### Self-Determination in the Modern World Order: A Look at Kosovo

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### Puzzle

Why does the international community support self-determination on paper but not in practice?

### Lit Review

- 1. Precedents & Unbridled State Creation, threatening sovereignty
- 2. Unlimited Ethnic Fragmentation, leading to war
- 3. Change in context surrounding Self-Determination makes it harder to apply

# Historical Background Decline in new states after 2000

Self-Determination is said to be guaranteed, yet it is no longer granted in the previous rates

Unique Case of Kosovo:

It declared independence on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008, not a UN or EU member

Still not fully recognized, independence seen as controversial

### Methodology

- I conducted a Discourse Analysis in order to show the various understanding of self-determination in the case of Kosovo.
- Analyzed historical documents for a basis in the principle
- Dominant Discourse: Kosovo has Independence/Self-Determination
- Competing Discourse(s): Kosovo is not Independent and/or Kosovo is not Self-Determined
- Looked for communication between the sources
- Was aware of my parental lineage hailing from Kosovo, as well as my location in an institution of higher learning in the United States

### Discourses Analyzed

### Group 1



- UN CharterStatements
- of KosovoOther actors

### Group 2



- Declaration of Independence
- Statements by Kosovo's Government

### Group 3



- Website Publications
- Protest Rhetoric

### Group 4



Website
Statements
on Kosovo

### Key Observations

### **UN** Charter

• Self-Determination of Peoples is a core right (Article One, Article Fifty Five)

### International Court of Justice

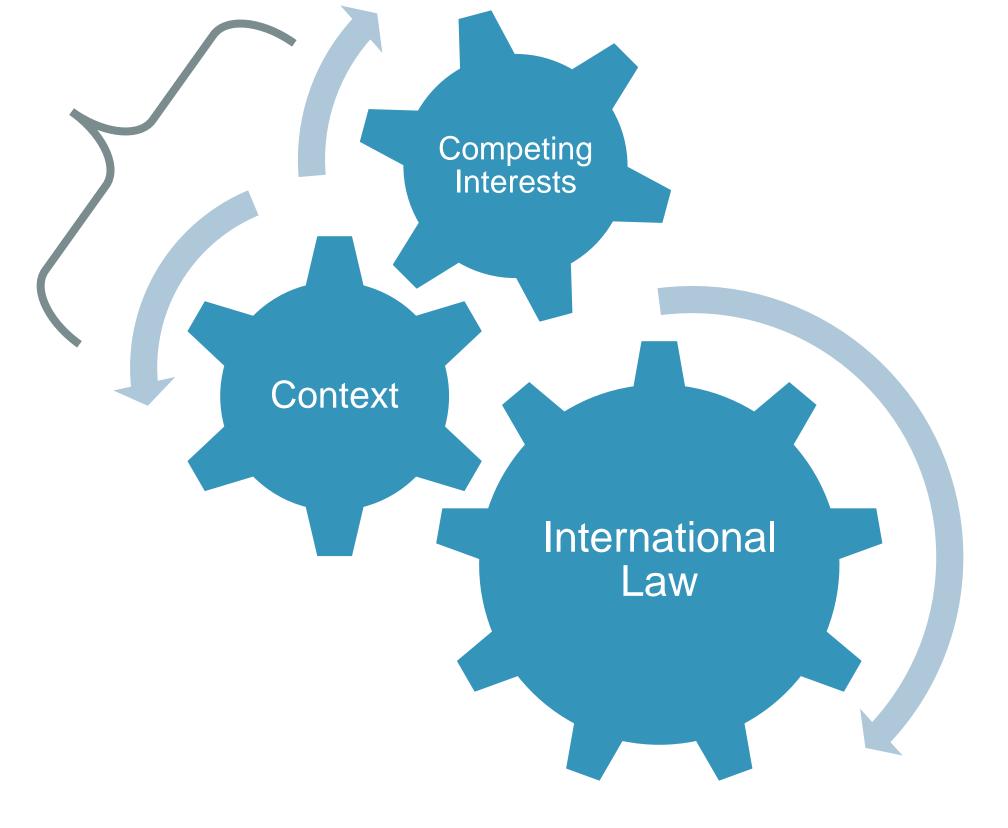
 Kosovo's Independence did not violate international law, nor is it a precedent

### Kosovo's Declaration of Independence

- Kosovo does not claim to be a precedent
- Cites Ahtisaari plan eight times

### Importance of Context

## Determine how International Law is Understood and applied



### Conception International Actor of Kosovo Principles Echoed International Security Needs to be Community Concern Supervised Kosovo "Sovereign Fully Independent State" Government Self-"Self-Still Determination Determination **Oppressed** of Peoples" Party

Results

### Conclusion

"Territorial

Integrity"

**Stolen Land** 

- Showed that the concept of self-determination is much more nuanced than I understood.
- This research helps us better understand how the Serbian Nationalists, Kosovo Government, and Vetvendosje can all believe they are legitimate by looking at the same international discourses.
- My findings forced me to rethink my conception of selfdetermination, as well as the literal understanding of international agreements

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