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**ETHNIC NATIONALISM AND REGIONAL SECURITY IN
SOUTHEAST EUROPE. A MULTIDIMENSIONAL
PERSPECTIVE**

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Ethnic Nationalism and Regional Security in Southeast Europe. A Multidimensional Perspective

I. Introduction

Southeast Europe continues to remain the most volatile region in Europe. The disintegration of former Yugoslavia brought about decades-long ethnic and political tensions, as well as unprecedented social and economic concerns. The international community has conceived a vast array of initiatives in an attempt to stop hostilities and create conditions for the new democracies to build democratic institutions and reach economic prosperity. The countries of the region share a multitude of economic, social and political issues and it is imperative that they are able and willing to address these problems in order to achieve regional stability.

In a world of regional and global interdependence, the ethnic uprisings or tensions, economic instability and backwardness, environmental degradation, organized crime and terrorism, are security shaking factors which affect the European security system and jeopardize the transatlantic partnership.

In order to analyze the post-Cold War dynamic in Eastern and Southeast Europe, it is necessary to take a first look at the history of the countries in this part of the world. Past events, even from medieval times, but especially those of the first half of the 20th century, had a tremendous impact on contemporary events. In the case of the Balkans perhaps the deepest mark was left by the 500 years of Ottoman rule. Also, the fact that the borders of countries have been changing throughout history cannot be overlooked.

On the other hand, each country developed and maintained, despite foreign rule, distinct cultural values that shaped the perception and action of many generations. At the same time, lack of knowledge in democratic practice and unwillingness to look forward instead of backwards has done much harm to the fragile democracies emerged at the beginning of the '90s. As the answers lie in the present and the future and not in the distant past, comprehensive and actual policy recommendations are demanded.

Although international and collective efforts were not always able to live up to the expectations, negotiation and peacekeeping efforts have come a long way and peace is more likely to be achieved through the consistent actions of institutions like NATO.

It is for this paper to strike a balance between the past and the present and outline successful means for attaining peace in the Balkans.

II. Southeast Europe – Past and Present

At the two ends of the 20th century, between decades of evolution and progress, events and international interests in the Balkans meet incredible similarities. Ignoring time and space, history presents to a confused audience what might be called the “fascination of the Balkans”. The terror and brutality of 100 years old wars are recaptured in a bloody ethnic conflict, which still tears apart the peoples of former Yugoslavia and risks to spread across to neighboring areas.

Since 1912-1913 much has changed, much has not. The vocabulary of the Balkans has gained a new term: “ethnic cleansing”. But under different names it has been present there all the time. The Balkan wars of 1912-1913 were despite their violence, for all we know, short. The present conflict lags for almost a decade and international efforts sometimes create more problems than solutions.

George F. Kennan, the editor of the Carnegie Endowment book The Other Balkan Wars”, considers that the Balkan wars were the battle between the policy of armament versus the policy of progress. Today when we look back we may say that there are two elements differing between then and now: the revolution in science and technology and the revolution in communications. This is how elements like refugees and ethnic cleansing - consequences of ethnic and religious nationalism - have made headline news and circled the globe in real time through satellite television and the Internet. This is how notions like guilt, responsibility and justice have been more mediated than many other aspect of our daily lives.

Also due to those important differences, the involvement of the international community and the big powers had different effects and results. We live in an interdependent world; nothing can survive isolated; it is in our own interest to get involved and assure world peace. This was the message President Clinton sent to America and to the world as U.S. troops were sent over to engage in the IFOR in Bosnia.

The achievement of a New World Order, better than the old one, is being tested for some time in Western European capitals and in the U.S. The strongest military and economic power, the leaders

of NATO and the UN, the initiators of the international peacekeeping missions and negotiations, the champions against international terrorism and crime, are the United States of America.

At the beginning of the 20th century a movement for consolidating world peace started in the U.S., Great Britain and other countries of Europe. This movement was the main reason for the occurrence of new international legislation and codes, as well as a new diplomatic behavior. The consequences, culminating with the Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907, were tremendous.

In addition, the U.S. showed great interest for negotiations and the adaptation of the arbitration and conciliation treaties. Those initiatives were supported at the time by certain institutions. While the Balkans were preparing for war, at the beginning of the 20th century, in 1910, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was being founded in America. Its purpose was to promote international peace and understanding, as well as to provide education in the field of international relations and American foreign policy (A Carnegie Book, 1993:3-6).

It is sad that those noble and peaceful initiatives of the US, in building world peace, were accompanied almost simultaneously by preparation for war in Europe – a war that was going to last half a century.

III. Ethnic Nationalism and Regional Security

The relationship between nationalism and security has been now long discussed. In order to understand the interdependence one needs to look at the changing notion of security after the fall of the bipolar world. Security has become a multifaceted notion. It has moved from being related

to “armed attack” as described in the Washington Treaty, to chemical and biological weapons, information and technology, ethnic nationalism and economic development all together. However, ethnic and religious conflicts seem to have won themselves the title of “threat of the 90s” and keep endangering the peaceful dawn of the next century.

As many authors have argued, there is a clear link between ethnic conflict and international security. If ethnic groups tend to identify themselves as nations, then in turn “states tend to legitimize themselves by aspiring to the moral dignity of nations” (Howard Michael, 1995:286). This is the vicious circle that some countries in Southeast Europe were caught in. Some states have either been destroyed by interethnic conflicts or have been crushed under the hegemony of a superpower. During communist times the only security that the members of the Warsaw Pact were being provided with came from the dominant power at the time -- the Soviet Union. Today, the main goals of post-communist societies are to reach democracy and free-market economy at a Western level, along with a new security framework. (Daniel Nelson, 1993:191-192). The dismembering or fragmentation of some countries (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia) and the ethnic conflicts that have jeopardized the stability of others, have brought about the need for a new international and regional security structure. Thus, we have to bear in mind that the path Western security will take depends a lot on the path security in the Eastern half of the continent takes in turn.

If we look at the destruction ethnic nationalism has created in the post-communist world since 1989; figures in matter of deaths, refugees and other catastrophes are comparable with those of W.W.II. Despite all these unfortunate events, it is obvious that the future security of Southeast Europe will not be maintained or enforced by aggression. It will instead result from a security ne

that will encompass “bilateral, regional and multilateral guarantees” (Daniel Nelson, 1993:205). On the bilateral level, security can be pursued through military agreements (the Open Skies between Romania and Hungary stands as a good example) which are supposed to build bilateral confidence and identify security-building measures. On a multilateral level it can be obtained by actions like the IFOR/SFOR.

Because parties have in some cases conflicting interests, those actions alone cannot guarantee security and must be enforced by other regional networks (the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative – SECI, and the Multinational Force in Southeast Europe stand as good examples). Regional networks can impede upon the general implementation of security principles in Southeast Europe and therefore they must be “supervised” by agreements at a multilateral, global level. In this respect, increasing the role of the OSCE in encouraging diplomatic and peaceful resolutions along with the process of NATO expansion might prove itself useful

Also, the “triple crown” trend, which aims at bringing NATO, the EU and the OSCE at a common ground, sounds promising in involving the last two organizations under European leadership, just as much as NATO is involved under U.S. leadership, to address regional and collective security.

Regardless of how committed the EU is in preventing future divisions, the overwhelming concern over the loss of the nation-state still haunts both East and West and represents a threat to European security. As natural frontiers “which purport to enclose each nation with its appointed territory did not assure international peace nor did they do away with mixed areas where nationalist passions were most inflamed” (Elie Kedourie, 1993:121), the necessity to understand and approach nationalism differently becomes an immediate demand. While Western governments are busy

raising awareness on the “Euro-spirit and a shared sense of Euro-identity” (van Tartwijk-Novey, 1995:147), Eastern Europeans and especially peoples in the Balkans, seem to have a harder time adjusting to concepts like fading borders and surrendering national sovereignty. Consequently a question arises: is the redefinition of the principles underlying the nation-state a price too high to pay for security to be achieved? The answer is not easy.

Depending on how we look at the consequences of a process like NATO enlargement we also need to subsequently pose the question whether in itself an enlarged NATO would strengthen or weaken the security system as a whole by changing the nature of the nation-state? In assuring shared security and responsibility and in enhancing the democratic principles of a civil society the nation-state will definitely suffer modifications. But it is not NATO that will create respect for individual freedoms and encourage diversity, but the maturity of the states in question to find a balance between the “old” and the “new” imperatives underlying the nation-state. And this will make them fit for ascending to NATO. From this point of view NATO will only maintain what states have already created within their own political, economic and social systems, provided that those changes comply with the basic principles of democracy.

Nationalist feelings are present everywhere in Southeast Europe and vary from one country to another. In most cases those feelings are determined by historical grievances. In other words the “bring people together not for what they are but for what they used to be” (Guehenmo, 1995:4). In Southeast Europe the events of 1989 produced a rise in nationalist feelings, which evidently created a violent crisis in the federal states (the former Yugoslavia) and milder forms of instability and discontent in other countries (Romania, Bulgaria). Nationalism in Southeast Europe is not essentially very different from nationalism in Western Europe, but in its post-communist form it

has considerably distanced itself from *the* nationalism which Michael Ignatieff described as being “that great European tradition”. Nationalism gives people a sense of belonging and a feeling of being for or against something, even though in many cases the feeling is very subjective.

Nationalism is also viewed as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintain autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation”. By this definition, nationalism applies to countries with a strong national past, as well as to ethnic groups that have never before formed a distinct nation (the Macedonians, the Gagaouz, the Kurds). It has strong cultural claims in terms of language, religion, rituals or customs and it may or may not be accompanied by territorial claims, however making “reference to wider sentiments and aspirations” (Anthony Smith, 1991:73).

Balkan nationalism, in particular, belonged with no doubt to the great 19th century European nationalism. Three significant stages are considered when talking about the development of national consciousness (Minority Rights Group, 1994:7): the first one initially animated an intellectual desire to transform vernacular languages in literary ones; the second corresponded to the scholarly idea that nationalism conveyed to a larger strata; and the third corresponded to the national movement reaching its mass apogee. Balkan nationalism as an ideology found its fulfillment in the national self-rule, promoting state independence through a paradoxical combination of secessionism and irredentism. Not only the moving of borders back and forth throughout history created confusion among the nations involved, but there was another aspect that created serious ethnic clashes, perpetuated until today. And that consisted in the fact that almost all unredeemed territories targeted by one new nation were conflicting with the territories targeted by other states (Minority Rights Group, 1994:8). This situation resulted in diplomatic and armed

conflicts often followed by ethnic cleansing, assimilation of the minorities that were not destroyed and development of historical revisionism. The last materialized in the dream of a larger state, Greater Serbia (1918-1941 and 1945-1991) being illustrative in this respect. The dream for a Greater Macedonia failed to come true, and became the symbol of the “lost fatherlands” (Minority Rights Group, 1994:8), phenomenon which explains why today a large majority of the Balkan nations believe that borders are incorrect but are not quite willing to fight wars to change them.

Because heated ethnic nationalism is exclusive and proved itself destructive, there is an imperative need to clearly establish its limits. Failure to attain true democracy in Southeast Europe would have disastrous effects over the continent’s entire security. In other words security is going to be determined by the integration or non-integration of the Southeast European countries into the Euro-Atlantic structures. The absence of ethnic disputes, along with a strong economic reform is evidently a condition to ascendance. Post-communist nationalism in Southeast Europe makes the best example where a guarantee like NATO membership is needed because this seems to be a region where “victory over dictatorship depends now on a new concept of security” (Daniel Nelson, 1993:5). The principles of the nation-state, though not intended to be destroyed, alone cannot work towards globalization. Preventing ethnic tension and conflict requires strong determination both on the part of the states concerned and on the ethnic communities involved. Not trying to be utopian in promoting the idea of a European super-state, I admit that the New World Order envisages changes that aim at relaxing nationalist feelings, not in the sense of repressing national identity, but in adding to it a broader, wider and wiser approach to national belonging. There is no future for any kind of shared leadership, if tendencies like forced ethnic assimilation or ethnocratic desires will continue to persist anywhere in Europe.

IV. The Balkan Conflicts And Their Impact on European Security and the Transatlantic Partnership

Coming back to the 90s, the desire of the international community to know and take action did not always live up to the expectation of actually doing it. Moving with high speed toward the information highway of the next century, a Europe more or less united had its failures in the Balkans. Across the ocean, in the U.S., the Dayton Accords were giving way to new hopes. But justice was hard to attain.

A. The Changing Notion of Security

Today security is a complex notion embracing three components - common, cooperative and collective -- which have derived from each other and influence one another.

The concept of **common security** was developed during the Cold War and represented an attempt to prevent serious clashes between the East and the West, and was translated in **peaceful coexistence** by reducing the danger of nuclear arms and the dimensions of regional conflicts (The Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance, 1991). The Cold War was a war between military assets and reducing tensions was often supported by strengthening deterrence, which at the time meant building more weapons. However, this approach alone did not prove itself to be valid and the concept of common security had to be enlarged by adding to it the notion of **common responsibility**. This meant peace by creating a better environment, free of nuclear weapons, encouraging economic cooperation, population stabilization, democracy building, enforcing human rights and in the end achieving global governance. These aims could have been

achieved by identifying common interests, while the approach also implied strengthening cooperation in the scientific and cultural endeavors despite differences in ideologies between the two sides of the Iron Curtain (Rotblat, Valki, 1986:341-342).

With the opening created by Gorbachev in the late mid 80s, both East and West came to realize that they had a common interest in ameliorating poverty, disease and environmental deterioration and that the failure of solving these problems was regarded as undermining no matter what kind of security the two parties had in mind. The common security framework was acceptable both to East and West, including the US, because it did recognize the differences in the political systems and it did keep sovereignty intact, making at the same time a clear distinction between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

This conceptual framework was extended after the Cold War and it was seen as a transition towards collective security. The Report of the Palme Commission, which dealt with the interdependence between security and the nuclear war and whose aim was to reduce arms proliferation, was implemented into practice at a larger scale. But while Cold War Europe found common security sufficient, the new European dynamic after 1989 went far beyond environmental hazards due to nuclear proliferation.

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the failure of communism broke the bonds between the East-Central European countries and the USSR. NATO enlargement became an issue after 1989 and was considered a modality to reach a different kind of stability in Europe based on common interests and nuclear arms reduction, process supported by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as by the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE).

The end of the Cold War has also changed the “imperatives” of international security, making ground assault and deliberate nuclear attack no longer the dominant problems in defense planning. **Cooperative engagement** is the appropriate principle for security relations. “Cooperative engagement is a strategic principle that seeks to accomplish its purposes through institutionalized consent rather than through threats of material or physical coercion” (Janne Nolan, 1994:3-4). If we consider NATO enlargement to involve mutual acceptance and surrendering of sovereignty which aim at transnational means of defense, then we can consider that the process can also provide cooperative security.

Cooperative security focuses on prevention rather than on preparation of war and can be described as a “model of interstate relations in which disputes are expected to occur, but they are expected to do so within the limits of agreed-upon norms and established procedures” (Janne Nolan, 1994:5). In discussing NATO enlargement we must also be aware that in the former communist countries of East-Central Europe, conflicts are more likely to occur and hence the above statement must be regarded as a necessary prerequisite in dealing with such conflicts.

Cooperative security is not meant to create an international government or to prevent and solve any form of violence. It does, however, provide a framework for the international community indispensable for a peaceful modeling of Europe’s future, stressing at the same time that military force requires internationally agreed upon norms.

NATO expansion towards the East was initially supported by three major agreements that provide cooperative security: the CFE Treaty and CFE A1 which expanded to 30 signatories in 1993 (both

NATO members and former Warsaw Pact countries); the OSCE which embodies 52 states; and the Open Skies Treaty which has been already successfully implemented into practice. The result of these treaties represented a concrete application of cooperative security principles and prove their logic in facing dramatic political change and a transformed security environment.

NATO enlargement is an ambitious step towards **collective security**. The central idea of collective security is that “governments of all states would join together to prevent any of their number from using coercion to gain advantage” (Weiss, Gordenker, 1993:3). The notion also assumes that aggression by any state will be met by all against one, idea found in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, and has as an ultimate aim to reestablish peace and order. In order to achieve collective security NATO needs to establish a strong and fruitful cooperation with other international institutions and organizations (the UN, the WEU).

Significant steps have already been made by NATO assuming the role of providing collective security. The PfP is “working to expand and intensify political and military cooperation throughout Europe, increase stability, diminish threats to peace and build strengthened relationships by promoting the spirit of practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles that underpin the Alliance. It offers participating states the possibility of strengthening their relations with NATO in accordance with their own individual interests and capabilities. NATO will also consult with any active participant in the PfP if that partner “perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security” (NATO Basic Factsheet, Nr. 9:1). The aims of the PfP are: facilitating transparency in national defense planning and budgeting processes; ensuring democratic control of defense forces; maintaining the capability and readiness to contribute to operations under the authority of the UN and/or the responsibility of the OSCE;

developing cooperative military relations with NATO, for the purpose of joint planning, training and exercises in order to strengthen the ability of PfP participants to undertake missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian operations, and others as may subsequently be agreed; developing, over the longer term, forces that are better able to operate with those of the members of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO Basic Factsheet, Nr. 9:1).

Active participation in the PfP plays an important role in the evolutionary process of accepting new members in NATO, as member states have already stated that they expect and would welcome the addition of new members to the Alliance as part of a process which takes into account political and security developments in the whole of Europe. The PfP will however not come to an end once countries like Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic will be admitted to join the Alliance. NATO has clearly stated that the door will not be shut on other countries that have applied for membership. Ascendance in their case would only be a matter of time; meanwhile an enhanced PfP will make those countries active partners and participants in NATO's programs and missions.

Europe is an important contributor to collective security and achieving it must involve a steady and stable relationship with the US; in other words there cannot be a European defense identity without a US presence. Some authors even went that far to affirm that "leadership in Europe will either be American, or it will not be" (Josef Joffe, 1993:52), since Britain and France are not strong enough to assume security and Germany will be preoccupied with the reunification consequences for a long time. Even though NATO is the metaphor for America's commitment to Europe's freedom (van Tartwijk-Novoy, 1995:135), one must not forget that Germany's reunification process does not prevent it from being one of, if not *the* most important actor in

shaping European security, being at the same time a major pillar in the EU. NATO's expansion will hence provide the structure from which the EU can create its own security and defense identity to deal collectively with the continent's instabilities.

The political dilemma of the EU enlargement towards the East --guarantee to security by creating a larger Europe or threat to security due to the economic weakness of the former communist states -- is somewhat found in the political dilemma of NATO enlargement. The question is whether NATO should end up in becoming a transatlantic partnership in which the WEU will be the European security pillar and hence increase security by not interfering in Russia's relationship with the EU, or should NATO become a pan-European body, case in which it will deepen the gap between Russia and the EU? (van Tartwijk-Novey, 1995:136).

The answer to those questions has to take into account the decision of the former communist states that NATO is the kind of alliance they wish to belong to. Fear of Russian expansionism is only one of the many reasons for which those countries have asked NATO to give them security guarantees, Nevertheless, Eastern European countries have also committed themselves to democracy and open-market economies and see ascendance to NATO, together with EU membership, a way to anchor themselves into the West. Collective security can only be assured in Europe if the WEU and NATO have clear and distinct mandates in order to prevent them from becoming competing rivals.

B. The Role of the US in Southeast European Stability

The transatlantic partnership and security network needs to be regarded in relation to American interests in Europe. A primary interest of the U.S. is the thwarting of conflict and the diminishing of the sources of insecurity in the Balkans.

The sources of insecurity are a topic that has already been much discussed. Actually, those sources do not belong to the Balkans only. It is the space torn by ethnic and religious unrest that fosters them to develop. In such a space there are breaches in national security, in its borders and its relations to other neighboring states. Arms and drug trafficking, organized crime, environmental degradation and economic collapse are the new non-traditional sources of insecurity that challenge the 21st century. Those sources do not appear isolated, but encourage the growth of other sources and spread to other larger areas.

The assistance U.S. offer in Southeast Europe is visible, among others, through programs like SECI. **SECI** (The Southeast European Cooperation Initiative) is strongly supported by think-tanks and other organizations in the U.S., being an example of confidence-building measures by stimulating economic cooperation between the Balkan states. It also assists the economic reconstruction of Bosnia.

Also, **The Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Southeast Europe**, is another example of U.S. support in the region. The force aims at preventing conflicts of whatever kinds in the area. Such a force, with the participation of both NATO and non-NATO countries, is aimed at becoming a

model of multicultural military cooperation with benefits in the social, political and economic realms.

Last, but not least, NATO enlargement under U.S leadership is another example of involvement in Europe. The **intensified dialogue** that the U.S. intends to start with the aspirant countries after the Washington summit in the spring of 1999, as part of the “open-door” package, shows the American commitment to Southeast Europe. This dialogue differs from the PfP and stresses the importance of bilateral relations in the NATO enlargement process.

U.S. interests in Southeast Europe cannot be viewed apart from the larger picture of U.S. interests in Europe in general. Aside from their role as leaders in world peace, the United States wish (and more so *should*) to be present in Europe. In other words, America’s interest in Europe consists of its very presence here.

In arguing over American leadership in Europe, the question is not IF, but WHAT KIND of leadership will the U.S. have. In this respect the U.S. need to be aware that the best leadership is the one shared with other partners, in this case the EU, more specifically France, Germany and Britain. The aim is to obtain a common vision and an efficient coordination in conflict management, as well as in political and economic cooperation.

U.S. presence in Europe should not be regarded as a competition, but rather as part of the transatlantic partnership between the two continents, as well as a necessity demonstrated by the sad experience in former Yugoslavia. NATO’s intervention in Bosnia under U.S. leadership was the only credible action along the initiatives taken by the international community.

According to some authors, intervention would only create more problems. And still the U.S. cannot assist apathetically to the collapse of countries vital to their own interest. Besides, regional instability only expands, engaging other areas and creating new confrontations. Thus, the economic support offered to some countries, and the military one offered to others, shows that the U.S. believe in regional stability as an enforcer of international stability. Unfortunately, success stories are few.

In supporting NATO expansion, we observe a hesitation in treating all aspirant countries in a non-discriminatory fashion. And that, because interests are more important than global stability, some may say. Rightfully so. The U.S. is not the savior of the world, or the world's policeman. They are just the most fervent supporters of world peace and stability. Not at whatever cost, though. In their relationship with countries in the area, the U.S. regard the process of integration in the Euro-Atlantic space as a two way street, in which each partner needs to accomplish its tasks. Added to those is of course the geo-strategic position and short, medium and long term benefits like the economic gratification of security. Offering assistance to countries in Eastern/Southeast Europe may also be regarded as a means to build up a security shield against Russia and the insecurity factors coming from there.

V. Macedonia – The Exception to the Rule. A Case Study

Along with the break-up of Yugoslavia, a new nation-state appeared on the map of Europe - Macedonia – the sixth and poorest of the former Yugoslav republics. Officially known under the name of FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and often referred to as a

“landlocked nation” because of its geographical position, this small state is an apparently quiet country that managed to stay at the edge of the Yugoslav inferno. However, FYROM has its own particular problems.

It was the multitude of neighbors and the common historical Balkan heritage they shared with Macedonia that contributed to the conflict over Macedonian identity and national belonging. The conflict, which is still felt despite the Yugoslav Peace Process, was a non-violent one with a long period of stalemate. The conflict was successfully prevented from escalating and spreading to other areas of Southeast Europe, partly by a UN preventive deployment force, partly by a U.S. presence inside the country and partly because of a skillful diplomatic attitude and conflict management approach on the part of the ethnic Macedonians. However, the conflict in and over Macedonia has its origins rooted in the distant past. The new Southeast European context and the Yugoslav war gave it a whole new dimension.

Bordered by Yugoslavia (on the northwest), Bulgaria (on the east), Greece (on the south) and Albania (on the southwest), FYROM is a country wanted and contested by all its neighbors. (Minority Rights Group 1994:8). The problems related to the Albanian minority, the open conflict with Greece over the legacy of using the name Macedonia, the effects of the economic sanctions over Yugoslavia, along with the general Balkan heritage lead to what is known by now as the “war of identities”. Loring Danforth, said that in defining Macedonia, this country “defies definition because of its complexity and mixture of population” (Danforth, 1995:96). In its short history, one can say that this nation survived armed conflict and nationalist outbursts by a miracle of fate.

As long as Macedonia was just a region and not a country, it shared the same status like Palestine or Kurdistan – invisibility in the system of nation-states. This was convenient to a point, since the Balkans were too crowded anyway and produced more history than they could have consumed.

Macedonian nationalism was the last to develop in the Balkans at the end of the 19th century. It was officially recognized only after WWII. Until then it was more an illegal kind of nationalism, not having the support of legal, political and cultural institutions. It also lacked a precise infrastructure (Andrew Rossos, 1994:369).

Although Macedonians were thinking of independence for a long time - their numerous secession attempts and the creation of the internal freedom movement IMRO in 1893 prove it – it was only the break-up of the Yugoslav empire that really gave them the chance to achieve their independence. (Loring Danforth, 1995:5).

In November 1990, the first multiparty elections are being held in Skopje and they were won by the former communist party in a landslide victory. In January 1991, the Parliament adopted the Declaration of Independence and shortly afterwards proclaims the independence of the country. In September of the same year, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted another declaration according to which the state agreed with the border and did not have any territorial claims over its neighbors. This measure was taken as a result of the neighboring states', especially Greece's, growing concern that Macedonia's independence will be followed by the desire of territorial expansion. Despite Macedonia's agreement to officially assure Greece of its non-expansionist policy, Greece refused to recognize the new republic under the name of Macedonia, claiming historical legitimacy over the name.

The Constitution of Macedonia was adopted in November 1992 at a moment in which the state was not officially recognized by any international legitimate body, or any of the neighboring countries. Being a poor country, with a very small population (approximately 2 million inhabitants), in which ethnic tensions were beginning to make themselves felt, Macedonia was facing economic collapse. The country managed to survive until April 1993 when it was recognized by the UN under the temporary name of FYROM (UN Security Council Resolution, April 8, 1993). This name was the result of a joint venture of France, Spain and Great Britain within the Council of Europe. The countries were trying to untie the tense relationship between Greece and Macedonia regarding the use of the name. The United States of America were the last to officially recognize FYROM in February 1994 (The White House, February 9, 1994).

At present FYROM is a parliamentary republic with the legislative power detained by a unicameral assembly, which among others is empowered to create a Council for Interethnic Relations. The council has a president and 2 members of each nationality (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Roma). The government forms a coalition of the social democrats, the Albanian minority and the liberals, while the main opposition party is the Party for National Macedonian Unity. The party is a descendent of IMRO and has a strong support in the diaspora and favors the formation of greater Macedonia (Perry Duncan, 1994:118).

FYROM - capital city Skopje – with a population of 2 million, represents an interesting mixture of ethnicities: Macedonians (64,5%), Albanians (21,1%), Turks (4,8%), Roma (2,7%), Serbs (2,2%). The main religions are Greek-Orthodoxism amongst the ethnic Macedonians and Islam among the

Albanians. The official language is Macedonian, written in the Cyrillic alphabet (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 1994).

The Constitution characterizes FYROM as being a state based on citizenship, more so than on ethnicity and reserves in a “vicious” passage a special place to the Macedonians as being the only constituent people: “citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia” (Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, 1992:2). This paragraph of the Constitution represented the main reason which started ethnic debates between the Macedonians and the Albanian minority. The Albanians regarded it as a clear sign of discrimination, in the conditions in which this minority demanded exact equal rights with the majority. The secession attempts on behalf of the Albanians have permanently threatened the fragile stability of FYROM, making it even subject to partition among its neighbors. But, again, despite the imminent conflict outburst, Macedonia managed to avoid war and a violent breakaway of the Albanians.

FYROM, as was earlier mentioned became the first former Yugoslav republic to leave the federation peacefully. The breakdown of Yugoslavia and the outburst of war in Croatia in June of 1991, produced for Macedonia the necessity of engagement in a “battle” over international recognition (Loring Danforth, 1995:43). Not only did Greece contest Macedonia’s right to use the name, but at the East a new issue was arising with Bulgaria over the language. Macedonian language is believed to be a dialect of Bulgarian, invented by Tito to get the territory out of Sofia’s sphere of influence. Skopje denied the absolute similarity of the 2 languages, fact that infuriated Sofia and determined Bulgaria to push for a recognition of Bulgarian language as the only official one in Macedonia.

Despite this controversy, Bulgaria was the first to recognize FYROM and engaged in economic cooperation with it. However, recognizing the Macedonian nation was delayed. Bulgarians considered Macedonians as being Bulgarians that along time have been ethnically corrupted by alien influences and departed from their origin. More so, Sofia claims that Tito's regime was the main factor to contribute to the distraction of Bulgarian national identity of the Macedonian people. In 1994, during a visit in Bulgaria, the Macedonian president Kiro Gligorov and his counterpart reached an accord regarding the language (Reuter Textline, April 25, 1994).

After proclaiming FYROM's independence the Greeks everywhere engaged in a battle against recognition of the republic (IREX, 1995). Those actions culminated in 1995 with an embargo over FYROM. Thus, Macedonia was denied access to the port of Salonik, its main commercial channel. At the same time Macedonia had to comply with the sanctions placed on Serbia by the European Union, thus losing another commercial partner (BBC Monitoring, September 8, 1994). Greece's restrictions were threatening the country with economic collapse. As a condition to lift economic sanctions, Greece was asking not only for the removal of the name Macedonia from the state's nomination, but also for the removal of the Star of Vergina from its flag. The Star of Vergina star portrays a sun with 16 rays and is considered by Greece to be one of its national symbols, but at the same time represents the aspiration to freedom of the Macedonian people.

Discussions between Skopje and Athens culminated in November 1995 with a decision of the latter to lift the embargo over Macedonia and restore its access to the port of Salonik. The condition was for Macedonia to remove the Star of Vergina from its flag and finding a name that contain more than just Macedonia. Although the government in Skopje agreed to take into account the removal of the star, a part of the population, especially the opposition, heavily

contested the decision and accused the ruling class of conducting shameful compromises in Greece's advantage (Reuter Textline, February 18, 1994).

In September 1995, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 2 countries signed the interim cooperation agreement. This moment was followed by 2 years of negotiations conducted by Cyrus Vance, UN mediator. In this agreement the parties confirmed their borders and agreed to establish diplomatic relations.

Serbia, FYROM's Eastern neighbor, regarded Macedonia's independence with caution. Belgrade always considered the Macedonians to be Serbians and Slobodan Milosevici, who wished to reconstruct greater Serbia on the ruins of Tito's empire, wanted to keep things that way. The outbreak of war in Croatia and then in Bosnia stopped Belgrade from implementing its expansionist policies over Macedonia. On the other hand, the spillover of turbulence from Kosovo to Macedonia, through which Serbia would have justified its entrance in FYROM, has been happily avoided (Stefan Troebst, 1994:34). So, the Yugoslav army is forced to pull out of FYROM in 1992 and is being replaced with a UN preventive deployment force – UNPREDEP. Its mission, to secure FYROM's border with Kosovo. In April of 1996, Belgrade and Skopje establish new diplomatic ties and sign an accord that represented the opening of a new chapter in both their histories.

Despite a certain coolness between Skopje and Belgrade and the disapprobation with the war in Bosnia, the government in Skopje opposes certain economic sanctions against Serbia. Strobe Talbott's visit in Skopje at the beginning of 1998, had a different effect than the one expected. The American diplomat came to the area in order to convince FYROM of the necessity to impose

economic sanctions on Yugoslavia. Instead he had to face the opposition of local officials who said that economic blockades did not always have the desired effect and that they affected the neighboring countries more than the country over which the sanction was imposed upon. Although FYROM survived in great part due to American support, Yugoslavia remains one of the principal commercial partners in the area. Without it, it would be hard to implement any regional cooperation programs (Iulian Nitu, 1998:16).

Albania, FYROM's poorest neighbor saw in Macedonia's independence nothing but a great opportunity to achieve its older dream - Greater Albania by reuniting with the Albanian population there. At the same time the war in Kosovo arose the secessionist desires of the ethnic Albanians in FYROM (Elez Biberaj, 1994:18). During Kiro Gligorov's visit in Tirana, the Albanian president declared that recognizing FYROM will depend a great deal upon the treatment the government in Skopje will give to its ethnic Albanian minority

Since it gained official recognition 1991, FYROM only had one goal: that of attaining international official recognition from the UN, the EU and last but not least from the U.S. In December 1991, the EC Council of Ministers announced a set of conditions under which it would recognize the new republic. Among those, a guarantee against any territorial pretence over its neighbors, condition introduced at Greece's insistence. Despite the fact that the EC considered Macedonia and Slovenia to fulfill all necessary conditions in order to be recognized as states, in January 1992, Slovenia and Croatia only were admitted in the system of nation-states through official recognition, and later Bosnia-Herzegovina.

At the end of 1992, The UN Security Council accepts to send over in Macedonia an exploring mission and detach a special contingent under the name of UNPREDEP from the UNPROFOR in Bosnia (UN Security Council Resolution, December 11, 1992). Shortly afterwards, the US agrees to participate in Macedonia with its only land troops in the area. Thus, the UN and the US considered it essential prevent the spillover of the conflict from Kosovo into FYROM. Such a situation could have gotten out of hand and involve in the worst case scenario 2 NATO members (Turkey and Greece) in a new Balkan war. The UNPREDEP was the first such mission in the history of the UN and involved the OSCE and the EC in adopting clear positions towards the new republic. (Macedonia, March 19, 1994).

Those events facilitated president Gligorov's international appreciation. Although a former communist he managed to bring the international fora and great powers together in taking interest into Macedonia. Through a skillful diplomatic attitude he also managed to prevent the extension of the Yugoslav conflict into his country.

1993 was to be a more fortunate year for FYROM. Being part of the CSEC would give it more security guarantees. Germany was the first country to support FYROM's accession to the CSCE (Perry Duncan, 1994:33). In February 1993, The European Parliament asked for the international recognition of Macedonia, stressing the importance of such an action for attaining peace and stability in the Balkans. In August 1993, Klaus Kinkel, German Minister of Foreign Affairs said in a meeting with the Macedonian president that an economic blockade against FYROM from Greece is a serious threat to peace in the region. In 1994, Germany was joined in its struggle to see Macedonia in the CSCE by Denmark and the Netherlands.

An armed conflict in Macedonia was therefore avoided through skillful diplomacy, regional and international involvement. It was clear the world was not ready for a “second” Bosnia.

Having in view that Macedonia’s destiny is closely tied up with that of Kosovo’s, the US expressed their will to extend the mandate of the peace-keeping force, which was due to expire in the summer of 1998, in FYROM (Iulian Nitu, 1998:16).

Macedonia itself engaged in regional cooperation programs with the purpose of strengthening stability in the Balkans. Programs like SECI and the PfP, and lately the Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Southeast Europe are good signs that peace is desired and possible. Also, the US which is already present in the region as it has been shown, wishes to assure itself that in the case of another unexpected outburst in the Balkans, it can rely on a multinational military participation to restore peace (Bogdan Chirieac, 1998:1).

Throughout history, many of the secessionist movements in the Balkans have been determined by the desire to create ethnically distinct states (Anthony Smith, 1991:140).

According to the “clash of civilizations” theory, the divisive effect of separating lines is visible in countries born out of the fragmentation of larger empires, empires kept together by authoritarian communist regimes. Once communism collapsed, culture replaced ideology, transforming itself into an instrument of attraction and rejection (Samuel Huntington, 1996:138). The former Yugoslav republics bear the mark of such processes along the following lines: catholic in Slovenia and Croatia, partially Muslim in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Orthodox in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Where successor states contained more than one group of civilization, conflicts

erupted. The Muslim minority and the Orthodox majority in Macedonia subscribe to this model. What that means in short is “we are different people and belong to different places”.

In Macedonia the conflict with the Albanian minority appeared because of the parties desire to create ethnically homogenous states. The resistance of the government in Skopje to accept an Albanian autonomous region on its territory is understandable having in view the consequences of such “experiments” in other countries.

Albanian nationalism manifested itself in the Balkans especially in the Serbian province of Kosovo, where in 1968 the Albanians asked for a republican status. The Albanians in Tetovo followed asking for the two areas to unite in a seventh Yugoslav republic (Hugh Poulton, 1995:126).

The main request the Albanians have in FYROM today is cultural, educational and linguistic independence. But at the same time they wish, if not territorial autonomy, at least to become a constituent people. Religion seems to be another differentiating element among the orthodox Macedonians and the Muslim Albanians. As opposed to Slobodan Milosevici who repressed an aspiration to autonomy of the minorities, Kiro Gligorov tried to offer the Albanian all possible rights in order to avoid the dismembering of FYROM. The government in Skopje is however worried by the high birth rate of the Albanians. They even consider that in 15 years the Albanian population will come to equal the Macedonians and eventually come to represent more than half of the general population (Minority Rights Group, 1994:25).

Another heated discussion is taking place around using the Albanian language as a national language. Although Albanians have their own media channels and their own university in Tetovo founded in 1995, they still claim that this higher education institution does not fulfill their needs. (David Binder, 1996:B8).

The differences between the Macedonians and the Albanians became more obvious after FYROM gained independence. The Albanians threatened with leaving the coalition numerous times, for in 1994 the Albanian Democratic Party to leave the Parliament and the government for a brief period of time.

The Albanians are also displeased with the fact that they are regarded as “second-class” citizens. Access to higher education is, in their opinion limited, much lower than that of the ethnic Macedonians, as well as with the fact that access to high management and significant business positions is restrained. This is how they justify the fact that law-breakers, delinquents and illegalities are more frequent among the Albanians (Hugh Poulton, 1995:144).

As far as the situation in Kosovo is concerned, the two ethnicities stand on totally opposing positions. While the Macedonian media speaks of Kosovo in relation to “Albanian terrorists” committing violent actions, the Albanians speak of Kosovo in terms of a republic of their own. They claim that their rights as a nation will be again recognized and therefore will be able to practice their culture freely. Actually these are only pieces of the Greater Albania puzzle, myth still existing in most Balkan people.

Finding a permanent resolution to the Albanian issue in Macedonia would stand as an excellent and eloquent example that reconciliation is possible. Although the situation is far from being solved FYROM has chances of becoming an example of multiculturalism at work, where autonomy and self-determination do not threaten territorial integrity.

Crises can be addressed through mediation and negotiations. Each conflict has at least theoretically a resolution and is subject to compromise. It is hard to satisfy all parties involved, but common interests must come first. As president Gligorov once said, “emotional reactions can only create violent nationalism. That is why it is essential to give it a second thought to embargoes, economic sanctions, boycotts and other such measures. The Balkans have become an area obsessed with legends, instead of concentrating on economic issues, cultural development and European integration” (One Europe Magazine, II/1994).

For the time being, on the international arena, Macedonia represents a key factor in regional stability, but also a strategic point as far as natural resources and the bridge to the Middle East are concerned. In an interview to AEGEE Skopje in 1994, Kiro Gligorov, said that foreign investment of capital in this part of the world could produce a boom in economic development similar to the formation of the “Asian tigers”. Analysts consider that in 10-20 years, if ethnic tensions are sealed, Macedonia has all chances to become a “Switzerland” of the Balkans.

VI. Economic Security - The Key To The Future

Stability offers countries a greater capacity to cooperate and focus on the economic prosperity of its citizens. This means more important businesses and consequently more money. And this is

because prosperity, jobs and dollars in some parts of the world are dependent on economic evolutions in other parts of the globe (Haas & Litan, 1998:3)

Today, it is more and more spoken about the multidimensional aspect of security. If during the Cold War security only had a military-political component, today it has gained a new aspect – the economic one (Sperling & Kirchner, 1998:21). The non-military aspects of security comprise everything from macroeconomic stability to environmental health. The result is obvious: where there is harmony and well being the chances of conflicts to erupt are smaller and the gain is exclusively financial and economic.

There is of course a combination between interest per se and their consequences. To illustrate, the case of Macedonia could be interesting. Macedonia benefits of a U.S. military presence, being considered a strategic spot in the Balkans. This military presence maintains Macedonia's economic level at a higher standard than some of other countries in the area, despite the fact that it is the poorest of the former Yugoslav republics and was affected by two embargoes in less than two years. Macedonia is illustrated (especially by the media) as being a success story in conflict prevention and peace maintenance.

Another aspect worth discussing here is the changing notion of economic integration. This term has gained new meanings in literature. One of them refers to the interdependence of the industrial sectors of the economy and the horizontal and vertical integration of industries. This aspect may be limited to the national level. The second aspect refers to the unification of economies through free trade areas, common markets, cooperation accords, bi- and multinational treaties, etc. This aspect can be referred to the bilateral, regional and international levels. The first concept is purely

economic, while the second is political (Barnes & Lederbur, 1998:105). Where would security fit in this case?

The sudden world order change occurred after 1989 completely modified the structure of the European system of states, thus intensifying the relationship between military and economic security. It produced new cooperation possibilities in the military and economic realms, as well as recalibrated the national economies in order to have them respond to the new security configuration.

But the end of the Cold War did not reunite Europe. She still remains divided by differences in the GDP and the varying level of institutional and economic reform (Sperling & Kirchner, 1998:222). As the U.S is the strongest military and economic power, they can only give a new way to change. Therefore, until transition and consolidation are complete, political economy should be regarded as a new element of the security system and not just as a welfare instrument.

The economy-security dilemma is dependent upon four variables as described by Sperling and Kirchner. The fear of exploitation, the subjectivity of decision-making factors in what national interest is concerned, the tendency to spend more on armament with the purpose of reducing security risks – when in fact those can be reduced by other means – and finally the offensive-defensive balance. Some authors argue that defensive is more beneficial because it diminishes the possibility of armed conflicts (Sperling & Kirchner, 1998:222).

Of course that in the end, there comes the question of allocation of national resources between economic welfare and national security, or between what is called in the Anglo-American

literature, “guns and butter”. This is however, determined by the production capability of a country and the preferences of a society. In the U.S. for example, many polls show that the population is equally willing to have a military secure environment, as well as an arms-free, economically prosperous environment for the next generations. The U.S. is an example in which both possibilities are desired and possible. There are countries even in Western Europe that cannot strike such a balance between “guns and butter”. Those countries need to opt in favor of one or the other, situation that may at some point disrupt the global security system

VI. Conclusion

Comparisons with the past have their benefits, among which a better understanding of the roots of the Balkan conflicts. What is fascinating about approaching such a subject is that analysis changes as contemporary history writes itself. Today we are not witnessing merely a Balkan conflict but a whole process with unknown variables.

The events sometime tend to be more than we can take, and sequences run with an incredible speed. The bright perspectives we so clearly saw after the fall of the Iron Curtain turned into nightmare. They were replaced by wars, blood and suffering, military scenarios and plans of action which only cost the lives of innocent children. And that is all that remains in the end.

Today, like always, knowledge is power, but not necessarily control. Knowing the causes of the Balkan conflicts did not prevent the tragedies of Bosnia and Kosovo. The trust that people will know how to use liberty was deceived. The rest of Europe clearly turned away from its less

fortunate sister from the Southeast. The Balkans defied once again the importance of peace and non-aggression (A Carnegie Book, 1993)

As far as U.S. involvement in Southeast Europe is concerned, this is part of the more complex U.S.-Europe relationship, a mutual bilateral cooperation in which both partners win but also offer something in return.

The U.S. are prepared to offer assistance to Europe in solving Kosovo and Bosnia type of crisis, but expects Europe to offer them in return support in fighting international crime and terrorism, or assist them in intervening in Gulf or Middle East type of conflicts. At the moment, the U.S. are the only credible force on the international arena.

The horizon shows new NATO expansions and the U.S. will see that those are going to happen. The EU and the WEU will be America's main partners in the shared leadership they will perform in Europe. But armed conflicts do not cease, terrorism does not pause and organized crime is strengthening its networks. There will be need for much work and common will to overcome violence, injustice and suffering. The question we need to ask: is humanity prepared for peace

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