

## Cynthia Drader, University of Calgary, CMSS

Cynthia A. Drader graduated from the University of Calgary with a B.A. in International Relations in 2001. She is currently a Master of Strategic Studies candidate at the Centre for Military & Strategic Studies. Cynthia has a background in French and History and spent two years at the Université Lyon II in Lyon, France studying language, literature, and civilization. She successfully completed the Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (D.A.L.F) exam in June 1999.

Cynthia's area of research includes ethnicity and conflict, civil war in Africa, third party intervention, humanitarian intervention, and the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and multinational corporations in conflict zones. She is currently conducting empirical studies on the relationship between ethnic identity and political violence. Her thesis will focus on the impact of nongovernmental third party intervention on the peace process.

Cynthia was recently a guest lecturer at the University of Calgary and presented a paper entitled "Humanitarian Intervention: Kosovo in Perspective" in February 2002. She also had two book reviews published in the *Journal of Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*. Outside academic endeavours, Cynthia sat on the Executive of the Society for Military & Strategic Studies (SMSS), serving as Conference co-chair of the 2003 SMSS Conference Steering Committee and editor of the SMSS Newsletter. She recently held two assistant research positions with the Department of Political Science and the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies.

### **Abstract**

The end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union has been a poor indicator of "the end of history" as envisioned by Francis Fukuyama. Hopes for a new world order characterized by stability and interdependence have been replaced by the realization that instead of world peace, the post-Cold War era has been defined by new challenges to security. Calls for new theoretical approaches to human security, humanitarian intervention, and peace studies reflect a shifting focus from traditional 'hardcore' realist assumptions about nuclear war to 'soft' issues addressed by liberal, feminist and post-modern discourse. One recent issue that has captured the attention of academics, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and politicians alike is *ethnic conflict*. Questions that arise include whether this is a new form of warfare, and whether there has been an increase in its

occurrence since the collapse of the bipolar international system. Is the study of ethnic conflict as a phenomenon distinct from other forms of warfare useful, or does it simply reflect changing academic interest across time and space?

This research project stems from a critical examination of current research in the field of ethnic conflict studies. There are three weaknesses that merit closer examination. First, the vast majority of research on ethnic conflict presumptuously neglects to define what *ethnic conflict* is and how it ties into intrastate violence. Most research premises conflict on ethnicity without directly engaging the concepts. This evokes the question of whether we are dealing with a viable factor in conflict studies or if *ethnic conflict* is simply a mainstream label with little intrinsic value. Second, theoretical attempts at establishing concise connections between *ethnic identity*, *ethnic group*, and *violence* are largely incomplete. Little attention is given to the process by which ethnic identity leads to the formation of cohesive ethnic groups and how this manifests into group mobilization and ethnic violence. Third, despite the increase in empirical research of ethnic conflict, the relationship between these concepts remains untested. Ted Robert Gurr's Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project at the University of Maryland, measures concepts such as ethnic identity, group cohesion, and rebellion levels. Yet, empirical publications on this topic are notably absent. Given the primacy placed on ethnicity in conflict studies, academic silence on the issue is thought provoking.

The purpose of this research is to examine the concept of *ethnicity* in the context of conflict. Through empirical analysis the study will determine whether ethnicity is a key factor in conflict. It addresses the question: "how ethnic is ethnic conflict?" Central to the analysis is determining if certain ethnic group types, whether communal contenders, religious sects or indigenous groups, are more likely to engaging in violent conflict. Are there generalizations to be made about the characteristics of these groups in respect to levels of *ethnic distinctness*, *ethnic identity*, and *group cohesion*? Given the saliency of ethnic cohesion over other forms of group cohesion such as ideology and religion, I would expect to find that strong ethnic identity groups are very cohesive. I would also expect to find that these groups mobilize around cultural grievances and are most likely to engage in violence.

The analysis will be broken down into three sections. In section one, overall patterns of violence between 1960 and 1998 will be established to determine if certain ethnic group types are more predisposed towards violent conflict. In the second section, relationships between six ethnic group types, strength of ethnic identity, group cohesion, and cultural grievances will be analyzed. In section three, groups that demonstrate strong ethnic identity and strong group cohesion will be tested against patterns of violence in five-year periods between 1960 and 1998.

## **Ethnic Identities, Ethnic Groups, and Ethnopolitical Violence: Dispelling**

## the Myths of Ethnic Conflict

\* Unavailable \*

