

Micro–macro dimensions of the Bosnian genocides: The circumplex model and violentization theory

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine accounts of the Bosnian genocides by applying Lonnie Athens' violentization theory [Athens, L. (2003). *Violentization in larger social context*. In L. Athens & J.T. Ulmer (Eds.), *Violent acts and violentization: assessing, applying, and developing Lonnie Athens' theories* (pp. 1–41). Boston: Elsevier Science] and the circumplex theory from family therapy [Olson, D.H. (1995). *Family systems: Understanding your roots*. In R.D. Day, K.R. Gilbert, B.H. Settles, & W.R. Burr (Eds.), *Research and theory in family science* (pp. 131–153). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole., Olson, D.H. (2000). *Clinical Rating Scale (CRS) for the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems* [Brochure]. Minneapolis: Life Innovations]. Following Winton's [Winton M.A. (2005). *A circumplex model of genocide*. In C. Gabrielle Salfati (Ed.), *Homicide research: Past, present and future: Proceedings of the 2005 Meeting of the Homicide Research Working Group* (pp. 47–56). Chicago: HRWG., Winton, M.A. (2007). *Macro-micro dimensions of genocide: the circumplex model meets violentization theory*. Manuscript submitted for publication] model, both structural characteristics of Balkan society (using the circumplex model) and the agency factors of perpetrator actors (using violentization theory) are consistent with the data. Suggestions for further research adding a comparative approach are addressed.

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Developing criminological and sociological theories to explain genocide and ethnic cleansing is needed (Day & Vandiver, 2000; Morrison, 2004; Yacoubian, 2000). The purpose of this study is to address this deficit by using qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of accounts of the Bosnian genocides by applying Lonnie Athens' violentization theory (Athens, 2003) and the circumplex theory from family therapy (Olson, 1995, 2000). Following Winton's (2005, submitted for publication) model, both structural characteristics of Balkan society (using the circumplex model) and the agency factors of perpetrator actors (using violentization theory) will be taken into account.

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1. The circumplex model

Borrowed from family therapy, the circumplex model focuses on cohesion, flexibility, and communication (Olson, 1995, 2000; Olson & DeFraim, 1997). The primary assumption of the model is that balanced families function better than unbalanced ones. Families with high (enmeshed) or low (disengaged) levels of family cohesion are more likely to present with family pathology, while families with high (chaotic) or low (rigid) levels of flexibility are also at increased risk. It is at these extreme points of flexibility and cohesion where family, organization, and societal problems are located. Families also have different levels of communication skills that influence their functioning (Olson & Gorall, 2003). Winton (2005) used the circumplex model at the macro level to address how organizations and social groups engage in genocidal behavior. Winton's (2005) study of 13 separate 20th Century genocides supported use of the circumplex model as the genocidal societies demonstrated unbalanced levels of cohesion and flexibility characterized by the rigid and enmeshed pattern.

Missing from Winton's (2005) study were the micro dimensions of perpetrator behavior. Winton (submitted for publication) chose to incorporate Lonnie Athens' (2003) theory of violentization to the Rwandan genocide to account for these neglected micro dimensions.

1.1. Violentization theory

Athens (2003) developed his theory through detailed interviews with violent individuals. According to Athens (1997) we need an interpretative approach that focuses on the "recognition that violent criminal action is *situated* and that operates on a model of the violent criminal as an *actor*" (pp. 25–26). Furthermore, Athens (1997) pointed out that this approach has been neglected in the criminological research.

Charny (1991) presented factors that are also relevant and related to Athens' (2003) violentization theory to include: dehumanization of a victim group, perception of the victim group as dangerous, availability of a victim group, and legitimation of the victim group by leaders. Athens (1992, 1997, 2003) presented his developmental approach with the following four stages of the violentization:

- **Brutalization — witnessing, learning, and experiencing violence**
The brutalization stage consists of the teaching and demonstration of violent behavior. This may include threatening, observing, and learning how to use physical force (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). In this stage, individuals and groups prepare to act violently towards others and begin to construct a genocidal script (Winton, submitted for publication).
- **Defiance — using violence to stop violence**
In the defiance stage, the perpetrator group presents a belief system that supports the use of violence (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). The belief system is then reinforced through multiple forms of repetition that justifies the use of violence. During this stage, leaders begin to enforce and implement their belief system to the actors in order that they are able to justify the use of violence and genocide (Winton, submitted for publication).
- **Violent dominant engagements — carrying out violent acts**
In the violent dominant engagements stage, the perpetrators are engaging in violent behavior (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). Once the perpetrators have internalized the first two stages, the killings begin. In this stage, the perpetrators are instructed to use violent behavior toward a group or groups based on the perpetrator belief system (Winton, submitted for publication). These behaviors could include removing the victims from their occupations and homes, putting them in prisons or concentration camps, torturing the victims, and engaging in small scale killings.
- **Virulency — violent and dangerous selves**
In the virulency stage, the group has defined itself as a violent and dangerous group with individuals also defining themselves as such (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). In this stage, the genocide or ethnic cleansing is well organized and carried out.
- **Extreme virulency — torture, rape, and mass murder**
This stage has been added to the violentization model to address violent behavior that goes beyond killing the victims to include torture and mutilation. Some of these behaviors share similarities with profiles from the serial

killer literature. Extreme virulency is higher in the intensity, severity, and scope of the violent behavior (Winton, submitted for publication).

Chalk and Jonassohn (1990) define genocide as: “a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator” (p. 23) and described the four types of genocides as: elimination of a threat, spread of terror, economic gain, and implementation of ideology.

While genocides may occur during internal or external wars, being engaged in a war is not a necessary condition for genocide to occur (Bartrop, 2002). Certainly, wars and other national crises may provide the conditions for genocide to develop (see Fein, 1993 and Harff, 2003 for structural models of the antecedents of genocide). In addition to the historical and structural conditions, situational factors are also relevant to understanding criminal or violent behavior (Birkbeck & LaFree, 1993; Dutton, Boyanowsky, & Bond, 2005; Mann, 2000).

1.2. Introduction to the Bosnian genocides

In 1990, Slovenia voted for independence. Croatia, under the leadership of Franjo Tudjman soon followed Slovenia. This led to conflict with the Serbs. In 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia formed as an ethnically Serb area of Serbia and Montenegro. Bosnia and Herzegovina remained multi-ethnic. The Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic wanted to remove Muslims and Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina and he planned to use ethnic cleansing to achieve his goal. Milosevic brought up the battle of Kosovo (that occurred 600 years earlier) and his role as the protector of the Serb nation. The Serb politicians and media constructed a false risk of genocide by presenting risk of death and deportation to concentration camps. The Serbian people were warned by the propaganda agents that they needed to defend themselves against genocide from Muslims and Croats. Ironically, it would be the Serbian military and political leaders that carried out the genocides. Television, radio, and newspapers were completely controlled by Serbian propaganda agents (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997).

As in the 1940s, political transition consisted of conflicting ideologies (Mirković, 1993). In a similar mode in the 1990s, the political transition led to conflict and crisis. According to Gowan (1999) the boundaries were unclear, there were conflicts between those favoring capitalism and socialism, and “there was no elite-level consensus on paths forward either in maintaining state unity or in separating” (Gowan, 1999, p. 176).

According to Burg and Shoup (1999), Bosnians’ had shared a common culture and had intermarried leading to diverse family relationships based on nationality. Prior to the genocide, there were close relationships among the different groups. Before the genocide, Bosnia was “the most ethnically-diverse republic with approximately 40% Muslims, 33% Serbs, and 18% Croats” (Markusen, 2004, p. 194).

As the groups moved toward independence, the social conditions moved toward a chaotic situation that would lead to war and genocide. To avoid the new geographical boundaries, Serbian leaders worked to move toward an enmeshed Serbian society. Communication breakdowns between the groups had also been apparent in the 1980s (Ramet, 1999).

These conditions led to a civil war between the Serbs and the Croats over the land. The (JNA) became the Serbian Army (Weitz, 2003) and the new army had the responsibility to use force if necessary to keep unity (Gowan, 1999).

The Serbian leader, Milosevic, made sure that the Croatian Serb and Bosnian Serb forces received weapons, money, and military supplies from the Yugoslav People’s Army (Ramet, 2004). Milosevic maintained control of the army by forcing generals who might oppose him into early retirement (Ramet, 2004) and using secret police to recruit from Serb militias.

Separate genocides took place during the 1990s. The Bosnian genocide occurred in Bosnia from 1992–1995 within a civil war that involved the Serbian use of concentration camps, torture, rape, bombings, and executions against the Muslims and Croats. Croats were also charged with genocide. Approximately 200,000 were killed during this period. Later, another genocide would occur in Kosovo. The primary goal of the Serbs was to cleanse the land of Muslims and Croats (Power, 2002).

2. Methods

We selected texts that provided information about the social conditions and the actions of perpetrators during the Bosnian genocides. We collected data from court transcripts, professional research reports, human rights reports, and books. We could only find two studies that that linked violentization theory to genocide (Rhodes, 2002; Winton,

submitted for publication) and one linking genocide to the circumplex model (Winton, 2005). Content analytic procedures were used to analyze how genocidal themes were constructed and how those involved in the genocide accounted for their actions (Berg, 2007; Feldman, 1995; Weber, 1985). Directed qualitative content analytic procedures were used to determine if the data fit within the two theories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

2.1. Data sources

Multiple databases were consulted to include: Criminal Justice Abstracts, Academic Search Premier (EBSCO HOST), Dissertation Abstracts, Historical Abstracts, JSTOR, Political Science Abstracts, PsychINFO, SAGE Full text-collections, Sociological Abstracts, Anthropology Plus, and Human Rights Watch reports using keywords such as Circumplex, Violentization, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Balkans, and Genocide. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) court transcripts were used as data regarding victim and perpetrator accounts of the genocide. These transcripts provided a wealth of information about the organization and implementation of the genocide and violent behaviors.

Since we did not find any articles that specifically included the Bosnian genocide and the circumplex model or violentization theory, we used the methods provided by Rhodes (2002) and Winton (submitted for publication) as guidelines for this study.

2.2. Data analysis

Qualitative content analysis is defined as, “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Our goal was to use this procedure to test the fit of the two theories with the Balkan genocide cases.

We used the directed content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This approach involved setting up the coding scheme prior to the analysis. The codes are based on previous research and theory for the purposes of this study. We used the theoretical variables from the circumplex and violentization theories (Winton, submitted for publication) and are presented below. By conducting a careful reading of the text, we “looked for indicators of the circumplex model and violentization variables by examining the narratives contained in the data sources” (Winton, 2007, p. 18). This involved reading the text to determine if perpetrator actions were present and then highlighting appropriate sections of the text using the circumplex and violentization theory categories (Carpenter, 2002; Feldman, 1995; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Weber, 1985, Winton, submitted for publication).

This is similar to pattern-matching which is used to determine if and how the two theories fit with the data (Harding, Fox, & Mehta, 2002). Harding, Fox, and Mehta (2002) state that pattern matching focuses on testing existing theory as opposed to theory generation. In this situation, we used a specific case, the Balkan genocides, to provide a comparative analysis case to test an existing theory (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999).

Following Winton’s (2005, submitted for publication) finding that genocidal societies tend to be rigidly enmeshed, we looked for examples of the rigidly enmeshed patterns in the data. We also looked for the other three extreme circumplex model patterns: rigidly disengaged, chaotically enmeshed, and chaotically disengaged (Olson, 1995, 2000; Olson & DeFrain, 1997). Communication patterns that encouraged or promoted genocidal behavior were also described and coded. The theoretical model is presented in Fig. 1.

For the circumplex model, we used the same variable definitions from Winton’s (2005, pp. 50–51) study of 13 genocides. These variables included:

- Cohesion — referred to emotional bonding, autonomy, closeness, loyalty, and independence. Cohesion was coded as very low (disengaged, too much separateness between groups, lack of loyalty, high independence), separated (low to moderate levels of cohesion), connected (moderate to high levels of cohesion), and very high (enmeshed, too much closeness, loyalty, and dependency). A society was considered to be balanced on cohesion if it is separated or connected (Olson, 1995, 2000; Olson & DeFrain, 1997).

The enmeshed cohesion pattern was identified in Winton’s (2005, submitted for publication) genocide research. Enmeshed cohesion indicators consisted of loyalty to the perpetrator group, excessive emotional closeness, dependency on the perpetrator group, fear of negative sanctions for dissenting from the perpetrator view, and following

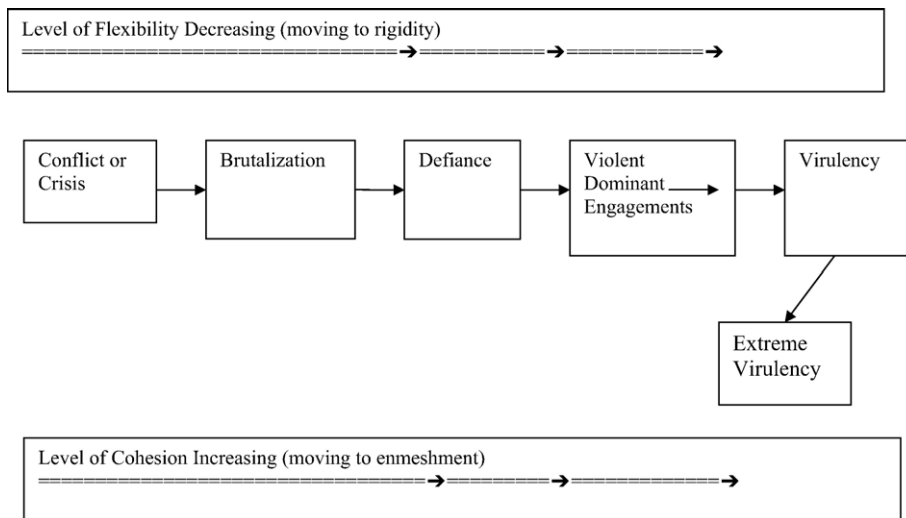


Fig. 1. Micro–macro (agency-structural) approach to explaining genocide (adapted from Winton, submitted for publication).

a strict decision making process (Winton, submitted for publication). For example, statements referring to feeling very close to the perpetrator group and being dependent on the perpetrator leader for direction would be coded as enmeshed cohesion.

Disengaged cohesion entailed an emotional distance. Indicators of this pattern included societal independence and lack of loyalty to a perpetrator group. In this type of pattern, people would not feel threatened for failing to follow perpetrator group orders.

- Flexibility — referred to the ability for a system to change in response to stress, leadership, role shifts, and control. Flexibility was coded as very low (rigid, too little change allowed, authoritarian, strict social control and rule enforcement), structured (low to moderate levels of flexibility), flexible (moderate to high levels of flexibility), and very high (chaotic, too much change occurring, lack of leadership, role shifts, rules change and social control shifts). A society was considered to be balanced on flexibility if it was structured or flexible (Olson, 1995, 2000; Olson & DeFraim, 1997).

Rigid flexibility was characterized by an authoritarian leadership style. Rigid codes of conduct and roles followed this type of pattern. Failing to question authority figures, rules, or roles would be coded as rigid flexibility (Winton, submitted for publication). The failure to successfully adapt to change or crisis due to rigid thinking patterns would also illustrate this pattern.

Chaotic flexibility patterns appeared when leaders had little control over others. Examples included disorganized and rapidly changing thought patterns with minimal social control, rules, and regulations.

Patterns of communication were also a major component of the circumplex model. We focused on statements from community leaders, political leaders, and media reports that encouraged violent behavior. For example, statements from leaders conveying a message that “we must kill or be killed” would be coded as encouraging a genocidal script (Winton, submitted for publication).

For violentization theory, we used Winton’s (submitted for publication) definitions from Athens’ (1992, 1997, 2003) work to include:

- Brutalization — consisted of teaching and demonstrating violent behavior. This included threatening, observing, and learning how to use physical force (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). For example, perpetrator reports of witnessing violence or being shown how to use violence were coded as brutalization.
- Defiance — in the defiance stage, the perpetrator group developed the belief that use of violence in order to prevent or stop their own violent victimization is warranted. A belief system was presented that supported the use of

violence and was reinforced through repetition (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). For example, perpetrator reports of using violence to prevent being victimized themselves were coded as defiance.

- Violent dominant engagements — involved the perpetrators engaging in violent behavior (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). In this stage, the perpetrators have internalized the previous stages. Perpetrators were instructed to use violence towards others. Some of the violent behavior included removing the victims from their occupations and homes, segregating them in concentration camps, torturing the victims, sexually assaulting the victims, and engaging in homicide.
- Virulency — involved defining oneself as a violent and dangerous person (Athens, 1992, 1997, 2003). In this stage, groups defined themselves as dangerous and violent and engaged in genocidal behavior. Examples included carrying out violent activities while taking on a definition of a dangerous and violent actor.
- Extreme virulency — involved violence that goes beyond killing the victims. Extreme virulency included torture, mutilation, sexual assault, and slavery. Extreme virulency was higher in the intensity, severity, and scope of the violent behavior (Winton, submitted for publication).

One limitation of the directed content analysis approach is the risk of analyzing the data with bias as the codes have been established before the data is examined (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Having multiple researchers analyze the same data set helped to reduce this risk. In addition, we looked for contradictions or inconsistencies in the data, used multiple sources, and provided original quotations and reference sources in order that other researchers may reanalyze the data (Winton, submitted for publication).

3. Results

3.1. *Bringing up the past to venture into the genocidal future*

Brutalization involves teaching and demonstrating violent behavior while defiance entails the development of a violence oriented belief system. To prepare for violent behavior, the Serbian government evoked memories of earlier (1300's, 1500's, and 1940's) historical cases of violence and victimization to construct a current need for nationalism and protection. This led to bringing ancient conflicts to the present, evoking current fears based on the past, and provoking actions to perceived threats (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a "Dule", 1997).

During the 1940's, the Croatian Ustasa used methods of destroying Serbian ethnicity through policies and laws such as, the Legal Decree on Citizenship and the Law on the Protection of the Blood and Honor of the Croatian People leading to genocidal activities ranging from obtaining control over occupied territory to ideologically motivated killings and deportations to purify the territories (Dulić, 2006). During this period, several genocides took place against the Serbs, Jews, Roma, and Sinti (Weitz, 2003). The use of the 1940s Croatian genocides was used to encourage Serb fears (Weitz).

The population was mobilized by creating narratives about their past and bringing these stories into the present (Miller, 2006). These perceived threats provided a "kill or be killed" script that justified a belief system for engaging in violent behavior found in the defiance stage of the violentization process.

For example, in 1992, it was reported to the Serbian people that, "a Croat doctor castrated newborn Serb boys and was performing sterilization surgery on Serb women and that a Muslim doctor intentionally administered the wrong drug in an attempt to kill his Serb colleague" (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a "Dule", 1997, paragraph 93).

The media also provided support for Milosevic and Tudjman's nationalist agendas as they controlled and exploited the media to create fears and tensions (Markusen, 2004). According to Markusen, Milosevic "frequently emphasized the theme of Serbs vulnerability and past victimization. Documentaries on the Croatian genocide against Serbs were often aired on television in Serbia" (pp. 199–200). In the late 1990s, Milosevic used nationalist speeches to encourage the Serbian people to revolt against the Albanians. Serbian radio and television presented false stories of Albanian abuse and rape of Serbs (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

The goal of the Serbs was to ethnically purify their utopian state through the use of massacres (Dulić, 2006).

One goal of this communication pattern was to begin to mobilize citizen support for violence by bringing communities into an enmeshed cohesion and rigid flexibility state. Characteristics of rigid flexibility included an authoritarian leadership style from Milosevic and Tudjman, the development of rigid roles among the military, the development and reinforcement of rigid thought patterns of a "kill or be killed" belief system, and the inability to adapt to economic and social crisis. Enmeshed cohesion was encouraged through Serbian nationalistic presentations, the

development of the notion that the Serbian military would protect the citizens from “dangerous groups,” and punishment for dissent through risk of being labeled dangerous or a traitor.

Recruitment of individuals who were more likely to have gone through the violentization process was used to encourage others to engage in violent behavior and to carry out the genocide. [Mirković \(1993\)](#) explained that the actual executioners profile in 1945 in the same territory as “the actual killers were, as a rule, recruited from socially declassed segments of society, from pariahs with little education and prestige in society... By doing their “dirty work”, zealously, they tried to please their superiors and prove their allegiance to the new state...they were frequently quite young (in their early 20’s). This affinity of youth, poverty, and the lack of social standing is a general feature of violent criminality (p. 327).” These same dynamics would repeat in the 1990s although the roles of the actors had changed. Serbian leaders recruited paramilitary forces from prisons and the community focusing attention on those men who were most likely to engage in violent behavior. [Mulaj \(2005\)](#) pointed out that thousands of prisoners were released and placed in paramilitary groups. The main purpose of this arrangement was to reduce Serbian military responsibility for criminal activities and to bring together groups of men who may have already been engaged in violent behavior.

After the Bosnian declaration of its independence in 1992, Serbia controlled a majority of Bosnian territory ([Wood, 2001](#)). The Serbs began to implement discriminatory policies against the Croats and Muslims by destroying the infrastructure and forcing citizens to leave the area or be killed. Many were violently victimized.

After Bosnia voted for referendum in March of 1992, initial reactions came from the Serbian army by preventing supplies from reaching non-Serbs and terrorizing the non-Serb population through sniping, shelling, and murdering civilians and destroying mosques and cultural monuments ([Markusen, 2004](#)).

Violent dominant engagements consist of threatening others and using violent actions through a variety of means. Serbian leaders had successfully constructed hatred behavior. Bosnians were removed from their employment, separated from their properties, and forced to flee as refugees ([Wood, 2001](#)). “Bosnian Serb leaders could use rumors of ‘Muslim fundamentalist’ or ‘Turkish’ plots and renewed Ustasha atrocities to rally ‘ordinary Serbs’ under the protection of a nationalist umbrella” ([Wood, 2001](#), p. 68). In a similar manner, before the genocide in Kosovo, the Serbian government implemented discriminatory laws against the Albanians and removed them from government positions ([Human Rights Watch, 2001](#)).

The planning is apparent in the following quote from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) transcripts:

In the early 1990s there were rallies that advocated and promoted the idea, with Serbian leaders in attendance. In 1992 Radoslav Brdanin, President of the Crisis Staff of the Serb Autonomous Region of the Banja Luka area, declared that 2 percent was the upper tolerable limit on the presence of all non-Serbs in this region. Radoslav Brdanin advocated three stages of ridding the area of non-Serbs: (1) creating impossible conditions that would have the effect of encouraging them to leave of their own accord, involving pressure and terror tactics; (2) deportation and banishment; and (3) liquidating those remaining who would not fit into his concept for the region ([Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997](#), paragraph 89).

Narratives assist us in understanding the ideology of ethnic cleansing. These hate narratives were based on historical frames of conflict, betrayal and victimization, and from economic and political resentment ([Lieberman, 2006](#)). The rapid change to a violentized society changed many relationships. One of the victims explained this rapid shift, as “we were friends a year ago, and then six months ago they started to hate us” ([Lieberman, 2006](#), p. 297). Neighbors participated in military searches, rapes, and beatings ([Lieberman, 2006](#), p. 296). Paramilitary forces and community volunteers were encouraged to loot property and engage in violent behavior towards the civilians ([Ramet, 2004](#)).

When a society is unable to adequately cope with change or crisis, it may become more rigid or chaotic. As predicted by the circumplex model, the Serbian community became more rigid. Group cohesion moved toward an enmeshed state as threats against Serbian society were constructed.

For example, a new Serb commander, described the seizure of the town as a defense against Bosnian Muslims stating, “they kill new-born Serbian babies and drown them in the River Drina...They sexually assault Serbian children aged between nine and 12 and they cut off Serbian men’s penises ([Lieberman, 2006](#), p 305).”

As a prelude to the ethnic cleansing, in March, 1989, riot police killed several Kosovar Albanians who were protesting ([Human Rights Watch, 2001](#)). Small massacres have been noted in other genocides as well ([Winton, submitted for publication](#)). This pattern followed the violent dominant engagements and virulency stages from violentization theory.

By October 1995, Croatian and Serbian leaders met in Dayton, Ohio with U.S. negotiators to end the war. The Dayton Agreement was signed on November 21, 1995 by the presidents of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia–Herzegovina (Glenny, 1999). Five months after the Dayton Agreement was signed, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began attacks on Serbs (Glenny, 1999). Despite the Dayton Agreement, another genocide was carried out by the Serbs against the Albanian population in Kosovo with NATO air strikes being used in an attempt to stop the genocide.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) opened the case on the basis of genocides with three arguments; “first, atrocities were committed in Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia by the JNA–Yugoslav Army (VJ), Serbian special forces and Serb paramilitaries; second, all of those forces were under the command of Slobodan Milosevic and reported to him; and third, the atrocities committed by those forces were either executed on the express command of the accused or occurred in connection with campaigns ordered or condoned by the accused” (Ramet, 2004, p. 119).

In the next sections, violent dominant engagements, virulency, and extreme virulency characterized the situations. The perpetrators engaged in violent behavior and defined themselves as dangerous and violent. In some cases the perpetrators engaged in extremely violent behavior toward others similar to cases from serial killers.

3.2. *Miroslav Bralo*

In this case, the perpetrator, a member of the Military Police Battalion of the Croatian Defence Council was actually recruited from a prison. To obtain his release, he participated in violent attacks against Muslim citizens. According to court transcripts:

Miroslav Bralo, also known as “Cicko,” was born in Kratine, in the municipality of Vitez, now in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on 13 October 1967. In the evening of 15 April 1993, he was released from Kaonik prison, on the condition that he agree to participate in an attack on the village of Ahmici to be carried out the following day by forces of the Croatian Defence Council (“HVO”). Upon his release, he was taken to a building known as the “bungalow” that was being used as the headquarters of the “Jokers,” which was the anti-terrorist platoon of the 4th Military Police Battalion of the HVO. He thereupon became a member of the “Jokers” and was given weapons and a uniform (Prosecutor v. Miroslav Bralo, 2005, paragraph 10). Early the following morning while it was still dark, Bralo and other members of the “Jokers” walked to Nadioci, where they entered the home of Osman Salkic, a Bosnian Muslim. Two other members of the “Jokers” then killed Osman Salkic and his wife, Rediba Salkic, and Bralo killed their daughter, Mirnesa Salkic, using a knife (Prosecutor v. Miroslav Bralo, 2005, paragraph 11).

Later that morning, Bralo and others participated in a surprise attack on the village of Ahmici, with instructions to ethnically cleanse the village, to kill the Muslim men of military age, to burn all Muslim residences, and to expel all the Muslim residents from the village. In the course of the attack, Bralo set fire to numerous homes belonging to the Muslim inhabitants of Ahmici, using incendiary materials including incendiary bullets, and aided and abetted others in setting fire to further Muslim residences. In addition, he captured, interrogated, and shot and killed an adult male of unknown identity. He and another member of the “Jokers” also planted explosives in and around the lower mosque in Ahmici, which they then detonated, destroying the mosque. (Prosecutor v. Miroslav Bralo, 2005, paragraph 12).

In a separate incident occurring between 16 April and 1 May 1993, Bralo and an HVO soldier took custody of fourteen Bosnian Muslim men, women and children, all members of the Salkic and Mehmet Ceremic families who had fled their homes following the attacks on Ahmici and Nadioci. While transporting these fourteen persons towards Kaonik, the soldier accompanying Bralo informed him of his intention to kill some of them. Bralo then assisted this soldier by taking the group to a clearing in a forest, and standing guard while the soldier shot and killed all fourteen men, women and children. Of these victims, two were approximately seven years old, one was eight, one was ten, one was eleven, one was thirteen, one was fourteen, and two were approximately sixteen years old. (Prosecutor v. Miroslav Bralo, 2005, paragraph 13).

In this case, civilians, to include young children were killed by groups of perpetrators. Recruiting from prisons provided members who may have already gone through the violentization process.

3.3. *The massacres*

Virulency and extreme virulency became apparent as several massacres took place. The violentization process was completed after the first massacre took place, thus making further mass killings easier to enact. In addition, Serbian society moved to a rigidly enmeshed structure as the violence continued.

In 1992, Serbs established concentration camps where at least 10,000 people were killed (Markusen, 2004). This was a move from killing civilians in their homes. To aid in the ethnic cleansing, Serbs used overcrowding, lack of food and medical care and the refusal to allow the United Nations permission to deliver humanitarian necessities (Markusen, 2004). NATO air bombings were used to intervene to stop the genocide.

This ideologically (tribal/ethnic) genocide did not end here. During the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnian Serbs killed Muslims in the so called NATO safe zone (Power, 2002). Finally, in 1998, Serbs killed thousands of Albanians living in Kosovo.

Kressel (2002) asked, how did groups that lived side by side and got along for years become enemies? Kressel stated that there were steps toward the genocide: increasing nationalist sentiments, increasing cultural toughness, reactivating historical fears and resentments, and increasing motivation for revenge. Serbian forces executed Albanians for three motives: cleansing, targeting suspected KLA members, and revenge (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

To further terrorize the Bosnian non-Serb population, the paramilitary leader, Arkan and his “tigers” and with the support of the Serbian army, looted and destroyed Bosnian cities (Markusen, 2004). In one case, Weitz (2003) described a situation in which the Serbian military members made the bus drivers kill at least one Muslim on the way to the executions. He states, “it also made the killings a communal event that bound all Serbs together” (p. 262). Forcing Muslims to eat pork and placing pigs in holy places was also used as a form of humiliation (Carmichael, 2006). These types of activities not only illustrate the violentization process, but also demonstrate the circumplex model at work. By making killing a communal event, the Serbian perpetrators developed greater cohesive enmeshment. They also were provided with a model of violent conduct that is consistent with a rigid pattern of behavior.

The following case from the ICTY court transcripts illustrates the use of sexual violentization:

While detained at Buk Bijela for several hours, all the Muslim civilians were lined up along the river Drina and guarded by armed soldiers. They were threatened with being either killed or raped and were otherwise humiliated. The soldiers approached each detained civilian, and took him or her to the above mentioned accused for questioning. The soldiers separated the women from their children. GOJKO JANKOVIC, JANKO JANJIC, DRAGAN ZELENOVIC and ZORAN VUKOVIC interrogated the women. The interrogations focused on the hiding-places of the male villagers and weapons. The accused threatened the women with murder and sexual assault if they lied. JANKO JANJIC and DRAGAN ZELENOVIC and other soldiers acting under the control of GOJKO JANKOVIC gang-raped, several women during or immediately after the interrogation who they suspected of lying. (The Prosecutor of the Tribunal Against Dragan Gagovic, Gojko Jankovic, Janko Janjic, Radomir Kovac, Zoran Vukovic, Dragan Zelenovic, Dragoljub Kunarac, Radovan Stankovic, 1996, paragraph 5.3).

A witness code named, FWS-75, was interrogated by GOJKO JANKOVIC and DRAGAN ZELENOVIC about her village and whether the villagers had weapons. GOJKO JANKOVIC warned the witness not to lie, otherwise she would be raped by soldiers and killed afterwards. As FWS-75 did not answer the questions sufficiently, a soldier took her to another room. There, at least ten unidentified soldiers, raped her, in turn. The nature of the rape included vaginal penetration and fellatio. FWS-75 lost consciousness after the tenth soldier sexually assaulted her. The episode of sexual assault lasted between one to two hours (The Prosecutor of the Tribunal Against Dragan Gagovic, Gojko Jankovic, Janko Janjic, Radomir Kovac, Zoran Vukovic, Dragan Zelenovic, Dragoljub Kunarac, Radovan Stankovic, 1996, paragraph 5.4).

According to Kressel (2002), “many Serbs lay claim to a national character of toughness and hypermasculinity, viewing themselves as a heroic and virile race” (p. 32) and there had been an increasing focus on hypermasculinity and antifeminism (Ramet, 1999). Carmichael (2002) sums up the situation as, “the mobilization of extreme virulent nationalism violently suppresses other identities” (p. 71). This case also demonstrated sexual violentization. Sexual abuse was encouraged and sometimes occurred by groups of perpetrators thus increasing the cohesion of the group.

Systematic rapes were used as a deliberate attempt to cleanse the lineage of the Bosnian culture by impregnating the victims (Markusen, 2004; Wood, 2001). Some of these occurred in front of the victim’s family and others. Many gang

rapes were reported (Human Rights Watch, 2001). This type of violent sexual abuse provided a belief system that sexual violence was permissible and would not be sanctioned.

Sokolovic (2005) defined Serbs' attitude as a "crime against life itself" and he stated,

"It is a crime the intention of which was not the humiliation of women as human beings, since that can also be achieved by 'ordinary' rape. The intention was to produce in woman, as the source of life, hatred against life in her own womb, hatred towards herself as the assumption of life, to deprive her of the noblest pleasure one can achieve, the pleasure of having a child. ...with regard to women's ethical stability and social persistence, that the *love of woman*, not Bosnian woman, but mother-woman, the *love toward life*, will be stronger than the crime against life (p. 128)."

The segregation of the victims by gender and age was one of the significant methods used in Bosnia. This was also used in the previous genocide in 1945 as "the victims were defined in terms of their ethnicity and religion, i.e., Serbian Orthodox or Moslem, respectively" (Mirković, 1993, p. 324). For example, Serb paramilitary troops "took off the trousers of men in order to find out if they were Muslims (Muslims, like Jews, practice a ritual of circumcision) (Sokolovic, 2005, pp. 124-125).

According to Jones (2006), the Serbs participated in gendercide by killing men between the ages of 18 to 55 to reduce the threat of retaliation. "The Serb campaign at the heart of the 1990s genocide in Bosnia was savage, but also sophisticated in its selectivity. Ethnicity was the primary criterion for selection. Next in significance was usually gender. Third was age" (Jones, p. 13). Fein (1999) also reported on the Serbian sex crimes against both men and women during the genocides.

The following case from the ICTY court transcripts illustrated the group violence and sexual violence consistent with violentization theory.

As evening fell, the terror deepened. Screams, gunshots, and other frightening noises were audible throughout the night and no one could sleep. Soldiers were picking people out of the crowd and taking them away: some returned; others did not. Witness T recounted how three brothers – one merely a child and the others in their teens — were taken out in the night. When the boys' mother went looking for them, she found them with their throats slit (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 44).

That night, a Dutch Bat medical orderly came across two Serb soldiers raping a young woman:

[W]e saw two Serb soldiers, one of them was standing guard and the other one was lying on the girl, with his pants off. And we saw a girl lying on the ground, on some kind of mattress. There was blood on the mattress, even she was covered with blood. She had bruises on her legs. There was even blood coming down her legs. She was in total shock. She went totally crazy." (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 45).

Bosnian Muslim refugees nearby could see the rape, but could do nothing about it because of Serb soldiers standing nearby. Other people heard women screaming, or saw women being dragged away. Several individuals were so terrified that they committed suicide by hanging themselves. Throughout the night and early the next morning, stories about the rapes and killings spread through the crowd and the terror in the camp escalated. (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 46).

On the morning of 13 July 1995, refugees searching for water came upon clusters of corpses next to a nearby stream. Finding dead bodies in such a prominent place strengthened their resolve to flee as soon as possible (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 47).

In this case, some of the victims committed suicide after experiencing extreme virulent actions. Group violentization was demonstrated with the soldiers supporting and encouraging the murder and rape of civilians.

3.4. The concentration camp

Details regarding the organization and activities in the concentration camps were obtained from the ICTY trial transcripts. The description of the Omarska camp illustrated some of the specific violentization strategies used to ethnically cleanse. The purpose of the camps was to expel the non-Serbs from the region. The camps were well organized and violentized behaviors consisted of torture, sexual assault, psychological abuse, and executions. Visitors

also entered the camp from the surrounding community in order to beat and kill the camp prisoners. This provided some evidence that some of the community members had also gone through the violentization process. In addition, the camps and communities operated from a rigidly and enmeshed social system. According to the trial transcript:

The establishment of these camps was part of the Greater Serbia plan to expel non-Serbs from opstina Prijedor. Generally the camps were established and run either at the direction of, or in cooperation with, the Crisis Staffs, the armed forces and the police. During confinement, both male and female prisoners were subjected to severe mistreatment, which included beatings, sexual assaults, torture and executions. They were also subjected to degrading psychological abuse, by being forced to spit on the Muslim flag, sing Serbian nationalist songs or to give the Serbian three-fingered salute. Prisoners were guarded by soldiers, police forces, local Serb military or TO units, or a combination thereof, who were dressed in uniforms and generally had automatic rifles and other weapons on their person. They cursed the prisoners, referring to them as “balijas” or “Ustasa”, as already mentioned. Members of paramilitary organizations and local Serbs were routinely allowed to enter the camps to abuse, beat and kill prisoners” (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997, paragraph 154).

When prisoners arrived by bus at Omarska, they were usually searched, their belongings taken from them, and then beaten and kicked as they stood, legs apart and arms upstretched, against the eastern wall of the administration building. The new arrivals were then sent either to stay outside on the pista or to rooms in the hangar or in the small garages in the office blocks or, if so selected, to the white house” (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997, paragraph 158).

The calling-out of prisoners was not only for the purposes of interrogation. In the evening, groups from outside the camp would appear, would call out particular prisoners from their rooms and attack them with a variety of sticks, iron bars or lengths of heavy electric cable. Sometimes these weapons would have nails embedded in them so as to pierce the skin. On occasions knives would be used to slash a prisoner’s body. The prisoners as a whole feared groups of men from outside the camp even more than they did the regular camp guards. These groups appeared to be allowed free access to the camp and their visits greatly increased the atmosphere of terror which prevailed in the camp (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997, paragraph 164).

Allowing and encouraging community members to visit the concentration camp and engage in violent behavior reinforced the violentization process. This situation could also be used to develop a greater intensity of cohesion among community members.

Organized torture, body mutilations, group rapes, and group psychological abuse led to the loss of hope among the prisoners. The similarities between the concentration camps in this case, and the concentration camps in Nazi Germany are apparent. One difference that is observed when compared to the Rwandan genocide is the organized camps. During the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Hutu slaughtered Tutsi in the fields and in their homes and churches. In a similar manner to other genocides, the Serbian perpetrators bonded together against a constructed common enemy. They were encouraged to engage in violent behavior and rewarded for defining themselves as violent and dangerous.

3.5. *The Srebrenica massacre*

The 1995 Srebrenica massacre of Muslim men demonstrated extreme virulency and a rigid and enmeshed organizational style. According to ICTY court transcripts:

Almost to a man, the thousands of Bosnian Muslim prisoners captured, following the take-over of Srebrenica, were executed. Some were killed individually or in small groups by the soldiers who captured them and some were killed in the places where they were temporarily detained. Most, however, were slaughtered in carefully orchestrated mass executions, commencing on 13 July 1995, in the region just north of Srebrenica. Prisoners not killed on 13 July 1995 were subsequently bussed to execution sites further north of Bratunac, within the zone of responsibility of the Zvornik Brigade. The large-scale executions in the north took place between 14 and 17 July 1995 (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 67).

Most of the mass executions followed a well-established pattern. The men were first taken to empty schools or warehouses. After being detained there for some hours, they were loaded onto buses or trucks and taken to another site for execution. Usually, the execution fields were in isolated locations. The prisoners were unarmed

and, in many cases, steps had been taken to minimise resistance, such as blindfolding them, binding their wrists behind their backs with ligatures or removing their shoes. Once at the killing fields, the men were taken off the trucks in small groups, lined up and shot. Those who survived the initial round of gunfire were individually shot with an extra round, though sometimes only after they had been left to suffer for a time. Immediately afterwards, and sometimes even during the executions, earth moving equipment arrived and the bodies were buried, either in the spot where they were killed or in another nearby location (Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, 2001, paragraph 68).

3.6. Massacres in Kosovo

The genocide continued in Kosovo. Men were sent to prisons where they were beat, tortured, and sometimes set on fire (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Serbian forces engaged in robberies and contaminated water wells, sometimes using corpses (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Executions were carried throughout the area (Human Rights Watch, 2001). For example, one witness reported that, “the massacre happened on Sunday April 18 at 6:00 a.m. Four different kind of paramilitaries arrived with tanks. They executed whoever they saw in the streets from seven [years old] to eighty-seven [years old]...They didn’t choose by sex or age. Most of the people they killed were killed by a gun shot in the neck, heart, or forehead. They burned nineteen houses and stayed two days...They came without warning” (Human Rights Watch, 2001, p. 268).

Another witness stated, “they took one guy from the crowd. First they showed their knife. One of them licked the sharp side of the knife. Then one of them cut his throat. It was a long, black knife about half an arm’s length, with a curved blade...Then they killed the rest of the men” (Human Rights Watch, 2001, p. 355). After killing the rest of the men by guns, they burned the bodies.

One witness reported that young Serbs engaged in violent behavior. He reported, “Serbian kids also came into the basement and hit us with metal rods and threw stones at us. The kids said, “Let us beat them.” They were different ages, eleven, twelve, or so. They had been in the street playing. When we were taken off the truck, they were there; they threw stones at us. The kids insulted our mothers and called us terrorists” (Human Rights Watch, 2001, p. 413). In this case, children and adolescents had become violentized.

3.7. Dusko Tadic

Dusko Tadic was born in 1955 to a respected Serb family. Tadic, a karate expert, married in 1979. In the early 1990s he opened a café that catered to Muslims and Serbs. It was reported that Tadic became more nationalistic and became a leader of a Serbian group that held nationalistic ideas. Witnesses reported that he had made several statements antagonistic towards his Muslim neighbors. Tadic was indicted by the ICTY for his involvement at the Omarska camp.

In addition to being charged with beating prisoners at the Omarska prison camp, Tadic was charged in a case of sexual violence. The case presented below sounds more like a case study from a serial killer profile. The description from the court transcripts follow:

After G and Witness H had been forced to pull Jasmin Hrnica’s body about the hangar floor they were ordered to jump down into the inspection pit, then Fikret Harambasic, who was naked and bloody from beating, was made to jump into the pit with them and Witness H was ordered to lick his naked bottom and G to suck his penis and then to bite his testicles. Meanwhile a group of men in uniform stood around the inspection pit watching and shouting to bite harder. All three were then made to get out of the pit onto the hangar floor and Witness H was threatened with a knife that both his eyes would be cut out if he did not hold Fikret Harambasic’s mouth closed to prevent him from screaming; G was then made to lie between the naked Fikret Harambasic’s legs and, while the latter struggled, hit, and bite his genitals. G then bit off one of Fikret Harambasic’s testicles and spat it out and was told he was free to leave. Witness H was ordered to drag Fikret Harambasic to a nearby table, where he then stood beside him and was then ordered to return to his room, which he did. Fikret Harambasic has not been seen or heard of since (Dusko Tadic Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic a/k/a “Dule”, 1997, paragraph 206).

This case illustrates sexual torture and extreme virulency. The criminal acts were conducted by groups of perpetrators against groups of victims. It appears that the perpetrator group offered support for the behavior demonstrating extreme group virulency.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine if the circumplex model and violentization theory apply to the Bosnian genocides. This research involved analyzing both micro and macro dimensions and the structural and agency components of the genocides. The findings paralleled those found by Winton (submitted for publication) on the Rwandan genocide.

The perpetrator groups became more violent as they went through the violentization process within a society that transformed into a rigidly and enmeshed system. As threats of territorial independence materialized, civil war and genocide developed. Fears and threats were constructed with assistance from the media and the use of myths. The perpetrator group had to form closer relationships as they defined other groups as dangerous. In order to avoid being victimized again, the Serbian military used several violent strategies to remove their constructed threats. Throughout the 1990s, military and paramilitary members returned home and continued their violent behavior towards others (Carmichael, 2002). Attempts to construct heroic acts were negated by the brutality of the ethnic cleansing against civilians (Carmichael, 2002).

According to Carmichael (2002), “ethnic cleansing and the crisis of war appears to invert, not exaggerate normal behavior, to turn normal men into murderers and rapists, leaving both victim and victimizer damaged” (p. 73).

In their 1999 interviews with Serb military members, Montgomery and Smith (1999) obtained clear examples of the violentization process. For example, they found that prisoners were offered release if they would become soldiers who were assigned to arrest and kill citizens. In addition, groups were active in raping and robbing community members. To speed up and implement the violentization process, violent men were recruited from the prisons. One of the soldiers described his situation as a different world. Another soldier pointed out that it was easier to kill while with a group. In addition, a soldier described training which focused on the violentization process through portraying Serbs as being victims of brutal attacks.

Some of the Serbian community learned to hate, distrust, and fear Muslims and Croatians. As economic and political crises developed, intense rigid thought processes towards the Muslims and Croatians also materialized. As found in Winton’s (submitted for publication) Rwandan genocide study, rigid group organization was related to the inability to cope with societal change and crises. The military had already been trained and only needed to have permission to carry out the massacres (see Sanborn, 2003).

Another finding that has some similarities to the Rwandan genocide is the cycle of violentization and the historical changes in victim and perpetrator status. As the Hutu had been victimized by the Tutsi prior to the 1994 genocide, the Serbs had been victimized by the Croatians during the 1940s. Further comparative research would allow for a more detailed analysis of how these genocides were similar and different in regards to historical processes of victimization and perpetration. For example, Coleman (1993) compared the Balkans in 1993 to Nazi Germany on similar variables that were used in this study.

There are several limitations to this study that could be addressed in future research. First, the analysis of the model is based on one case of genocide. Further research could incorporate several genocides into the analysis. Second, the use of secondary sources, especially court transcripts prevented asking direct theoretically based questions. Third, this study did not address how to prevent genocides from occurring as this would be of primary importance for policy making.

Future research may address several policy based questions. First, research can focus on the types of interventions at different points in the genocidal process. Second, studies that address reversing the process (deviolentization) may be able to offer insight into assisting societies in which mass killings have occurred and prevent repeating the violence (Ulmer, 2003). Third, the application of the model to different situations involving violence (e.g. natural disasters or terrorism) would provide further assessment of the utility of combining the circumplex model with violentization theory. Fourth, violentization research using different methods and cultures could be helpful (Ulmer). Fifth, historical-comparative methods could be used to address the preconditions, genocide event, and post genocide (Huttenbach, 2004). Finally, it is hoped that this type of research encourages other criminal justice professionals and those in the social sciences in general to conduct research, present their findings at conferences, and teach about genocide. Future research that focuses on micro and macro or structural and agency level factors and events will offer a greater set of options to understand and prevent genocides.

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