"Ethnic and civic nationalism: a dynamic picture of political identities"

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Abstract

The classic dichotomy of ethnic vs. civic nationalism does not allow for dynamic alterations between the two. Peoples that see their identities basically in terms of blood kinship will hardly accept an alternative mainly civic identity. Any change, within this picture, presupposes generational replacement. On the level of collective attitudes of a particular generation, however, peoples remain invariable. I challenge this static vision of nationalism that allows for change only as part of generational replacement, although I do not challenge the latter postulate. Change within identity on the scale between ethnic and civic nationalism is possible within specific communities. One of the causes for such change is the presence of strong international political institutions, institutions aiming to create their own transnational political identities. I take the European Union as an example of such international political institution and a sample of EU member-states and candidates for membership as cases of possible cultural shift from ethnic toward civic nationalism and vice versa. I use qualitative and ethnographic techniques and methods of interpretation to account for the causal mechanisms that link the EU and the dynamic picture of national identities.

This research deals with transformations of national identities under the influence of EU integration in the Balkans. The research question follows a debate in the literature on the effects of European integration on nationalism in the member states. Various authors have very different expectations regarding the role of EU integration, from boosting healthy civic national identities and harmonious inter-ethnic relations to eroding local ethnic identities and stimulating nationalist backlash under the form of populist political parties. I define nations as dynamic communities that share basic cultural codes of understanding. Having a common language is certainly a facilitating factor in such understanding. I also adopt modernist explanations of nation building. In the Balkans, despite widespread national myths, nations are fairly recent phenomena. Multiple causal mechanisms, whether socially- or state-based, material or ideal, helped to create the current condition of national communities. Unlike most authors, I do not see this process as irrevocably settled. The volcanoes may look dormant, but new tectonic processes are taking place under the surface. Each new fundamental shift in the continental plate creates opportunities for renegotiating national contracts and galvanizing hidden social forces. European integration represents such a fundamental shift. It erodes from both above and below the principle that, according to Weber[1], state is a human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. Within the process of European integration, member states give up their sovereignty within particular domains; their citizens find new channels for expressing grievances and for influencing domestic political actors. People start questioning whether

it is worth taking part in national political process in general instead of switching allegiance to supranational political bodies.

This research, based on an interpretative and constructivist paradigm, provides findings pertaining to the effects of this integration on state-owning national communities in the Balkans; by these I mean ethnic majorities that give the states their language, history and political purpose. I take two cases, Bulgaria and Macedonia, as examples of states already within the Union and as examples of those still waiting to become members. I use qualitative methodology, mainly semi-directive in-depth interviews. The findings' validation is achieved through triangulation with other techniques such as non-participant ethnographic observation and text-analogue discourse analysis from three field trips to these countries between 2009 and 2011.

The findings confirm that these two national communities, far from being settled and static, are in a state of perpetual motion. Informants report more attachment to or more detachment from their respective national communities as a direct result of European integration. People may become more or less Bulgarian, or Macedonian, or European; or they may become simultaneously more involved within their respective national communities and the new supranational identity. Therefore there are many cultural trajectories present rather than just one.

In terms of organization, the first section presents the research question, which is the development of nationalism within the context of EU integration. The following section presents the modernist vision of nationalism in the literature. It is followed by a methodological section, in which I present and discuss my choices on ontology and epistemology, on techniques and on cases. The final section of this research, which is also the longest, is dedicated to presentation and discussion of findings.

European Union integration

European integration is a process of transformation for European countries that accept to limit their sovereignty in the name of greater economic efficiency, social and individual prosperity. The key element of the integration process is the European Union, although there are other supranational arrangements, such as the Schengen area of free movement, that were originally developed outside of the EU. This research focuses on European Union integration as far as the post-communist countries are concerned. Chronologically, the process of eastward enlargement of the Union began with setting up the Copenhagen criteria for membership in 1993, featuring necessary but not sufficient conditions to start accession negotiations. Among these conditions were stipulations that each candidate country achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposed the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union[2].

The European Union started preadmission negotiations with many East European countries in the late 1990s. In 2004, eight post-communist countries joined the Union together with Malta and Cyprus. In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the Union. As far as the former Yugoslavian countries are concerned, only Slovenia is currently an EU

member. Croatia is expected to join in 2013 while Macedonia. Montenegro and Serbia are officially considered as candidates, but are still not in accession negotiations. The other former Yugoslav republics are considered as potential candidates for membership.

The literature on the effects of European integration on nationalism in the member states is conflicting. Various authors have very different expectations regarding the role of EU integration, from boosting healthy civic national identities[3] and harmonious inter-ethnic relations[4] to eroding local ethnic identities and stimulating nationalist backlash under the form of populist political parties[5]. This debate is embedded within the larger question of complex relations between European and national identity. According to Belot[6], this question has been asked several times in the literature[7] just to show the difficulty to establish a clear correlation between the two phenomena. European identity may be represented within dominant national discourse either as extension of national identity[8] *or, inversely, as an antithesis to the national identity*[9]. *These two nested debates, on the effects of* European integration on nationalism within the debate on the relations between European and national identity are both nested within the debate on *the effects of* European integration on national political development in general. As far as the post-communist context is concerned, this umbrella debate opposes authors who see the EU as largely benevolent force working to liberalize national political regimes[10] and authors who see the Union as an external center of domination taking away political sovereignty and democratic rights[11]. My research deals mainly with the first debate, those on *the effects of* European integration on nationalism.

The main causal mechanisms that epitomize the role of EU integration are either the creation of a credible supranational institution that acts as an honest broker in order to soften inter-ethnic relations on a supranational or regional level, or a detached foreign center of authority that takes away local political tools for negotiation.

These authors may have different views on how and in which direction the EU affects local national identities. They do, however, share many common theoretical and methodological tools. Ontologically, most authors use formal institutions and procedures as preferred units of analysis. The two preferred theoretical mechanisms of integration are institutional (or learning) and strategic or (instrumental); the EU states and societies may change because they learn about their new roles or because they make calculations about the costs and benefits of changing. Therefore, the major difference between the two models is that the institutional model eliminates the specific role of key domestic actors; they are just pupils who must learn their new roles. The strategic model to the contrary, emphasizes the choices of domestic actors; they are power maximizers who pursue further EU integration in order to keep, if not to increase, their national political positions. These two main models of integration are found independently from predictions about EU influence.

These two models are ideal-types in the Weberian sense that I super-impose on the literature as an interpretation; none of the authors mentioned in the review has explicitly tried to purify his model by unilaterally emphasizing or eliminating the role of the domestic strategic players. However, these ideal-types, as artificial tools of understanding, are important in order to simplify social reality and facilitate its understanding.

All authors accept the objective asymmetrical power relations between the EU and post-communist candidate countries; the role of subordinated party here is attributed

to those who have to make more efforts to adapt to the changes within the system of relations. The level of asymmetry, though, is not the same for the different authors. Those who use the institutional model attribute less autonomy to the domestic actors who have no other option but to adapt to the requirements set up by the dominant party, the EU. Those who use the strategic model start from the point that candidate countries have sufficient space for maneuvering, e.g. in terms of whether to join the Union; such political choices that the domestic political elite have to make are enough to make the Union less strict on some points and more ready to accept bargaining.

Epistemologically, most authors work within the realm of positivism; methodologically, in what Schatz and Schatz [12] call methodological excess, they use either quantitative data or non-interpretative qualitative methods. Among them, none look at EU integration as a process of cultural interaction. The learning process implies passivity and gradual adaptation on the recipient end of the relationship. The local cultural legacy may influence only the speed of learning but it does not change its initial direction. Unless it is rooted in instrumental rationality, the local cultural legacy has to give way to new imported institutions. An analysis of EU integration as a culturally and emotionally charged interaction that does not predetermine the course of integration is missing from the literature. Such an alternative analysis can neither start from the formal ends of integration nor from the strategic rationality of the local elite because they still have to be confirmed. Instead of using the logic of deductive and normative research, this new logic will use inductive and descriptive demonstration. Instead of measuring the effects on nationalism by what should have been achieved, it will describe what has already been achieved. Instead of interpreting the findings from the position of foreign normative observers, this new research will use intersubjective interpretations that local society creates in order to grasp the new reality of EU integration.

On the roots of nationalism

I want to first determine the theoretical framework in which I am operating. Studies of nationalism are a relatively new branch within political science. They are still in what Kuhn calls a "pre-paradigmatic" stage of scientific development[13]. Most of the key authors who deal with this matter are not trained within the field of political science. Yet, a brief recall of some seminal works on the matter is necessary before putting my research on the map.

Most research on nationalism falls within the so-called modernist paradigm, as opposed to the primordial paradigm. The modernists look at the phenomenon as a product of recent historic developments, related to some aspects of capitalist development. I start with the anthropologist and philosopher Ernest Gellner[14], to whom we are in debt for giving us the most commonly accepted definition of nationalism as congruence between national and political units. My research will rest on this definition throughout the article. For this author, the imperatives of a capitalist economy are the main factors that create the need of specialized people, capable of moving between professions. It is the capitalist economy that produces rapid urbanization, vertical social mobility, labor migration. It is also the capitalist economy, which ultimately destroys traditional rural communities and leads to centralized political systems. Traditional societies do not create communities of equals, rulers and ruled combined. On the contrary, in traditional societies, rulers create

and maintain different cultures for themselves and for the common people; the reason obviously being to keep the latter away from upward political aspirations. For Gellner, capitalism, the modern economic system par excellence, is the main road for forging national consciousness, although alternative roads, such as top-down state-imposed types of nationalism without corresponding economic structures are also possible. Because of contingencies and bad luck many cultures never develop into modern nationalisms. These are the Gellner's famous dogs that never bark. Only a relatively small number of cases, few hundreds out of several thousands, develop into modern nation-states or have aspirations to become nation-states.

Similar, although not identical, is the interpretation of nationalism made by the anthropologist Benedict Anderson[15]. He takes another aspect of the capitalist economy to show causality with modern nationalism, print capitalism, or the combination of the printing press with capitalism's insatiable desire to maximize profits. The business of print requires an ever-growing market to attain maximum profits. A large market can be made of people whose vernacular tongues may seem mutually unintelligible when spoken but, when written, can be mutually understood. Hence, there are objective laws that produce a linguistic community, which is the cornerstone for the modern national identity. Thus, for Gellner and Anderson, there is no nationalism without capitalism.

Quite different from Gellner's and Anderson's theoretical framework is the one in which Eric Hobsbawm[16] operates. As an historian, he tries to account for as much as possible of the observable data instead of producing parsimonious links of causality. Hobsbawm creates different possible trajectories that show genesis and development of modern nations. One possible trajectory is linked with the development of a common vernacular, which may or may not happen in modern times; another possible road is linked to belonging to a particular ethnic community, which is again independent from the process of modernity. Other possible causes are having a common religion and belonging to a common political entity. Regarding the Balkan context, more particularly Bulgaria and Serbia, another historian Bozeva-Abazi[17] explains the development of modern nationalism and nation building by concentrating on the modern state as a key factor.

If I can take these seminal works as conceptually representative for the current state of the sub-discipline, they look mainly at the origins of nationalism. Their analyses are another way of saying that this phenomenon is considered already settled, at least in most parts of the world, including the Balkans. But in the social world there are no such motionless phenomena. The dynamic process is not confined only to the genesis of that process; each society may undergo major overhauls, including the ones that concern nationalism. Important developments with regional, continental and global dimensions may significantly affect nationalism. Some of these developments may even jeopardize the formation of nationalism as a political principle. Usual suspects for such development are economic globalization and ethnically based separations. In this research, however, I will not look at these usual suspects. I will look instead at European integration, a process that takes the countries as already established nation-states.

Methodological choices

I use qualitative methods and techniques. The use of qualitative methods that interpretatively reveal the symbolic world of actors is quite uncommon within mainstream political analysis[18]. The literature is dominated either by quantitative analyses or by qualitative positivist research. Among the qualitative techniques that I use, semi-structured interviews occupy center stage. They are based on the principle of empathy from the interviewer to the interviewee, or the informant. For this reason they are particularly well adapted to help revealing subjective meaning. The semi-structured aspect of the interview allows some freedom in answering questions or in addressing particular topics. Methodology guides advise interviewers to abstain from making explicit to informants what is the preferred type of answer or even whether answering a particular question is preferable over declining to answer[19]. A semi-structured interview is not a mundane talk between people who happen to know each other or just meet for the first time. It is a planned talk where the interviewer determines the scope of topics to be discussed and is prepared to make significant changes that accommodate different participants[20].

My interviews occurred during three field trips to Bulgaria in June-July of 2009, in June-August of 2010 and in May-June of 2011, and one field trip to Macedonia in June-July 2010. In total, there were 84 interviews in both countries (60 in Bulgaria and 24 in Macedonia). There were some topics which were invariably common to each informants, such as producing free associations with and showing attitudes toward the European Union, or which were common within each country, such as the impact of the Schengen visa restrictions before 2001 for Bulgaria and before 2010 for Macedonia, or the constitutional name issue for the latter. Each interview took approximately one to two hours. Twenty follow-up interviews in June-August of 2010, which were mostly face-to-face (16), with a few interviews (4) using the Internet between the summer of 2009 and the summer of 2010, took place with informants in Bulgaria.

Observation is another widely used technique. Although I do not present separately here the findings based on observations only, they are used extensively to validate information collected though interviews. Observations examine people's behavior in natural settings or in naturally occurring situations. Some authors make a distinction between participant and non-participant observations; the former combines participation in the lives of the people being studied with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of information[21]; the latter, on the other hand, requires as limited as possible interaction with those observed. Where the dividing line between these two forms of observation lies is not a question that is addressed or of issue in this research. The extreme cases as ideal-types, however, are easily distinguishable. Joining an underground group or a band of outlaws in order to observe its members' behavior clearly falls within participant observation; in this case participation in the group's activity is a condition for making any observation. It is not so clear whether prior knowledge of a rare language that facilitates observation makes it a case of participant observation. I am inclined to think that as long as the observer does not interfere directly with the observed peoples' activity, it is still non-participant observation, despite social and cultural requirements that make this observation possible. For this reason I consider my observations as non-participant. They are ethnographic as far as I do not limit myself to a particular field in order to discern the role of EU integration; everything can become part of my field notes. I share ethnography's holistic

assumption that a society represents an interrelated system; therefore any causal factor may find its way to all social sub-systems.

Regarding the accumulation of observable information, my best period of seeing "with new eyes", "like a foreigner" in the case of Bulgaria and Macedonia was usually limited to 2-3 weeks after my arrival in the field, which roughly corresponded to the time attributed to the each individual field study. Observations, in my case, after this 2-3 week period, reached a point of saturation; the point of saturation was the moment when adding new information through observation did not add new findings or new questions. Instead of puzzles, at that moment I saw predominantly a normality similar to my normal social environment; my natural psychological ability to adapt and adjust had made me part of the new normality and therefore I stopped asking myself questions "as a foreigner".

Finally, this research uses text-analogues techniques to validate findings collected though interviews. It is part of discursive analysis that deals with objects other than texts that are analyzed using semiotic techniques. Unlike linguistics, discourse analysis aims at revealing socio-psychological characteristics of a person or persons rather than text structure[22]. The discursive analysis here deals with text-analogues. This is an approach that uses discursive techniques applied to social artifacts that are not originally produced as part of the language, written or spoken. Analyzing political cartoons may provide useful information as to the general mood and directions in a particular society regarding specific topics. For this research, I use it as an independent technique because of its credited success in revealing the formation of new national identities[23].

As with the other techniques used to collect relevant information, the collection of visual representations is at the same time an independent source of information regarding the research question and a way to corroborate, through triangulation, the information gathered through other techniques, such as in-depth interviews and non-participant observations. Some cartoons include texts in either Bulgarian or Macedonian. To increase the level of certainty regarding some messages, when the semantic level was not sufficient to make unequivocal interpretation, I met with some of the authors to discuss their cartoons.

I analyzed 140 Bulgarian political cartoons. They were published in the local press and/or were presented to different exhibitions since 2002. Most of them appeared in the following daily and weekly newspapers: "24 chasa", "Capital", "Dnevnik", "Novinar", "Noshten trud", "Sega", and "Trud". For Macedonia I analyzed 50 political cartoons. Somewere published in "Utrinski vestnik". In Macedonia, unlike Bulgaria, there was no tradition of posting political cartoons in most newspapers. Therefore, most of the cartoons analyzed were only presented at local exhibitions or were published in thematic or authors' brochures since 2005.

Ethnography is social research based on close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real time and space, in which the investigator embeds himself near (or within) the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do[24]. Ethnography brings field workers into direct contact with processes instead of filtering that knowledge through other people's testimony, written records, and artifacts of interaction[25]. Ethnographic techniques vary from more intrusive types, such as in-depth interviews to more unobtrusive types, such as observations concerning the remnants and consequences of interaction[26]. In general, however, ethnography is not a mainstream way of doing research in political science. Out

of hundreds of articles that were published in *American Journal of Political Science* and *American Political Science Review* between 1996 and 2005, only one article relied on ethnographic techniques, according to Auyero and Joseph[27]. Most "methods" courses at Ph.D.-granting institutions do not cover ethnography, according to Bayard de Volo and Schatz[28]. Most ethnographic research is done in social disciplines other than political science[29]. When done in political science, most authors are not trained in political science, but rather in anthropology and sociology. Yet, as a form of social research, it is well suited to an inductive form of research, research that looks for answers on a micro level[30]. These authors also state that such underutilization of ethnographic techniques is not warranted. In the hands of an interpretativist, ethnography is "the art and science of describing a group or culture," the aim being the explication of meaning[31]. For a positivist, it is a tool to fully understand the causal story[32]. Ethnography is readily employed to test hypotheses to determine whether and how well a general theory applies to a specific case. For example, James Scott[33] and Susan Stokes[34] both use ethnography, combined with other methods, to "test" the Gramscian theory of hegemony[35]. Being part of inductive research as opposed to hypothetico-deductive research, ethnographic techniques look at findings well outside the restricted circle of possible explanations, which are different for each social science and humanity discipline. In political science, for example, an ethnographer would pay attention to the street music environment and local gossip as much as to official political discourses and the presence of particular political institutions.

Regarding the choice of cases, works regarding the influence of the EU in the post-communist world[36] are predominantly based on development in Central Europe, Poland, Hugary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. I am purposefully focusing on the Balkan region, a region in which post-communist transitions are slower and more difficult.

Bulgaria is an interesting case as a principal field study; the country has gone through the entire process of European integration; it entered the EU as a member in January of 2007. In addition, this country defies the simplistic logic of institutional transfer from West to East, part of the EU integration process. Even after its formal EU membership, Bulgaria continues to pose serious questions regarding the fulfillment of EU political conditionality. As a candidate, Macedonia is still in the waiting room pending the official start of accession negotiations; for diachronic analytical purposes this latter country is therefore a good candidate for a secondary field study.

Findings

This part of the research is divided into two thematic sections. In the first, I narrate the life stories of five informants from Bulgaria and Macedonia; these informants are the keys who unlock different intersubjective cultural trajectories of nationalist development in both countries. The main focus here is on their interpretation of being Bulgarian or Macedonian respectively and how this relates for them to the process of European integration. In the second section, I discuss the findings as representing typical cases from different cultural trajectories.

George, a Bulgarian, was a 45 year-old male and a state civil servant, although he preferred calling himself "a public servant". He administered international projects and

grants within the Bulgarian ministry of culture; these projects and grants included, but were not limited, to EU financial resources, although in fact, administering these EU resources represented a big part of his job. His daily tasks were twofold. On the one hand, he provided information to potential social clients about existing EU programs that were ready to provide financial aid; on the other hand, he contacted EU financial agencies to solicit financial aid for existing projects that could not be executed without such aid. This put him in constant contact both with EU authorities that provided financial assistance and with Bulgarian social actors who asked for such assistance. His contact with the EU, that manifested itself in many ways, began in the early 1990s. He worked at the French cultural institute in Sofia; some years later he was appointed expert at the Bulgarian Council of Ministers to take part in the negotiation process with the EU. His contacts with the EU and his current work as an "honest broker" (as he described his position) were life changing. At the beginning of the 1990s he described himself as hesitant and without direction, therefore politically inactive; he did not vote at that time. Now he felt freer, happier, more meaningful, with a clearer vision about his own and his society's future. He could see the results of his work and could be sure that they would not be washed away with the next governmental change. He talked with a certain satisfaction about a micro-revolution in people's mentality, with more readiness for cooperation and going beyond individual selfishness. He was putting emphasis on personal fulfillment, despite his rather modest salary as a civil servant. Politically, he voted regularly, felt civically competent and self confident about the issues that were at stake and was ready to cooperate with anyone if necessary, regardless of his ethnic or religious background, toward collective political action. George felt proud to be Bulgarian, to be part of a nation that was, in turn, part of such a magnificent community as the EU. He also felt European; these two identities for him coexisted in perfect harmony; on this point, he confirmed the observations of Duchesne and Frognier[37] according to whom civic nationalism and European identity could mutually reinforce each other. George was optimistic regarding the chances for Bulgaria to cross the civilization gap that separated the country from the most advanced European nations. He looked at the ethnic dimension of Bulgarian nationalism as a thing of the past. With equal zeal, he was ready to manage projects and solicit European financing for people that did not belong to the Bulgarian ethnic community, e.g. Turks or Roma. For him they were Bulgarian nationals first and foremost.

Mira, a Bulgarian, was a 30 year-old NGO officer and a former state civil servant working on environmental projects. Her main task was to monitor how Bulgaria fulfilled its obligations as a member of the European Union. She also filed reports to the European Commission on the same topic. Such expert reports might be taken into account in case of judicial litigation between Brussels and Sofia. As a matter of fact, there were already several European legal procedures opened against Bulgaria. In the case of such litigation Mira was ready to put all her energy in siding with Europe against her native country. She did not consider herself Bulgarian. For her, being Bulgarian and European was to be part of two mutually exclusive identities; Bulgarian meant backward, treacherous, chaotic, hopeless; European meant advanced, loyal, organized and hopeful. She called for more European presence up to a complete disintegration of the Bulgarian state within the European Union; she called for a new totalitarian regime, imposed by and directed from

Brussels. She did not vote in national elections because it was a waste of time and created a false image of Bulgaria as a functioning democracy. She, however, felt politically competent and ready for collective action regardless of ethnic or religious background. The right political framework for her was European, not national. If, for George, European integration went hand-in-hand with deepening of his civic nationalism, for Mira European integration was synonymous with Bulgarian de-nationalization. She felt like a European who lived in Bulgaria who happened to intimately know Bulgarian reality. Her political and group loyalty was only to Brussels.

Jivka, a Bulgarian, was a 30 year-old state civil servant. She administered formal relations with Brussels on different issues. Her role was to try to postpone, using bureaucratic tools, legal litigations between Bulgaria and the Union before they reached European courts. She considered the Union as a community of nations without supranational sovereignty. All European nations were equal; therefore there was no place for any sort of foreign diktat. All European conditionality was a matter of the past. It was time now for a dialogue between equals. She did not understand how it was possible that some Bulgarians sided with Brussels in the case of disagreements. Bulgaria had to speak with only one voice, the voice of its government. She looked at Bulgarian NGOs and ethnic minorities with particular suspicion. They were either paid by Brussels, or, worse, by foreign governments, to blackmail the Bulgarian state. She gave as a good example to follow the Russian regulations where such non-governmental activity was restricted. As far as her national identity was concerned, she was proud to be Bulgarian, but not for the same reasons as George. Being part of the EU did not increase her national pride; in fact it only created additional problems. For her, being Bulgarian concerned strictly ethnic boundaries; ethnic Turks and Roma unless they felt and behaved like ethnic Bulgarians were not part of the Bulgarian nation. The process of European integration made this division even more acute. Brussels used these minorities in order to influence local politics, which for her, was unacceptable. As a consequence, she was not ready to contemplate forms of collective action with ethnic and religious minorities. In fact, she was not ready to contemplate any collective action as far as it might clash with Bulgarian state interests.

Ana, a Macedonian, was a 45 year-old female and a director of an NGO that administered EU projects who was initially socialized within the former Yugoslavia. For her, present-day Macedonia as a unitary state was just one out of many possible political configurations. Other configurations included being part of a larger regional and continental federal or confederal body, being annexed, in necessary by force, by one of its stronger neighbors, being divided along ethnic lines with or without foreign annexation, or being itself a federal state. The most desirable solution for her would be to see Macedonia as part of the EU. The country itself should be based on individual rights rather than on ethnic communities. The Yugoslav experience was frequently and without solicitation used as a reference to show her preference toward being part of a larger multinational organization. Among the usual positive aspects of this arrangement were peace, economic prosperity, and more individual opportunities. The EU was therefore Yugoslavia writ larger and arguably more stable and economically more prosperous. Ana considered herself Macedonian, but this consideration did not preclude other loyalties on

top of her primary identity. Being Yugoslav or European could fit harmoniously with her interpretation of Macedonian-ness. Therefore, European integration helped her not to feel threatened either by ethnic minorities or by European conditionality. She was willing to contemplate collective action with members of local ethnic minorities. The civic elements of nationhood took precedence over strictly ethnic dimensions.

Petko, a Macedonian, was a 61 year-old male and former French language teacher. Unlike Ana, he was a strong opponent to EU integration. He felt threatened, personally and collectively, from the changes that this integration would bring to the country. Individually, he and his wife had lost most of their French language students. English was growing in force, and those who had an interest in French had many alternative options, including studying abroad. At the collective level, he felt that EU norms would give too many rights to ethnic minorities and so the ethnic nature of his state would be diluted. If the sensitive "name" issue was a prerequisite for beginning negotiations, nobody knew what the prerequisites for becoming an EU member state would be. EU integration for Petko was good only for the ethnic Albanians and for other minorities that tried to solve their national questions and territorial aspirations without violence. The EU, therefore, meant giving up the sovereign state in exchange for nice words and empty promises. Thus far, he voted regularly for the nationalist party VMRO-DPMNE, the only real guardian of Macedonian statehood according to him. He doubted, however, that even this party would always be vigilant in protecting the ethno-national identity of the state. If EU integration went forward, he was not sure whether he would keep voting. He did not need his country within the EU in order to feel European, he felt it already. He did not feel that the EU would bring more economic prosperity to the country; to the contrary, he saw a negative impact of EU influence. His political goal, as far as EU integration was concerned, was to block it as long as possible. As far as the nature of the state was concerned, he would prefer an open confrontation with the Albanians instead of making the country a multinational state. He was afraid that given the unequal demographic development that favored the Albanians, such open confrontation would be the only solution. He lamented that the ethnic confrontation of 2001 was stopped with the aid of the EU before solving the problem between the two main communities in the country once and for all. This problem, according to Petko, could be solved by expelling the Albanians from the parts of Macedonia where they settled en masse during the 20th century. Whether the remaining parts traditionally populated with Albanians would remain or not part of Macedonia was not his concern, as long as the ethnic Macedonians kept running the country as a unitary national state. If necessary, he was ready to limit the political rights of those who declared themselves not to be Macedonians. The fact that he considered himself Macedonian *and* European should not be understood as if he divided his loyalties between Skopje and Brussels. All his loyalties lied with the Macedonian state as the political representation of the will of Macedonian ethnic majority. Being European meant being part of a larger cultural identity, akin to Huntington's western civilization. Within this larger cultural identity, Macedonia was not a pupil but one of the main historical architects.

These five individual cases are more than personal stories; in fact, they represent particular intersubjective cultural trajectories, typical cases within specific subcultures.

These subcultures may interact with other subcultures within the larger national culture. Three Bulgarian and two Macedonian cases represent different trajectories concerning the evolution of national identity under the influence of European integration. George represents Bulgarians who assert their civic national identity thanks to their new supranational characteristics; Mira represents Bulgarians who deny their Bulgarian identity because they develop an alternative sense of supranational European identity; Jivka represents Bulgarians who affirm their ethnic Bulgarian-ness as opposed to newly born civic nationalism. These three informants make very different interpretations of what it means to be Bulgarian. For George being Bulgarian and European is possible at the same time; for Mira and Jivka it is not. The latter two solve this dilemma by either attaching themselves to the European or to the Bulgarian side of the symbolic opposition. For George being Bulgarian is mainly a civic concept; for Mira and Jivka it is mainly an ethnic concept. These informants' different interpretations regarding their identity makes a difference as far as their political activity is concerned. George would conceive of collective action with any Bulgarian citizen; Jivka will choose only among ethnic Bulgarians that oppose European diktat; Mira will look for Bulgarians who detach themselves from the narrow ethnic framework. In Macedonia, Ana hopes for a civic national identity as part of the larger European family; Petko, on the contrary, seeks a clear demarcation between ethnic Macedonians and other groups, minorities and foreigners. The parallels between Bulgarian Mira and Macedonian Ana should not be overemphasized. Mira considers the Bulgarian ethnic group as backward; Ana has no such feelings toward ethic Macedonians. As a result, Mira chooses Europe with or without Bulgaria; Ana chooses Macedonia within Europe. Jivka and Petko are both ethnic nationalists. Yet there are some important differences between the two. Petko considers himself part of mainstream social and political forces. He also considers himself culturally European, perhaps much more than many people in Western Europe do. Jivka has no such cultural protection within Bulgarian society where the main center-left and center-right parties equally push for deeper European integration. As a result Petko advocates democratic ways of protecting the Macedonian state; Jivka advocates anti-democratic ways of limiting political participation of Western-oriented NGOs and ethnic minorities. On this point, Bulgarians Jivka and Mira are surprisingly similar in their anti-democratic stance despite their opposite views on European integration. As in the case of Bulgaria, the two Macedonian informants reveal two different concepts of nationhood. Ana aspires for civic nationalism integrated within European norms and values that protects individual citizens against the omnipotent state; Petko advocates an ethnic version of nationalism, protected by a strong state, where individual rights are not important at best or are suspicious at worse.

What are the causal interpretative mechanisms that affect national identity in both Balkan countries? The particular trajectory epitomized by George, i.e. the trajectory where civic traits of nationalism overlap with purely ethnic traits, and European identity emerges in addition to Bulgarian, is a result of the action of multiple interpretative mechanisms all of which may lead to European integration as a cause. Among them I identify the following: informants like George report acquiring a better sense of vision or a roadmap for social development; the EU presents a picture of future social order that needs to be followed by candidate countries or new members; acquiring a better sense of security, or the understanding that anybody's personal contribution positively affects his

or her future; acquiring a sense of dignity, or the understanding that everybody has inherent worth as human being within a social world of clearly separated zones of good and evil; acquiring a sense of freedom, or individual capacity to act based on clear and fair rules and regulations; and finally, acquiring a new positive meaning of teamwork that dashes the post-communist understanding that any sort of collective action ultimately represents communist-era mentality and practices.

The trajectory epitomized by Mira shares all interpretative mechanisms of the previous group, with one very important difference. The Mira type of informant considers ethnic Bulgarian nationalism as inherently backward and hopeless. These informants feel ashamed of considering any cultural fusion between newer European and older Bulgarian identity. European integration gives them an opportunity to remain politically active without playing only within the Bulgarian political realm. Before European integration took place, this group would have considered international emigration as the most likely outcome of political and cultural dilemmas.

The trajectory epitomized by Jivka does not acknowledge acquiring a better sense of vision as a result of European integration. On the contrary, this group considers integration as a factor that damages the clear roadmap for social development. These informants also do not acknowledge a better sense of security, dignity, freedom or teamwork. In addition, informants from this group report reactivation of the fear of ethnic minorities, another interpretative mechanism that makes them more radically ethnic nationalists than before the integration took place. Unlike the previous two groups, the Jivka type of ethnic nationalist is detached from civil society. For these informants, it is the state that should be put at the center of political action, a state that speaks with one voice and acts independently on the international arena. Another important difference between Jivka, on the one hand, and George and Mira, on the other, is the former informant's strong emotional attachment to nuclear family and Bulgarian Orthodox Church as social identifiers. The Jivka type of informant perceives European integration as a threat to nuclear family. This type also associates integration with the threat of spreading alternative sexual practices and lifestyles.

In Macedonia, informants also show two different interpretative mechanisms that affect their national identity, partly under the influence of EU integration. As far as the mechanisms better sense of vision, security, dignity and freedom are concerned, Ana and Petko make very different interpretations of integration. For the former, this integration boosts or helps maintaining all these elements in higher gear; for the latter it is the opposite, the process of integration leads to erosion of all of these elements. Macedonian informants, unlike Bulgarian informants, despite their opposing views on European integration, share common positive attitudes toward Macedonian ethnic nationalism and toward nuclear family values. What separates them is the answer to the question pertaining to whether or not the Macedonian ethnic community would be better off within or outside supranational structures, which take away some measure of national sovereignty. Ana answers affirmatively to this question and Petko negatively.

An important difference between these two countries comes from their different historic ways of negotiating their types of nationalism within or outside supranational structures that impose particular identities. Bulgarian nationalism, on the one hand, according to Bozeva-Abazi[38], has developed within its own independent nation-state. Despite participation within supranational organizations such as the Warsaw Pact or

COMECON, the country remained nominally sovereign during the Communist period; its population and elite did not have to have double identities, national and supranational despite official ideological propaganda of proletarian internationalism. Macedonia, on the other hand, saw its nationalism thriving within post-Second World War Yugoslavia, which acknowledged the Macedonian nation and gave it separate administrative structures. Having said this, all Bulgarian trajectories were generated by a common cultural ancestor; ethnic Bulgarian nationalism that was congruent with the Bulgarian state for many generations. It was European integration, among other factors, that led to splitting this nationalist sentiment into many cultural trajectories: civic-national, civic-supranational and ethnic-national. In Macedonia, the Yugoslav arrangement created an entire spectrum of possibilities between 1945 and 1991; informants could situate themselves anywhere between double identity with Yugoslavia and complete ethnic encapsulation. As far as my informants can witness, the main post-communist dynamic in Macedonia comes from the split within the pro-Yugoslav branch of ethnic Macedonians; some of whom are now joining those who never accepted the Yugoslav double identity.

Conclusion

Bulgaria and Macedonia show different dynamics of post-communist nationalism as a result of EU integration. In Bulgaria, a new branch of civic nationalism is born; it splits into two different trajectories as far as people decide to identify themselves with Europe or Bulgaria. In Macedonia, the main trend is to get back into ethnic isolation. Bulgarian society, more homogenous than Macedonian on this point barely 10 years ago, becomes more diversified; the Macedonian ethnic majority, initially more diverse than the Bulgarian ethnic majority, becomes more homogenous. Bulgarians for the first time in history have a real choice of national identity without renouncing their ethnic roots. Macedonians, on the other hand, have had their pool of choices shrink. The group of Euro-optimists in Macedonia, those who advocate accepting European conditionality, gets smaller. Being Macedonian in Macedonia now becomes equal to being ethnic Macedonian and Orthodox Christian, without any double identities.

Such major shifts in national identity will affect the countries prospects for further European integration and their relations with geographic neighbors. Unless a major political cataclysmic event, national or international, reverses the current trends in both countries, Bulgarian society will become more permeable to European norms and values. The use of European formal mechanisms, administrative and judicial, to influence Bulgarian political life may increase. Bulgarians who live in Bulgaria but feel more European than other Bulgarians will become more comfortable in their alternative identity. In Macedonia, time plays in favor of Euro-skeptics. Accepting European conditionality becomes tantamount to national treason, and pro-European politicians pay a high price of remaining loyal to their EU-integration views. The largest ethnic minority, the Albanians, still wait for a positive solution of the name dispute with Greece, and by extension, with the EU and NATO. My ethnographic notes show that this patience will end very soon. But this is a topic of for further research.

NOTES

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