

ASSIMILATION AND EXCLUSION
AN ANALYSIS OF FAILED POLICY IN MACEDONIA

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

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Introduction

The world is well aware of the horrific aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991 with the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo, and Croatia. Although it is true that two former Yugoslav republics, Slovenia and Macedonia, were able to achieve their independence relatively bloodlessly, Macedonia still faced an internal ethnic struggle which threatened to take it along the path of its former Yugoslav brethren. In the nascent independent state of Macedonia, ethnic Albanians and Macedonian Slavs also inhabited a world of interethnic tensions.

Macedonia is, indeed, an ethnically heterogeneous state. According to the most recent figures, published in 2002, the breakdown of the population of Macedonia was as follows: Macedonian Slav 64.2 percent, Albanian 25.2 percent (predominantly in the western regions of Macedonia), Turkish 3.8 percent, Roma 2.7 percent, Serb 1.8 percent, and “other” 2.3 percent. Additionally, 70 percent of the population was Macedonian Orthodox, 29 percent Muslim (mostly ethnic Albanians), and 1 percent “other.”¹

By the year 2001, Macedonia was on the brink of civil war with the ethnic Albanian minority and the Macedonian Slav majority at loggerheads over the direction of the country and their places in it. Ethnic Albanians were calling for more rights within the country, including more autonomy, making Albanian an official language alongside Macedonian, having greater inclusion of Albanians in state institutions, and having more access to education. Calamity was narrowly averted by negotiation, under the auspices of the international community, which resulted in the 2001 Ohrid Agreement. In this

¹ *World Factbook: Macedonia* (Accessed 29 October 2004), available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mk.html>.

agreement, the Macedonian Slav majority conceded many of the points desired by the Albanian minority.²

The perilous situation in which Macedonia found itself by 2001 did not appear unpredictably. In fact, the stage for this confrontation had been set in the 1980s and early 1990s. Since it was during this time period that positions hardened, policies were created, and tensions began to mount, this essay will focus primarily on the period from 1980 through 1993, the year in which Macedonia received mass international recognition.

The 1980s were a period of attempted assimilation and of exclusion of ethnic Albanians in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, a trend which continued into the early years of independent Macedonia. It was during the 1980s that Macedonian Slav authorities, working through the one party communist state, waged a campaign to erase, or at least lessen, the ethnic identity of its Albanian citizenry in the wake of its emerging nationalism. Schools were purged of ethnic Albanian teachers, the Albanian language was suppressed, and ethnic Albanians faced exclusion from the economic, cultural, and political spheres.

With the fall of Yugoslavia and the appearance of an independent Macedonia, the Albanians were in a much better position to combat the assimilative and exclusionary forces brought upon them by the Macedonian Slav majority. The loss of Communist Party supremacy and the emergence of a multi-party system allowed the Albanian minority to voice their concerns more readily. Additionally, the Macedonian state, having severed its ties from Yugoslavia, was weakened to such a degree that it could no longer control its territory effectively. With these factors, the Albanian minority was able

² *Republic of Macedonia, Framework Agreement* (accessed 31 March 2005); available from <http://www.coe.int> .

to employ a number of different techniques, from boycotts to attempted secession, in their fight for political, cultural, and economic rights in the newly independent Macedonian state.

The Historical Context

The use policies of assimilation and exclusion are not new phenomena in the international arena, and much less in the Balkans. In Macedonia itself, the use of much harsher homogenizing policies had been employed. For example in 1913, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece divided up the historically defined Macedonia, of which modern Macedonia is only a small part. Bulgaria, in an attempt to homogenize its new territory and to integrate it and its people into Bulgaria proper, denied the existence of the Macedonian ethnicity and followed a program of forced assimilation.³ Greece also adopted a program of forced assimilation, Hellenizing Slavic names and destroying Slavic literature.⁴ Greek authorities even took such measures as to fine, beat, and execute people for speaking their native Slavic tongue and participated in population exchanges with Bulgaria, trading Slavic speakers for ethnic Greeks.⁵

As surprising as some of these actions may seem to the contemporary reader, these policies were, at least in part, accepted and sanctioned by the international community. Following World War I, the League of Nations was established, in part, to protect minority groups. In 1934, C.A. Macartney, The Secretary to the Minorities Committee of the League of Nations, stated that:

³ Loring M. Danforth, "Claims to Macedonian Identity: The Macedonian Question and the Breakup of Yugoslavia," *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 9, No. 4. (Aug., 1993), p. 4. Available from Jstor. Accessed 28 March 2005.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

... Since the sole conception of the national state implies a violation of the principle of equality to the detriment of the minorities, the guarantee of equality might be considered as involving the renunciation by the state of its national character. ... A national state and national minorities are incompatibles.⁶

From this rationale, this institutionally mandated guarantor of minority rights had come to the conclusion that minority rights were, intrinsically, impossible to uphold in the international, nation-state system.

In fact, he had some suggestions on how a nation could solve its minority problems. McCartney noted that

“... when a minority exists in such a state, only three solutions are possible: the revision of frontiers to match the distribution of populations, the elimination of the minorities by emigration ‘perhaps through the exchange of populations,’ or the altering of the basis of the state, so that it is no longer a national state. He also noted that a fourth possibility could be seen in ‘physical slaughter,’ but that ‘although this is the most effective of remedies still in vogue in certain countries it shall not be discussed in this humane essay.’”⁷

Although McCartney noted that “physical” slaughter, although used, was not a decent solution because it was not “humane,” he accepted the other possibilities of population exchanges, changing the state system, or changing borders. If he were to accept forced population exchanges or the changing of borders, which can involve brute force, it stands to reason that a less extreme option, such as assimilation and exclusion, would also have been accepted. Such policies are arguably less severe than population exchanges and also potentially nonviolent.

⁶ Robert M. Hayden, “Schindler's Fate: Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, and Population Transfers,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4. (Winter, 1996), p. 735. Available from Jstor. Accessed 28 March 2005.

⁷ Ibid.

Macedonia vs. FYROM

As noted in this introduction, I have opted to call the country “Macedonia” rather than the “Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” or “FYROM.” I hope that the use of this term is not taken as a sign of disrespect for those who might disagree with this designation. I am also not attempting to be controversial by adopting this nomenclature. Rather, my choice for such a label is threefold. First, the terms “Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and “FYROM” are both, in my humble opinion, too long and artificial. Second, the United States Government has officially recognized the country as “Macedonia,” which has, indeed, lessened the controversial nature of its use. Third, the official name, according to the Macedonians themselves, is “The Republic of Macedonia,” or, in shorthand, “Macedonia.” It is with these considerations, and this explanation, that I continue.

The Policies of Assimilation and Exclusion

During the period of time under analysis, the Government of Macedonia⁸ abided by a dual policy of assimilation and exclusion of the ethnic Albanian minority. As one analyzes the government’s policies, the apparent goal was to limit the influence of growing Albanian ethnic nationalism and, thus, consolidate the position of the ethnic Slav majority. The government endeavored to achieve its goal by following policies related to the education system and the use of the Albanian language, and by attempting to erase Albanians, both categorically and physically, from Macedonia.

⁸ Throughout this essay, the terms Government of Macedonia, Macedonian Government, and Macedonian Slav dominated government are used interchangeably.

Restrictions on Education

One cannot underestimate the powerful effect that education can have on the population. “[I]t is [in] the school that one forms citizens and arouses and nourishes their loyalty to the collectivity. ... The school transforms members of a small, provincial community into citizens.”⁹ Using the vehicle of education, Macedonia attempted to incorporate the Albanian population into southern Slav culture by eliminating Albanian teachers and Albanian nationalistic ideas and by limiting the use of the Albanian language.

One of the efforts to remove an emerging sense of Albanian nationalism from the schools of Macedonia was to exclude teachers and professors who advocated this nationalism.¹⁰ In 1981, the Republican Secretariat for Science and Education, acting on the behest of the Macedonian Assembly, recommended not only that educators who advocated Albanian nationalism be removed from their positions, but that legal proceedings be initiated against them.¹¹ The Republican Secretariat, moreover, labeled these ethnic Albanian nationalist teachers as “enemies,”¹² and a process began to replace ethnic Albanian instructors with ethnic Macedonians.¹³ The logical conclusion of these actions, therefore, would be the fostering of a more Slavic identity in the minds of the minority Albanian citizens by excluding ethnic Albanians from the education sphere. In

⁹ Dominique Schnapper, *Community of Citizens: On the Modern Idea of Nationality* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1988), 109.

¹⁰ A sense of Albanian nationalism was beginning to appear in the Albanian dominated portions of the former Yugoslavia in the late 70s, i.e. Macedonia and Kosovo. Some contribute this rise to Albania proper.

¹¹ “Albania Nationalism: Secondary Education Teachers Dismissed in Kosovo,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 28 August 1981. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis. Note: Parallels with Macedonia were drawn in this article on Kosovo.

¹² “Manifestations of Albanian Nationalism in Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 20 July 1981. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹³ “Albanian Newspaper Article on ‘Chauvinist Campaign in Macedonia,’” Albanian Telegraph Agency, 19 November 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

other words, by removing the influence of Albanian nationalism, Macedonian Slav teachers could instill in their ethnic Albanian students a more Slavic identity.

The existence of Albanian nationalistic educators was not the only threat that the Republican Secretariat for Science and Education observed in 1981. An additional threat was found in the educational materials used in many of the schools of western Macedonia, where the majority of Albanians resided. In its investigation, the Secretariat discovered that many of the educational materials contained information that “glorif[ied] alien and unacceptable ideas...thus making it possible for Albanian nationalist, irredentist...tendencies and manifestations.”¹⁴ Hence, the recommendation of this body was to remove these materials and to have a stronger inspection regime of the materials employed in the western part of the country. This strong control over the materials used in the educational facilities in the predominantly Albanian regions, thus, would serve the purpose of filtering out the ideological conditioning of Albanian nationalism, replacing it with ideas that would facilitate assimilation of the Albanian population into the Macedonian Slav majority.

Control over the educators and the materials used in schools were not the last changes the Macedonian Government instigated in the 1980s. The use of the Albanian language itself was also severely restricted. Instead of classes taught solely in Albanian, compulsory bilingual education, i.e. education in both Albanian and Macedonian, was mandated.¹⁵ In 1987, the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia began the process of “mixed classes,” or classes which theoretically took place in Macedonian and Albanian. In many

¹⁴ “Manifestations of Albanian Nationalism in Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 20 July 1981. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁵ It is important to note that, when discussing the issue of language, the reader keep in mind that Albanian uses the Latin alphabet, while Macedonian employs Cyrillic. Hence, even something as trivial as a place name could be illegible to a literate person if he is unable to decipher the other alphabet.

cases, however, there was the complete removal of the Albanian language from the schools, and there were also no higher level educational facilities in Albanian.¹⁶

Although one might suspect the Albanian newspaper *Drita*'s statement that these reforms had the sole purpose of “abolishing” Albanian secondary schools as ideologically based rhetoric, this sentiment is corroborated by the more objective Associated Press.¹⁷ The Associated Press noted in a 1988 article that the aforementioned “anti-Albanian” policies served to “denationalize the Albanian school, and, by denying the use of the language, strip it of the national character.”¹⁸ The loss of “national character” is the logical conclusion of assimilative policies.

This process of forced assimilation continued during the process of Macedonian independence from Yugoslavia. Although the Macedonian Government allowed, in October 1991, the return of Albanian as an acceptable sole language of instruction, legal regulations were kept in place that would punish the reemergence of Albanian nationalism in the schools, as well as non-Macedonian citizens, i.e. from Kosovo or Albania, from working as educators in Macedonia.¹⁹ Hence, although the use of the Albanian language was theoretically allowed to return to the schools, there remained a tight rein on the material and the people who would use it—all for the purpose of limiting the strengthening of an Albanian identity separate from the Macedonian Slav identity.²⁰

¹⁶ “Portrait of Tito Used by Albanian as Weapon Against Police,” *The Associated Press*, 30 August 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁷ “Macedonia’s Anti-Albanian Policies,” *Drita-Tirana*, 10 January 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁸ “Albanian Newspaper Article on ‘Chauvinist Campaign in Macedonia,’” Albanian Telegraph Agency, 19 November 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁹ “Macedonian Government Approves Classes in Albanian and Rejects Independence,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 17 October 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²⁰ The attempt to monopolize the formation of identity by a state in its own territory is not necessarily an illegitimate action. However, the reaction by the Albanian minority was to deem it illegitimate, as will subsequently be demonstrated.

Restrictions on the Albanian Language

The use of the Albanian language was not only severely restricted in the schools of Macedonia, but it was also limited in other realms of the public sphere. Via legal measures, the use of Albanian was practically non-existent in the official workings of the state apparatus as well as in the social organizations administered by the state.²¹ Hence, in order to be able to operate effectively in the state and to keep from being completely excluded, native Albanian speakers would have to learn Macedonian. By adopting the language of the majority, the process of assimilation would be furthered.²²

The forced adoption of the language of the majority was not the only step taken by the Macedonian Government in the process of assimilation via language. Another strategy was to “slavicize” place names in western Macedonia. On the recommendation of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences in 1985, “names of the places in the territory of SR of Macedonia will be written and used only in their Slavic forms.”²³ This recommendation became law in 1988. While explaining its rationale for the legal measure, the government stated that the move was necessary in order to “correct the names of those places which had been illegally and arbitrarily changed, especially in recent years, from positions of Albanian nationalism and separatism.”²⁴ Hence, the stated purpose of these laws was to mitigate the influence of Albanian nationalism, and, simultaneously, to impose upon the Albanian minority a more Macedonian identity. In

²¹ “Macedonia’s Anti-Albanian Policies,” *Drita-Tirana*, 10 January 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²² Once again, control over the language of national discourse is not an illegitimate action for a state to take. However, in the case of Macedonia, one must remember that in the western regions, ethnic Albanians were the majority group. Hence, the need to learn Macedonian was, as the later discussed Albanian reaction demonstrates, seen as illegitimate by the Albanian minority.

²³ “Albanian Newspaper Article on ‘Chauvinist Campaign in Macedonia,’” Albanian Telegraph Agency, 19 November 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²⁴ “Law Against Abuse of Place Names in Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 18 March 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

fact by mid-1993, there were no longer any street names in Albanian, no names of regions in Albanian, and not even a cultural organization title left in Albanian.²⁵

Apart from place names being slavicized, surnames were also made to resemble more closely those of the Macedonian Slavs. There was also a very effective campaign to change, and once changed to keep, Albanians with slavicized surnames. In 1982, teachers were punished in the Albanian regions of Macedonia for changing the surnames of students by removing the Slavic suffix “-ski,” and replacing it with an Albanian or Turkish suffix.²⁶ By 1985, it was estimated that in some regions of western Macedonia, over 70 percent Albanians had surnames which ended in the Slavic suffixes “-ski” or – “ov.”²⁷

Therefore, the restrictions on educational facilities, the changing of place names and surnames, and the restriction on the use of the Albanian language in Macedonia suggest an attempt to remove the Albanian identity from this ethnic group and to replace it with a more Macedonian and Slavic identity.

Restrictions on Family Size

In 1988, the Macedonian Government adopted a policy to suspend child support from the government for the fourth child of a family. Although this law seems to be innocuous in that it did not explicitly pertain to the Albanian population, the effect on the ethnic Albanian population was much greater than on the Macedonian Slav population.

The Albanian population was more than twice as likely as the Macedonian population to

²⁵ “Borba: Albanians Collect Signatures Demanding Constitutional Changes,” *Borba*, 22 June 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²⁶ “Albanian Nationalism: Teachers Punished for Changing Surnames,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 06 April 1982. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²⁷ “Kosovo Albanian Complaints of Names Being Slavified,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 08 June 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

have more than three children.²⁸ Hence, it would seem that although the initiative to limit population growth in the Macedonian Republic was, on paper, directed at the entire population, it effectively was designed to limit, to a much higher degree, the population growth of the ethnic Albanian population. If the Albanian population were to grow more slowly, its forced assimilation could be quicker and easier.

Official Disappearance of the Albanian Minority

By pursuing such an aggressive campaign of assimilation, one might venture to argue that Macedonia attempted to remove the Albanian identity from its territory. In fact, this is how certain Albanian factions, especially in the country of Albania, saw the process. In 1985, the *Albanian Telegraphy Agency*, the official news source in Albania, stated that the sole purpose of the actions of the Government of Macedonia in maintaining the Slavic surnames of its Albanian minority was to “declare someone “Macedonian” or “Moslem”, “Moslemified Macedonian”, etc.”²⁹ Once again, one might consider such a statement as tainted with ideological bias considering its source in Albania, but this is arguably not the case. In fact, the removal of the Albanian identity as an official designation *was* what the Macedonian Government attempted to accomplish. To that end, the Macedonian Government added a new nationality of citizen, “the Islamicized Macedonian” which included a large number of ethnic Albanians in the country.³⁰ Hence, in order to further assimilate the Albanian minority, a large number of

²⁸ “Macedonian LC President on Demographic Policy,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 01 March 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

²⁹ “Kosovo Albanian Complaints of Names Being Slavified,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 08 June 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

³⁰ “Albanian Newspaper Article on ‘Chauvinist Campaign in Macedonia,’” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 19 November 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

this group was now, in fact, being officially recognized as “Macedonian,” albeit with a special modifier which indicated their religious orientation.

When one observes the attempt to erase the ethnic Albanian identity via assimilative policies in education, place name changes, surname changes, the creation of a new category of “Macedonian,” and a program of population control, one comes to the conclusion that the Macedonian authorities were attempting to assimilate forcibly the Albanian nationality. One can see that this was, indeed, the end result desired by the Macedonian Government.³¹ In 1989, the Macedonian Government created an amendment to its constitution which removed the Albanian nationality from the definition of the state. The original constitutional wording defined Macedonia as “a state of the Macedonian nation and the Albanian and Turkish nationalities.”³² The proposed constitutional change, however, would have erased the Albanian and Turkish nationalities, and would have defined the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia simply as a “national state of the Macedonian nation.”³³ ³⁴ Hence, the Albanian ethnic population would have been completely and officially removed from the “Macedonian nation.”

Ethnic Exclusion in Macedonia

This constitutional exclusion, moreover, effectively recognized another policy employed by the Macedonian Government to consolidate the Macedonian Slav position in society, a policy of overall exclusion. First, economic, cultural, and political exclusion

³¹ Although the actions of the Macedonian Government pointed toward an official attempt to remove officially the Albanian minority from society, as was shown with the Ohrid Agreement of 2001, it was not successful.

³² “New Definition of Macedonia Statehood,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 03 May 1989. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ As will later be demonstrated, the Albanian minority understood this constitutional change as an attempt to exclude them from them officially from the political-economic system. In their eyes, the Macedonian “nation” was for the Macedonian “nationality.”

will be examined. Following this analysis, exclusion as a result of the post-independence constitution will be discussed.

Economic Exclusion

Economic exclusion did, occur during the period studied. First, not only were ethnic Albanian instructors removed from their positions as previously described, but ethnic Albanians were also removed or excluded from positions within all other sectors of the state apparatus. Spectators from Albania saw such actions as an attempt to remove the influence of ethnic Albanian nationalism from the state and to ensure Macedonian ideological supremacy.³⁵ Since this removal of influence was what had occurred in the schools, one can state that the extension of such a policy to the rest of the public sector would be logical. Hence, the ability to make a living wage and to benefit professionally in government service did not exist, to the economic detriment of the Albanian minority.

With the fall of the Yugoslav state and with the creation of an independent Macedonia, the economic exclusion continued. By mid-1992, some ethnic Albanians likened their experiences in Macedonia with that of the black population of South Africa during Apartheid. Albanians were unlikely to be employed by the state, and it was also practically impossible to acquire a state apartment—many ethnic Albanians resided in “shanty towns.”³⁶ Thus, the economic exclusion continued in terms of state employment and also limited the ethnic Albanians ability to benefit from public goods, i.e. state housing.

³⁵ “Macedonia’s Anti-Albanian Policies,” *Drita-Tirana*, 10 January 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

³⁶ Helena Smith, “Macedonia’s Outcasts Threaten to Turn Balkan ‘Fruit Salad’ into a Powder Keg,” *The Guardian*, 31 July 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

After the collapse of communism, there was a deterioration of the Macedonian economy, which put even more strain on the economic position of the ethnic Albanian population in Macedonia. For example in 1992, gasoline was procured mostly on the black market, at 5 USD a gallon, with the average salary reduced from 200 USD a month prior to the collapse of Yugoslavia, to a mere 60 USD in 1992.³⁷ Since the ethnic minority Albanian population was already in a precarious economic situation at the end of the communist era, it takes little imagination to envision their collective economic condition worsening as the economy plunged.

Although it may be true that the Albanian minority, being more concentrated in the agricultural western regions, was less dependent on income than Macedonian Slavs, the disparity in salary would have the effect of keeping them in a de facto position of economic exclusion in that they were less able to participate in the workings of the economy. If one cannot participate in the workings of the economy, he is effectively excluded from it.

Cultural Exclusion

Cultural exclusion in terms of language, names, and education has already been discussed, but the Macedonian Government, both before and after the fall of Yugoslavia, used additional methods to exclude the Albanian minority culturally. For example, the government disbanded numerous Albanian cultural, sport, and art associations, all officially because they fostered Albanian nationalism.^{38 39} All of these organizations, by

³⁷ Robert Marquand, "Macedonia Staves off Conflict," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

³⁸ "Manifestations of Albanian Nationalism in Macedonia," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 20 July 1981. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

³⁹ "Federal Secretariat Bans Albanian Association in Macedonia," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 16 March 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

their mere definition, were designed to express, spread, and maintain culture. Since they were abolished, the Albanian minority was no longer officially able to foster and to express its culture.

Additionally, there was a great lack of Albanian language information available from the Macedonian Government, including television, radio, and newspapers. For example, as late as 1993, there was only one hour of news a week in Albanian on Macedonian television, compared to dozens of hours of Macedonian language television.^{40 41} In the course of a day, when all hours of radio play time were combined, even as late as 1993, there were 64 hours of airtime in Macedonian, with only six in Albanian.⁴² Lastly, also in 1993, there were no Albanian language newspapers published in Macedonia.^{43 44} With such limited access to the media as a way to spread and to express culture and language, one cannot deny the case of cultural exclusion, especially when compared to the much larger access the state granted to media service in Macedonian.

If there was one specific action taken by the Macedonian Government, albeit during Yugoslav times, which symbolically exemplifies the extent of cultural exclusion the Albanian minority faced, it would be the removal of a monument in western Macedonia that marked the location of the Monastir Conference, which standardized the

⁴⁰ Robert Marquand, "Macedonia Staves off Conflict," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁴¹ "'Very Alarming' Lack of Albanian Language Reporting," *Albania Radio*, 12 June 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ It is true that the radio and newspaper did come from a biased source, i.e. an Albanian Radio report, but the Christian Science Monitor, a well respected news source, did support the facts presented on television airtime in Albanian. This corroboration lends, therefore, more credence to the information presented by the Albanian media.

Albanian alphabet and language.⁴⁵ In fact, the Albanian Government in Tirana stated that the removal of the monument was an attempt “to wipe out every trace of the historic and cultural traditions of the Albanians in [Macedonia].”⁴⁶ If the Albanian Government saw this action as an attack, and when factored in with the other forms of exclusion of ethnic Albanian cultural activities in Macedonia, the conclusion that Albanians in Macedonia would also have seen it as an attack is logical.

Political Exclusion

In addition to the economic and cultural exclusion faced by ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, there was also strong political exclusion. Between 1980 and 1985, for example, some 1,151 Albanians faced legal action in Macedonia charged with ethnic nationalism.⁴⁷ In 1991, the government admitted that there were approximately 60 people incarcerated in Skopje charged with Albanian nationalism, albeit they did not consider them political prisoners, but rather “radicals” focused on destroying the Republic by creating a “Greater Albania.”⁴⁸ Despite this official declaration of the inmates not being imprisoned for political grounds, it seems to reason that the mere fact that they were imprisoned because of Albanian nationalistic tendencies seems to negate the government’s statement.

Average Albanians, however, were not the only ones subjected to imprisonment due to nationalistic tendencies. In September 1991, Nevzat Halili, the leader of the ethnic Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), was sentenced to two months in prison

⁴⁵ “Albanian Memorial in Macedonia Removed,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 04 January 1989. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁴⁶ “Albanian Paper on Removal of Albanian Memorial in Macedonia,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 10 January 1989. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁴⁷ “Nationalist Problems in Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 17 December 1985. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁴⁸ “No Political Prisoners in Macedonian Albania Sentenced for Separatism,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 27 February 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

for “his refusal to give information to the census commission during the census in April.”⁴⁹ The ridiculous nature of the charge, not to mention the sentence itself, shows the great lengths the Macedonian Government went to in order to suppress ethnic Albanian political movements.

If Albanians were imprisoned for simply professing allegiance to their ethnic identity and for advocating higher standards of living for themselves, then one can say that political exclusion did exist. In fact, the extent of this political exclusion will be the focus of a subsequent section of this essay. However, the underlying fact remains that the Albanian minority was unable to profess its political ideas and faced imprisonment for them.⁵⁰ This, in and of itself, is the definition of political exclusion.

Political exclusion continued in the advent of a multiparty system in Macedonia. In November 1990, the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia held the first free parliamentary elections since its founding in 1945. However, there was talk of irregularities in the Albanian sections of the country during and shortly after the elections.⁵¹ Word of these irregularities caused ethnic Macedonians to protest the results of the election, with over 50,000 ethnic Macedonians in Skopje demonstrating against the results, claiming that the elections had been used as a tool of Albanian separatists attempting to increase their representation via fraudulent elections.⁵² In response, the Macedonian Government annulled the election results from some 150 polling stations, predominantly from ethnic Albanian regions. As a result, Albanian and Macedonian interethnic tension rose, the

⁴⁹ “Leader of Albanian Party in Macedonia Receives 60-day Prison Sentence,” Yugoslav News Agency, 12 September 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵⁰ This occurred both during the Yugoslav era as well as in independent Macedonia, as will be established in other sections of this essay.

⁵¹ “Yugoslav Poll Protests,” *The Financial Times*, 12 November 1990. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵² “Protest Rally in Skopje over Macedonian Elections Albanian Party’s Reaction,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 16 November 1990. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Macedonians upset at the alleged actions of “Albanian separatists” and Albanians upset by the annulment.⁵³

This annulment led the Albanian parties to call the elections “rigged” and blamed these elections for the lack of larger numbers in the National Assembly.⁵⁴ Despite the promise of more representatives by the initial election results, the annulment led to fewer representatives. The veracity of “rigged” elections is not necessarily important. The more important fact is that the Albanian minority *believed* the elections were manipulated and that they felt even more excluded from the political system. This feeling of exclusion continued in the period of the drafting of a new constitution.

Exclusion and a New Constitution

It was this newly elected legislature which, following the declaration of independence, penned the constitution of the new Republic of Macedonia. As a result of the annulment of the vote in the predominantly Albanian districts, combined with the fact that the Albanians were already a minority, many of the Albanian demands and wishes were not respected in the final version of the new constitution. In fact, during the process of drafting and debate, the ethnic Albanian members of the legislature walked out several times in protest, thus slowing down the process.⁵⁵

The major point of contention was the position of the ethnic Albanian minority in the constitutional structure of society. First, the Albanian representatives objected to the fact that the Macedonian state was declared to be “the home state of the Macedonian

⁵³ “Albanian-Macedonian Tension in Western Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 17 November 1990. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵⁴ “Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity Holds Congress in Macedonia,” *Tanjug*, 12 February 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵⁵ “Macedonian Parliament Postpones Debate on Constitution for Two Days,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 12 November 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

people and all people who live in it,” preferring, instead, that the wording include the phrase “and the Albanian people.”⁵⁶ When there was a possible mention of an Albanian minority in the constitution, the Albanian representatives balked at the fact that they were relegated to the status of a simple minority, not as a “nation” as was their position in Yugoslavia, the effects of which will be discussed forthwith.⁵⁷ Finally, there was great disappointment on the part of the Albanian representatives that their language was not made an official language of the state. The constitution stated that the sole official language was Macedonian, although there was the concession that “minority” languages could be used in regions where it was dominant.⁵⁸ Consequently, the Albanian language and the Albanian ethnic group itself were excluded from the new constitution in that they received no explicit mention.

As a result of the aforementioned exclusion, the Albanian representatives and their parties not only publicly decried the final constitution, but also boycotted the final vote which promulgated it. This boycott called into question the legitimacy of the constitution itself.⁵⁹ Thus, a shadow was cast over the constitution in that, via the boycott of the final vote, the ethnic Albanian minority intimated that they would not necessarily respect this constitution.

Inclusion?

In order to give a better understanding of the period, it is important to point out that it was not only ethnically based rhetoric and discord which dominated the period

⁵⁶ “Macedonian Parliament Postpones Debate on Constitution for Two Days,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 12 November 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵⁷ “New Macedonian Constitution Adopted by National Assembly Amidst Polemics,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 17 November 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ “Ethnic Albanians Question Validity of New Macedonian Constitution,” *Radio Belgrade*, 19 November 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

between the 1990 elections and the end of 1993. In mid-April 1992, for example, two ethnic Macedonian policemen were suspended following an incident of police brutality involving an ethnic Albanian. In the aftermath of the episode, the Macedonian Government did not ignore the incident, nor did it only engage ethnic Macedonians in the investigation. Instead, the National Assembly formed a committee, with an equal number of ethnic Macedonian and Albanian members, with the purpose of investigating all incidents of police brutality in the country. Hence, there was some reaching out on the part of the Macedonian majority to the Albanian minority.

Representation on this committee was not the only potentially positive example which one can cite for this time period. Also in April 1992, the Macedonian Government, specifically the Ministry for Internal Affairs, began a series of institutional changes in order to increase the representation of ethnic Albanians, especially in the western regions of the country where they were the majority ethnic group. By mid-April 1992, the police chief in the western Albanian stronghold of Tetovo was an ethnic Albanian, the first Albanian to hold that post in almost 50 years. Additionally, there was an active campaign to recruit more ethnic Albanians to serve the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the West.⁶⁰

The government itself also made an effort to include ethnic Albanians in the Cabinet, out of proportion to its numbers in the Assembly. In the period in question, Albanian based parties held 25 out of the 120 seats in the Macedonian Assembly, or approximately 21 percent of that body.⁶¹ However, Albanians held, depending on the

⁶⁰ "Macedonia's Interior Ministry Says Police Will Now Reflect Ethnic Diversity," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 16 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁶¹ Igor Nekrasov, "Albanian Plot in Macedonia," *Moscow News*, 26 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

month, either five or six of the 14 ministries in the Macedonian Government, or between 36 and 43 percent of those posts.⁶² Hence, there was an effort on the part of the Slav Macedonian dominated government to be inclusive of the ethnic Albanian parties, i.e. they effectively doubled their numbers in the Cabinet when compared with the numbers of the representatives elected to the Assembly.

In terms of the Assembly itself, the Albanian parties publicly stated that they did have some influence, a further testament that not all was negative during the period in question. Nevzat Halili, the leader of the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), stated in mid-1993 that, “Although not fully satisfied with its share in the coalition... the party had influenced the passing of certain laws, particularly those affecting privatization.”⁶³ Hence, the Albanian minority parties were not completely isolated in the workings of the government.

Another positive development involved limited inclusion of the Albanian language. The first compromise involves education. As has been noted elsewhere in this essay, the use of Albanian as a language of instruction was allowed in schools under close supervision by the government. The records maintained in the schools, however, continued to be exclusively in Macedonian. Hence, a compromise reached between the Albanian and Macedonian representatives allowed teaching records to be in the language of instruction and allowed official educational documents to be in both Albanian and Macedonian.⁶⁴

⁶² “Albanians’ Role in Macedonia Government a Contribution to Peace, Minster Says,” *Islamic Republic News Agency (Iran)*, 27 June 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ “Protest by Albanians Outside Macedonian Assembly over Education Issue,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 15 June 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

In addition to the use of Albanian on educational documents, the Macedonian Government compromised on language for other official documents, such as identity cards, which had been written in Macedonian. Although the Macedonian Government in its compromise did not allow for the entire document to be in both languages, it did make the concession that the name printed on the card could be in both Albanian and in Macedonian.⁶⁵ However, since Macedonian was the official language of the republic, the use of Macedonian was used exclusively in official government documents, including passports, which was a further point of contention.⁶⁶

Although, as stated above, the Albanian parties did have some influence, and although there was theoretically more institutional representation for ethnic Albanians in the West through initiatives such as those followed by the Ministry for Internal Affairs, there were still many problems in the eyes of the Albanian minority. The most discontent dealt with the composition of state institutions and the desire for autonomy.

According to representatives of the Albanian minority, there was “no court with an Albanian chairman, no Albanian in the Macedonian Army General Staff, and no Albanian in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Relations.”⁶⁷ Despite the announced call to include more ethnic Albanians in its ranks, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in the opinion of Albanian parties, still was not representative enough. For example, in an *Economist* article from November 1993, it was noted that Slav

⁶⁵ “Proposal by Main Albanian Party on Identity Cards Rejected, Compromise Offered,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 25 May 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁶⁶ Helena Smith, “Macedonia’s Outcasts Threaten to Turn Balkan ‘Fruit Salad’ into a Powder Keg,” *The Guardian*, 31 July 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁶⁷ “Borba: Albanians Collect Signatures Demanding Constitutional Changes,” *Borba*, 22 June 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Macedonians control the Ministry and, in fact, their control had been strengthened.⁶⁸

Hence, if an institution which promised more inclusion could not fulfill its pledge, then one can reason that other institutions, such as the army, courts, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all of which were explicitly mentioned, would have just as poor, and possibly worse, inclusion.

Albanian Reactions

As a result of the assimilative and exclusionary policies of the Macedonian Slav dominated government, the Albanian minority actively began to resist. One of the possible methods used by an ethnic minority in the face of forced assimilation and/or exclusion is to start ignoring the laws and the system imposed upon them by the majority. The Albanian minority, in fact, adopted this strategy in Macedonia. In a statement issued in September 1990, the Macedonian Government stated that the Albanian minority had begun “to ignore and hamper the functioning of legitimate bodies...in the spheres of education, culture, science information, and other areas of public life.” Additionally, the government made public that the Albanian minority had begun to boycott “teaching in Macedonian and the teachers of the Macedonian nationality.”⁶⁹

Boycotting and ignoring the law, however, were not the only methods the ethnic Albanian population employed; protesting was another weapon utilized against Macedonian policies. The following are examples of the numerous protests which occurred during the time period studied, examples meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. The first example took place in 1988, when there was a protest against

⁶⁸ “Macedonia and Albania: Aha, a Plot,” *The Economist*, 20 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁶⁹ “Macedonian Government on Situation in West Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 19 September 1990. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

compulsory bilingual education in Macedonia in which demonstrators hurled rocks at police.⁷⁰ Rocks were once again employed at a protest in 1991, when demonstrators pelted census officials in the Albanian dominated province of Tetovo.⁷¹ And in 1992, about 40,000 Albanians flooded Skopje demanding more political and national rights.⁷²

Apart from boycotting, ignoring the law, and the protesting which occurred in the 1980s and early 1990s, there was also a separatist movement which occurred during this time period. As has already been mentioned, there were multiple incarcerations prior to the fall of Yugoslavia for separatism, but the movement really exploded in the aftermath of Yugoslavia's collapse and the establishment of an independent Macedonia.

As early as 1988, ten Albanian separatist organizations had been discovered by the government, with 76 people arrested for their activities.⁷³ After Macedonia seceded from Yugoslavia, the Albanian minority took their separatism to a new level by announcing a referendum, for the 11th and 12th of January 1992, on autonomy for the Albanian dominant regions. Although the Albanian parties which announced and organized this referendum stated that its purpose was not to “threaten the territorial integrity, rights and interests of other national communities in Macedonia,”⁷⁴ the veracity of this statement was negated by the perceptions of observers leading up to the poll. One observer noted that, via the rhetoric spouting forth from the ethnic Albanian organizers of the referendum, the root cause of the vote was to provide “a possible first step towards

⁷⁰ “Portrait of Tito Used by Albanian as Weapon Against Police,” *The Associated Press*, 30 August 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷¹ “Census Officials in Macedonia Attacked by Albanians,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 02 April 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷² “Albanians Protest in Skopje for Minority Representation in the Republic,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 31 March 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷³ “Macedonian Assembly Meeting Albanian Nationalism Condemned,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 20 September 1988. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷⁴ “Party for Democratic Prosperity Announces Referendum on Albanian Autonomy,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 01 January 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

formation of a Greater Albania.”⁷⁵ Despite the fact that the Macedonian Government called the poll “illegal,”⁷⁶ it took place with 99.9 percent of Albanians voting in favor of autonomy.⁷⁷

In the face of the Macedonian Government’s declaration of the poll and its result as “illegal,” the ethnic Albanians in Macedonia effectively dropped the demand for autonomy and, instead, declared the ethnically Albanian dominant regions of Macedonia as an independent republic which they named “Ilirida” in early April 1992.⁷⁸ This republic was proclaimed after a weekend of protests, and was described as a first step to unite “all Albanians in Yugoslavia and the Balkans in one state.”⁷⁹ According to the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), Ilirida would be a separate state in a federalized Macedonia, which would serve as the basis for a greater Albanian state in the future.⁸⁰

The Albanian party leaders which took part in the January referendum on autonomy, as well as in the declaration of the independent Ilirida, announced the rationale behind their actions. Specifically, they focused on the effects of the forced assimilation and exclusion that they had endured in the 1980s and early 1990s. They stated that they would finalize the partition of the country, “if the Skopje authorities

⁷⁵ Nicolas Miletitch, “Ethnic Albanians Flex Separatist Muscle.” *Agence France Press*, 10 January 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷⁶ “Macedonia Declares Albanian Autonomy Poll ‘Illegal,’” *Agence France Presse*, 06 January 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷⁷ “Albanians in Macedonia Vote Overwhelmingly for Autonomy,” *Agence France Press*, 14 January 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷⁸ By the fall of 1992, however, the Albanian parties and the majority of the Albanian people had given up on the idea of federalizing Macedonia and of asking for complete independence. Robert Marquand, “Macedonia Staves off Conflict.” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁷⁹ Nicolas Miletitch, “Ethnic Albanians Proclaim Republic in Macedonia,” *Agence France Press*, 06 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁸⁰ “National Democrats Want Albanians to Become a State-Forming Nation in Macedonia,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 17 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

refuse to grant Albanians the same national rights as Macedonians...Macedonian Albanians are under-represented in state companies and public institutions. They lack schools, and their share of the media is limited...”⁸¹

The separatist actions, however, were not simply limited to rhetoric and referenda, but also included armed struggle. From the time of the referendum for autonomy in January through June 1992, the Macedonian authorities seized 26 Albanian weapons shipments of machine guns and explosives.⁸² By the end of August, Albanian paramilitary groups had armed themselves in extreme western Macedonia,⁸³ and acts of terrorism, including the bombing of a railroad line, had taken place.⁸⁴

By the end of 1993, although the rhetoric for an independent Ilirida had somewhat subsided, the arms smuggling had continued. Another plot was uncovered in November 1993, which had envisioned the arming of a 20,000 person strong Albanian army on Macedonian soil.⁸⁵ ⁸⁶ Hence, although the rhetoric had abated, segments of society continued what they believed was an armed struggle against the Macedonian Government and its policies.

Albanian Political Parties Resist

As has been duly noted, the results of the exclusionary and assimilative policies against the Albanian minority were to cause turmoil in the internal workings of

⁸¹ Yigal Chazan, “Minority Threatens Macedonia Split,” *The Guardian*, 17 November 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ In addition, a Macedonian paramilitary group formed in response to the Albanian group, which also announced it would assassinate any Albanian leaders in Macedonia who called for autonomy.

⁸⁴ Frank Viviano, “Next Balkan Flash Point,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 August 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁸⁵ “Interior Minister Says Conspirators’ Arms Came from Albania,” *Yugoslav Telegraph Service*, 10 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁸⁶ “Arrests of Senior Government Officials; Widespread Anti-Albanian Crackdown,” *Yugoslav Telegraph Service*, 09 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Macedonia. Albanian politicians often used their political parties in order to resist the policies of the government. One common demand centered on the use of the Albanian language. Although it is true that the Macedonian constitution theoretically allowed the use of a “minority language” in regions where it was present, the reality of the situation was that this did not always occur. Thus, in order to guarantee its use, Albanian political parties continued to clamor for the addition of Albanian as an official language of the State in the constitution.⁸⁷

Perhaps the principal controversy was that of the official status of the Albanian population, which was constitutionally said to be a “minority” instead of a “nation.”⁸⁸ In July 1992, the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) Vice President, Sami Ibrahimi, stated, “We are not a minority, we are a constituent nation of Macedonia.”⁸⁹ Although one may not necessarily be able to deduce the importance of the difference in designation, one must remember the legacy of Yugoslavia in which constituent nations were guaranteed autonomy either via their own republics, i.e. Slovenia, Macedonia, or as autonomous regions, i.e. Kosovo.⁹⁰ Hence, the designation becomes important in that by being “a state constituent” or “an equal, state constituting nation,” there would be some degree of autonomy afforded to the Albanian minority dominated areas.⁹¹ It is this autonomy, the right for the Albanian population to gain a stronger role over their own

⁸⁷ “Albanian Parties in Macedonia Set Out Demands on Minority Issues,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 02 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁸⁸ Once again, it is important to note that the Albanian minority understood “nation” to mean “nationality.”

⁸⁹ Helena Smith, “Macedonia’s Outcasts Threaten to Turn Balkan ‘Fruit Salad’ into a Powder Keg,” *The Guardian*, 31 July 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹⁰ “Albanian Party Demands Conference on Macedonia Before its Admission,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 19 February 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹¹ “Fourth Albanian Party in Macedonia Demands More Rights for Albanians,” *Yugoslav News Agency*, 18 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

affairs, which was one main goal of the ethnic Albanians and the parties which they formed.

Arguably, the one defining characteristic of the Albanian parties in Macedonia in the period covered is their working in coordination with Albanian parties in other countries and with the Government of Albania in an attempt to resist Macedonian Slav pressure. The coordination of parties was rather extensive. In August 1991, before Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia, a conference of Albanian parties from the Balkans established a coordinating committee based in the Albanian stronghold of Pristina in Kosovo. Ten ethnic Albanian parties from Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, and Montenegro collectively announced their main goals of cooperation and coordination of policy and of jointly combating assimilative and exclusionary measures against Albanians.⁹²

This committee, or its individual members, often commented on the events that were taking place in Macedonia during the years considered. One prominent example appeared in a press release in November 1993, issued by the *Albanian Telegraph Agency* in Tirana. The statement averred, “Albanian political parties and public in Kosovo maintain that the imprisonment of Albanians in Macedonia is a dangerous act which intends destabilization in the country and serves the anti-Albanian policy and Serbian warmongering purposes.”⁹³ From this statement, it is obvious the interconnectedness, especially of policy and of interest, the Albanian parties of the committee maintained in their resistance to Macedonian Slav policies.

⁹² “Formation of Co-ordination Committee of Albanian Parties in Yugoslavia,” *Tanjug*, 28 August 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹³ “Kosovo Parties Condemn Imprisonment of Albanians in Macedonia,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 16 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

One can state, however, that the Serbian oppression of Kosovo, as well as the extremely weak Albanian state, minimized the influence of these groups on their Macedonian counterparts, making their support mostly ideological and not material. The country of Albania, for example, was in a deep economic crisis which became even more serious as the communist regime started to fall. By the end of 1990, the Albanian economy had completely collapsed, with food riots ensuing and complete dependence on foreign aid.⁹⁴

The Albanian Government in Tirana, however, was very active politically with the Albanian parties in Macedonia. In 1993 alone, members of Macedonian Albanian parties visited Albanian officials, including President Berisha, on at least two occasions.⁹⁵

⁹⁶ In addition to the meetings of political allies, the Government of Albania and its members often commented on the state of affairs in Macedonia. In late 1992, President Berisha repeated his call for constitutional changes in Macedonia that would give the Albanian minority a stronger role.⁹⁷ In late 1993, the Democratic Party of Albania issued a statement in which it likened the persecution of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia to a “witch hunt,” and called for an end to Albanian oppression in Macedonia.⁹⁸ Through the meetings with Albanian officials, the public pronouncements on the state of affairs in Macedonia made by Albanians outside of Macedonia, and the coordination committee,

⁹⁴ Liam McDowall, “Albanians Flood Across Border for Orthodox Easter,” *The Associated Press*, 25 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹⁵ “Selami Meets Delegation of Ethnic Albanian Party from Macedonia,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 14 December 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹⁶ “Albanian President Receives Ethnic Albanian Party Delegation from Macedonia,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 12 April 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹⁷ “Albanian Deputies of Macedonian Parliament Visiting Albania,” *Albanian Telegraph Service*, 09 December 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

⁹⁸ “Democratic Party Condemns Persecution of Albanians in Macedonia,” *Albanian Radio*, 12 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

one can see how Albanians actively resisted Macedonian policies of exclusion and assimilation.

Macedonian Parties React

Ethnic Albanians were not alone in the creation of political parties which were based on ethnic demands; Macedonian Slavs also created such a party. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian Unity, VRMO-DPMNE, won the largest portion of the vote in the spring 1992 elections with 33 percent.⁹⁹ From this total, one can understand the power this party had in the political mainstream of Macedonian politics. From its appearance early in 1991, during the course of Macedonia's first multi-party elections, the VRMO-DPMNE's platform not only demanded a Macedonian state independent from Yugoslavia, but also labeled itself, "a rampart against Albanian nationalism and separatism."¹⁰⁰ Hence, from its first platform, it capitalized on the attempts of ethnic Albanians to fight assimilation and exclusion.

As time progressed, and as nationalism grew stronger and the call for more rights, autonomy, and independence grew stronger, the fear of the average Macedonian Slav grew. In September 1991, the Skopje daily paper *Vecer* issued an editorial which stated that,

"The institutions of the Macedonian state can no longer count on the loyalty of ethnic Albanians, and that possibilities should not be ruled out for the state to step up repressive measures towards the Albanian minority in Macedonia if the PDP seek the answers to its dilemmas in aggression and if a scenario of an all-Albanian referendum become reality."¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ It is important to note that moderate Macedonian Slavs formed a coalition with the ethnic Albanian parties in the National Assembly, and the VRMO-DPMNE was forced into the opposition. Robert Marquand. "Macedonia Staves off Conflict." *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰⁰ "Congress of VRMO-DPMNE Call for 'Comprehensive Independence' of Macedonia," *Prilep*, 11 April 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰¹ "Macedonian Paper on Need to Consider Repression of Ethnic Albanians," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 10 September 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

By March of 1992, Albanian nationalism had become such a powerful force in western Macedonia that Macedonian Slavs in the region felt the need to protest the inaction of the government. In explaining the reasons for the protest, a spokesperson for the protestors told the press that they blamed the Macedonian Government for being unable to check the progress of Albanian nationalism and the effort to create a Greater Albania.¹⁰²

The VRMO-DPMNE capitalized on the fears of the average Macedonian Slav in its ethnically charged political positioning. In June 1991, the Minister of Education and the Vice President of the National Assembly announced that there would be a debate on allowing educational records to be kept in both Macedonian and Albanian. The VRMO-DPMNE's response was quick and harsh. It called the actions by these politicians "treason" and called for their immediate resignations.¹⁰³ By April 1992, the party had gone so far as to announce its intent to assassinate the leaders of Albanian parties if they continued their nationalistic program.¹⁰⁴ Finally, in terms of examples, the VRMO-DPMNE called for the exclusion of all Albanians from government in 1993 as a partial response to the interference, previously described, of the Albanian Government in the internal affairs of Macedonia.¹⁰⁵ ¹⁰⁶ Therefore, one can see the extreme politicization of

¹⁰² "Western Macedonians Reportedly Accuse Government of Betraying Macedonia," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 04 March 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰³ "Call for Resignations over to Concessions Albanians on Education Issue," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 15 June 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰⁴ "Macedonia's Interior Ministry Says Police Will Now Reflect Ethnic Diversity," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 16 April 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰⁵ "Macedonia and Albania: Aha, a Plot," *The Economist*, 20 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰⁶ Igor Nekrasov, "Albanian Plot in Macedonia," *Moscow News*, 26 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

the parties in Macedonia along ethnic lines, with Albanians demanding more rights and the Macedonians Slavs responding with their own brand of ethnic nationalism.

Moderate Politicians

This nationalist extremism had its effect on moderate politicians. From the first multi-party elections in Macedonia through the end of 1993, not all politicians were as radical as those mentioned in the previous sections. There were, in fact, rather influential moderate politicians in positions of power, and even factions within the Albanian political parties, which advocated a more moderate approach. The moderate Macedonian Slav politicians and the Albanian PDP were able to form a coalition government in the National Assembly following independence,¹⁰⁷ but with little result. Moderation simply maintained the status quo and was unable to provide solutions to the ethnic tensions which culminated in near civil war and the 2001 Ohrid Agreement.

In order to understand why the moderate politicians were only able to maintain the status quo, one must take a closer look at the internal workings of the ethnically based political parties. The PDP, part of the ruling coalition, was fighting an internal struggle. Extremists in the party advocated secession and the formation of a Greater Albania while moderate party members preferred to work within the established Macedonian political system and maintain Macedonia's integrity.¹⁰⁸ Both factions desired the same outcome, the elevated position of the

¹⁰⁷ Robert Marquand, "Macedonia Staves off Conflict," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁰⁸ Marcus Tanner, "Macedonia 'Walking Tightrope' to Avert Balkan War," *The Independent*, 11 November 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Albanian minority, it was just on the means to that end in which the two sides differed.

Macedonian Slav moderates also faced a similar situation, best represented by the Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov, an ethnic Slav. President Gligorov attempted to navigate between the Macedonian and Albanian political extremes in order to keep the country together,¹⁰⁹ but he faced strong resistance from fellow Slavs, namely the opposition VRMO-DPMNE. For example, constitutional wording was agreed upon in the National Assembly, under the guidance of Gligorov, which gave preeminence to Macedonian citizenship rather than to an explicit ethnic group or groups. Following this agreement, the VRMO-DPMNE came very close to pushing through a vote of “no-confidence” against Gligorov.¹¹⁰ Additionally, Gligorov was trying to work within a system in which Macedonian Slavs were becoming more and more hostile to Albanians because of their secession attempts.¹¹¹

Hence, both moderate Albanians and Macedonian Slavs faced a dilemma. One option was to work together and devise solutions which would quell ethnic tensions in Macedonia. If they were to do this, however, there would be a very high likelihood of failure in that they would lose support from their ethnic group. For example, if the Macedonian moderates were to give concessions to the Albanian minority, then they could lose in the next elections in favor of more

¹⁰⁹ Robert Marquand, “Macedonia Staves off Conflict,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹¹⁰ “Macedonia and Albania: Aha, a Plot,” *The Economist*, 20 November 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹¹¹ Robert Marquand, “Macedonia Staves off Conflict,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

extreme politicians, i.e. the VRMO-DPMNE, as presaged by the close vote of no confidence against Gligorov. If the Albanian moderate politicians were to agree to less than what was demanded, then they, too, could lose support from their ethnic group resulting in stronger demands and actions toward secession and a Greater Albania.

In the face of these two extremes, the outcome was logical—maintenance of the status quo. Since neither side could give or receive what it truly wanted without the probable end of extremism taking over, then the next rational step would be to try to keep extremism from taking further hold. The best way in which to achieve such a result was to try to keep the situation static. Eventually though, the status quo was no longer viable and the specter of civil war emerged. The policies of assimilation and exclusion officially failed, as evidenced by the 2001 Ohrid Agreement and the concessions granted to the Albanian minority.

The Question

As has been shown in the introduction, the use of forced assimilation and exclusion were traditionally used to homogenize society in the Balkans. Macedonia's use of such historically proven methods, therefore, is unsurprising. Macedonia, however, was much less successful than other Balkan nations had been in the past. Therefore, the question arises that if Macedonia was following the historically defined and proven policies of the Balkans in order to get its population under control, why were there so many problems? In other words, why was the Macedonia Slav majority so unsuccessful given the historical tradition of forced assimilation and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans?

Rationale for the Assimilative and Exclusionary Policies and their Failure

Before one can answer these questions, however, an analysis of the rationale behind the assimilative and exclusionary policies employed by the Macedonian Government is warranted. It has been posited by numerous academics that heterogeneity increases the odds of conflict in nation-states. Michael Brown has noted that “states with ethnic minorities are more prone to conflict than others” while more homogeneous states are less disposed to discord.¹¹² Sergej Flere agrees and adds that although heterogeneity is not an absolute indicator of societal discord, it increases the possibility.¹¹³ Finally, Steven Burg and Michael Berbaum claim that, “Cultural diversity...is widely viewed in the comparative politics literature as an impediment to integration at the mass level and therefore as a threat to political stability.”¹¹⁴ Since heterogeneity could be the source of such instability and potential societal discord, one logical conclusion is the adoption of a policy to homogenize society via assimilation of the minority group(s).

By looking at such cases as Switzerland, Belgium, France, and Spain, all of which are historically multi-ethnic, there is the possibility that division based on ethnicity can be reined in, and a stable, multiethnic polity created. In all of these cases, a national identity was formed which transcended ethnic differences. Macedonia, however, was unable to foment such a national identity partly due to the historical legacies it had inherited from the Ottoman Empire and the Yugoslav state, especially the legacy of the delayed formation of a Macedonian identity.

¹¹² Michael Brown, “The Causes of Internal Conflict,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 7.

¹¹³ Sergej Flere, “Ethnic Antagonism in Yugoslavia,” *European Sociological Review* 7, No. 3 *Special Edition on Eastern Europe* (December 1991), 189.

¹¹⁴ Steven Burg and Michael Berbaum, “Community, Integration, and Stability in Multinational Yugoslavia,” *The American Political Science Review* 83, No. 2 (June 1989), 536.

The Historical Legacy of the Ottoman Empire and Yugoslavia

Macedonia faced several obstacles which inhibited it from forming a complete national identity. The first obstacle to the forming of a national identity which would unite the entire population within the borders of Macedonia was the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire. The modern state of Macedonia was not conceived of as a political entity until the consolidation of Yugoslavia under Tito in the 1940s. Part of the reason for this state of affairs is the way in which the Ottoman Empire was able to limit ethnic identity from appearing in its territories, including in what today is the Republic of Macedonia.

The Ottoman Empire was able to limit ethnic identity as a challenge to its central authority. The Ottomans began using religious administration in the 15th century as a way to administer the newly acquired territory in the Balkans.¹¹⁵ The Patriarch of the Orthodox Church was responsible for the loyalty of his followers to Istanbul, including tax collection and maintaining public order.¹¹⁶ By utilizing the church hierarchy, the Patriarch was able to keep “the Christian community almost unchanged in an ideological sense until the age of national movements.”¹¹⁷

Centralization based on religion had the effect of stunting the growth of ethnic identity. As was discussed, the Patriarch in Istanbul had effective control over all Orthodox Christians in the Empire. However, an Orthodox Christian could be what is today known as a Greek, Serb, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Romanian, etc. The long history

¹¹⁵ Barbara Jelavich, *The History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 49.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 50.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 52.

of identification based on religion, and not on the modern European concept of ethnicity, stunted the emergence of a “national” identity in Macedonia.

Complementing this system of religious identification, the center was able to limit the formation of ethnic identity as a challenge by incorporating different groups into the power system. By the latter part of the 19th Century, non-Muslims were well represented in the local and central Ottoman bureaucracy, in the military, and in the civil service.¹¹⁸ The logical effect of incorporating the different ethnic groups into the power system was to give these different groups a stake in the system. Since all were represented, there was more of an opportunity to have their needs heard and met, thus limiting the possibility for discontent and the possible challenge to the center. The Ottoman identity was strengthened, not what was to be known as the Macedonian identity.

After the loss of the Macedonian lands by the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, another obstacle to the creation of a national identity was the relatively recent appearance of Macedonia during the Yugoslav era. In fact, the Macedonian identity did not develop until the twentieth century, and is still in the process of development.¹¹⁹ ¹²⁰ Macedonia was established as a republic within the federal system of Yugoslavia only in 1945, and this entity was only 40 percent of the historic area known as Macedonia which had existed under the Ottoman Empire as late as 1905.¹²¹ With this lack of history, the Republic of Macedonia, with its modern borders appeared.

Assimilation in the Absence of History

¹¹⁸ Caglar Keyder, “The Ottoman Empire,” in *After Empire*, eds. Karen Barkey and Mark Von Hagen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 35.

¹¹⁹ James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press), 28.

¹²⁰ Stokes, Gale et al., “Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession,” *Slavic Review* 55, No. 1 (Spring 1996), 154.

¹²¹ Ian Traynor, “Ghosts of Ethnic Feuding Revive,” *The Guardian, London*, 26 February 1990. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

It is Bereciartu's contention that the creation of a national "mythology" would have the effect of limiting regional or ethnic centrifugal forces by creating an "awareness of pertaining to the [territorial] nation; in short, a national consciousness."¹²² Bereciartu also asserts that this creation of a national mythology must be based on concrete realities, something very difficult for new nation-states to foster because "peoples without a state cannot be the subjects of History because they do not have history."¹²³ Macedonia was neither a state prior to 1991 nor a politically defined entity until after World War II. Therefore, according to the logic of Bereciartu, Macedonia did not have a history, making the creation of a national "mythology" much more difficult. In the absence of such a history that could be used to unite society, the use of assimilation was an attractive alternative.

Additionally, Schnapper has asserted that nations created in the twentieth century were successful only if all of the ethnicities in the territorial nation were united, and that this success depended on the ability of the territorial nation to resolve the rivalries between the different groups.¹²⁴ In order to achieve this aim, multiethnic nation-states have had to minimize historical and cultural differences,¹²⁵ and also create a "sense of community" that fosters integration on the nation-state level.¹²⁶ Forced assimilation is, indeed, one method a government could use to accomplish this sense of community and to minimize differences.

¹²² Gurutz Jáuregui Bereciartu, *Decline of the Nation-State* (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1994), 41.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹²⁴ Dominique Schnapper, *Community of Citizens: On the Modern Idea of Nationality* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1988), 98, 116.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Steven Burg and Michael Berbaum, "Community, Integration, and Stability in Multinational Yugoslavia," *The American Political Science Review* 83, No. 2 (June 1989), 549.

Historically, nationalism is based on egalitarianism and cultural homogeneity; the “nation” is made up by those who share the same culture regardless of their socio-economic status or politics.¹²⁷ In a nation-state which has multiple ethnicities, there are two options which will bind all groups, assimilate the minority groups into the majority group, or create a national identity independent of the cultural identifications of the different groups.¹²⁸ Since the formation of a national identity in Macedonia was so severely hindered due to its lack of history, assimilation became the default option.

Rationale for Exclusionary Policies in Macedonia

If there is one majority and one main minority, “the temptation is always present for the larger to seek to promote a ‘nation-state’ through exclusion...of the smaller.”¹²⁹ An excellent explanation for the general causes of exclusion can be found in Andreas Wimmer’s *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict*, which draws on the author’s own theories and those of others.

First, one must have a general understanding of the basic causes of ethnic differentiation, and for this, Wimmer turns to Max Weber’s theory of social closure. Weber theorized that “[s]ocial closure means excluding those who are not felt to belong, drawing a dividing line between the familiar and the foreign...The borderlines between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are often marked by distinctive forms of everyday cultural practice.”¹³⁰ Therefore, it is the quotidian which begins the separation, the division of “us” and “them.”

¹²⁷ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 53.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 55.

¹²⁹ James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press), 139.

¹³⁰ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 33.

However, the aforementioned solidification of ethnic identity, alone, is not sufficient to create ethnic discord. Such discord occurs “[o]nly when those in power favour their own groups to the cost of others is a fertile ground for the politicisation of ethnicity prepared.”¹³¹ Therefore, there is a three step process. One, there are different groups which have readily discernible cultural differences. Two, the boundaries between the groups solidify. Three, the majority starts to favor its own group to the detriment of the other group.

In Macedonia, there were readily discernible cultural differences as evidenced by the attempts of assimilation by the Macedonian Slavs of the Albanian minority. If there were no such differences, then there would be no need to have a policy of forced assimilation. This process helped lead to step two, where the boundaries between the two groups solidified, as shown in the form of calls for secession and the political rhetoric. This led to step three, the Macedonian Slav majority began to favor its own group by excluding the Albanian minority from the economic, cultural, and political spheres.

Albanian Resistance

Economic exclusion, real or perceived, is one basis for Albanian resistance. Specifically, “unequal economic opportunities, unequal access to resources such as land and capital, and vast differences in standards of living are all signs of economic systems that disadvantaged members of society will see as unfair and perhaps illegitimate.”¹³² In Macedonia, the ethnic Albanian population was, indeed, the disadvantaged members of

¹³¹ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 92.

¹³² Michael Brown, “The Causes of Internal Conflict,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 11.

society when all of these conditions are considered—they were excluded from state employment and often lived in shanty towns.

If one ethnic group perceives itself as disadvantaged relative to another ethnic group, it may band its members together and attempt to collectively improve its economic position. Hence, one of the consequences of this type of exclusion is that a member of the disadvantaged group will turn away from the national polity and toward his ethnically based polity in an attempt to correct the economic inequality.¹³³ Therefore, economic exclusion helped drive a wedge between the Albanians and Macedonian Slavs.

Cultural exclusion drove this wedge deeper between the two groups. Similar to the reasoning identified in the previous discussion on economic discrimination, cultural discrimination can cause members of an ethnic group to band together in an attempt to protect itself from the limitations forced upon it by the majority ethnic group. Although the term “culture” can incorporate a considerable number of possible facets, two of the most basic elements of culture are language and religion. Therefore, it is not surprising that limitations on the use of the language or on the religion of a minority group is often a source of internal conflict.¹³⁴ In fact, “[m]ost minority nations feel that their culture is under attack from the state, which usually identifies with the majority nation or with a synthetic state culture.”¹³⁵ By undergoing policies such as linguistic exclusion, Albanians, indubitably, felt that they were being attacked by the state, thus increasing their ethnic resistance.¹³⁶

¹³³ Herman Weilenmann, “Nation and Personality Structure,” in *Nation-Building*, eds. Karl Deutsch and William Foltz (New York, NY: Atherling Press, 1966), 45.

¹³⁴ Michael Brown, “The Causes of Internal Conflict,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 13.

¹³⁵ James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press), 69.

¹³⁶ Although history has shown that forced assimilation does not necessarily mean that an ethnic group’s nationalism will increase, the likelihood of its occurring in Macedonia was likely because of factors such as

Perhaps the most important determinant of the rise of the Albanian resistance was the degree of political discrimination it experienced. When one ethnic group establishes its control over political institutions, as the Macedonian Slavs did, it is more likely to establish the rules for political procedure and require that political discourse conform to the established norms. Those who fall outside of the governing ethnic group, which cannot adapt, or will not adapt, to the dominant political and procedural discourse, will become marginalized because the system does not allow them access.¹³⁷ With the lack of access, the needs and desires of the excluded group often go unheeded and the public benefits which political institutions dole out no longer “appear to be *public* benefits available to all, but rather *collective* goods attainable only by those who belong to the ‘proper’ ethnic group.”¹³⁸ Thus, the political institutions lost their legitimacy for the members of the Albanian minority, the excluded group.

This process occurred in Macedonia as witnessed by the resistance of the Albanian population to Macedonian Slav exclusionary policies. Albanians boycotted the vote on the new constitution in protest over their exclusion from it, and clamored for autonomy and independence as a result. Via the exclusion suffered by the ethnic Albanian population, there was, indeed, the feeling that *public* goods had become *collective* goods and were reserved for the Macedonian Slav majority.

the a changing political system, the weakness of the Macedonian state, the lack of a national identity, and a change in the psychology of the international community—all of which will be elaborated, in detail, in the last main section of this essay.

¹³⁷ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 37.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, 102.

Government Organizational Factors Leading to the Failure of Policy

The mere fact that a territorial nation consists of multiple ethnicities does not preclude the ability of it to function well. Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, and other stable countries are all comprised of a majority with one or more sizeable minorities, yet all have gotten beyond the ethnic rivalries. However in each of these cases, there are three conditions that have been met which have facilitated the creation of a viable democratic government: all groups are represented in the political elite; each group retains the right to manage its own affairs; and each receives funds proportional to its number.¹³⁹ In the case of Macedonia, the assimilative and exclusionary policies prevented the appearance of these conditions, which helped bring about their failure.

As stated above, it is important for all groups to be represented in the political elite. Representation alone, though, will not be truly authentic unless the actual ability to have one's voice heard exists. There needs to be an effort to include the minority in broad-based governing coalitions in government, as well as in positions of power including the cabinet, civil service, military, and party positions.^{140 141} The purpose for such inclusion is apparent, if members of a minority group have the voice and the power to affect change, then there will be a higher willingness to remain in the system. There will be, most likely, the realization that to be in the system, where the group's voice is

¹³⁹ Dominique Schnapper, *Community of Citizens: On the Modern Idea of Nationality* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1988), 81.

¹⁴⁰ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 143.

¹⁴¹ Philip Roeder, "Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete National Revolutions," *Slavic Review* 58, No. 4, *Special Issue: Ten Years after 1989: What Have We Learned?* (Winter 1999), 865.

being heard, is preferable to be outside of the system and risk having no voice at all.

Herein lies the rationale for further cooperation.¹⁴²

However, the fact remains that a minority is, in fact, a minority so in a democratic system based on majority rule, even though there are minority members in positions of power in the political elite, there still remains the possibility that the voice of the minority will not be heard. In Macedonia, this was the situation as demonstrated by its exclusion from the constitution, employment, education, etc.

Thus, an oft used solution or compromise is to decentralize, federalize, or grant regional autonomy in the system and grant each group some ability to govern its own affairs, a position the Albanian minority desired. One possible way to achieve this goal is to decentralize power to give specific agencies more decision-making power, thus granting ethnic groups more influence over decisions.^{143 144} By having more control and more of a voice in the process, then there will be less likelihood of unpopular decisions being made and, thus, less likelihood of instability in the system.

As has been shown, however, the Macedonian Slav dominated government refused to allow the ethnic Albanian minority autonomy. Therefore, the Albanian minority reacted to taking this step on their own by first proclaiming autonomy and, when the Macedonian Slav dominated government rejected this, by announcing independence. The original calls for autonomy for the ethnic Albanian population came even before independence was declared from the Yugoslav Republic. In April 1991,

¹⁴² David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 143.

¹⁴³ Philip Roeder, "Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete National Revolutions," *Slavic Review* 58, No. 4, *Special Issue: Ten Years after 1989: What Have We Learned?* (Winter 1999), 866.

¹⁴⁴ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 144.

Albanian political parties publicly called for “all local authority” in the regions where they were the majority group. However, the Macedonian Government refused.¹⁴⁵ As has already been discussed, the call for autonomy had been constitutionally made, at least in theory, impossible by the designation of the Albanian population as a “minority” and not as a “nation.” Thus, there were repeated demands for changes to allow for this autonomy—a concession that that the Macedonian Government, during the period examined, refused to yield.

The legal prohibition and reality, however, differed. For one, Albanians had effectively taken over the state institutions in the regions where they were the majority, as illustrated with the impotence of the Macedonian Government in the wake of the declaration of the Republic of Ilirida. In fact, by the end of January 1993, the Macedonian Slavs in the Albanian dominated region of Tetovo, frustrated with Albanian dominance, withdrew themselves from the Tetovo Assembly and formed their own, ethnically pure, “parallel” Assembly.¹⁴⁶ Despite the rhetoric of aspiring for more autonomy, it appears from the evidence that the Albanians had de facto autonomy. Thus, the failure to give autonomy resulted in its appearance, further thwarting the government’s assimilative and exclusionary policies.

The final criterion to be considered as a reason for the policies’ failure is the absence of granting a proportional amount of resources to each group. As discussed in the section of economic exclusion, the unequal distributions of goods and resources, especially in financially strapped economies such as the overall Yugoslav, or independent

¹⁴⁵ “Assemblies Call for Own Assemblies in Tetovo and Gostivar,” *Belgrade Home Service*, 13 April 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁴⁶ “Leader of Party of Democratic Prosperity Warns of Increase in Tension,” *Albanian Telegraph Agency*, 27 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Macedonian, led to Albanian resistance. Thus, equitable distribution could have negated these forces and provided for institutional stability, something, as already demonstrated, that did not occur in Macedonia. This economic exclusion, as shown in the previous section, helped to further unite the Albanian minority in their fight against the policies of exclusion and assimilation.

Therefore, although there are stable, multiethnic states, the reality is that Macedonian Slav majority was unready and/or unwilling to adopt the policies needed to ensure its own stability. The ethnic Albanian population did not have enough of a voice in the affairs of government, it was not given the autonomy it demanded, and it did not receive enough of the “public goods” that it should have obtained. In light of this situation, the Albanian minority rebelled, helping to cause the failure of the policies.

Political Parties—Detrimental to Government Policies

As has been demonstrated above, groups that feel marginalized rally together and work against the system which excludes them. One of the methods often used in order to try to obtain more power in the system for the excluded group, or to try to keep the status quo for the dominant group, is the formation of political parties whose membership relies on ethnic ties. This process also led to the failure of the exclusionary and assimilative processes.

In fact, “under conditions of a politicization of ethnicity, it makes sense for the individual to consider ethnic representations as meaningful when it comes to choosing political alliances.”¹⁴⁷ Since the political system, as described above, had been established in such a way that it excluded a minority group, then it would make little

¹⁴⁷ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 45.

sense to entrust their needs to the political parties of that majority determined system. Therefore, the one enticing option that remains is to rely upon your own ethnic group.

Since there is already an established system, it would logically be an option for some members of the excluded group to try to work within that system by creating, or by giving political allegiance to, a political party based upon his own ethnicity. One should be able to trust his own ethnically based political group. However, once there are political groups based on ethnicity, further problems can occur. For example, Lake and Rothchild have posited that it is not differences among ethnic groups which cause problems, but rather the manipulation of these differences by those in the political elites of the groups which cause the conflict.¹⁴⁸

The political elite of the ethnic groups play upon the fears and apprehensions of the members they represent in an attempt to solidify their power and their position as the true representatives of the group in the multiethnic society.^{149 150} The result of this manipulation is that the leaders of different groups, or even of more moderate politicians within the now more extreme groups, feel obligated to move farther to extremes in order to compete.^{151 152} As has been demonstrated, this occurred in Macedonia. Ethnic Albanian politicians went from asking for more concessions in the constitution, to proclaiming autonomy, to announcing the independence of the Albanian dominated provinces. The Macedonian Slav VRMO-DPMNE also went to such an extreme position

¹⁴⁸ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 139.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 126.

¹⁵⁰ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 109.

¹⁵¹ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 139.

¹⁵² Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 108.

as to call for the assassination of ethnic Albanian politicians and the resignation of Macedonian Slav officials who tried to make minor concessions to the Albanian minority. Assimilation is thus not possible because both sides have effectively isolated themselves with hardened positions. In light of such extremism, the policies could not work.

Problems of Power Sharing and “Majority Rules”

As witnessed by Albanian parties’ own admissions, they had some influence in the development of laws in the Macedonian Assembly. Additionally, there was a form of power sharing occurring with representation in the cabinet, in the National Assembly, and in some committees. This fact, however, is not necessarily a total positive. A power sharing system based on ethnicity can still create grave problems and instability, as happened in Macedonia.

Philip Roeder enumerates three reasons which explain why “power sharing institutions contain the seeds of their own destruction.” First, “it privileges ethnicity as a basis of solidarity and conflict.”¹⁵³ Instead of creating a national system in which allegiance is paid to *all* of the citizens of the country, allegiance is paid to an individual’s ethnic group. Thus, there is no cement to keep the entire citizenry together, and, therefore, the political parties will only cater to their own groups, as happened in Macedonia. By including the minority in the political system, exclusion did not exist, thus negating this policy. Additionally, by allowing group identification along ethno-political lines, assimilation cannot occur because group identification is maintained and affirmed.

¹⁵³ Philip Roeder, “Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete National Revolutions,” *Slavic Review* 58, No. 4, *Special Issue: Ten Years after 1989: What Have We Learned?* (Winter 1999), 868.

Second, power sharing institutions “foster divergence of preferences among ethnic lines.”¹⁵⁴ When making decisions, there is no real attention paid to what might be in the best interest of the country as a whole. Instead, attention is paid to what might benefit one’s own ethnic group. As shown in the previous paragraph, allegiance is owed solely to one’s ethnic group, with little regard to the “other.” Therefore, one takes into account what would benefit his own group, even to the detriment of another group, and there is an attempt to maximize one’s own benefits while attempting to minimize the potential harm that might be inflicted by another group. The result is the aforementioned divergence of preference among ethnic lines. In this way, group identification solidified to the detriment of assimilation. Ethnic Albanian parties pushed for more power, more autonomy, and more representation, while the main Macedonian Slav party pushed for the further subjugation of the Albanian population.

Last, power sharing institutions based on ethnicity create “institutional weapons that can be used against other ethno-politicians and...tear the state apart.”¹⁵⁵ If decision-makers owe allegiance to their own ethnic group because the group put them into power, and if preferences are delineated along ethnic lines, then one could logically conclude, as Roeder did, that the institutional apparatus would tear itself apart. The different ethnic groups, in their attempt to maximize their own positions, use the institutional apparatuses allotted to them in order to consolidate their position. Thus, instead of sharing power, the situation arises in which the powers obtained are pitted against one another. If one group garners more power, then it can take over the other powers, thus destroying the system. However, if no one group is able to enter a position of total control, then a deadlock

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Philip Roeder, “Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete National Revolutions,” *Slavic Review* 58, No. 4, *Special Issue: Ten Years after 1989: What Have We Learned?* (Winter 1999), 868.

could emerge and institutional chaos ensues. As was previously discussed, this deadlock did occur, isolating the Macedonian Slav from the Albanian, damaging the policy of assimilation and fracturing the system by 2001.

Macedonian Specifics that Led to Failure

Apart from the problems that assimilation and exclusion intrinsically entail, there were further factors which exacerbated these problems which were specific to the Macedonian case.

The Paradoxical Outcome of Assimilation and Exclusion

One of the most important reasons that these policies failed is that they are mutually exclusive. The main desired result of a policy of assimilation is to make the “other” more like “us.” This process is followed in order to incorporate the assimilated “other” into the majority, thus limiting the centrifugal forces that differences bring. By trying to assimilate the Albanian minority into the Macedonian Slav majority, an effort was made to limit the centrifugal forces associated with Albanian nationalism which threatened the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and, later, independent Macedonia.

A policy of exclusion, however, attempts to limit the damage of the centrifugal forces of difference by isolating the “other.” In this policy, the hope is that by denying access to the system, these effects of the “other” will be excluded. For example, by denying ethnic Albanians teaching positions, the hope was to limit the proliferation of Albanian nationalism, or by excluding ethnic Albanians economically, their poverty would limit what they could accomplish.

The use of a policy of exclusion compromised the ability of the Government of Macedonia to assimilate the Albanian minority. If a group is to be assimilated, it needs to

have the opportunity to interact with the system in order to be influenced by it. If the group is not allowed in the system, then it will not be influenced. Conversely, if a group is to be excluded in order to limit the potential systematic damage it might cause, it must not be given any access to the system. Granting limited access will allow some of the undesired influence into the system. By following a simultaneous policy of exclusion and assimilation, neither one would be successful.

Parties: From One to Many

Macedonia faced a grave crisis in that ethnic politicization in countries making the transition from the one-party communist state to a multi-party democratic regime is much more frequent than in homogeneous cultures. Additionally, countries which attempted to make the transition from communism with ethnic power-sharing institutions faced a significantly greater likelihood of ethno-constitutional crises.”¹⁵⁶

The reasons for the higher potential of conflict in transitioning, multiethnic societies such as Macedonia are rather straightforward. First, one must recognize that there is a transition occurring, from a one-party state that had great control over society to a more politically decentralized society, as evidenced by the several political parties which emerged in Macedonia in the early 1990s. Thus, power is no longer in the hands of a small few but dispersed, thus making the enforcement of policies such as assimilation and exclusion more difficult.

Second, when there is a transition from the one party state to a plural democratic one, then, obviously, there will have to be an electoral process to decide the leaders of the country. It is precisely these elections which can lead to problems in the multi-ethnic

¹⁵⁶ Philip Roeder, “Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete National Revolutions,” *Slavic Review* 58, No. 4, *Special Issue: Ten Years after 1989: What Have We Learned?* (Winter 1999), 876.

state. Elections could galvanize different ethnic groups if politicians seize upon ethnicity and try to outdo each other with rhetoric.¹⁵⁷ As was shown previously, political parties did increase the ethnically based rhetoric. Hence, the groups isolated themselves, further limiting the effectiveness of the policies.

The Role of Weak Institutions

Even despite “successful” elections, there could still be problems in states with limited resources and with weak institutions, such as Macedonia. This is especially true in poorer, heterogeneous nations because “in many developing countries, sufficient state resources to satisfy all groups involved ...are lacking.”¹⁵⁸ Thus, even if a system is agreed upon which gives each ethnic group some voice in the political process, this voice may not be strong enough to garner all that it wishes for itself. Thus, there could be the view, either real or perceived, that one group is benefiting more than another. The less successful group will be pushed into a position of societal opposition; “an ethnic group which does not control the state [often] expresses its nationalism in opposition to the state.”¹⁵⁹ Such was the case in Macedonia with Albanian political parties and separatist movements.

The existence of weak or minimal institutions can lead to ethnic nationalism. Michael Brown has referred to ethnic nationalism as a “default option” when institutions are weak.¹⁶⁰ If institutions are weak, they can arguably no longer serve their purpose of maintaining order in society and of preserving the basic human need of safety.

¹⁵⁷ David Lake and Donald Rothchild, “Containing Fear,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 145.

¹⁵⁸ Andreas Wimmer, *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 110.

¹⁵⁹ James Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press), 55.

¹⁶⁰ Michael Brown, “The Causes of Internal Conflict,” in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 9.

Therefore, groups, according to Brown, will start to look after their own members. Thus, the assimilative policies would not be effective because they would, according to Brown's theory, not be able to counteract the protective pull of one's own group.

The weakened institutions of Macedonia also worked toward the futility of the policies because Albanians were able to take advantage of the weakened Macedonian institutions to further impede the assimilative and exclusionary policies of the Macedonian Government. Although the length of the essay precludes an in depth analysis of the institutions of Macedonia after the collapse of Yugoslavia, there is ample anecdotal evidence which aptly demonstrates the weakness of Macedonian institutions, specifically in terms of border security, the military/police, and the economy.

The Macedonian Government had great difficulty in securing its borders with its neighbors, especially its western border with Albania and northern border with Kosovo/Serbia. For example, the porous Macedonian-Albanian border allowed a relatively large number of Albanian citizens to cross over into Macedonia. Although Macedonia had great economic difficulties, as will be demonstrated at shortly, the situation in Albania was much worse. Therefore, there was a large number of economic refugees who entered Macedonia looking for remedial work, often residing with ethnic Albanian Macedonians.¹⁶¹

However, Albanians did not only enter Macedonia to look for work; there were also raids against ethnic Macedonian Slavs in the border region by citizens of Albania. It quickly became clear, by the sheer number of the raids and the fact that Macedonians Slavs started organizing and arming themselves for protection, that the border was not

¹⁶¹ "Tanjung: Increasing Number of Illegal Albanian Workers in Macedonia," *Yugoslav Telegraph Service*, 13 July 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

secure.¹⁶² As evidenced by the lack of border control, therefore, it can be seen that Macedonian institutions were rather weak.

The border with Albania, however, was not the only vulnerable border that Macedonia had. The border with Serbia/Kosovo was just as problematic, and possibly more so, as ethnic violence raged in Kosovo. By July 1993, the international community noted the weak state of Macedonia's institutions and sent some 1,000 UN and US troops into Macedonia in order to protect the border with Serbia/Kosovo.¹⁶³ The US, through its diplomatic mission in Skopje, gave the reasoning for these troops as being "meant to reinforce Macedonia's integrity,"¹⁶⁴ a tacit acknowledgment of Macedonia's weak institutions.

One of the main reasons that the Government of Macedonia had such a challenging time keeping its borders and maintaining internal integrity is that it had no army. As part of Yugoslavia, Macedonia was able to rely on the Serb dominated Yugoslav Federal Army. After independence, however, that Serb dominated army left Macedonian territory and took with it the enforcement and stability potential that a trained army could provide. In fact, there was no attempt, even after independence, to establish an army during the period under analysis.¹⁶⁵ Without an army, Macedonian institutions remained weak in that it could not effectively control its borders, nor could it maintain effective domestic order. Without an effective army, the Macedonian Slavs could not enforce their policies against the Albanian minority.

¹⁶² "Tanjug: Albanian Bandits Raiding Villages in Western Macedonia," *Yugoslav Telegraph Service*, 12 December 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁶³ "Albanians' Role in Macedonian Government a Contribution to Peace, Minister Says," *Islamic Republic News Agency*, 27 June 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁶⁴ Frank Viviano, "Next Balkan Flash Point -- It Could Be Macedonia," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 August 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁶⁵ Marcus Tanner, "Macedonia 'Walking Tightrope' to Avert Balkan War," *The Independent*, 11 November 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

The strength of the economy also helps determine the strength of state institutions, and the state of the economy of Macedonia through 1993 was very poor. Upon the break up of Yugoslavia, Macedonia was the poorest of the Yugoslav republics. Additionally, in 1992 alone, Macedonia lost an estimated 2 billion USD in its already weak export trade.¹⁶⁶ By the end of the summer of 1993, Greece had initiated a blockade of Macedonia, which resulted in a loss of approximately 1.4 billion USD, and the loss of Serbia as a trade partner, due to UN sanctions, cost Macedonia an additionally 3 billion USD.¹⁶⁷ Having been the poorest republic of the impoverished Yugoslavia, Macedonia's further economic deterioration weakened it even more. Consequently, its ability to promote its policies was also weakened.

Finally, as evidenced by the referendum on independence and on the call for a separate republic, perhaps one of the strongest indications of institutional weakness was the fact that the Macedonian Government in Skopje had very little control over what was occurring in its western most regions. The work of the government in that region began to be conducted exclusively in Albanian, place names which had been slavicized in the 1980s were renamed in Albanian, the Albanian language and Albanian national ideas were reintroduced in the schools, and some oppression of ethnic Macedonians began to occur in the West.¹⁶⁸ Hence, between the loss of border control, the introduction of foreign soldiers to monitor the northern border, the desperate shape of the Macedonian

¹⁶⁶ Robert Marquand, "Macedonia Staves off Conflict," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 05 January 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁶⁷ Eric Bourne, "Brave in the Balkan Heartland," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 August 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁶⁸ "Christian Population Fear Albanians Setting up Own State in Western Macedonia," *Yugoslav Telegraph Service*, 25 May 1993. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

economy, and the loss of all control in the western provinces all attest to the weakness of the Macedonian institutions. The weak institutions help explain why the policies failed.

Change in attitude of the International Community

One final condition which hindered the possibility of Macedonia to follow a stricter policy of assimilation and/or exclusion is fact that the nature of the international community had changed by the early 1990s. It was no longer the world of Mcartney and the League of Nations, and no longer would the international community stand by and allow forced assimilation, exclusion, ethnic cleansing, or genocide. By 1991, the United Nations Declaration of Human rights had been in existence for over 40 years, with many of its precepts complimented by treaties, agreements, and court decisions. In fact, many of the human rights embodied in these documents are considered by some to have entered the realm of jus cogens. Additionally the concept of self-determination, a child of the period of colonial emancipation, had become practically crystallized in customary international law. The international community had spoken out against the mistreatment of the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey, and even united against Iraq in order to liberate Kuwait. UN Security Council resolutions were condemning the actions occurring in some of Macedonia's former Yugoslav partners, namely in Bosnia and Serbia/Kosovo. The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia in 1993 demonstrates how far, indeed, the international community had changed.

This evolution of the international environment arguably had to have had some effect on the psyche of the Macedonian Government in terms of its policies and actions toward the Albanian minority. As previously illustrated, Macedonia was in such a weakened state that it could not control its own borders, pay its citizens a decent wage, or

even feel that it could be independent. Thus, one might argue that Macedonia would also have been unable to undergo such violent and forceful policies as were occurring to its immediate north. All this might be true, but it is also true that this weakened state might have tempered the actions of the Macedonian Government as well. Since it was so weak and in such a precarious situation, and because Macedonia was trying to consolidate its own position domestically, it might not have wanted to incur the wrath of the international community, even in the form of sanctions, such as those that had been placed on Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). To have undergone sanctions would have hurt its development and weakened it even more.

Finally, Macedonia was looking for international recognition in order to guarantee its place on the international stage and, thus, ward off any possible attempts of conquest by Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), Greece, and/or Bulgaria.¹⁶⁹ The main culprit for the delayed recognition was Macedonia's southern neighbor Greece, which vehemently objected to Macedonia's international recognition. The central reasons for Greece's objections were the flag that Macedonia adopted and the name of the new republic itself. In terms of the name "Macedonia," Greece believed the adoption of that name showed Macedonia's intention to capture Greek Macedonia. Moreover, Greece argued that Macedonia was, historically, Greek, and the newly independent Republic of Macedonia, Slavic and Albanian nation, had no right to use this name. Additionally, landlocked Macedonia's original flag depicted the sea, which, in the eyes of the Greek

¹⁶⁹ It was the opinion of the Government of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that it was not ready for independence for two main reasons, it was the poorest of all the Yugoslav republics and did not want to cut itself off from them, and because it feared its neighbors of Bulgaria and Greece, which it felt had territorially aggrandizing ambitions at the expense of Macedonia. The veracity of this statement is not necessarily as important as the fact that the Government believed it. John Tagliabue, "Macedonians Vote for Independence from Yugoslavia," *The New York Times*, 09 September 1991. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

Government, also showed the expansionist desires of Macedonia, i.e. the desire to acquire territory to have access to the Mediterranean.¹⁷⁰

Although the main reason for the delay in recognition was Greece, the Albanian minority seized upon the recognition problems in an attempt to make its case internationally. In March 1992, the Party for Democratic Prosperity sent a memorandum to the European Community stating that, "Macedonia cannot be recognized internationally as an independent, autonomous and sovereign state unless the Albanian "nation", as "a constituent element in the new Macedonia state" is given territorial, political and cultural autonomy."¹⁷¹ Thus, the Albanian minority was attempting to further delay recognition by appealing to the evolved international community's devotion of self-determination and minority rights.

Even though the Greek Government's objections to Macedonia's name and flag were the two basic reasons for the delay in recognition, the fact that the Albanian minority was using the issue in an attempt to garner international support must have had some effect on the Macedonian Slav dominated government. Thus, an attempt to forcibly implement the policies of exclusion and assimilation may have created a longer delay in recognition, a gamble the government did not want to take because of the fear it had of its neighbors. This situation is yet another reason that the policies of assimilation and exclusion were unsuccessful.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Keith Highet, George Kahale III, and Anne Peters, "Commission of the European Communities v. Hellenic Republic," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 89, no. 2, April 1995. Accessed 15 October 2004. Available from JStor, 377.

¹⁷¹ "Albanians Protest in Skopje for Minority Representation in the Republic," *Yugoslav News Agency*, 31 March 1992. Accessed 22 December 2004. Available from LexisNexis.

¹⁷² The international community did grant Macedonia recognition, albeit with the name of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, en masse at the end of the period under analysis, 1993.

Conclusion

According to multiple political scientists, there is a direct correlation between the heterogeneity of a country's population and the potential for ethnic politicization and violence. In the face of such heterogeneity, governments face various options to limit the potential damage, including forming a national identity which transcends ethnic bonds, instituting a policy of assimilation, and following a program of exclusion. Given the relatively recent historic appearance of Macedonia in its modern form, its ability to form a national identity which would encompass all ethnic groups found within its borders was extremely hindered. Additionally, the use of forced assimilation and other, harsher, forms of homogenization had been traditionally used in the region. Therefore, the option of following a program of assimilation and exclusion was understandable and predictable.

Macedonia, when faced with Albanian nationalism, set out on a policy of forced assimilation and exclusion in order to keep the integrity of its majority dominated national system intact. Via policies such as educational reform, restrictions on language and family size, and economic, cultural, and political exclusion, the Macedonian Government attempted to counteract the Albanian nationalism of the 1980s and early 1990s.

The Macedonian Slav majority, however, was unable to bring the desired results of these policies to fruition. For one, these policies were incompatible. If one is trying to assimilate a minority group into the majority, the minority group must work within the system in order to be influenced by it. The policy of exclusion, however, limited this process. Additionally, a policy of exclusion requires that the minority group not be granted access to the system, something which did not occur in Macedonia. Second, the

Macedonian state was in a weakened condition due to an economic crisis, lack of an effective military, and the change of a one party to a multi-party state.

Since the internal contradictions weakened the effectiveness of both policies, and the fact that the Macedonian state itself was weak, the Albanian minority was able to resist them. The most innocuous responses involved boycotts to peaceful protests, while more violent responses ranged from the throwing of rocks to acts of terrorism. In fact, the ethnic Albanian backlash almost resulted in the dissolution of Macedonia by means of a referendum on Albanian autonomy and the subsequent declaration of the independent republic of Ilirida. In the wake of this ethnically based polarization, both sides' positions hardened making any further progress impossible. Later, a civil war was narrowly avoided with the 2001 Ohrid Agreement.

Therefore, the following question remains, if Macedonia had exclusively followed a policy of assimilation or of exclusion, could it have been successful? The answer to this question is most likely "no." First, even if Macedonia attempted the policy of exclusion in exclusivity, the fact remains that its weak institutions would not have permitted it to fully carry it out. For example, the Albanian minority did have de facto autonomous control over the regions in western Macedonia where it was the majority. However, the Macedonian Government was unable to bring it back under control. If the Macedonian Slav dominated government had followed the policy of exclusion alone, it would still have been unable to regain control in the West.

Second, if Macedonia had followed only the policy of forced assimilation, this policy, too, was just as likely to have failed. Apart from the aforementioned weakness of its institutions, it is doubtful that the international community would have allowed it.

Macedonia's neighbors had attempted to follow such a policy of forced assimilation and ethnic cleansing, i.e. in Bosnia and in Kosovo, which resulted in civil war. The international community responded with sanctions and with force when necessary. Had Macedonia followed a similar path, it, too, would have likely met a similar fate.

Although there are still problems in Macedonia, the positive aspect is that it did not fall into civil war as its neighbors did. Had it followed the path of exclusion, the Albanian minority might have seceded and a civil war might have broken out. If it had followed the path of forced assimilation, a civil war might have also broken out as in Bosnia and Kosovo. Thus, even though the mixture of exclusionary and assimilative policies did not achieve its objectives, perhaps that same mixture did, in fact, prevent a bloodier conclusion to the ethnic tension.

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