

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

INTEGRATING THE WESTERN BALKANS INTO THE EU: CROATIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes the degree of preparedness of the Western Balkans, specifically Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, for EU membership. Taking a historical approach, it demonstrates that many of the region's contemporary problems are rooted in history, either as unresolved conflicts or as national identities built on historical falsifications. Comparing Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, I show that many of the latter's foreign policy problems are due to the historical falsifications that the country's national identity is based on, while the former is only hindered by easily resolvable obstacles. After examining the potential grave problems for the EU and the Western Balkans that could occur if integration is delayed or hurried without qualitative reform, this thesis concludes that the region must be integrated. Criticizing the current methods of enlargement, which allow for too much leeway and interpretation, I propose improvements such as expanding the principle of Conditionality to include country-specific criteria in every case. I further propose that the EU monitors the implementation of concrete prescriptions as criteria for accession, and not least, that it be more careful about the political figures it legitimizes through partnership.

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Introduction

West or Western Balkans is a term of convenience or neologism used to designate, and to demonstrate an attitude to, those countries in South Eastern Europe that have turned into sources of instability for Europe over the past twenty years. Namely, these include the states of former Yugoslavia, excluding Slovenia, but adding Albania.¹ With the accession of Albania and Croatia to NATO in the spring of 2009, the term, having a fluid nature, may be redefined in the near future to exclude these states.

The European Union has declared that it wishes to integrate the Western Balkans into its structures. Some initial steps, such as concluding and ratifying Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA) with Albania, Croatia, and the Republic of Macedonia have been taken. The other West Balkan states have also signed the SAA, but these agreements are still awaiting ratification by some member states. The EU is not rushing the process because of the unresolved Lisbon Treaty dilemma, enlargement fatigue, the sticky Turkish problem, and as of this year – the economic crisis, which is unlikely to make European voters more supportive of enlargement, associated with additional expenses.

The governments of Western Balkan states have also declared their desire to join the EU, but in most cases have not demonstrated the will for real change. Therefore, both sides have declared the will for something that they appear to be unprepared to implement in reality. Furthermore, the EU is ignoring, or at least not addressing, the conclusions that most observers formulated

¹ Angel Dimitrov. "The Western Balkans: Terminological Projection of the European West-East Attitude." in *The East-West Problem: Bulgaria and the Balkans*, ed. Tamara Stoilova (Sofia: Asotsiatsia Klio-96, 2006), 312.

after the last enlargements – that changing mentalities, changing old and deeply flawed modes of governing, and removing compromised individuals from positions of power, are often more problematic than legal convergence.

Allowing the Western Balkans to remain ‘outside’, with lingering nationalist tendencies directed against internal groups or neighboring countries, with questionable national identities, built in some cases on historical myths and falsifications, and without a clear direction for reform is dangerous for the future of the region and for Europe. I will demonstrate that the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Republic of Macedonia suffers because of the historical falsifications endorsed by its political elite. An unreformed, un-integrated, Western Balkans is already a haven for organized crime; the seeds for Islamism are dormant, and interethnic violence could resume, if the region remains in a “frozen” state.

On the other hand, integrating the Western Balkans hastily and using only formal criteria, while ignoring the lessons from the previous two enlargements, is also dangerous. This would weaken the EU by allowing unreformed states who share distaste for one another equal access to decision making, especially considering the current inefficient decision-making mechanism of the EU.

The topic concerns the future of six European countries and indirectly all of Europe. If these states are dealt with incorrectly, this may have grave consequences for the millions of people living in them, as well as for the image and power of the EU. On the other hand, if these states are successfully integrated, this will heal one of the enduring political wounds in the body of

Europe, which is a drain on resources and a source of crime. It will also open up a faster route to Asia, and decrease the perimeter for Russian political pressure.

This thesis will analyze the degree of convergence to EU political and social standards in Western Balkans, focusing on Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, as its two case studies. These two countries have been chosen since they are most ahead of their neighbors, but have a large disparity when compared on their own. The thesis will ask what could happen to the region if EU integration is delayed or stopped, or if it is hastened to the extent that these states are allowed entry unprepared. It will then present a number of unfavorable scenarios that may materialize if integration is carried out inadequately. Finally, it will analyze the problems of the existing enlargement model and argue that the Conditionality principle, in its current application, is not a strong enough policy tool. The thesis will propose a policy change, namely that the solution to the problems of the West Balkans is quicker integration, but with a far deeper and wider scope of *EU interference*.

This thesis will search for the causes of the region's unfavorable social and political situation in its history, approaching the subject from a historicist standpoint – the idea that historical developments and local peculiarities can explain the present conditions more accurately than any single theory. The author shares the theoretical outlook of Jerry Z. Muller, who opposes the “the universalizing and scientific pretensions of some streams of political science.”²

“Scientism” refers to the endeavor to apply the methods and criteria of the natural sciences to all realms of human experience—although for some they are inappropriate. This includes the effort to explain all

² Jerry Z. Muller, “Muller Replies,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 4 (July/August 2008): 146-147.

phenomena with simplified theories of human motivation and the attempt to replicate the hard sciences by using laboratory conditions to study political science. History provides a useful source of data with which to study the range and complexity of human behavior. It is a highly imperfect laboratory, where both the data and the interpretation are influenced by the methodological and ideological predispositions of the investigator. But it is often superior to the alternative: apparently scientific forms of explanation.³

This approach demands that the thesis be opened with a detailed description of the histories of Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, since history is directly related to many of their contemporary problems. The scope of my research will be from the time when the West Balkans began their integration journey, in the 1990s with the breakup of Yugoslavia, till June 1, 2009, and further back in the first chapter.

The thesis will analyze documents and publications, issued by governments and international organizations, as well as printed news publications and NGO reports as primary sources. It will use the work of other scholars and analysts as secondary sources and in the sections concerning the methods of EU integration will take part in the scholarly debate on the subject, proposing a new way.

³ Muller, 146-147.

CH. 1 – PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT, ANSWERS FROM THE PAST.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with a better understanding of the historical background to present-day problems in the Western Balkans, and the two countries that are used as case studies. This broad historical overview is essential knowledge for any observer who wishes to be able to see through the mythology and problems related to it, that are at the base of many of the region's contemporary ills, as is the case with the falsifications used in the construction of Macedonian national identity, which cause many of the country's contemporary problems with its neighbors.

Origins of the Term “Western Balkans” and Historical Overview

The Western Balkans are now a source of tension and instability, because of the historical legacy of not resolving problems in accordance with the wishes of the national and religious majorities, but catering to Serbia's wishes. The latter was on the winning side in the Balkans, First and Second World Wars, and had the backing of the West until the very end of the 20th century. “The process [of cohesion of Yugoslavia] was hindered by a widespread feeling outside Serbia that the new state was little more than an extended Serbia, as its dynasty was Serbian and Serbs dominated the critical institutions of the state, the administration and above all the army.”⁴ Serbian nationalism is directly connected to the models of ethnic development in the Western Balkans, because, as Angel Dimitrov points out:

If we exclude the specific Albanian case and the Croatian model, which was formed under different historical circumstances, [...] all problematic ethnic models in the Western Balkans were launched at different times by Belgrade. Their failure is characteristic for the political past of former Yugoslavia and directly influences the

⁴ R.J. Crampton. *The Balkans Since the Second World War* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), 11.

contemporary condition of Serbia and Montenegro, the Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁵

This pattern of blind support for Serbian interests coming from the West, as it has existed until the breakup of Yugoslavia, changed with the war between the former Yugoslav republics.

After the bloody conflict between rump-Yugoslavia (consisting of Serbia, with Kosovo, and Montenegro) and the Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Slovenes, the international community slowly started to move its support in the direction of the latter three, as well as of the Albanians, who did not directly participate in the first part of the conflict, that ended with the Dayton Accords. However, the Western Balkans remained a region of risk and political instability:

The Yugoslav breakdown and the convulsions of Serb nationalism, the aggressive advance of the Albanian factor, the Kosovo and Macedonian crises – these are the events, which most warningly demonstrate the crisis potential of the Western Balkans and its undefused ability to produce its own political quakes.⁶

The fact that it continues to be ‘undefused’ points to the failure of the states belonging to the West Balkans to find solutions to their disagreements, but also to an EU policy that could be improved considerably.

As was mentioned earlier, Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia form their own group in the West Balkans, being the two former Yugoslav countries most advanced in their quest to join the European structures. However, the difference between their success is evident and the reasons for this are partially hidden in the historical circumstances of Macedonia.

1.1 – Republic of Macedonia – History

⁵ Dimitrov, 317.

⁶ Angel Dimitrov, “Bulgaria, NATO, and the EU” (Report, Sofia, 2006), 23.

[T]here was never any serious doubt that the Slavic population of Macedonia belonged to the same linguistic, historical, and cultural zone as the Bulgarians.

*Ivo Banac*⁷

Introduction

Knowing the history of a country or region gives one far more insight than any political theory, and is therefore the basis to well-informed politics and scholarship. Having a clear understanding of the historical processes that led to the formation of the Republic of Macedonia is particularly important as they are closely connected with the foreign policy problems, such as the name dispute with Greece, that have blocked the country's progress toward EU integration.

In his book *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, the renowned historian Ivo Banac points out that “among the South Slavs, the national identity of the Bulgars, Croats, and Serbs was acquired, though not firmly fixed, long before the development of modern nationalism.”⁸ This sense existed due to the maintenance of a collective memory of medieval statehood. This is not the case in the Montenegrin, Macedonian, and Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim identities “who are the products of twentieth-century mutations in South Slavic national affinities and are, indeed still in the process of formation.”⁹ The fact that Macedonian national identity is a mutation of Bulgarian national identity that was produced with outside help during the 20th century is not recognized in the Republic of Macedonia. In Yugoslavia, after World War II, historiography was

⁷ Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 309.

⁸ Banac, 23.

⁹ Ibid.

harnessed to serve the politics of the day, by forging a “history” to serve a new identity, both of which were needed to justify Vardar Macedonia’s inclusion into Yugoslavia.

In order to do this, Macedonian “theorists of national uniqueness”, as Banac calls them, looked to the Bulgarian empire of Samuil, as the first “Macedonian” state. This empire is regarded as Bulgarian by historians outside of the Republic of Macedonia.¹⁰ Official Macedonian historiography has not given up on their claims over this empire and dynasty, or the idea that the Macedonians are Slavs, although these theories are too obviously lacking historical credibility, due to their proven Bulgarian nature by an abundance of records and artifacts.¹¹ This Slav beginning is complemented by a myth of Macedonia’s *Ancient* roots, which is based on the usage of the name “Macedonia”, “a controversial misapplication of the name used for the ancient Hellenic kingdom of Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the Great [...]”¹² Both theories have one thing in common – they claim historical figures, events, and localities which from a the perspective of non-political scholarship are Bulgarian or Greek, as exclusively *Macedonian*, and form the basis of an irredentist nationalism which lays territorial claims over the territory that during the Ottoman period was known as Macedonia. I will argue that, in fact, the Slavic population of present-day Republic of Macedonia had been ethnically Bulgarian, not *Macedonian*, and certainly not related to the Hellenic kingdom of Alexander the Great. Being aware of the historical truth does not have to conflict with the existence of a separate Macedonian national identity.

¹⁰ Steven Runciman, *The History of the First Bulgarian Empire*, (London: G.Bell & Sons Ltd, 1930), trans. (Sofia: Ivan Vazov, 1993), 168.

¹¹ One of them being the nickname the Byzantine emperor Basil II *Bulgarochtonis* or Bulgarian-Slayer, which he acquired after defeating Samuil’s army. Issues like this make Samuil’s Bulgarian empire a difficult choice for the title of Founder of the non-Bulgarian Macedonian nation.

¹² Vesna Garber. “Slav Macedonians.” in *Encyclopedia of World Cultures*, Vol. IV, ed. Linda A. Bennett (New York: G.K.Hall & Co, 1992), 238.

Formation of the Bulgarian Nation

The Bulgarian *ethnos*, formed as a gradual amalgamation that occurred in the Balkans after the establishment of the first Bulgarian state in 679 A.D., between three original groups: Thracians, Slavs, and Proto-Bulgarians. Gradually, “the proto-Bulgarians and Slavs consolidated into a unified Slav people who thenceforward retained the name of Bulgarians.”¹³ This process was aided by the adoption of Christianity, a common religion for all Bulgarian subjects, that used the Glagolitic and later the Cyrillic script to translate religious texts into the Slavic dialect spoken in Bulgaria. In this way, “the ethnic differences in the territory of the first Bulgarian state (covering Moesia, Thrace, and Macedonia) in the 9th and 10th centuries”¹⁴ were obliterated.

Since the focus of this thesis is not Bulgaria in general but Macedonia, the First Bulgarian Kingdom, the period of Byzantine rule, the Second Bulgarian Empire, and the period of Ottoman rule are not in themselves relevant. What is relevant is the unified nature of Bulgarian cultural institutions during the National Revival period, which started in the 18th century and went on until the reestablishment of a Bulgarian state in 1878.

The National Revival Period and the Exarchate

In 1860, Stefan Verkovic, a Serbianized Croat, who worked in Ottoman Macedonia published one of the first collections of folk songs from Macedonia and entitled his book *The Folk Songs of*

¹³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th ed., s.v. “Balkan States: Bulgaria.”

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Macedonian Bulgars. The introduction of the book explains the title with Verkovic's experience that "should somebody today ask a Macedonian Slav, 'What are you?' he would immediately get the answer, 'I am a Bulgar and my language is Bulgarian.'" ¹⁵ A similar collection written by the Miladinov brothers, native to Macedonia, was entitled *Bulgarian Folk Songs* and featured mainly songs from Macedonia ¹⁶.

In this context, it should come as no surprise that during the 19th century, a popular campaign was carried out by Bulgarian communities throughout the Ottoman Empire to reestablish an autocephalous Bulgarian church. ¹⁷ Since this movement rejected Greek and Serbian religious control, it can be used to delineate the Ottoman territories where the Christian population self-identified as Bulgarian (See Fig. 1).

In the region of Macedonia the Bulgarian population had been among the most active in demanding a Bulgarian church. This development was accompanied by Bulgarian schools, cultural organizations, and other locally-based organizations, and had the same ideological character in what are today Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia, which indicates a clear identification with the Bulgarian nation. Moreover, a *Macedonian Slav* nation or ethnic group, other than the Bulgarian, is not mentioned in any census (For an ethnographical map of the Balkan Peninsula, see Appendix 1). Even Greek and Serbian propaganda, which diminishes the number of Bulgarians in ethnographic surveys, does not mention *Macedonians*. Furthermore,

¹⁵ Stefan Verkovic, ed., *Folk Songs of the Macedonian Bulgars* (Belgrade, 1860), xiii.

¹⁶ Many of the songs have texts that additionally demonstrate the Bulgarian nature of the population of Vardar, Aegean, and Pirin Macedonia. In the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, as well as in its contemporary descendant, the book has been republished with the title changed to *Macedonian Folk Songs* or simply *Folk Songs*, and featuring disclaimers that the people living in Macedonia during the 19th century were confused about their national identity.

¹⁷ R.J. Crampton, *A Short History of Modern Bulgaria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 14-15.

during the same period “a movement was begun in Macedonia by the Slavs to join Macedonia to an independent Bulgarian state, which finally happened in 1878.”¹⁸

¹⁸ Garber, 239.

Fig. 1 – Map of the Bulgarian Exarchate (1870-1913), showing the parts of the Ottoman Empire where the majority of the Christian population self-identified as Bulgarians (in light brown).



Map by D. Rizoff, in “The Bulgarians in their Historic, Ethnographic, and Political Boundaries,” Berlin, 1917.

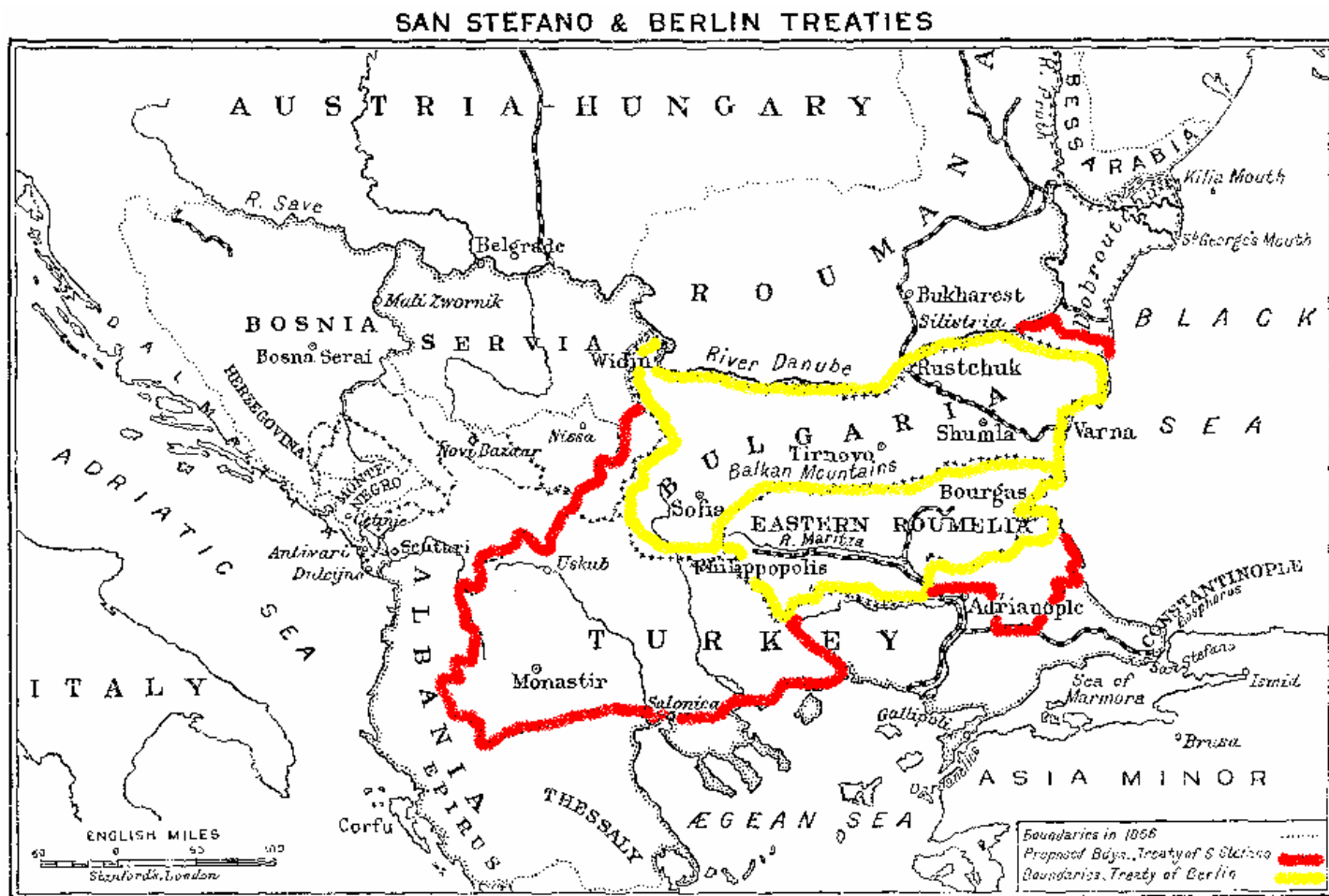
San Stefano, Berlin, and the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913.

After the Russo-Turkish war of 1876-78, the treaty of San Stefano was signed, which assigned all territories with a Bulgarian majority to the new Bulgarian kingdom. Fearing excessive Russian influence in the grateful Bulgarian state and a secret Russian ploy acquire a warm-sea port, the rest of the Great Powers objected to the terms of San Stefano. After only a few months, with the Treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria’s status and boundaries were severely decreased, with one of the results being that all of Macedonia was left out of Bulgaria (See Fig. 2). Thereafter, the ‘Macedonian Question’ shaped Balkan politics and determined the alliances of most Balkan states in both world wars. Of course, Bulgaria’s neighbors did not want to see a larger unified Bulgaria as their neighbor. “That is why ‘national separatism’¹⁹ was wanted by all, and the Great Powers, and the Greeks, and the Serbs, and the Albanians, and the minorities in Macedonia, - only not by the majority ‘native’ population, which ‘had only one ideal, one will: to form one state within the boundaries of its language,’ meaning on the whole area of the ‘Bulgarian space.’”²⁰

¹⁹ ‘National separatism’ here refers to the movement for a separate Macedonia, rather than joining Bulgaria.

²⁰ E. Kupfer, *La Macedoine et les Bulgares*, (Lausanne, 1918), 45. in Dimitar Dimitrov, *The Name and the Mind*, 226.

Fig. 2 – Treaty of San Stefano (red) and Treaty of Berlin (yellow).



Map by Stanford's London, in John Holland Rose, "The Development of the European Nations, 1870-1914," <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14644/14644-h/14644-h.htm>, colors added by this author.

With the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Balkan Alliance, and the subsequent defeat of Bulgaria by all of its neighbors in 1913, Macedonia was divided, Greece receiving about one

half, Serbia two fifths, and Bulgaria one tenth. According to the Carnegie Endowment's report,²¹ an "anti-Bulgar campaign" began in the parts of Macedonia under Greek and Serb rule.

The Serbians expelled Exarchist churchmen and teachers and closed Bulgar schools and churches (affecting the standing of as many as 641 schools and 761 churches). Thousands of Macedonians left for Bulgaria, joining a still larger stream from devastated Aegean Macedonia, where the Greeks burned Kukuš, the center of Bulgar politics and culture, as well as much of Serres and Drama. Bulgarian (including the Macedonian dialects) was prohibited, and its surreptitious use, whenever detected, was ridiculed or punished.²²

A Bulgarian source reported that Serbian terror from 1912 to 1915 resulted in the murder of 1,854 people including 23 Exarchist priests, the disappearance of 285, the rape of 20 women, and the burning 1,221 houses.²³ The Serbianization of Bulgarian family names gained momentum (i.e. Stankov → Stanković), internal colonists were sent from Serbia (the plan being for 50,000 families), and much of the population was subjected to forced labor and intense propaganda.²⁴

Macedonism and the Creation of a Macedonian Nation.

The father of the concept that there should be a Macedonian nation is the Serbian professor and politician Stojan Novaković. Worried by the ongoing consolidation of the Bulgarian nation, after Serbia's defeat in the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885, Novaković decided that the most effective way for Serbia to react was to promote the idea that the population of Macedonia is neither Serbian nor Bulgarian, but a separate nation – Macedonians (1886). Novaković viewed *Macedonism* as an interim mechanism for Serbianizing the Bulgarians of Macedonia.

²¹ International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914), 162-207.

²² Banac, 317-319.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Banac, 308, 320.

Stojan Novaković, a prominent Serbian historian and politician, who was instrumental in developing Serbian strategies in Macedonia, believed that Serbian propaganda had little chance of uprooting the deeply embedded Bulgar sentiment in that region through direct confrontation. As a result, after 1866, he counseled that the Serbs finance the so-called Macedonists, who preached Macedonian national and linguistic separateness from Bulgaria.²⁵

Novaković's idea was developed further by Dr. Jovan Hadži-Vasiljević, a Serb ethnographer, and later Jovan Cvijić, a prominent Serb geographer, and the Serb linguist Alexandar Belić, who devised a theory which looked at the Macedonian population as a *flotant mass*, a group lacking clear identity that can become whatever is made of it by its rulers. This theory placed true Bulgarians only east of Sofia, and described them as un-Slavic, and generally vile and inferior.²⁶ Between the two world wars, when Vardar Macedonia was in their possession, Serbia returned to the idea that the Macedonian Bulgarians are in fact Serbs.

During its resistance against the Serbization of Vardar Macedonia after World War I, the Communist International (Comintern) revived the forgotten idea of Stojan Novaković. Therefore Stalin and the Comintern played an instrumental role in the creation of the Macedonian nation. As Dimitar Vlahov, a former Bulgarian diplomat who changed his views between the World Wars, recalls in his memoirs, the Comintern²⁷ decided to consider the Macedonian Questions at one of the consultations of its executive committee: "Before the convening of the consultation, the inner leadership of the committee has already reached its stand. In 1934 it was concluded that the Macedonian nation exists."²⁸

²⁵ Klime Džambazovski, *Stojan Novaković and Macedonism*, (Skopje: Istoriski časopis, 1963), in Banac, 112.

²⁶ Banac, 310-311.

²⁷ The Communist International.

²⁸ Dimitar Vlahov. *Memoirs*, (Skopje: Nova Makedonija, 1970), 357.

Macedonian historiography lays claim over just about every historical figure, event, and organization that were born or occurred on the territory of the geographical region of Macedonia, regardless of the facts pointing otherwise. (For some well-known historical myths regarding Macedonian history that are still official in the Republic of Macedonia, see Appendix 2).

Additionally, the Bulgarian state's actions regarding Vardar Macedonia during the 20th century are vilified as actions of a foreign state striving to achieve domination.

Vardar Macedonia, 1919-1991.

After losing World War I, the territory of Vardar Macedonia was assigned to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia), which began a campaign of Serbianization of the population. The existence of Bulgarians was denied in the first Yugoslav census (1921). "The census made no distinction between the population of Macedonia and the Bulgars in the districts of Bosilegrad, Caribrod, and in the other salients along the Bulgarian border, which were turned over to Yugoslavia by the provisions of the treaty of Neuilly (1919)."²⁹

After a brief national unification, referred to as Bulgarian Fascist Occupation in the Republic of Macedonia, the republic was once again included into Yugoslavia, this time as a constituent republic, called the People's Republic of Macedonia (PRM). The PRM³⁰ along with the concept of a Macedonian nation, as separate from the Bulgarian nation, were implemented simultaneously after the Second World War, with the "new identity [...] aided by the Communist

²⁹ Banac, 50.

³⁰ Novitsa Veljanovski, *The State and Legal Development of Macedonia*, (Skopje: Institut za natsionalna istorija, 1992), 201.

parties in Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia.”³¹ The Macedonian Language “was created soon after World War II under the supervision of the Communist government of Marshal Tito. This new language is based on a Slavic dialect spoken in the areas of Prilep and Titov Veles.”³² “The Slavs of Macedonia were then used by Tito as tools in his expansionist policy, which envisioned the creation of a ‘Greater Macedonia’ to include Greek Macedonia and thus to gain access to the Aegean Sea.”³³ This explains Stalin’s support for the idea, dating back to the original decision by the Comintern, as it was one possibility to gain a warm-water port – a traditional Russian aim. Following the party line and preparing for a Balkan Federation with Yugoslavia, the Bulgarian Communist party consented to the Macedonization policies and forced the ethnic Bulgarians in Pirin Macedonia to register as ethnic Macedonians in the 1946 census (see Appendix 3), but reversed this policy after the split between Moscow and Belgrade.

As any product of unnatural, but politically-motivated top-down action this creation needed a significant amount of force, before it could become relatively stable. As the British historian R.J. Crampton puts it:

In 1945 a Macedonian national consciousness hardly existed [...] But if there were no Macedonian nation there was a Communist Party of Macedonia. It was in the PRM that the modern Macedonian nation was to be born in terms of the creation of a national alphabet and the rapid growth of a sense of Macedonian national identity.³⁴

The undoubtedly harsh politics of Yugoslavia regarding the national issues, coupled with mild policies in other areas, and the visible economic improvement from the 1960s onward, maintained the status quo, in Macedonia, as in the rest of Yugoslavia. The economic downturn, which was felt after the mid-1970s and Tito’s death, reminded people of their privately-held

³¹ Garber, 239.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Crampton, 28.

opinions of Yugoslavia. “[L]arge groups within Yugoslavia, including the Croats and Macedonians, saw the first Yugoslav state as a devise created by Serbian hegemonists.”³⁵ The resurgence of this consciousness contributed to the destabilization and eventual collapse of Yugoslavia.

The Republic of Macedonia did not take part in the conflict with rump-Yugoslavia, because the latter made the decision to let go of Macedonia. Considering that there was an absence of a sizeable ethnic Serbian community³⁶ or vast economic benefits Serbia saw no need to try and maintain its hold on Macedonia. Perhaps this was furthered by its heavy involvement in the west and its fear of provoking Macedonia’s other neighbors.

Instead, Serbia chose the option of trying to continue to influence the political developments in the Republic of Macedonia, preventing Macedonia’s speedy Euro-Atlantic integration and reestablishment of close ties with Bulgaria. One of the main ways to prevent the latter has been through the continued falsification of history, which has mutated into the idea that current Macedonians are descendants of Ancient Macedonia. This, aside from being historically untrue creates problems for Macedonian foreign policy, but is maintained as the official position of the country.

³⁵ Ibid. 141.

³⁶ Ibid. 294.

1.2 – Croatia – History

Unlike the Republic of Macedonia, whose government's and academic community's denial of history has brought about a score of international and domestic problems, blocking the country's Euro-Atlantic integration, Croatia does not have a comparable problem. Since the Croats existed as a nation during the Medieval period, there is no argument regarding their nationhood, which is why a shorter historical overview is more appropriate. Without wanting to dwell on the ancient and Medieval history of Croatia, this brief overview is meant to compare the situation to that of Macedonia, which did not exist as an ethnicity, nation, or independent country prior to 1945.

Formation of the Croatian Nation

The Croats are present in historical texts as having existed in the form of a tribe as early as the 6th century AD. At that time they had begun their movement from present-day Ukraine to the lower valley of the river Danube, and then toward the Adriatic coast. After conquering the Roman fortress of Salona in the beginning of the 7th century AD³⁷, they settled in Pannonia and Dalmatia. During the same century they converted to Christianity.³⁸ “Shortly afterward they were allowed to use their national language in church services [...] By 880 Branimir (ruled 879-892) became the first independent *dux Croatorum*.”³⁹

Croatia became a state and reached its peak in the 11th century under Petar Kresimir. However, very soon, under the reign of his successor Dimitrije Zvonimir during the latter part of the same

³⁷ Stephen Gazi, *A History of Croatia*, (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1993), 8-9.

³⁸ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th ed., s.v. “Balkan States: Croatia.”

³⁹ Ibid.

century, the Croatian kingdom became the victim of a civil war, which led to the eventual downfall of the state. Byzantium reconquered parts of the country and the Hungary occupied the Pannonian part of the country under King Laszlo I. A last Croatian King in Dalmatia was subdued by the Hungarian king Coloman, who was officially elected king of the Croats by agreeing to respect their rights. This marked the beginning of a long period that connected Croatia to Hungary and later to the Habsburg Empire until the end of World War I.

Fig. 3 – Map of the Croatian Military Frontier (Southernmost territory on map).



Map by F. Handtke.

The situation for Croatia became worse when Bosnia, hitherto a part of Croatia, became independent and was taken over by the Ottomans, “[reducing] the size of the country to an all-time low.”⁴⁰ This turned Croatia into a border and war zone (see Fig. 3) for the next few centuries. Bordering an expanding Ottoman Empire, much of what was left of Croatia was transformed into a military frontier zone (1578), known as the *Vojna Krajina* or *Militärgrenze*.

⁴⁰ Gazi, 97-98.

These developments led to the migration of Croats away from the region and the settlement of Austrians, Hungarians, and Serbs. The losses incurred by the aristocracy from the Ottoman advance had to be compensated by the peasantry, which was “leveled [...] to the lowest form of serfdom.”⁴¹

Moving further into the 19th century, conflicts between the Croats and Hungarians effectively crippled both against the central Austrian authority. After the compromise between Austria and Hungary that created the Dual Monarchy, the Croats managed to produce a similar agreement with Hungary, which gave them more autonomy, although still within Hungary. Still, Croatia and Slavonia were in the Hungarian part of the empire, while Dalmatia remained in the Austrian part, even though the compromise or *Nagodba* with Hungary recognized the three as a unit.⁴² Thereafter followed a period of nationalist aspiration for more freedom and autonomy on the part of the Croats, countered by policies to advance the Hungarian element. In this political climate, during the 19th century the Illyrian idea was born – the concept of South Slav unity. This was followed by the creation of a Croatian-Serbian political coalition, as well as the creation of a Croatian Peasant Party by Ante and Stjepan Radić.⁴³

Yugoslavia

Most historians point to an overall positive inclination to forming a South-Slav union between the Croats and Serbs in Austria-Hungary and the independent Serbian kingdom by the First World War. The Party of Rights headed by Ante Starčević was the main political force propelling the latter idea. Toward the end of the War, the declaration of Corfu was signed

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Gazi, 159-169.

⁴³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th ed., s.v. “Balkan States: Croatia.”

between the Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, who had fled there during the war, and Ante Trumbić. On October 29, 1918, the Croatian Diet broke off ties with Austria-Hungary, and less than two months later, on December 1, 1918, the Serbian prince regent, Alexander, announced the formation of Yugoslavia.

The initial accord was quickly destroyed as it became evident that the Serbian element was not only the strongest, but also showed centralist tendencies. “Although the proponents of Yugoslavia’s unification had presumed that the establishment of the Yugoslav state, freed from external tutelage, would remove the nationality conflict from the political agenda, events proved otherwise.”⁴⁴ The national question became the primary issue of Yugoslavia, as the non-Serbian nationalities resisted Serbia’s *unitarist* tendencies. As the latter were in favor of erasing any differences between Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes, the non-Serbs wanted to retain their specifics and opted in favor of a federal state.

Since “Serbian political parties used centralism to further Serbian preponderance”⁴⁵ and were successful at achieving their goal, from the very inception of Yugoslavia, a vehement opposition began between Serbia and the new nations that had been (voluntarily or not) included into Yugoslavia. After the elections of 1920, the Croatian Peasants Party under Radić became the main political opposition. It should be noted that this party had a republican orientation and also “had an unmistakable national coloration and was therefore intended to be an alternative to the (by then) established position of the Serbian dynasty.”⁴⁶ In other parts of Yugoslavia, which were not given the right to self-determine, as in Macedonia (referred to as Vardar Banovina between

⁴⁴ Banac, 214.

⁴⁵ Banac, 214-215.

⁴⁶ Banac, 238.

1929 and 1941) and Kosovo, revolutionary groups took over this “responsibility.” In Croatia, soon after Stjepan Radic was arrested for the second time (for political reasons), the Yugoslav Military began a campaign for draft-animal registration. This meant that farm animals, such as horses and oxen, that were at the time used by the military for towing equipment and transportation, would be branded in order to mark the ones that could be used in future maneuvers. This procedure was unknown to Croatian farmers. A mixture of political resentment over Radic’s arrest and the new Serb-dominated administration’s arrogant attitude toward Croatian peasants stirred up the passions of the populace. “When the peasants asked the military commissioners who would reimburse them for the livestock, these would answer them by pointing a finger toward the heavens.”⁴⁷ It can be said that these were the two causes for the Croatian Peasant Revolt of 1920 – a revolt in a part of Yugoslavia that had originally been enthusiastic about the Yugoslav concept. In the Croatian case, the situation improved in 1939 with the signature of the *Sporazum*, which mandated that Croatia and Dalmatia unite, along with other provisions. However, this move came too late and after Yugoslavia was invaded by Germany in 1941, the Independent State of Croatia, headed by the Fascist (Ustasa) Ante Pavelic, was established. This state is generally considered to have been a German puppet state and included a much larger territory (namely Bosnia and Herzegovina) than present-day Croatia.

Fig. 4 – Map of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), including Croatia.

⁴⁷ L. and M., “Seljacka buna u Hrvatskoj,” *Nova Evropa* 1, no. 2 (1920): 73.

SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

AS OF 1 JANUARY 1991



Map by the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, <http://www.icty.org/sid/321> (accessed May 29, 2009).

After the end of the war, Croatia once again became part of Yugoslavia – this time a Socialist Federation. The national spirit never died down, even after attempts to stifle it as in the case of the Croatian League of Communists purge in 1972, and this led eventually to the reestablishment of the Croatian State. “The present configuration of Croatia has existed since 1946, when the Yugoslav federation was formed. It consists of the territories of Dalmatia and most of Istria (provinces of Austria-Hungary before World War I) and the former Hungarian region of Croatia-

Slavonia. Croatia and Slovenia were the first republics to break away from Yugoslavia both declaring independence on June 25, 1991.”⁴⁸

1.3– What Degree of European Integration has been achieved up to May, 2009?

The examination of the histories of Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, as well as that of the West Balkan states as a whole, highlights the historical causes to the problems that the region experienced in the 1990s, and continues to experience today. It is now necessary to establish the degree of European integration that has been achieved up to the present day. Since this is more a matter of background data than the focus of this analysis, it will be presented briefly. Integration into NATO will also be included, since past practice has shown that NATO membership has been an essential, albeit unofficial, precondition to EU membership for the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 (See Table 1 for summary).

⁴⁸ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th ed., s.v. “Balkan States: Croatia.”

Table 1 – Degree of Euro-Atlantic Integration of the Western Balkans.

Country	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croatia	Kosovo	Montenegro	Republic of Macedonia	Serbia
Integration*							
NATO membership status***	Member	Intensified Dialogue	Member	Undeclared Intent	Intensified Dialogue	Membership Action Plan	Membership not a goal
Stabilization and Association Agreement – Signed / In force.	2006 /2009	2008 / No	2001 /2005	No	2007/No	2001/ 2004	2008 / No
Application for accession issued / Status of application	28 April 2009 / Not official candidate	No	21 February 2003 / Negotiating**	No	15 December 2008 / Not official candidate	22 March 2004 / Negotiating	No

* Only signed documents are dated. Anything not signed by May 1, 2009 is marked with a **No** even if it is planned for the future.

** Negotiations started in 2005 / planned to finish in 2009.

*** Using NATO terminology; All West Balkan states that are not NATO members are members of Partnership for Peace (PFP).

The Republic of Macedonia, after applying for EU membership in the spring of 2004, received a response the following year, and on November 9, 2005, the European Commission recommended that the Republic become a candidate state. This was agreed to on December 17, 2005, and the country was assessed positively in regard to the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, the Copenhagen Criteria, and the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP).⁴⁹ However, no date has been set for starting negotiations, largely due to the name dispute with

⁴⁹ Council of the European Union, “Presidency Conclusions, 15/16 December, 2005,” http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/87642.pdf (accessed April 20, 2009).

Greece, the resolution of which is an official EU precondition for accession, among other reasons. At NATO's Bucharest Summit in 2008, Greece vetoed the invitation for the Republic of Macedonia's membership due to the same reason,⁵⁰ while Albania and Croatia were invited, and became members in 2009.

In comparison with the Republic of Macedonia, Croatia has been quite successful, but just before the finish line, a border dispute with Slovenia has frozen its integration process. Once the second wealthiest Yugoslav republic, Croatia applied for EU membership on February 21, 2003. As was the case with the Republic of Macedonia, Croatia's bid was positively assessed by the European Commission in April 2004 and soon after, in June of the same year, the Council confirmed its candidacy.⁵¹ After a relatively brief delay over doubts that the country was not cooperating enough with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY), accession negotiations were launched on October 3, 2005. A number of chapters have been opened, with about 1/5 of them being already closed. However Croatia's progress has been halted "subject to positive development"⁵² in the border dispute over the bay of Piran that the country has with Slovenia. It was feared that Slovenia will also veto Croatia's NATO membership, but the country was invited to join NATO at the Bucharest summit in 2008 and became a member in April 2009.⁵³

⁵⁰ Der Spiegel, "Jilted Macedonia Walks out of NATO Summit," 3 April, 2008.

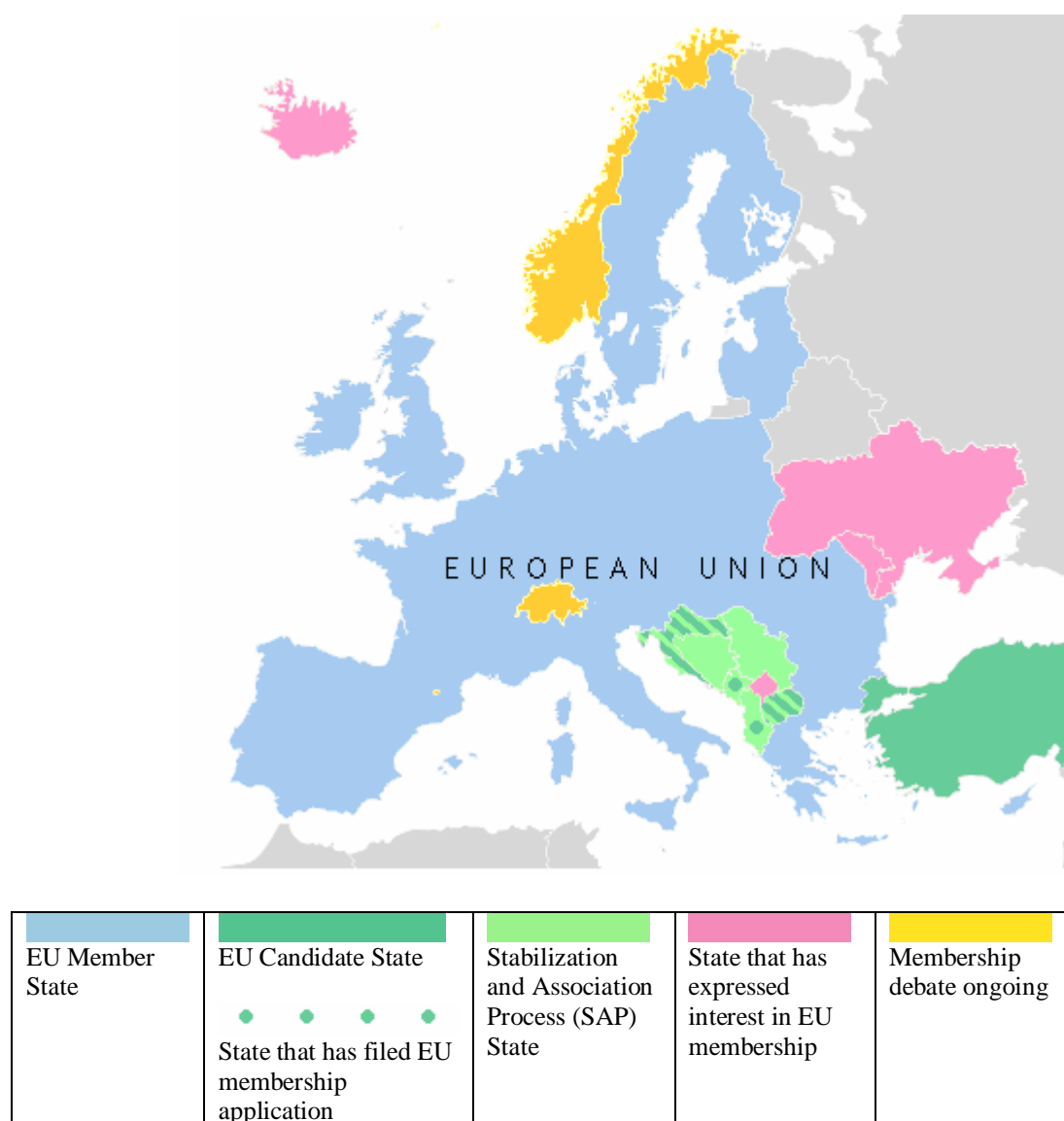
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,545214,00.html> (accessed April 3, 2009).

⁵¹ European Council, "2008/119/EC: Council Decision of 12 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with Croatia and repealing Decision 2006/145/EC," 12 February, 2008. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:042:0051:01:EN:HTML>. (accessed May 3, 2009).

⁵² BBC, "EU calls off talks with Croatia," 23 April, 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8014840.stm> (accessed 29 April, 2009).

⁵³ Government of the Republic of Croatia, "The Parliament accepted the Proposal for Ratifying the North-Atlantic Treaty," March 18,

Fig. 5 – Map of EU integration of the Western Balkans



This chapter presented the historical background of the conflicts in the Western Balkans, focusing on Croatian and Macedonian history, which are necessary to understand the causes of contemporary problems. This section has shown that the Balkans are not a mysterious place full of ancient hatreds, but simply a place of unresolved conflicts, based on short-sighted and selfish involvement on the part of the international community since the time of the Eastern Question, or

2009.http://www.vlada.hr/hr/naslovnica/novosti_i_najave/2009/ozujak/vlada_saboru_poslala_prijedlog_ratifikacije_sjeveroatlantskog_ugovora (accessed May 3, 2009).

the period of the Ottoman Empire's dissolution, as well as on falsification of history. In order to bring the information up to date, I have shown a brief overview of the region's EU integration up to the present day (see Fig. 5). I hope that after reading this chapter, the reader will be able to understand the following chapters, as well as the problems of the Western Balkans in general, much better.

CH. 2 – COMPARING THE LEVEL OF PREPAREDNESS FOR EU MEMBERSHIP OF CROATIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA.

This chapter is divided in two parts: The first focuses on internal issues related to freedom and order, while the second analyzes state policies that have to do with neighboring countries and ethnic minorities. This chapter sheds light on many of the usual problems of EU integration, as well as on peculiar West-Balkan issues related to interethnic tensions and national identities built on historical falsifications.

2.1 – A European Society?

The differences between Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia extend beyond history and its effects on foreign and domestic policies. The two countries, albeit ahead of their West Balkan neighbors, have a significant disparity in terms of institutional capabilities and corruption levels, civil society and media freedom, and the perceived degree of freedom and democracy – some of the main components that make up a democratic system, which is central to European governance, and also among the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership. Since these criteria are difficult to measure, this thesis will use rankings and information from authoritative sources, such as Freedom House, which has been especially useful due to the wide scope of its reports and its theoretical neutrality, Transparency International, the European Commission (EC), as well as media evidence.

In its 2008 report, Freedom House gives Croatia Political and Civil Liberties scores of 2 and ranks the country as “free.” This compares favorably with the Republic of Macedonia’s Political and Civil Liberties scores of 3, and the country’s ranking as “partly free.”

2.1.1 – Elections and Democracy

Freedom House ranks both Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia as electoral democracies, which is a basic criterion for democracy, but not enough in itself. In the OSCE’s report on Croatia, elections were assessed as “free, fair, and transparent”, though featuring minor issues that should be fixed.⁵⁴ Regarding the Republic of Macedonia, Freedom House talks of “serious flaws in the electoral process”, although the elections largely conformed to international standards.⁵⁵

Many of the aforementioned serious flaws have to do with the Albanian–majority areas, where the quality of the political process has deteriorated since the entry of the newest ethnic Albanian party, the Democratic Union for Integration (BDI), on the political scene. Its leader, Ali Ahmeti, was the commander of the guerillas during the 2000-2001 Albanian armed rebellion, whose participants demanded even more rights for the Albanian minority than it already enjoyed. Many other BDI functionaries, like their leader, are controversial figures, possibly connected to the underground life in the Balkans. The BDI, during its relatively brief political existence has demonstrated that it is willing to employ parliamentary boycotts, as it did in 2006 after not being

⁵⁴ Freedom House, “Freedom in the World: Croatia (2008),” <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2008&country=7377> (accessed April 25, 2009).

⁵⁵ Freedom House, “Freedom in the World: Macedonia (2008),” <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2008&country=7437> (accessed April 26, 2009).

invited for a coalition partner,⁵⁶ and threats of renewal of hostilities, as well as other illegitimate means, to pursue its goals.

The Republic of Macedonia cannot be blamed for the dysfunction caused by the BDI. Sadly, it is the international community, including the United States and EU, that is to be held responsible for the inclusion of the former rebels into the country's political process and their legitimization. This is one of the starkest examples of the damage that can be done to a country when people and movements of dubious nature are welcomed onto the political scene by the international community. In this context it should be noted that Macedonia already had two major Albanian parties with responsible leaders, the Democratic Party of the Albanians (DPA) and Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), who were an integral part of the political process, and who were somewhat pushed aside by the newer Albanian formation.

2.1.2 – Preparedness of the Judicial System – the Primary Instrument Ensuring the Rule of Law

Corruption and the fight against its debilitating influence are connected to law enforcement, and especially, with the judicial system of a country. The latter has shown itself as a weakest link in a number of recent EU member states. According to Freedom House, the judicial system of Croatia is inefficient, trials are too long, and the decisions are often not implemented, particularly in cases concerning the property of Serbs expelled from Croatia, who would like to return and are reclaiming their property. This demonstrates that there is an unacceptable level of partiality among the country's juridical officials, particularly disturbing as it often overlaps with

⁵⁶ BBC, "The Assembly will vote for the New Government," 25 August, 2006. http://www.bbc.co.uk/macedonian/news/story/2006/08/060825_vlada.shtml (accessed 2 June, 2009).

the issue of good neighborly relations. Nevertheless, Croatia has shown improvement, especially in lowering the number of backlogged cases.

In the Republic of Macedonia, “the judiciary is widely seen as corrupt and incompetent.”⁵⁷ The EU has demanded that the country strengthens the independence of judges, among other issues. Freedom House cites a case when in 2007, BDI (the part of the former Albanian insurgents) members of parliament walked out to avert the approval of a measure which would have allowed the government to fire judges, thus threatening the comfort of criminals close to the party. Furthermore, the judiciary has been used for political purposes, as some cases mentioned later will illustrate.

2.1.3 – Freedom of Assembly and Association

As of 2008, according to Freedom House, the Macedonian government generally respects the constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of assembly and association, and thousands of NGOs are registered and operate. It should be noted, however, that this had not been the case before 1998, when Macedonian citizens who did not hide their Bulgarian ethnic self-identification were persecuted in ways entirely incompatible with a democracy.⁵⁸ While the situation has somewhat improved, the comparison with Croatia in this category is entirely to the benefit of the latter, which has enforced European standards in this field, and even supports the operation of independent NGOs.

⁵⁷ Freedom House, “Macedonia.”

⁵⁸ International Institute for Macedonia, “5 Years of Independence: Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia 1991- 1996,” http://members.tripod.com/~HR_Macedonia/hr_en.htm#veles (accessed April 17, 2009).

After the initial euphoria of independence and the first expert cabinet, the former Communists, now restyled as Social Democrats, returned to the position of political power. They had never lost their control of the security, defense, and law enforcement agencies, the media and the economy. This power was used for political ends, but was tolerated by the West due to the savvy attitude of the former Communists, who employed a pro-Western rhetoric. When the opposition VMRO-DPMNE won the parliamentary elections in 1998 and the former communists (SDSM) were ousted, the country democratized further, but democracy has not been consolidated.

Freedom House is generous to the Macedonian authorities in omitting to mention a number of cases which cast doubts on how much the freedom of association and assembly are respected, particularly regarding those Macedonians who openly declare their Bulgarian origin (For specific cases, see Appendix 4). These instances of arbitrary power compare very unfavorably to Croatia, as well as to objective criteria for EU accession.

2.1.4 – Media Freedom

Freedom of expression and the press are guaranteed by the Croatian constitution, and as of 2006, libel is no longer punishable by prison sentence. Yet, Freedom House claims that the state-owned radio and television stations HRT are still prone to pressure from political parties (logically, the one in power). Reporting about the Yugoslav Wars, critical of the Croat side, is likely to face pressure.⁵⁹ Freedom House's independent media ratio demonstrates an improvement in Croatia, from 5.00 in 1999-2000 to 3.75⁶⁰ in 2008, the same as Romania, and almost as good as Bulgaria.

⁵⁹ Freedom House, "Croatia."

⁶⁰ The smaller numbers are better.

Unfortunately, the Macedonian media have deteriorated since 1999-2000 when their score was 3.75. Currently, they have fallen to 4.25, the same as Bosnia and only better than Kosovo in the West Balkans.

In theory, the Macedonian constitution “provides for freedom of the press.”⁶¹ However, the Macedonian media are plagued by a number of legal and practical problems, which have both internal implications, affecting the degree of democracy, and foreign policy implications, illustrated later in this text. Freedom House mentions a number of problems: Political appointees are often installed at high positions in state-owned media, “from which the majority of the population obtains its information,” and political parties either formally own or are “closely linked” to 3 of the 5 national TV stations. One example: “In 2006, it was revealed that journalists at several leading outlets secretly worked for a public relations firm that shaped reports to favor the previous SDSM⁶²-led government.”⁶³

The safety of journalists has also been threatened, which typically brings about some degree of auto-censorship. Journalists have been tapped, beaten, and pressure has been put on them. Pressure has also been applied against journalists who openly contradict the Macedonian government’s history and foreign policy dogmas, such as the Macedonian Bulgarian journalist, Viktor Kanzurov, who was arrested on 22 April, 2008 and held in jail for 24 hours, on farcical charges than could not be sustained in court.⁶⁴ On May 3, 2009, the Macedonian Journalists

⁶¹ Freedom House, “Macedonia.”

⁶² SDSM is the abbreviation of Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (in Macedonian); formerly League of Communists of Macedonia.

⁶³ Freedom House, “Macedonia.”

⁶⁴ Viktor Kanzurov, “I am not under House arrest, since there are no Grounds to press Charges against me,” *Agentsiya Focus*, 23 April, 2008, <http://www.focus-news.net/?id=f8928> (accessed March 16, 2009).

Association protested “against the bad situation in the Macedonian journalism, including the court verdicts, pressures, political influences, salaries”⁶⁵ by urging all electronic media to come off the air for five minutes, which they did. Additionally, while libel is no longer punishable by prison sentences, it is punishable by fines, which in a poor country is likely to cause considerable hesitation before any investigative or opinion piece is published, concerning anyone with access to political influence.

2.1.5 – Corruption

Corruption has been deemed among the top problems of new member states, and since it threatens the economies and democracies of these countries, it can be classified as an indirect threat to the stability and democracy of the EU as a whole. This makes corruption an issue deserving mention, as an indicator for the degree of preparedness of the two West Balkan applicants. In the Croatian case, many of Freedom Houses’ criticism have to do with the aftermath of the 1990s Yugoslav war. Suspected war criminals are often treated more tolerantly than would be expected and the government often has a friendly attitude toward them. One example mentioned by Freedom House in their annual country report is the case of Ret. Gen. Mladen Markac and Interior Minister Ivica Kirin, who went hunting together. This violated the General’s conditions for being allowed to reside in Croatia while proceedings are in progress against him. It should be pointed out, however, that Kirin resigned after the scandal emerged. Other forms of corruption are also a problem in Croatia, however in its 2007 report, the EC commended it for improving its legal framework and for the increased activity of the Office for

⁶⁵ Macedonian Journalists’ Association, “Statement,” MakFax, 3 April, 2009, under “Macedonian Journalists’ Association calls members to attend protest,” <http://www.makfax.com.mk/en-us/Details.aspx?itemID=3710> (accessed April 18, 2009).

the Fight against Corruption. Unlike Croatia, an EU report from 2007, cited by Freedom House, criticizes Macedonia for its “disappointing reform record” and states that “corruption continues to hamper economic growth and political transparency.”⁶⁶ At the same time, the administration of Nikola Gruevski has dealt with several high-profile corruption cases, which has improved the government’s image.

Transparency International ranked Croatia 64th of 180 in their Corruption Perceptions Index for 2007, while R. Macedonia followed exactly twenty positions behind Croatia at 84. For the purpose of comparison, the two newest EU member states, Bulgaria and Romania are in 64th and 69th place respectively. If one considers the vigorous criticism that the European Commission has drawn in the past year for recommending Bulgaria and Romania for membership, despite their corruption problems, Croatia’s score is not encouraging, and Macedonia’s, sharing the same place with Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as a number of third world countries will not help speed up accession.⁶⁷

2.2 – EU-style Regional Foreign policy?

2.2.1 – Inter-Ethnic Relations/Problems

One of the main ideas of this thesis is that the history of EU enlargement has demonstrated clearly that one-size-fits-all, administrative, approaches to assessment and convergence leads to states, whose elites get entrenched along with their flawed systems after membership is achieved. This leads to weaker states and a weaker EU. That is why the presence or lack of what may be

⁶⁶ Freedom House, “Macedonia.”

⁶⁷ Transparency International, “Annual Report, 2007.” Berlin: Transparency International, June 2008, 27.

called a *European Spirit* should be assessed and the EU should insist on convergence in this area also. Good inter-ethnic relations are a major part of the European Spirit and they matter in both Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia.

The percentage of ethnic Croats in Croatia is very high. According to the CIA World Factbook the ethnic breakdown of the more than four million citizens is as follows: “Croat 89.6%, Serb 4.5%, other 5.9% (including Bosniak, Hungarian, Slovene, Czech, and Roma) (2001 census).”⁶⁸ The religious composition follows that of the ethnic groups, with the Croats being Catholic and the Serbs – Orthodox.

The situation of the Serbs is perhaps the most serious minority problem in Croatia. Due to strained relations after the recent war in Yugoslavia, ethnic Serbs are unlikely to be hired by most employers and it is possible that they may be harassed by the local Croat population in mixed areas. Religious discrimination is mostly present in the cases when Christian Orthodoxy overlaps with Serb ethnic belonging.

One of the other most serious problems facing the Republic of Macedonia is its inter-ethnic divide. Since the inclusion of Vardar Macedonia into Yugoslavia, there has been a clear consciousness among some of the Albanians there that they should join Albania or gain independence. Even during the seemingly-stable Yugoslav period, an illegal Albanian organization had existed aiming to unite West Macedonia, along with Kosovo, to Albania.⁶⁹ The Macedonians and ethnic Albanians have had different views about the country’s future, with the

⁶⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, “CIA World Factbook: Croatia,” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/hr.html> (accessed April 27, 2009).

⁶⁹ Mariana Stamova, *The Albanian Question in the Balkans (1945-1981)* (Sofia: Faber, 2005), 306-7.

former wanting to have a country *for* them, while the latter fearing that they will be marginalized once again, like they were in Yugoslavia.⁷⁰ Therefore, separatist feelings exist and this partially helps to understand the motivation behind the 2001 insurrection. One could not compare the situation of the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia to that of their compatriots in Kosovo. As Mischa Glenny writes: “by the summer of 1991, the Albanians here [Macedonia] are without question the most prosperous of the three compact territories on which Albanians live. [...] True, they do not have full access to the organs of power, but the harsh repression of the pro-Serb communist leadership in Macedonia has been rapidly eroded since the elections of 1990.”⁷¹

The international community made a mistake by tolerating the Albanian insurrection to the extent that it legitimized its leaders and allowed them to enter the political life of the Republic. As was mentioned before, this was not only done at the expense of the previously-existing Albanian politicians and parties, the DPA and PDP, but also caused a feeling of indignation and fear of separatism among the majority.

Unlike Croatia, which drove out most of its ethnic Serb minority, thus crudely reducing its interethnic conflict from a threat to national security to an issue of human rights, the Republic of Macedonia was encouraged to compromise with the Albanians. The 2001 insurgency was ended with the Ohrid Accords of the same year, most of which have been implemented, albeit facing resistance from the majority. Some of the results of the Accords have been that the parts of the constitution’s preamble referring to “the land of the Macedonian people” have been removed,

⁷⁰ In Yugoslavia the Albanians were a ‘nationality’, rather than a ‘nation’. The difference between the two terms was of major constitutional significance, making the former ‘minorities’ and the latter state-forming elements. The Albanians, who were the majority in Kosovo, felt marginalized by being given this lesser status in Yugoslavia.

⁷¹ Mischa Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia* (Suffolk: Penguin Group, 1992), 70.

Albanian is now an official language in the municipalities where Albanians constitute more than 20% of the population and the number of the latter increased as the municipal divisions were redrawn, and Albanian insurgents, such as the leaders of the BDI, were amnestied. The percentage of Albanians in the police, army, and various other state organizations has increased dramatically, and certain legislation has to be approved by a majority **also** of minority members of parliament (MPs), not just a majority of all MPs.

2.2.2 – A “State-Owned” Identity

As the historical part of this text attempted to clarify, Croatia does not have a national-historical problem, because Croatian national identity has existed since before the Middle Ages. Communist Yugoslavia (SFRY), on the other hand, needed to create a Macedonian ethnic identity in order to motivate the existence of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia within SFRY.

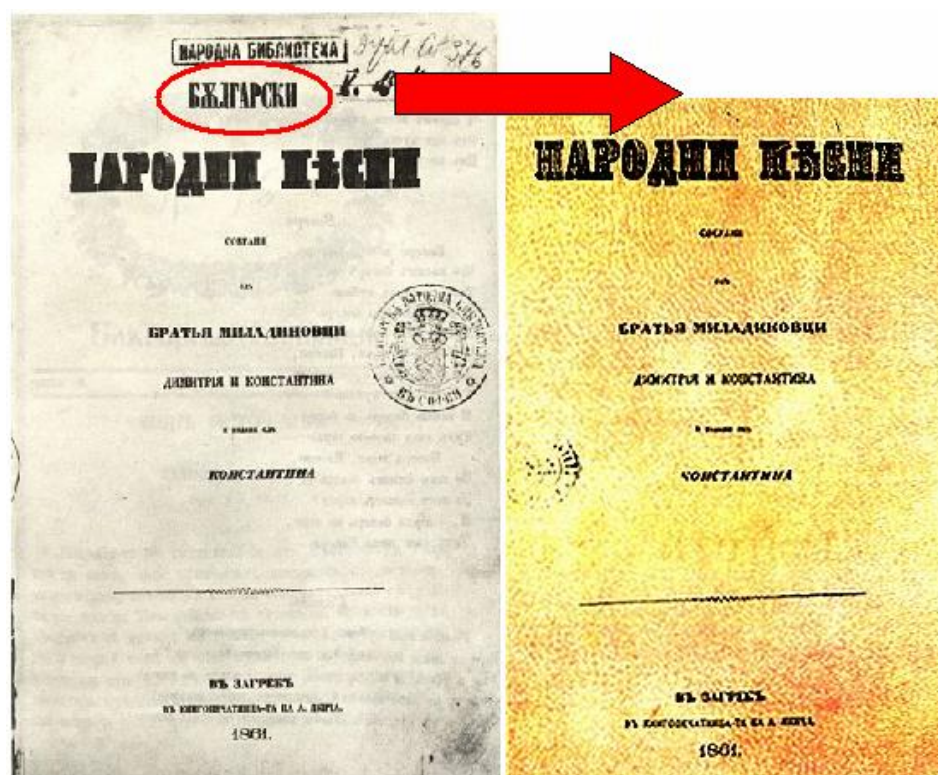
This Macedonian national identity, having been constructed during the Yugoslav period when the country was under heavy Serbian influence,⁷² relies on historical myths and has brought about the existence of contradictory ideas about its origin. One theory is that the Macedonian nation is a separate Slavic nation. The other theory is that the present-day Macedonians are descendants of Ancient Macedon. A third group of Macedonians are aware of their Bulgarian roots. A fourth group is composed of people who had been Serbianized and accepted the Macedonian identity after 1944, as a political necessity. Perhaps the last group is most attached to the myths and to a sense of Yugo-nostalgia, because they fear that a revision will lead to the

⁷² Novitsa Veljanovski, *Macedonia 1945-1991. Statehood and Independence* (Skopje: Institute for National History, 2002).

loss of the nation's *raison d'être*, in its current form. The identity-related myths are taught at school by history books that are manipulated and contain falsifications, by monuments, by the so-called newly-composed folk, and by the media. Historical documents and older books are falsified. The falsification of history covers all *sites of memory*, as the famous French historian Pierre Nora refers to all monuments, museums, and texts in his work on national identity.

One example is the Bulgarian Folk Songs collection by the Miladinovi brothers, which has been reprinted in Macedonia under the name Macedonian Folk Songs or simply Folk Songs. The website of the Archive of Macedonia, hosted by the server of the Macedonian branch of the Open Society Institute, features this falsification. On the left is the original edition of the book published in 1861 (the word Bulgarian is circled) and on the right is the cover of the book as presented by the website of the Archive of Macedonia, with the word Bulgarian cut out. (See Fig. 6) This appears like a case of local employees involving an organization which is dedicated to openness and democratization into a scheme of perpetuating Communist-era falsifications without the knowledge of its leadership. Of course, falsifications can be found inside also, the word “Bulgarian” replaced with the word “Macedonian” in some editions, or containing a disclaimer that “explains” that the adjective “Bulgarian” really means something other than the obvious.

Fig. 6 – The Falsified cover of the “Bulgarian Folk Songs” Collection by the Miladinovi Brothers.



http://www.soros.org.mk/archive/G04/01/A04_01/sa2004.ht, accessed April 22, 2009.

The weakness of the Slav-but-not-Bulgarian theory is the main motive for Macedonia's practically-official identification with the Hellenic Macedonia of Alexander, which has been reinforced by the renaming of infrastructure and constructing monuments to Alexander the Great and other ancient Hellenic historical personages. As Mischa Glenny recalls:

Alexander lived before the Slavs had settled in Macedonia, but remains an important foundation stone upon which Macedonian nationalists build their myths. Despite the significance which the musicians invest in their songs, it is impossible not to giggle at these ridiculous ensembles who look like the mutant children of an unholy union between Jethro Tool and Deep Purple. And sound even worse as they offer their cacophonous homage to Alexander up to the bright, summery Macedonian skies. Their performance is worthy of the Balkans' endemic passion for nonsense.⁷³

⁷³ Glenny, 73-74.

Therefore, the attempt to escape from Bulgarian history automatically leads to trespassing into Greek history. This is also the cause for many of Macedonia's foreign policy problems, particularly with Greece. In this way the still-powerful forces from the past, who do not wish to lose their political and economic relevance, keep the Republic of Macedonia frozen on its European path, while Croatia moves forward, as exemplified by its recent accession to NATO.

2.2.3 – Good Neighborly Relations.

Due to the problem of the unresolved national identity of Macedonian Slavs, the country cannot fully enter into a stage of good neighborhood relations. The Republic of Macedonia through history books and other official publications, as well as through the statements of prominent officials, lays claim over just about every Bulgarian historical figure, event, historical monument, and institution that existed on the territory of geographical Macedonia, ignoring the fact that these were Bulgarian and could not have been Macedonian due to the absence of a separate identity or state on that territory. Claims are also made on Bulgarian territory. These measures instill nationalist feelings among Macedonian students in history classes and this is one cause of contention in the bilateral relations.

Additionally, Bulgaria is vilified for its attempts to liberate Macedonia during the two World Wars, the latter case being referred to as “Bulgarian Fascist Occupation”, despite the plentiful evidence that the population welcomed, cooperated and identified with the Bulgarian authorities. Most Bulgarian military cemeteries and memorials were destroyed by the Yugoslav authorities

and the renovation of the remaining ones is a priority for Bulgaria. The Macedonian government has allowed the Bulgarian state to renovate some of them, however attempts to slow down the process, because it worries that a large share of the dead soldiers were themselves from Macedonia, had volunteered to join the Bulgarian army, and had names ending in –ov and –ev; not yet changed to –ovski/oski or –evski/eski, as the Yugoslav regime did with most Macedonians after 1944.

There was a recent controversy when Bishop Petar of the unrecognized Macedonian Orthodox Church, whose Bitola-Pelagoniya eparchy contains many Bulgarian military graves due to the battles fought there during World War One, was quoted in the Macedonian and Bulgarian media as saying that the graves of Bulgarian soldiers in the Republic of Macedonia should be dug up and the remains sent back to Bulgaria. In April, 2009, Bulgarian MEP of the European People's Party (EPP), Nikolay Mladenov, reacted in the European Parliament, saying that the European Parliament ought to suggest to the Macedonian government that such statements, like Bishop Petar's, should not be left without a reaction from the government.⁷⁴ In an interview for the Bulgarian Focus Agency, the Bishop denied having made that statement, along with allegations of refusing to hire alumni of the Seminary in Bulgaria and ordering signs in Bulgarian to be erased from temples in his eparchy.⁷⁵ Later the same month, Mladenov, accompanied by the MEP of the Party of the European Socialists, Evgeny Kirilov, visited Bulgarian and other European military cemeteries in the Republic of Macedonia, and met with government officials,

⁷⁴ Nikolay Mladenov, "Member of the European Parliament from GERB visits Bulgarian Military Cemeteries in Macedonia, April 8, 2009," *nmladenov.eu/blog/2009/04/08/espodenymam-om-gerb-noceuyava-bylgarsc/* (accessed April 15, 2009).

⁷⁵ Bishop Petar, "Bishop Petar will support the Restoration of Bulgarian Military Memorials in Churches of the Prespa-Palagoniya Eparchy," *Agentsiya Focus*, 28 March, 2009. <http://www.focus-news.net/?id=f11631>. (accessed March 29, 2009).

who stated that the problem was “technical”⁷⁶ and will be resolved in the spirit of European values. On June 1, 2009, however, the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to the Bulgarian embassy stating that it will not allow restorations of the two military memorials that the Bulgarian side has requested.⁷⁷ There are a number of other issues, such as the deprioritization of Corridor 8 in the part linking Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia, and the ongoing smear campaign against Bulgaria in the Macedonian media, most of which, as was mentioned earlier, are not fully independent and therefore “freedom of the press” is not a valid excuse in many cases.

Nevertheless, Bulgaria continues to support the EU and NATO integration of the Republic of Macedonia. The new country received economic, political, and military support from Bulgaria in its times of need, during the Greek embargo, Kosovo war, and its own civil war in 2001. Without the Bulgarian gasoline and other supplies during the Greek embargo, the state may have collapsed economically. Without the tanks and guns that the Macedonian army received as a gift from Bulgaria in 1999, the army may not have been able to contain the Albanian insurgency in 2001. Therefore, Bulgaria has demonstrated that contrary to the unfair treatment it receives in much of the Macedonian media and often unfriendly behavior of the Macedonian authorities, it is willing to continue its friendly and European-style policy toward the Republic of Macedonia. Possibly because of the awareness in Bulgaria of the harsh imposition of anti-Bulgarian propaganda in Yugoslavia and the feeling of oneness, there is a spirit of patience and forgiveness. Bulgaria is therefore a natural ally for the new republic.

⁷⁶ Martin Minkov, “Macedonia did not Allow the Restoration of the Bulgarian Military Memorials,” *Bulgarian National Radio*. http://www.bnr.bg/Horizont/News/Cor_World/Postings/0603-Mace-voen-pamet.htm (accessed June 3, 2009).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

However, the Republic of Macedonia also lays claims over Greek historical legacy, namely the ancient Macedonian state and everything associated with it. (See Fig. 7) Unlike Bulgaria, which was the first to recognize the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name, according to Crampton, the major difficulty (in terms of a foreign state) facing the Republic of Macedonia is Greece: “The Greeks believed that the existence of a state called Macedonia posed a threat to the integrity of Greece, one of whose provinces bore the same name, and Athens therefore refused to recognize any state which used the word ‘Macedonia’ in its title.”⁷⁸ Interestingly enough, Greece never complained about the usage of the name ‘Macedonia’, before 1992, when it was used by Yugoslavia.

Fig. 7 – A Bulgarian caricature depicting a man in traditional dress, representing the Republic of Macedonia, choosing between a sign that reads ‘Europe’, and signs that read ‘Philip’, ‘Alexander’, ‘Cleopatra’, and ‘Bucephalus’, all pointing in the opposite direction.

⁷⁸ Crampton, 294.



Caricature by Ivan Kutuzov, published in Dnevnik. www.dnevnik.bg

While the Greek reaction is exaggerated, and has to do with its own nationalist myths, the Republic of Macedonia is surely not helping its own cause with its conduct. Politicians, organizations, and journalists that identify contemporary-FYROM with the state of Alexander the Great are given an extensive forum in the media and state backing. Streets and institutions are named after ancient Macedonian place names and people, culminating with Skopje's airport recently being renamed "Alexander the Great."⁷⁹ The government and its educational institutions fail to demonstrate their disapproval of these historically-unfounded theories.

When it comes to good neighborly relations, Croatia also has problems, although much smaller than the Republic of Macedonia. While the latter had one territorial dispute, with Serbia and later

⁷⁹ Der Spiegel, "Which Macedonia was Alexander the Great from?" 29 March, 2008. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,544167,00.html> (accessed April 18, 2009).

with Kosovo, which was resolved, Croatia and its neighbors have not resolved their border issues. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, who share a very long border, have disagreements over the delineation of their border. The current border zigzags over the river Una, cutting the railway line Zagreb-Bihać-Split in so many parts that it is rendered unusable. Another problem is that the southernmost strip of Croatian territory along the Adriatic (bordering Montenegro), is cut off from the rest of Croatia by the Bosnian Neum municipality, Bosnia's tiny access to the Adriatic. Croatia wishes to build a bridge through the Pelješac peninsula, which would connect it to its exclave, but Bosnia protests that this would close its only naval shipping route.

Serbia and Croatia also have an unresolved border issue concerning two Croatian river islands, controlled by Serbia since the 1990s war, and other minor issues. In 2002 Serbia and Montenegro returned the Prevlaka peninsula to Croatia (this applies to Montenegro).⁸⁰ Croatia has also inherited the problem of property restitution for formerly exiled Italians.

Perhaps the most difficult foreign policy challenge for Croatia is its EU-member neighbor Slovenia, who, some believe, is using its politically superior position to force Croatia to acquiesce to its demands. Among other lesser problems, such as the joint management of the Krško nuclear power plant, the two countries have unresolved border disputes, the most serious being over the Bay of Piran in Slovenian or Savudrija in Croatian. Currently Slovenia has access to a portion of the coast, but from the Croatian perspective, is cut off from international waters by the territorial waters of Croatia and Italy, enclosing the small pocket of Slovene territorial waters from both sides. Slovenia demands a corridor, but Croatia is unwilling to agree to this,

⁸⁰ Law of the Sea. "Protocol for the Temporary Regime of Prevlaka," http://www.lawofthesea.net/protokol_o_prevlaci.htm (accessed 9 January, 2009).

because it would deprive it of its maritime border with Italy.⁸¹ It should be noted that the crisis began in 2004 when Croatia announced plans to create an Exclusive Economic Zone, thus blocking Slovenia's access to the high seas.⁸² When Croatia suggested international arbitration Slovenia originally refused, and later agreed, but only under the condition that all border conflicts between the two states are arbitrated. One expert assessment of the argument is that:

Slovenia has strong moral rights in the case, Croatia has the stronger legal position and moves to use EU accession as a stick would be unjustifiable. [...]From a legal standpoint, Croatia is acting in accordance with its rights. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea states that a coastal state is able to assert its exclusive right to manage all natural resources in a band up to 200 nautical miles from its shore. Although, the convention does make it clear that any decision of this nature should be made in cooperation with all interested parties and not unilaterally [...].⁸³

This statement demonstrates the complicated but technical nature of the problem, which unlike identity-related issues, is easier to resolve provided there is mutual good will.

⁸¹ Hina, "Slovenia Seizes Piran Bay With A New Map," Javno, January 20, 2009. http://www.javno.com/en-croatia/slovenia-seizes-piran-bay-with-a-new-map_226008. (accessed May 14, 2009).

⁸² Biljana Radonjic, "Slovenia: Maritime dispute unlikely to obstruct Croatian EU membership ambitions," November 10, 2003. http://civilitasresearch.org/publications/view_article.cfm?article_id=50 (accessed February 9, 2009).

⁸³ Ibid.

CH. 3 – THE RISKS OF DELAYED OR PREMATURE INTEGRATION.

Now that it has been established to what degree the two states, Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia, much as samples of West Balkan politics, are compatible with certain basic conditions for integrating into a family of democracies, and how their histories have contributed to shaping their current political problems and successes, it is important to review some potential negative scenarios. While this thesis uses Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia as its cases, one or more of these scenarios are possible for each West Balkan state. These include interethnic and/or interreligious tensions escalating into armed conflict, the growth of Islamism among Balkan Muslims as a security threat and an obstacle to modern development, the increase of Russian influence in the case a political vacuum is opened by slowed integration, and, on the other extreme, the premature integration of unreformed states posing a threat to EU cohesion.

3.1 – Interethnic/Religious Tensions and the Possibility of New War.

The Western Balkans is populated in a way that provides for the mixing of ethnic groups in a given country. The brief amount of time that has passed since the establishment of borders in the 1990s has not allowed for myths and stereotypes to be put aside. A number of commentators, such as Misha Glenny, in his book *Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*, argue that the Dayton Peace Accords and many of the other pacifying measures taken by NATO and EU are too weak to stand on their own, without the presence of international forces. While the book was written before a number of major changes occurred (i.e. Kosovo's independence, fall of Milosheвич, etc.), this author agrees that the concept still holds true.

Likewise, In his article entitled *Us and Them: The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism*, Jerry Z. Muller makes the point that opponents of *ethnonationalism*, nationalism based on shared heritage rather than citizenship, as is the case in Europe and the West Balkans, tend to assume that if this kind of nationalism is socially constructed, as they believe, then it must be by definition weak and bound to wither away. This is a mistake, as history has demonstrated the strength and pervasiveness of ethnic nationalism in modern societies.⁸⁴ According to Muller “one could argue that Europe has been so harmonious since World War II not because of the failure of ethnic nationalism but because of its success, which removed some of the greatest sources of conflict both within and between states [...], leading to the most stable territorial configuration in European history.” Furthermore, he adds that “Liberal democracy and ethnic homogeneity are not only compatible; they can be complementary.”⁸⁵ Muller is correct to the extent that one is looking at a national state or a state with a dominant majority. Other scholars, such as Maria Bakalova do not share this assessment and believe that nationalism and democracy are incompatible. This holds true particularly for multicultural states, as evidenced by the few states that had remained mixed after 1945: the USSR, CSSR, and SFRY; they either peacefully divided after 1989, or descended into wars of ethnic cleansing. With European and US help, these conflicts were either resolved or remain frozen, as is the case in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and the Republic of Macedonia. EU involvement coupled with the prospect of joining has added incentives for peace: “European integration processes in the region in general, EU specific plans and projects, as varying promises and incentives from the Union to the region have an ambiguous impact on Balkan nationalisms, since they subdue and transform

⁸⁴ Jerry Z. Muller, “Us and Them: The Enduring Power of Ethnic Nationalism,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (March/April 2008). 31.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

some forms and appearances of nationalisms, while at the same time stimulating and determining others.”⁸⁶

Putting normative judgments about the merits and shortcomings of ethnonationalism aside, History has demonstrated time and again that it exists both among minorities and majorities, that it can be harnessed by politicians and foreign powers for destructive purposes, that often as one side becomes more balanced, the other, seeing this as weakness, radicalizes its demands. In the West Balkans, where poverty, a still unclear European perspective, and bitter memories from the recent past continue to exist, revanchism is often muted in the political discourse, but alive. Most importantly, unlike most of Europe, which with a few (unstable) exceptions is composed of dominant majority states, the West Balkans remains an area of ethnic and religious diversity. As if not wishing to open Pandora’s Box by talking about the subject, Maria Bakalova notes that “the relationship between nationalism and European integration processes receives the least attention, which may be due – among other things – to the fact that the official European vocabulary refrains from using the term ‘nationalism’ in relation to EU enlargement.”⁸⁷ However, I do not support that assessment as ethnic nationalism in multicultural societies is capable of obstructing democratic consolidation and causing a renewal of hostilities.

Often interethnic (usually overlapping with interreligious) relations are viewed by the majorities of both sides as zero-sum games. In the West Balkans it has been the trend that majorities fear demographically fast-growing minorities, which are seen as wanting to take over the country

⁸⁶ Maria Bakalova, “Balkan Nationalism in the European Integration Processes.” in *EU and the Balkans: Policies of Integration and Disintegration*, ed. Leila Simona Talani (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 8-9.

⁸⁷ Bakalova, 7.

from within, and minorities fear their states' patrons who have historically demonstrated a willingness to carry out assimilation campaigns, if not worse. While in Croatia, this issue largely disappeared after the war, in the Republic of Macedonia, with its at-least 25% Albanian minority, as well as in other West Balkan states, tensions run high. In a recent interview, Menduh Tachi, the leader of the Democratic Party of the Albanians, claimed that the ruling VMRO-DPMNE has destroyed the Ohrid Framework Agreement and called for a new agreement between Macedonians and Albanians. He warned that anyone who wishes to destroy Albanian politics in the country will face a more radical and more extreme political response.⁸⁸ This sort of political language coming from the leader of a somewhat moderate minority party demonstrated the lack of interethnic confidence that exists even in cases where past conflicts were not nearly as bloody as elsewhere in the West Balkans. It also demonstrated that if West Balkan populations and political leaders perceive the EU as an unattainable dream, and are pressed with economic problems, a small spark is capable of starting new trouble in the region, which would render it a long-term source of instability for the EU. This effect would be destabilizing and a security threat in a number of ways.

3.2 – Radical Islam – a European Source of Terrorism?

Unlike the United States, whose National Security Strategy defines terrorism as an external threat, the European Union, in its European Security Strategy (ESS) admits to several aspects of

⁸⁸ Mariela Trajkovska, "DPA is preparing a Replacement for the Ohrid Accords," Skopje: Dnevnik, 11 May, 2009. <http://www.dnevnik.com.mk/default.asp?ItemID=B4214804526D544E8B5C366882FC8094> (accessed May 2, 2009).

an alarming problem; namely, that Radical Islam is a source of terrorism, that it targets Europe, and that it is found not only abroad, but unlike the United States, domestically:

The most recent wave of terrorism is global in its scope and is linked to violent religious extremism. It arises out of complex causes. These include the pressures of modernisation, cultural, social and political crises, and the alienation of young people living in foreign societies. This phenomenon is also a part of our own society. Europe is both a target and a base for such terrorism: European countries are targets and have been attacked. Logistical bases for Al Qaeda cells have been uncovered in the UK, Italy, Germany, Spain and Belgium. Concerted European action is indispensable.⁸⁹

As the above quotation clarifies toward the end, Islamist terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda operate cells in West European societies, featuring large groups of Muslim first and later-generation immigrants. This problem, at first glance, is detached from the interethnic and inter-religious problems of the West Balkans.

However, religious radicalization is an ever-present threat for communities that are experiencing poverty, political confrontation with a neighbor or an ethnic majority/minority that professes a different religion. We witnessed the eagerness of Middle Eastern Islamist organizations and governments to help the Muslims in Bosnia and to a smaller extent in Kosovo and Macedonia, during their respective wars. This help, of course, as real as it may have been, came with strings attached, namely that radical Islam now has gained a modest following in the region.

In the Republic of Macedonia, for example, the Albanian minority belongs to the Islamic faith and local Muslim officials are cited by Freedom House as reporting that extremists have taken control over two mosques in Skopje; also, that clerics have become more fundamentalist, and have received financial support from Middle Eastern Islamic extremists. In the Albanian areas

⁸⁹ European Council. A SECURE EUROPE IN A BETTER WORLD: EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY. 12 December, 2003. <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (accessed June 1, 2009).

women are often denied access to education and are “subjected to proxy voting.” While this does not mean that the Albanian or any other predominantly-Muslim community in the Balkans has espoused a form of radical Islam, it should be taken as a warning that if European integration is unreasonably delayed and for as long as the presence in the Balkans of religious, educational, and charity foundations connected to shady Middle Eastern sources of funding are tolerated, the threat of Islamism and an internal European source of terrorism will only increase.

Since the Muslim community in the Balkans is traditionally more modern than its Middle Eastern counterpart, it will be difficult for extremists to impose their agenda on native-European Muslims. Since radicalism is often associated with poverty, EU integration can help by leading to an increased standard of living in the region. However, the development of this security threat into a security crisis may be swifter than we can predict and is preventable by the quick Euro-Atlantic integration of the region, full execution of reforms, and improvement of the quality of life.

3.3 – Russian Influence and its Implications.

In a world which is becoming increasingly multipolar, at a time when Russia is demonstrating ambitions which could be seen as neo-imperialist, and considering that the former has traditionally been interested in South Eastern Europe and the Balkans, it is a very real risk that if the hope of EU integration as a motivating force for reform is weakened and a political vacuum is formed in the West Balkans, Russia could use the opportunity to expand its own political influence in the region.

Until World War I, Russia had been a rival of Austria-Hungary for the West Balkans and the Ottoman Empire for what we may retrospectively refer to as the “East” Balkans. In the latter case, Russia’s interest was in controlling the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus for strategic reasons, as well as capturing Constantinople, for the sake of symbolism. These aspirations had been manifested in a number of ways, some positive, as the Russo-Turkish War of 1878, which ended with the treaty of San Stefano, an arrangement that would have liberated much of the Balkan peninsula from the Ottomans, and in negative ways – participating in internal and international political intrigues and conflicts between parties, government, and Balkan states to obtain the most for Russia. Soviet Russia continued this policy, helping to engineer a Yugoslav Macedonia, perhaps with the intention of acquitting Aegean Macedonia and gaining access to the Aegean through a friendly Communist state. After the breakup of the USSR and Yugoslavia, Russia showed support for Serbia and the Bosnian Serbs during the Yugoslav Wars. Finally, Russia supported Miloshevich’s regime during the campaign of ethnic cleansing that he carried out in Kosovo, and then scrambled to reach Prishtina airport before the NATO forces. During the 2001 war in the Republic of Macedonia, Russia demonstrated that it is willing to support the government in exchange for foreign policy favors. Recently, Russia has attempted to monopolize the energy distribution systems of West Balkan states like Serbia.

If the European Union and NATO allow a political vacuum to form in the West Balkans, and for Russia to take a more advantageous position in the West Balkans, this could have a number of implications such as: increased energy dependency, the advance of authoritarian parties and leaders, which would in turn lead to a reversal of democratic reform and consolidation, and

deterioration of minority rights and freedom of the press. In other words, if EU and NATO integration is halted or slowed down excessively, this strategically important region could be destabilized and dominated by Russia, making it a long-term strategic liability for the EU.

3.4 – Integrating Unreformed States – A Liability for the EU?

The political structure of the states preparing for EU accession has its own specifics, which may be difficult to understand from the perspective of a Western democracy. In almost every country of the former Eastern block, the former Communist parties changed their names and adopted democratic modes of functioning. In practice, though, they preserved the connection of the old *Nomenklatura* with new political figures and often succeeded in transforming their political power into economic, often oligarchic, power. Every country's case has peculiarities. As Peter Poole writes about Bulgaria and Romania, "the former Communist parties [...] called themselves 'Socialist' with little change of leadership or policy [...] [and] they blocked political or economic reforms that threatened the careers of old communist colleagues who still held many positions of power."⁹⁰ More or less, the Western Balkans followed the same pattern. The major difference between the first 2007 pair and the Western Balkans was that due to the unresolved inter-ethnic conflicts, nationalism was used by members of the Yugoslav and Albanian establishments as a tool for preserving and increasing their power at the expense of the victims who suffered from the Wars during the 1990s.

⁹⁰ Peter Pool, *Europe Unites: The EU's Eastern Enlargement* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 98.

As previous enlargements have shown, unreformed countries lose their incentive to reform quickly after accession and make their deficiencies EU problems. This means that countries which have not undergone the full set of reforms prior to accession are likely to perform worse after accession. Corruption, organized crime, poor control of external border, are among the problems that unreformed states can “transfer” to the EU, when they accede to the Union. While these problems are difficult, they are solvable.

They are only the symptoms though. West Balkan states, just like many of their East European counterparts experienced a post-Communist mimicry of people who had held key positions during Communism and who managed to cling on through power, through connections, using the old security services to create organized crime and launder dirty money, etc. In the West Balkans, more so than in other places, the same “forces of the past”, as we may call them, also espoused extreme nationalism and chauvinism to attract a following. Naturally, real regional cooperation, a real functioning market economy, real rule of law, and every other Copenhagen criterion will not be *really* implemented for as long as West Balkan societies continue to be possessed by forces who will only suffer from transparency, democracy, and cooperation.

If the European Union repeats its 2007 mistake of accepting new member states before they are fully reformed, it is likely to weaken itself. One only needs to think of the immense difficulty of steering the EU with its current ineffective decision-making procedures, to imagine how dysfunctional the EU would become if countries with unresolved problems, as exist between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia, or in fact, many of their West Balkan neighbors, were to

end up in the Council vetoing one another's ideas and weakening the whole EU with their squabbles.

CH. 4 – THE BENEFITS OF ENLARGEMENT AND METHODS OF INTEGRATION

This chapter will focus on the benefits of timely enlargement, as opposed to the potential problems of delayed or rushed integration. It will discuss the shortcomings of the currently-used methods of integrating future member states and will proposed improvements. The latter section of this chapter can be viewed as a policy proposal.

4.1 – The Benefits of Enlargement

The benefits of timely and well-prepared enlargement are many and are found for both sides. The Western Balkans will have a unique chance to join a union of traditional but forward values, and economic prosperity. These states will have the chance to break with their unstable recent past and open a new page of regional cooperation, within the EU, which will benefit all political actors in the region.

The European Union, through ensuring better governance, will have the opportunity to eliminate the organized criminal activity originating in the Western Balkans. It will more importantly integrate a region, which is strategically located, and prevent Russia and Radical Islam from increasing their influence there. The chance for a destabilizing and image-wrecking new armed conflict will become practically impossible. The inclusion of the West Balkans into the Union

will consolidate it geopolitically, opening up faster land routes to Asia and will consolidate the image of the EU as an effective stabilizing force.⁹¹

In other words, a timely enlargement which has ensured that new member states are reformed will prevent the materializing of the negative scenarios discussed earlier, and will bring about more security, prosperity, and stability for both sides.

4.2 – The current approach and its effects.

The way accession is currently run is far from perfect. The 2004 and 2007 waves of enlargement showed that after joining the EU, new member states lose their reform impulse and unresolved issues become harder to fix, particularly as the EU lacks an adequate mechanism of coercion. A recent Economist article summarizes that: “Plenty of diplomats and politicians in Brussels say that Romania and Bulgaria were admitted too soon, arguing that once such countries get into the club, the EU loses most of its leverage over them. (Many say much the same of Cyprus as well.)”⁹²

The EU is in the process of repeating the same or perhaps a much bigger mistake with the Western Balkan states, which “will display the same [corruption-related] problems as Bulgaria

⁹¹ Dušan Reljić and Solveig Richter, “The EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Risks Forfeiting Its Leverage in the Western Balkans,” *German Institute for International and Security Affairs*, (December 2008), http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/produkte/swp_aktuell_detail.php?id=10175&PHPSESSID=4915d75141f129c08df0fb199fd1260a. (accessed March 17, 2009).

⁹² The Economist, “Bulgarian rhapsody,” May 16-20, 2009, 38.

and Romania in even more extreme form”⁹³ in addition to their dysfunctional, intolerant, and societies, completed with extreme nationalism, state-supported identity fraud based on denial of history, and tense foreign relations. The main problem of the current approach is that the EU uses a technical and at times superficial approach for all states, which does not always reflect the countries’ specific history, development, and problems.

The principle of Conditionality is applied as the main tool of enlargement with a focus on adopting the *Acquis communautaire* (*Acquis*), transposing EU directives, and fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria; the multi-speed approach, reflecting the EU’s annual monitoring reports is the practical application of conditionality. The EU at times fails to exact certain necessary reforms because its institutions are either ignorant of them, the *Acquis* does not cover them, or because these would cross into what some see as micromanagement; at times uneven standards have been applied to different applicant countries.⁹⁴

In addition to the principle of Conditionality, a number of formats, such as the former Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SPSEE) encouraged the states from South Eastern Europe to work out issues and reform in three fields: human rights and democracy, economics and development, and justice and security. However, it left a large degree of the initiative in the aspirant states.⁹⁵ As Maria Bakalova points out, there have been times when EU action, with its generalizing approach even produced a backlash and the opposite result, as was the case with the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Bernd Rechel, “What has Limited the EU’s Impact on Minority Rights in Accession Countries?” *East European Politics and Societies* 22, (2008), 176-177.

⁹⁵ SPSEE was replaced by the Regional Co-operation Council (RCC), which is related to the South East European Co-operation Process (SEECOP), started by Bulgaria in 1996.

Stability Pact which: “ended up reinforcing nationalism, even though it was clearly oriented around conflict-prevention.”⁹⁶

Returning to Conditionality, some authors, such as Vachudova, argue that Conditionality is an “unprecedented leverage over domestic politics of aspiring member states.”⁹⁷ Bakalova also claims that while accession conditions are framed in general terms, their monitoring is country-specific, taking into account even issues like nationalism. “e.g. Croatia – in all Commission reports there was a very strong emphasis on the country’s minority politics and on the relations with neighboring countries; on the other hand in Macedonia attention is directed at the relations between the two major communities and the implementation of the 2001 EU-brokered Ohrid agreement of 2001.”⁹⁸

While this is true to some extent, the examples given by Bakalova are nevertheless on the level of “technical” issues, failing to address issues such as history denial, which have a very real effect on the present. This author believes that the application of the conditionality principle allows for too much leeway and lacks enough country specificity. There are other authors who share this view, although they focus on other areas of reform, such as minority protection. Due to the “conditionality gap,” scholars such as John Hughes et al call conditionality as a Europeanization tool a “myth.”⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Bakalova, 14.

⁹⁷ Milada Anna Vachudova, “The Leverage of International Institutions on Democratizing States: The European Union and Eastern Europe,” *RSCAS Working Paper* 33, no.2001, 1-42, in Rechel, 172.

⁹⁸ Bakalova, 14.

⁹⁹ James Hughes, et al., *Europeanization and Regionalization in the EU's Enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe: The Myth of Conditionality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 172.

Bernd Rechel further elaborates this point in an interesting study that uses Bulgaria as a case study. He writes that “the ‘Europeanizing’ effect of EU conditionality has so far been generally assumed rather than empirically proven, while deep divergences across national and policy contexts persist.”¹⁰⁰ Weaknesses of conditionality, according to Rechel, are that “both national government and the EU tend to overstate the impact of EU pressure,” governments often follow recommendations of intergovernmental organizations only superficially for “political reasons,” and “when policy changes [are] triggered they [are] often of token nature.”¹⁰¹ Additionally, while the author specifically studies minorities, his conclusion that there is missing expertise on the part of the EU is valid in other areas too.

In addition to authors such as Rechel, Hughes, Vachudova, and Bakalova, who discuss the subject of EU enlargement, often in the context of conditionality or in the context of the Western Balkans, John O’Brennan and David Chandler conducted a discussion (partly on the pages of *Global Society*) on whether the EU is properly integrating the Western Balkans or not, with Chandler approaching the issue from the opposite perspective of this thesis. Chandler argues that the EU is engaged in a neo-imperial exercise in the Western Balkans, which is compromising the democratic institution building process and which has a “depoliticizing” effect of these societies destroying the link between the people and their governments.¹⁰² O’Brennan argues the opposite point – that the EU’s integration process allows for the independence and free movement of the West Balkan candidates. Of course, O’Brennan does not deny that democratization and institution building are still problems, but sees the 2004 and 2007 enlargements as proof of the

¹⁰⁰ Rechel, 172.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² David Chandler, “European Union Statebuilding: Securing the Liberal Peace through EU Enlargement,” *Global Society* 21, no.4, (2007), 593-607.

success of the EU's methods. Chandler in his response argues that O'Brennan does not address the idea that the principle of conditionality and direct EU participation in reforms is making internal discussions and consensus within the Western Balkan states impossible or useless. This is an ongoing debate, as a book by John O'Brennan on this subject is expected to be published in December of 2009.¹⁰³

This author stands closer to the positions of Hughes and Rechel, and far from supporting Chandler's idea that the West Balkans be given more leeway, believes that more *interference* is needed, both in its scope and its depth (meaning it ought to cover more subjects and micromanage more than it currently does).

4.3 – A New Approach and its Possible Effects.

It is not difficult to find examples of EU officials speaking in general, vague, technical terms about the adoption and implementation of the *Acquis* and Copenhagen criteria. This author suggests a new application of the Conditionality principle be realized in the Western Balkans. This approach is founded on the realization that like all post-Communist states, but to an even larger degree, Western Balkans societies are not healthy. They have grave internal problems, similar to an infection. Just like in the case of an infected person, treating the symptoms is usually not enough. If one is to be healed, one needs to attack the illness causing the symptoms. The Western Balkan states suffer from chronic corruption and lack of healthy civil societies, as is the case in other new member states. In addition to problems, however, West Balkan states due

¹⁰³ John O'Brennn, *The EU and the Western Balkans: Stabilization and Europeanization through Enlargement* (Routledge, 2009).

to their historical circumstances have unresolved, frozen, minority conflicts with destabilizing potential. They also have elites that maintain historical falsifications and unsettled national identities left over from Yugoslavia, which aside from precluding the development of good neighborly relations and genuine democratization, also feed aggressive nationalism.

When the European Union limits its interaction to treating the “symptoms” of these societies, this is insufficient. In order to reform the West Balkans fully and ensure that they will be successful and constructive future members states, the EU needs to set up specific criteria and prescribe concrete action on a country-to-country basis, taking into account the historical legacy of each state and the problems stemming from it. The EU ought to closely monitor the implementation of these measures, which will strive to *normalize* West Balkan societies and together with the implementation of the more-general *Acquis* and Copenhagen Criteria, prepare them for fruitful EU membership.

In the case of all West Balkan states, more attention should be directed toward the choice of political partners and their actions, in order to avoid legitimizing controversial political figures. Particularly in the Republic of Macedonia, the EU should arrange for creating joint commissions of scholars to revise all educational materials in the humanities and social sciences, until the major disagreements are resolved, according to the international principles of scholarship, and employing international arbitration if need be. Sparking a critical self-analysis of historical myths and nationalist stereotypes will cause a social catharsis, which will weaken aggressive nationalism and strengthen good neighborly and interethnic/interreligious relations. The same goes for ensuring genuine media freedom and a genuine respect for human rights.

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to achieve several objectives. One was to demonstrate the significance of history as a cause of political problems, but also the significance of detailed historical analysis in finding solutions for political problems. On this basis, this thesis asked how prepared the Western Balkans are for EU accession, using Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia as case studies. The answer to this question corresponds with the assessment of EU institutions: while Croatia is at the finish line of EU membership, the Republic of Macedonia, despite the positive steps it has made, continues to be pulled back by inter-ethnic and identity problems, which brings it closer to the level of its less reformed neighbors – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia.

The frozen conflicts, organized crime, and aggressive nationalism, from which many West Balkan politicians profit, are keeping these countries in an unstable existence, which is a security risk for the European Union. This thesis attempted to demonstrate that only timely but not hurried integration will ensure the stability and prosperity of the region. However, a rushed integration that has overlooked key areas of social and mentality reform will only destabilize the Union by allowing dysfunctional states access to the already-difficult mechanisms for maneuvering EU policy.

This thesis also concludes that the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans is not only in the interest of the former, but also in the interest of the EU. A successful handling of the Balkan situation will boost the image of the EU as a security-building actor on the international

arena. It will also ensure that no negative geopolitical scenarios, related to Russia or Islamic extremism will occur in what is a strategic part of Europe.

However, in order to achieve a qualitative integration, West Balkan societies need to undergo a social catharsis, reexamining their historical myths and stereotypes that Yugo-communism (except in Albania) left them as an inheritance, and the identity and nationalist issues associated with that. Only this will genuinely free these societies from their frozen conflicts and will open the way for more-than-technical integration.

The European Union has not been flexible enough in addressing the specifics of each state, which in the case of previous enlargements has led to overlooking major problems. It has become obvious that the mechanical transfer of EU law, the *Acquis*, and the insistence on the concept of the Copenhagen criteria, but without concrete prescriptions, has allowed states to pursue hollow convergence in certain areas. The West Balkans, being more problematic than any of the recently admitted member states, requires an overhaul of the application of the conditionality principle. It ought to involve more concrete prescriptions and the EU must ensure their full implementation, in addition to the *Acquis* and Copenhagen criteria. The EU should also be more involved in ensuring that good governance and the rule of law are being implemented, and that political leaders with ties to organized crime do not receive legitimacy.

APPENDIX 1

An Ethnographical map of the Balkans from 1911.



Map by William R. Shepherd, Historical Atlas, 1911.

APPENDIX 2

Examples of major historical falsifications and mystifications concerning the formation of Macedonian national identity and relations with the Bulgarian nation and state, which can be found in contemporary historiography and textbooks in the Republic of Macedonia.	
Falsification/Myth	Clarification
Krustyo (Krste) Misirkov is misrepresented by the Macedonian historian Blazhe Ristovski as having a Macedonian national consciousness. ¹⁰⁴ In the Republic of Macedonia today, Misirkov is regarded as the patriarch of the Macedonian nation.	The large collection of archival material, as well as Misirkov's diary from 1913 show him in a different light – as a Bulgarian patriot. ¹⁰⁵ A bilingual edition of the diary was published in Sofia and Skopje in 2008, which is a first step in the right direction.
Macedonian historiography claims Samuil's Bulgarian Empire as the first Macedonian state.	This theory is not accepted outside of the Republic of Macedonia; the prominent British historian Steven Runciman, like many others, considers it a part of the First Bulgarian Empire. ¹⁰⁶
<i>Autonomist</i> ideology, or the idea that Vardar and Aegean Macedonia should seek autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, is often cited as proof of the separate national feeling of revolutionaries such as Gotse Delchev.	Banac clarifies that Gotse Delchev and the other leaders of the Bulgarian Macedoni-Adrianopolitan Revolutionary Committee (BMORK) were “aware of Serbian and Greek ambitions in Macedonia”, which were to partition the country. Therefore, they thought that autonomy would preserve Macedonia whole and that it was “a prophylactic that would preserve the Bulgar character of Macedonia's Christian population despite the separation from Bulgaria proper.” ¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Blazhe Ristovski. *Krste P. Misirkov (1874 – 1920)*, (Skopje: Kultura, 1966).

¹⁰⁵ K.P.Misirkov. *Diary. 5.VII – 30. VIII.1913*, (Sofia – Skopje: Drzhaven arhiv na RM/Durzhavna agentsiya “Arhivi” na RB, 2008).

¹⁰⁶ Runciman, 168.

¹⁰⁷ Banac, 314-315.

<p>The inclusion of Vardar Macedonian into the Bulgarian Kingdom during World War II, is referred to as the “Bulgarian fascist occupation” and a myth of mass resistance has been created.</p>	<p>The facts show otherwise. During the summer of 1941, there were 300 members of the Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP) in Vardar Macedonia. During this period, the leadership of the Macedonian Communists, headed by Metodi Shatarov, aspired to switch the Macedonian Communists’ allegiance from the YCP to the Bulgarian Communist Party, and thought that there are not conditions for mass armed resistance, because the population considered Macedonia liberated. Tito referred to Shatarov as “the old Bulgar” and removed him with help from Moscow.</p> <p>Even then, there was practically no partisan movement until 1943, and until July-August 1944, the total number of partisans in the Bulgarian-controlled part of Vardar Macedonia was around 3000 people according to Macedonian historiography and 1100-1200 according to Bulgarian intelligence data.¹⁰⁸ The Serb instructor-commissars of the YCP stated the reason for this was the “multitude of Bulgar elements.”¹⁰⁹ British officers embedded with the partisans held the same opinion. In 1944 Clarke wrote that “the local villagers in their majority are hostile toward the partisans... they constantly informed the Bulgarian army of our movements” and According to Captain Lambie “the population of this part (Eastern) of Macedonia was burdened by anti-partisan propaganda and was not amicably disposed.”¹¹⁰</p>
<p>The myth of mass resistance during the period of Bulgarian occupation (1941-1944) is accompanied by a myth of many ethnic</p>	<p>This figure apparently includes the (approximately) 7,000 Jews deported by the German military and other civilians that died</p>

¹⁰⁸ Angel Dimitrov. “Bulgarskata vlast vuv Vardarska Makedonia ili za efektite ot politicheskata inertsia v istoricheskoto mislene.” in *Istoriyata – Profesiya i sudba. Sbornik v chest na 60-godishninata na chlen-korespondent Georgi Markov* (Sofia: Tangra TanNakRa, 2008), 421.

¹⁰⁹ Mihailo Apostolski. *Izvori Za Osloboditelnata Vojna I Revolucija Vo Makedonija 1941-1945* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, vol. I, book I, 1968), 158-187.

¹¹⁰ Todor Chepreganov, ed., *Britanski voeni misii vo Makedonija 1942-1945* (Skopje: Matica Makedonska, 2000), 307, 347.

<p>Macedonian casualties killed by the Bulgarian army. According to Macedonian propaganda they are between 14,000 and 20,000 people.</p>	<p>during the war against Germany after September 1944.</p> <p>According to data from the Bulgarian military archive, the number of partisans killed is 353.¹¹¹ The vast majority of arrested and convicted resistance fighters had their death sentences waived or other sentences reduced. Usually they declared to be Bulgarians and that they repented for their actions, as was the case with the first prime minister of Macedonia after 1944, Lazar (Lazo) Kulishevski. Similarly, the partisan “general” Mihaylo Apostolski, who had been a Yugoslav officer, after being released from Italian captivity as a Bulgarian requested to join the Bulgarian army. After being denied, he joined the partisans.¹¹²</p>
<p>The liberation of Vardar Macedonia from Germany is also mythologized, denying the contribution of the Bulgarian army, and claiming that it was the work of the Communist partisans.</p>	<p>In one of his subsequently declassified reports to the British War Office, Gen. Walter Hayes Oxley, head of the Allied Control Commission, writes that Bulgarian military was the only force practically capable of challenging the Wehrmacht in the region. He adds that it drove out the Wehrmacht from the Vardar Valley (including Kosovo and South Serbia.) This happened in October-December 1944.¹¹³</p>

¹¹¹ Dimitrov, 432.

¹¹² Dimitrov, 434.

¹¹³ Nikolay Kotev. *Voyna bez pravila: Britanskoto razuznavane v Bulgaria* (Sofia, 1994) 189.

APPENDIX 3

A. 50

Б Ъ Р З А

Т Е Л Е Ф О Н О Г Р А М А

До Г Г Кметовете в околията

Незабавно свикайте контролърите и преброителите и им съобщете при попълване графа 13 от домакинската карта и графа 5 ~~аа~~ на домакинския лист Б народност да се пише **МАКЕДОНСКА** изключително само евреите-циганите турците и българите дошли от пределите на България Българомохамеданите да се пишат по народност македонци без разлика дали са от сам или от татък р. Места

№ 10269

27 XII 1946 год.
гр. Неврокоп О. Ангелов; /ЛАКОВ/

Telephonogram from the Regional Director of the Nevrokop region (Gotse Delchev, Bulgaria) to the mayors in his region ordering that during the 1946 census all people except Jews, Gypsies, Turks, and Bulgarians originating in other parts of the country, but including the Muslim Bulgarians from both sides of the river Mesta, ought to be registered as ethnic Macedonians, without taking their opinion into account.

Original, Typed, Nevrokop, December 27, 1946.

State Archive – Blagoevgrad, fund 242, index.1, archival unit 25, sheet 50.

Vesselin Angelov, *Chronicle of a National Treason. The Attempts for Violent Denationalization of Pirin Macedonia, 1944-1949*, (Sofia, 2004), 15-56.

APPENDIX 4

One recent case from 2007 was the destruction of a plaque in Skopje commemorating the Macedonian Bulgarian resistance fighter, Mara Buneva, shot by the Serbian authorities in 1928. The people attending the commemoration, including intellectuals and elderly, were assaulted by about thirty armed men, while the police remained idle,¹¹⁴ which some see as covert support for the thugs. The Macedonian police behaved in a similar way when the US embassy was attacked during protests against NATO's campaign in Yugoslavia in 1999.

On March 2, 2008, a bust of Todor Alexandrov, another Macedonian Bulgarian revolutionary, which Dragi Karov from the town of Veles had erected in his house's garden, was destroyed by the local authorities and then vandalized by supposedly unknown perpetrators. The town's mayor, Atse Kotsevski, condemned Karov for installing the bust on his private property because he had not asked for permission and because this monument, in the mayor's own words, "opens large topics which could divide the Macedonian nation."¹¹⁵ This appears as a double standard, as illegal construction, known as *divogradbi*, is omnipresent and tolerated in Macedonia, and so are monuments of Albanian national heroes and even insurgents from 2000-2001. The following day, charges were raised against Karov for having Bulgarian and IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) flags on his property.¹¹⁶ Ironically, the IMRO flags are the same as the flag of the ruling party in the Republic of Macedonia.

¹¹⁴ Dnevnik, "An Incident causes Tensions of Relations with Skopje," 14 January, 2007. http://www.dnevnik.bg/bulgaria/2007/01/14/304597_incident_obtiaga_otnosheniiata_sus_skopie/. 14 January, 2007 (accessed April 24, 2009).

¹¹⁵ Petar Pechkov, "A Bust of Todor Aleksandrov Sprung up in a Veles Yard," Skopje: Dnevnik, 3 March, 2008.

¹¹⁶ Viktor Kanzurov, "The Contemporary Problems of the Bulgarians in the Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria's position," Argumenti, 20 May, 2008. <http://www.argumenti.net/?p=23> (accessed on May 7, 2009).

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