
- Are the Kosovan political parties fulfilling these jobs and responsibilities?
- In your opinion, how is the situation regarding intra-party democracy?
- What do you consider to be the most important jobs for *your* political party?
- Why was your party established when it was? What was it a response to?
- Most parties have stated an official ideology, such as center-right, center-left, conservative or liberal. I would ask them: What does this ideology mean to you?
- How do the political parties in Kosovo differ from one and other?
- When the people of Kosovo go to vote, what do they vote for? (Ideology, program or individuals?)
- Have the Kosovan political parties done a good job including all segments of the population, such as women and young people?

- Have the Kosovan political parties done a good job including the ethnic minorities of the country? Why are they establishing their own ethnic parties, instead of joining the big catch-all parties?
- Is Kosovo ready for democracy?

3. Additional questions for minority candidates

- Why do minorities form their own parties, instead of joining the bigger catch-all parties?
- Do you not think your interests would be represented in a bigger party, such as the PDK, LDK, AAK and so on?
- What are the most important issues for your ethnic group?
- How do you evaluate the situation for your ethnic group after the war, as opposed to before?

I would also always ask, if they felt like something important had been forgotten during our conversation, either about the war time dynamics or about the political party situation of today.

Appendix 2: List of respondents

Name	Political Party	KLA-affiliation
Adem Salihaj	LDK (MP) Earlier amongst the creators and vice-president of LDD, the breakaway faction caused by Rugova's death. Now back in LDK.	No (affiliated with the LDK/Rugova/FARK branch). Part of the first illegal ministry of defense.
Aida Derguti	VV (MP)	Yes (soldier)
Albin Kurti	VV (Former leader and current MP)	Yes (in the office of Adem Demaci, KLA's General Political Representative)

Anton Quni	LDK (MP)	Yes (Commander).
Basri Musmurati	PDK (Party Secretary)	Yes (Part of KLA's Karadak Headquarters, responsible for logistics).
Cerim Bajrami	VAKAT (MP)	No
Dukagjin Gorani	None (Former PDK / Thaqi advisor.)	Yes (Part of KLA's political branch, close to the headquarter, produced communicates).
Gezim Kelmendi	FJALA (MP) (earlier: PD. Used to part of PDK's parliamentary group, now independent in parliament.)	No (Teenage refugee in Montenegro).
Haxhi Shala	NPK (MP) (earlier: PDK)	Yes (brigade commander).
Kujtim Paqaku	KNRP (MP)	No
Leonora Kryeziu	None (Academic, runs the Prishtina Institute for Political Studies, academic English teacher).	No
Mytaher Haskuka	VV (MP)	No (Involved in fundraising and campaigns abroad).
Myzejene Selmani	AKR (Former MP)	No
Nenad Rasic	PDS (MP) (Earlier SLS)	No

Nuredin Ibishi	LDK (MP)	Yes (brigade commander and chief of staff)
Pal Lekaj	AAK (MP)	No
Refik Gerbeshi	AKR	No
Rrustem Berisha	AAK	Yes (brigade commander and chief of staff)
Safete Hadergjonaj	PDK (MP)	Yes
Shaip Muja	PDK (MP) (formal member, broke away from its parliamentary group).	Yes
Shqipe Pantina	VV (MP)	No

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