

CHAPTER SIX

Newly Independent Former Soviet Satellites All Triggered Damaging Intergroup Issues

THE TIMING WAS actually perfect. I began my direct learning process about countries with internal intergroup conflicts at the same time that the Soviet Union was dissolving and creating almost two-dozen newly independent countries that each had their own major internal intergroup issues and challenges.

The collapse of the Soviet Union gave new independent status to both the former Soviet satellite nations and to more than a dozen former captive countries.

It was clear to me fairly quickly that each of those newly independent countries had its own set of internal intergroup issues and some of those issues were so intense that a couple of the new countries did not survive and countries needed to be broken into their tribal pieces.

The macro forces of history in the early years of my study into intergroup issues gave me great fodder for my research and a rich array of settings to learn from relative to issues of intergroup division and conflict.

It was fascinating to look at those issues at a highly relevant time when a whole new river of intergroup stress points and negative intergroup interactions was being triggered by the ending of the Soviet Union. Intergroup instincts and behaviors were triggered in very negative and obvious ways in many places as the Soviet Union dissolved.

Some of those negative internal intergroup behaviors were so intense that they caused a couple of the newly independent nations to collapse as nations and to break into separate new national entities along ethnic and tribal lines.

That was a great chance to both test theories and build theories about the impacts of our basic intergroup instincts on functioning intergroup interaction.

The dissolution process for the Soviet Union freed seven former satellite countries and it liberated 15 former captive countries.

I had no clue about the ethnic diversity that existed in those settings until I started looking at the Soviet Union post collapse issues. I learned quickly that the former Soviet Union had in total more than 120 ethnic groups with separate languages before the collapse.

It was an incredibly diverse empire. All of those 120 ethnic groups still exist. Those groups are all now included in either the new Russian confederation or they are in one of the newly freed captive countries.

The leadership in Moscow tried to reflect that ethnic reality in the processes they used to determine which current ethnic enclaves became independent nations and which of the ethnic groups were melded in various ways into the new Russian Confederation.

The decisions made by the leaders in Moscow as part of that process made some of those formerly captive ethnic groups who became independent very happy — and it made others who were not given their independence deeply unhappy. The happy groups were the ones who were set free.

The most unhappy of those tribal groups were the ones who were not given independent status and who were retained as subsidiary pieces of one kind or another under the continuing direction and control of Moscow as part of the new Russian Confederation.

Many of the ethnic groups who have been included in the Russian confederation and who were not freed at that point in history would actually like to gain their own freedom today.

Some, like Chechnya, are in a state of unrest and are even rebelling today to the point where bombs are being exploded and people are being killed by separatist forces in those settings.

The Satellites Became Independent First

When the Soviet Union ceased to exist, all of the major captive communist countries in Eastern Europe that had been ruled by the communists in Moscow were set free. Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and East Germany were each given their independence and each of those former satellites regained control of their own destinies as nations.

East Germany merged, of course, with West Germany. That did create some cultural issues for that new nation. But there were no ethnic or tribal tensions involved in creating the new unified Germany.

Ethnic conflict in a couple of the other former satellite nations was extensive, however.

Yugoslavia went through some very clear and direct intertribal conflict that killed a lot of people — too often in typical conscience free ethnic conflict fashion. The old Yugoslavia now exists as six separate nations — Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Kosovo.

More than 140,000 people died in the ethnic conflicts in that country before the new nations each took peaceful control of their own tribal turf.

That country served as an obvious testing ground and a real time proving point for the kinds of intergroup conflicts that I was investigating and trying to understand as I was writing those books.

Likewise, Czechoslovakia was a former multi-tribal satellite nation that split of its own accord immediately after achieving independence into the Czech Republic and Slovakia. That division into relevant ethnic statehood was peaceful, collaborative, and allowed each of the relevant tribal groups to have a sense of their own autonomy and tribal destiny.

The other newly independent former satellites of the Soviet Union each had their own internal ethnic stress points — and each ended up with some levels of intergroup tensions and even discrimination — but only those two purely multi-ethnic countries split into their ethnic pieces.

Ethnic Tension Levels Were High in the Former Captive Nations

The ethnic tension levels were also fairly clear and high in several of the 15 additional former captive countries were set free as the Soviet Union ended.

Those 15 newly independent countries had functioned for many years as subsets of the USSR. Most of those small countries had also been under the control of the Czars of Imperial Russia long before the Soviet Union existed.

Each of the 15 captive countries that were set free had its own language and its own culture and each had some level of prior local governance structure. All 15 of those areas were simply given their freedom and they were each allowed to become self-governing nations as a gift from the dissolving USSR.

The Former Captives Were Given the Gift of National Autonomy

In stark and painful contrast to the Kurds and the Basque who have struggled unsuccessfully for generations in each of their home settings to be free, those 15 former captive countries were all simply given their freedom as a gift that was created for them by circumstances that they did not control and did not create.

Several of those new countries did have their own history and legacy of unsuccessful separatist movements. Some even had years of rebellion against the Soviet government — but those separatist activities were not the primary reason they were set free at that point in time. The tides of history simply were flowing in their direction.

The newly autonomous countries were Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Technically, Russia, itself, should be on that list because the ethnic homeland of Russia was also set free from the USSR when the Soviet Union ended.

Each of those new countries has its own history and language. Each has its own culture and each has a clear sense of group identity.

Several Internal Ethnic Groups Were Not Given Autonomy by Russia

The intergroup issues that continue to exist today inside of Russia are complicated a bit by the fact that another dozen areas with similar ethnic characteristics were given a level of partial independence, but were set up to be legally subsets of the new Russia and were retained as component parts of the new Russian Federation.

The new Russian Federation is, in itself, a multi-ethnic and somewhat smaller echo of the old Soviet Union. I was amazed to learn how ethnically diverse the new Russia continues to be. The new Russian Federation actually has an amazing number of clearly distinct and significant internal components parts that most people in western countries do not know exist.

Russia, itself, is the largest component part of the new Russian Federation. For a number of logistical and functional reasons, the Russian ethnic group that is anchored by Moscow as their capital city tends to be the dominant ethnic group in the new confederation.

The situation that the Russians created in setting up the new confederation was much more complex than most people realize and the model they have chosen clearly reflects the reality of the relevant diversity of that new structure.

The new Federation actually is officially divided into 85 separate units who each have varying degrees of local control. More than 20 of those units function as separate Republics and the Republics each have their own constitution. More than 45 of the units are set up as provinces. Each province elects a governor — much like our states in the United States.

A couple of other component parts of the new Russian confederation also have varying degrees of local governance. Those other components include three Federal cities that each function much like provinces.

I mention all of that here to point out that Russia is an incredibly complex country even now. Some parts of the surviving country — like the Republic of Chechnya — have been in armed rebellion for years — with separatists in those settings doing the same kinds of terrorist acts we see other separatists do in other countries who have groups who want to be freed.

I Expected a Reduction in Ethnic Conflict

My own initial reaction back in the early 1990s to the Soviet Union breaking up was to speculate that ethnic conflict in a number of those areas would be reduced after the new nations were clearly defined. I expected a reduction in ethnic conflict in those settings because many of those new highly tribal nations would finally have their own sense of ethnic destiny fulfilled.

It was clear in that process that local people and local ethnic groups in all of those newly freed settings would now have the chance to achieve local ethnic self-governance. I thought ethnic conflict would shrink in all of those settings after that self-governance happened.

I was very wrong. It was not true that the creation of ethnically focused countries would inherently and naturally trigger a reduction in intergroup conflict and intergroup damage. In actuality, what we saw in every newly freed state, was the sad reality that basic us/them instincts that were triggered in those settings at the local level still created intergroup behaviors that damaged some sets of local people in each setting based on their ethnicity.

Those nations had tribal majorities, but they did not have ethnic purity — so each of those nations did negative intertribal things to people from other groups who lived in each setting.

That whole set of internal inter-ethnic conflicts that happened relatively quickly in all of those newly freed very small countries surprised me. In retrospect, each of those local negative intergroup interactions made perfect sense. When you understand the basic instincts that are always involved for people in multi-ethnic settings, then all of those internal intergroup conflicts that happened in each of those newly independent, but still multi-ethnic nations should actually have been easy to predict.

Ethnic Groups Become Prominent, Dominant, and Sometimes Exclusive

The pattern for the new sets of intergroup problems that actually did happen in each of those settings was immediate and it was very clear. Almost all of the newly independent countries with new levels of local ethnic dominance did negative things to their minority populations. The newly independent countries each tended to end up with significant levels of negative internal intergroup instinct activation that was directed very clearly in each setting against the local minority groups in each setting.

That negative intergroup instinct activation happened in all of those settings because each of the new nations had more than one ethnic group and each nation had some long-standing internal ethnic diversity issues and intergroup problems that had been suppressed by Moscow and by the Soviet Army when those sites were under Soviet rule.

The patterns are clear. Each country had a clear majority ethnic group. Those clear majority groups took control of each country and each country used ethnicity at some level as a control mechanism.

The new ruling ethnic group in each country took very clear and deliberate steps to make their own ethnic group prominent, dominant, and in some unfortunate cases, exclusive.

Purges and Expulsions Happened in Multiple Settings

Purges happened in many settings. People from other groups were expelled. Ethnic cleansing was clear intentional and deliberate government policy in several settings.

Purges and group expulsions obviously damage groups of people very directly when they happen and they happened with great frequency in those newly independent countries with new ethnic majority control. People were damaged because of their ethnicity in a number of settings and the people doing the damage felt justified for all of the reasons that people getting revenge use as justification for damaging behavior.

It seemed counterintuitive to me at first that giving independence to those formerly captive countries would increase the level of active ethnic damages being triggered in those settings. It was clear from the beginning that each of those newly independent countries had ethnically concentrated populations. The new nations were very intentionally built around those local majority group ethnic delineations.

The ethnic groups in control in each setting did not resist the opportunity to ride their new ethnic alignment power pathway in negative intergroup ways when that power pathway became available to them.

Each Started by Reinserting their National Language

Those countries each tended to take the language of their primary ethnic group as their newly official national language. Moving to the tribal language was a major initial step in creating tribal dominance.

Russian had been the language of government in many of those settings for many years because Russia had been the ruling power for each area for an extended period of time.

The new ruling ethnic groups in each newly independent setting very consistently stopped using the Russian language. The new rulers sometimes actually banned use of the Russian language in their settings.

In addition to restoring their own tribal language and moving away from speaking Russian, most of those countries began to expel people who lived there who had Russian ancestors. Those countries also tended to expel people who were from other ethnic groups who lived there and who had moved in to those settings for various reasons while the country had been under Soviet Union or Russian control.

Many of the people from various other ethnic groups who happened to live in each of those settings when they became free had been intentionally moved into those areas in the past as a deliberate attempt by the Soviet Union to weaken local ethnic control by making those particular historically ethnically concentrated and tribally pure areas more ethnically diverse.

Russia Had Deliberately Tried to Increase Ethnic Diversity in a Number of Areas Through Immigration Strategies

The historic reality has been that ethnic Russians tended to run the Central Soviet government. The ethnic Russians who ran the USSR used to send both ethnic Russians and people from other nearby ethnic groups into each of those captive countries to create what were the equivalent of Russian ethnic group settlements in those settings. The goal of that immigration process was to artificially create a higher level of local ethnic diversity in many of those sites.

The process of creating ethnic diversity through forced immigration resembled and echoed the centuries old strategy that had been used by England to send outside people from Scotland and England into Northern Ireland to live to reduce the local ethnic purity and control there.

The goal for the Soviets of artificially creating that local diversity in those settings and of forcing people in those settings to all use the Russian language was to increase the us/them loyalty levels felt by those areas to Moscow and to decrease the local sense of ethnic “Us.”

That effort failed. It failed and it was resented by the people from the local ethnic group who did not want their tribal areas to become more diverse. That

resentment turned into revenge behaviors in many settings that evolved into ethnic cleansing behaviors, in some situations.

Each Country Restored Their Tribal Language

Once those nations became independent, they each restored their own local majority group ethnic language as the language of their government and they each began to discriminate in several ways against the remaining ethnic Russians and against any other ethnic minorities who might be living on their turf.

Some of the settings had been under Turkish control before they were ruled by Moscow. The Turks also had sent people to live in those settings while Turkey ruled them — so there were also a number of people with Turkish ancestry who lived in some of those settings when they became independent.

Again — the patterns of clearly instinctive behaviors were both very obvious and very consistent in each of those countries. People in those areas whose own group had been ethnically suppressed by the Russian government — and who had also been — in some cases and settings — ethnically suppressed much earlier by the Turkish Empire government in the years before the ethnic Russians took over control of the area — were now able to restore their own tribal language to ban the other languages, and to expel people who had ancestry from other tribes.

That set of governmental actions by the new governments obviously created problems for many people of Russian or Turkish descent or for any people with other kinds of local minority ancestry who still lived in those post-satellite countries.

Pure and simple ethnic cleansing happened in some settings — with people whose ancestry was Turkish sent to Turkey and people whose ancestry was Russian sent back to Russia — often with no resources and no support because they had been forcibly displaced.

People Who Did the Expelling Felt No Regret

I have talked to people from a couple of those former satellite countries who expressed no regret at any level about those expulsions.

“They don’t belong in our country,” one man told me. “They were never part of us. It is good for them and it is good for us that they are gone.”

I found his use of us and them to define the relevant groups in his country to be sadly reinforcing and clearly illustrative of the instinct-linked origin of those behaviors. In many cases, the people who were expelled had ancestors who had lived in those settings for generations, but simply living there for many years was not sufficient to generate a sense that those people were an us to that tribal nation.

Expelling those people whose families had lived in those settings for generations would be a little like our country saying that anyone with Irish ancestry whose family had been in our country less than four generations now needed to go back to Ireland.

It was clear in some of the newly independent countries that having four or five full generations of people from a particular family living on their turf did not count as being enough relevant local history and enough local connectivity to give those fourth or fifth generation people local status.

We would be sending a lot of people back to Ireland if we decided that four generations was not long enough to qualify people with Irish ancestors to be “Us” here.

Many of the Immigrant Families Did Not Assimilate

To put that Irish expulsion hypothetical situation in a slightly more relevant and more accurate context, however, it was fairly clear that many of the ethnic Russians who were living in many of those settings in the captive countries had personally not assimilated with the local people and it was also true that many of those people in each of those countries who had Russian ancestors were still generally speaking Russian as their daily tongue.

To make the Irish expulsion analogy more accurate, to copy exactly what some of those former captive countries did — we would need to be expelling all of the people with Irish ancestors from this country who still spoke Gaelic as their daily language. If we used that particular expulsions criteria, the number of expelled persons from our country who had Irish ancestors would probably drop to zero.

I personally only know one second-generation person with Irish ancestry who still speaks the Gaelic language of his forbearers — but he learned it in his college years by actually studying in Ireland.

“Us/them” instincts had influenced the behavior choices in the people with Russian ancestry in those sites to continue to function and to live as Russian speaking enclaves in those countries. Those behaviors clearly increased their risk and their vulnerability when the us/them instinct packages were activated in the local ethnic group and when that local group in each setting finally had full control over their new local government.

In any case, I could see as I began looking around the world to learn as much as I could about intergroup issues in various settings, that pure ethnic conflict and division happened after independence was granted to many of those formerly captive settings. Those issues are still issues in some of those settings. We still have not seen those sets of intergroup conflicts fully play out in all of the nations set free by the ending of the Soviet Union two decades later.

Some of those countries continue to have significant internal ethnic negative behaviors today. Those sets of local ethnic issues are getting more troublesome in some settings where the level of local ethnic diversity continues to trigger conflicts.

Russia Is Reaching Out to Some Russian-Speaking Ethnic Enclaves

In a set of behaviors that are almost a mirror image to the settings where people of Russian descent are being expelled from the former captive and satellite countries, the remaining Russian government in Moscow has begun to reach out

to several areas that used to be run by Russia through the Soviet Union where there are still large numbers of local Russian speaking residents.

We are now seeing Russia, itself, reaching out as a country to extend its influence and control again over several areas in neighbor countries where the population is primarily people of direct Russian ethnicity. In a couple of specific areas — areas in adjacent countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire, where the majority local population are clearly from the Russian ancestry ethnic group — Russia is now actively helping separatist groups in those areas separate from their current parent country.

Both the Ukraine and Georgia are facing pressure for parts of their territory to allow the sections of their countries with clear ethnic Russian majorities to either become independent or to actually leave their current country and become part of Russia.

The functional reality is that after voluntarily giving up Soviet Union level dictatorial control over each of those new parent countries, Russia is now retaking control over a few of the Russian speaking parts of those countries.

Russia Has Annexed the Russian Ethnicity Majority Crimea

That pattern has been fascinating to watch and not hard to predict. Two provinces of Georgia that have Russian speaking majorities have had successful separatist movements. Those areas have left Georgia to interact more directly with Russia.

The Crimea and the Russian speaking areas in Odessa have actually both been annexed by Russia. Both of those areas and populations were most recently part of the Ukraine. Both had local populations with majorities of ethnic Russians. In those settings, significant numbers of the local people sought closer alignment with Russia rather than minority citizens of the Ukraine.

The situation is fluid, but that current situation is that the geographic areas in the Ukraine where Russian-speaking people are the majority currently have

armed separatists in charge of key cities and relevant terrain and it isn't clear whether or not they will end up leaving the Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Government Banned Russian as a Governing Language

The Ukrainian government clearly has had its own internal issues and problems with those particular Russian-speaking pieces of their geography. The initial internal accords that created the Ukraine as an independent and multi-ethnic country set up clear laws that offered protection for the Russian language in ways that would allow that language to continue to be used for schools and for government activities in those areas of the Ukraine where the majority of local people basically use that language.

The Ukrainian government subsequently changed those laws. They reduced or eliminated those protections for the Russian language by people with ethnic Russian ancestors for those areas a number of years after Ukrainian independence.

The clearly stated reason given by the government of the Ukraine for ending that law protecting the use of the Russian language was to have the Ukraine become a single language country and to have that single language for the whole country be Ukrainian.

Canada, Belgium, and Switzerland could all have advised the Ukrainian government with centuries of multi-language experience that taking away any people's group language tends to trigger fierce resistance from those groups of people. The Kurds have resisted very similar pressure to give up their language in many settings for generations. The Kurds have very consistently resisted that pressure and those attempts to get them to stop speaking the Kurdish language with some vigor and success.

That approach of forcing local people away from their language has generally not been successful as a mandate in most places in the world where minority languages exist. The response to that approach by the Ukrainian government

to ban that Russian language use in those areas of the Ukraine that have large numbers of Russian ancestry was predictable.

The Portions of the Ukraine That Speak Russian Have Separatist Aspirations

Those portions of the Ukraine that have Russian speaking majorities first protested and then revolted. Local militias who speak Russian now control significant pieces of that country.

I suspect that there are very few Ukrainian speaking soldiers in those separatist militias, just as there are very few Hebrew-speaking soldiers in the Palestinian militias and there are no Gaelic-speaking fighting squads representing the Ulstermen in Northern Ireland. The lines in those kinds of intertribal conflicts in all of those settings are drawn by group and language differences between the groups can be volatile intergroup triggers.

Ethnic separation and ethnic division inside the Ukraine has now created very clear local levels of partial ethnic autonomy for some parts of that country. It is unlikely that the ending of that process will ever restore Ukrainian as the only allowable language for those settings.

The Kurds Do Not Have a Big Brother Next Door

Those battle lines are clearly drawn. Some of the ethnic Russians who live in those settings, for fairly obviously tribal reasons, have recently taken steps to move their local portion of turf from ownership by the Ukraine back to ownership by Russia.

The country of Russia, for what seem to be equally tribal reasons, has tended to both encourage and support those separatist movements. The support of the Russian government for those separatists obviously significantly increases the choices that the separatists in those settings will, in fact, ultimately separate.

What makes the separatist success level situation very different for the Kurds of Turkey compared to the separatist ambitions of the Russian-speaking

people of the Ukraine is that the Kurds of Turkey do not have a mother country speaking the Kurdish language and armed with tanks and missiles sitting next door — and the Russian-speaking separatist Ukrainians do actually share a highly relevant and convenient border with Mother Russia.

National Leaders – Ethnic Division in Other Countries When Their Own Country Grows as a Result

One of the points I learned early in the process as I looked at all of the separatist movements in the world is that national leaders in existing countries tend to never support separatist movements in any other countries. National leaders prefer to maintain the status quo in their own countries and they tend to support the status quo in all of the countries around them.

Russia has clearly not followed that pattern for Georgia and the Ukraine.

In a very tribal and primal way, the leader of Russia has supported that ethnic separation process for those parts of Georgia and the Ukraine. That support is due in part to the fact that Russia is actually gaining turf in the process.

A number of people in other settings have expressed great concern about the overall territorial expansion ambitions of Russia that might be teed up by the expansions into Georgia and the Ukraine

The people with those concerns seem to be missing the point that the current Russian territorial expansion efforts seem to be limited fairly directly to very specific adjacent geographic areas in countries that were once ruled by Russia where the ethnic Russian tribe is still the local majority group and where the Russian language is still the usual language spoken by the people who live there.

Poland, Albania, and the Czech Republic have nothing to fear from future Russian army invasions and future Russian territory expansion ambitions if that set of language-linked factors continues to be the only standard that the

Russians from Moscow use to determine where to send their troops in efforts to aid separatists and to acquire additional turf for Russia.

Our Media Has Missed the Tribal Elements of the Ukraine Conflict

That is another case where our news media has fairly consistently overlooked and missed the point of the purely tribal issues that are heavily involved in those Ukrainian and Georgian turf battles. The tribal components of those conflicts could not be more painfully clear. There have been almost no news stories that explain that Russia has not been interfering in any geographic area where the language that is spoken by local people is not Russian.

That basic fact about the exact sites of the conflicts has either not been understood by the media or it has not been noticed.

It is also possible that those points have deliberately not been mentioned by the media because that specific data point about ethnic linkages to those conflicts doesn't feel relevant to the people who are reporting the news. Ethnic linkages, as I mentioned earlier, tend to be spoken of in disparaging terms and "sectarian" issues have not been considered by most news media to be legitimate reasons for groups to act.

The reality is, however, that people kill each other all over the world based on ethnic linkages and sectarian alignments. We need to take steps to stop that killing — and those steps need to reflect the reality of who is killing and who is being killed.

The ethnic linkages that exist in those settings are directly relevant to those conflicts because situations exist that make intergroup conflict inevitable. The ethnic issues are worth mentioning when any conflicts have clear ties to ethnic issues because there are the factors that drive the conflict and Peace can only happen when the solution strategies address those realities and those issues.

International Law Supports Current Boundaries

The prior chapter of this book made the point that leaders of all countries tend to have an almost fanatical commitment to the preservation of all existing national boundaries for all countries, including their own. That commitment by national leaders to existing national definitions of turf continues to be true across the planet. Leaders of multi-ethnic countries do not want the precedent of separatist movements actually succeeding in any setting.

Russia Has Its Own Internal Separatist Groups

Russia faces those same exact issues in a highly challenging way from both directions.

There is a relatively high level of fairly obvious irony in Russia becoming involved in supporting those tribal separatist groups in the Ukraine or in Georgia because Russia, itself, does have dozens of ethnic groups today inside Russia who each want more autonomy from Russia.

Many people have died in Chechnya in response by Russia to the separatist movements there.

When you think in strategic terms, it is entirely possible that one of the reasons why the head of Russia can't be as clear today as he could be about his support for locally determined ethnic separation for the Russian-speaking separatists in Georgia and the Ukraine is that he doesn't want his words endorsing voluntary ethnic separations in any setting used against himself or his government in Chechnya or in any of the other separatist sites that exist within his country.

The leader in Russia needs to position his response and support for those separatist Russian-speaking areas as being actions in defense of oppressed people — not as supporting ethnic autonomy in any setting.

Internal Ethnic Issues Exist in All of the Freed Countries

Those are historic and changing times. This really has been a fascinating time to look at those issues. History has fed the fire of intergroup conflict across the world with the ending of the Soviet Union as one of the major triggers for new sets of conflicts.

Those issues resulting from the end of the Soviet Union and centered on local ethnic control issues in those newly freed satellite and captive nations will clearly continue to play out in people damaging people in those settings for reasons of tribe and ethnicity for many years to come.

People displaced in groups by those internal conflicts are moving from place to place to find a new place to nest, and live.

Colonialism Has Created Even More Conflicts Than the Freed Soviet Satellites

As large as the old Soviet Union was and as bloody as some of the local conflicts that result from the USSR dissolving have been and still are — that particular array of problems is not as extensive as the multiple levels and the layers of interethnic problems and intergroup conflicts that have also been created in our lifetime by another major historical event — the end of colonialism.

Colonialism had a huge impact on how the world operated for centuries. Colonial powers used to suppress local ethnic conflict in all of the areas where colonial powers ruled colonial areas. Like the collapse of the Soviet Union, the colonial agenda and infrastructure has now dissolved. The end of colonialism has created a plethora of intergroup problems that are actually increasing rather than decreasing the levels of intergroup conflict in multiple settings as a reality for our world.

It is impossible to understand the state the world is in today and the problems we face just ahead of us without understanding the intergroup interaction consequences that ending colonialism has very directly triggered for major areas of our world.