

BILKENT UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**BALKANS MINORITIES AND THEIR EFFECT
UPON BALKAN SECURITY**

BY
SONER ÇAĞAPTAY

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of
International Relations
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of International Relations**

JUNE 1995

ANKARA

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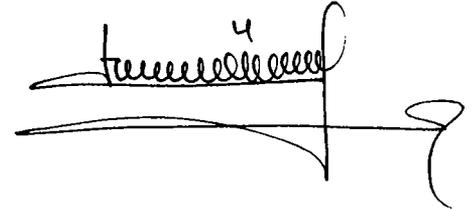
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Dr. Hasan Ünal



ABSTRACT

With the advent of a bloody war in ex-Yugoslavia which has by now claimed hundreds of thousands of lives, the Balkans has once again become a focus of interest. Many have concentrated on the study of religion, nationalisms and minorities, admittedly three sources of trouble in the peninsula. It is worth noting that almost all Balkan states have had significant minority populations since their establishment. The very existence of minorities coupled with irredantist and chauvinist features of Balkan nationalisms as well as claims of homogeneity have somewhat turned minorities into potential surrogates of their *host-states* in which they live. *Mother-states*, to which minorities look for support have been regarded by their host-states as dangerous neighbors.

As a result, enormous amount of mistrust between Balkan states has come about, letting loose a considerable amount of combustible materiel throughout the Balkans. To this may be added the third source of trouble, that is the minorities. This work aims to analyze a somewhat peculiar relationship which has three dimensions, namely host-states, mother-states and minorities. It also aims to focus on relevant aspects of Balkan nationalisms. And it concludes that, in spite of a number of a triangular relationships involving these three actors, every case has to be treated on its own merit.

ÖZET

Eski Yugoslavya'daki krizin kanlı bir çatışmaya dönüşmesiyle birlikte, çeşitli azınlıklara evsahipliği yapan Balkan yarımadası bir kez daha ilgi odağı haline geldi. Bugün dikkatler yarımadadaki sıkıntıların üç kaynağı olarak kabul edilen din, milliyetçilik ve azınlıklar konularına çevrilmiş durumda. Hemen hemen istisnasız bütün Balkan devletleri kuruldukları günden beri kayda değer azınlık cemaatlerine evsahipliği yapagelmiştir. Buna ilaveten, Balkan milliyetçiliğinin yayılcı ve şövenist özellikleri, azınlıkları içinde yaşadıkları evsahibi devletler (*host states*) açısından potansiyel hain konumuna koyabilmiştir. Bu durumda azınlıklar çevreleri tarafından kendilerine göre gayrı-milli olan bir devlette yabancı olarak yaşayan ve bu nedenle de kendi devletlerini kurma ya da bunlara katılma hayalleri peşinde olmaları muhtemel gruplar olarak değerlendirilmekte, öte yandan kendileri de bu bakış açısını az çok paylaşmakta ve kimi tavırlarıyla da bunu göstermektedirler. Bunun uzantısı olarak evsahibi ülkeler azınlıkların kendilerini yakın hissettikleri ana devletlerine (*mother states*) karşı dikkatli davranma zorunluluğunu hissetmektedirler. Bunun tabii bir sonucu, Balkanlı devletler arasında - azınlığın da içine dahil olduğu- üçlü bir güvensizlik ilişkisidir. Bu çalışma, bu ilişkiler ağının ve Balkan milliyetçiliğinin kökenlerinin analizine katkıda bulunma iddiasının yanısıra bu tür üçlü ilişkilerin çeşitli örneklerini inceleyerek her birinin altyapısını oluşturan özgün dinamikleri de ele almaktadır.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have been realized had it not been for the efforts of my supervisor, Dr. Hasan Ünal. His illuminatingly guiding perspective into the Balkans; the inspiring discussions I have had with him during the course of my studies and his sense of academic ethics have, I believe, not only helped me to complete this work but also reinforced my commitments to academic career.

I am deeply grateful to the Department of International Relations, above all, the Chair, Professor Karaosmanoğlu and as well as all other academic staff. My thanks also go to Mrs. Müge Keller, for her help to me in finalizing the computer work.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to my family, and in particular to my mother for her support during the writing-up. And last but not least, my father for his eternal encouragement for learning.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A glance at the history of the Balkans will reveal the fact that for much of its past, and also for the present, the issue of religion, nationalism and minorities are inseparable from the analytical point of view. During long Ottoman years, as the social system of the Empire defined the Imperial subjects on the basis of adherence to religious communities (i.e. *Millets*) this turned religious identity into an inalienable part of the Balkan heritage. In addition, since the Balkan churches -within the framework of the Millet system- were the sole institutions to have survived into the Ottoman system, they initially became a refuge for the heritage, and later (starting with 19th century) the perpetuators of indigenous Balkan identities.

Thus religion had become the dominant, if not the single, social bearing, by the time nationalism arrived in the peninsula. Nationalism reached the Balkans, following the French revolution and in a rather indirect fashion through intermediaries. Central Europe, Greece and the Greek speaking peoples of the Empire were the stations through which nationalism found favourable terrain in the peninsula. However, this indirect course it followed gradually led to major modifications in the understanding of nationalism depending upon experiences, and interpretations of these intermediaries.¹ This brand of nationalism that bore chauvinistic, irredentist and historicist features under the premises of building a state for the supposedly already existing nation had enormous repercussions.² Here, the nation was defined on the basis of a distant -in most cases medieval- state and people. It soon reached point where every Balkan nationalism came to demand the resurrection of a glorified former state in its original territories.³ Such a vision (in other words a *megali idea*) not only disregarded the existence of peoples of various religious and linguistic background within the boundaries of the envisaged national state, thus gravely ignoring the rich mix of peoples in the peninsula; but also paved the way to regard the peoples of different background with caution and gradual enmity, since their very existence held the potential to inhibit the fulfillment of a great idea.

This is the reason why the problem of minorities has sprung up within independent Balkan states. Coming into existence, individual Balkan states had to face the dilemma of accommodating minorities into their nationalist structure. This proved to be a cumbersome, if not impossible, task, not only because these host states lacked the will to do so, but also because the minorities (considering themselves as inalienable parts of other nations) looked to their mother states (to which they felt attached) as their home to be.

The resultant lack of confidence between Balkan states due to the precarious position the minority occupied in their eyes would be strengthened in time through acts such as assimilation, ethnic cleansing, deportation, discrimination on the part of host states; encouragement of separatism and belligerency on the part of mother states; and last but not least resistance on the part of minorities.

Today there are numerous minority communities all around the peninsula. Some of these simply fall out of the scope of the perspective, discussed above, for various factors such as lacking a potential mother state, being too small in size, or having gone through a process of voluntary assimilation. Nevertheless there is a number of minorities all around the peninsula that continue to constitute serious bones of contention, deteriorating inter-state relations while suffering due to violation of their rights.

For the moment it seems likely that the atmosphere of mistrust prevailing in the Balkans is not least because of a perception of threat host states perceive from mother states and their own minorities, and a feeling of uneasiness that mother states their minority "phenomenon" in neighbouring states feel towards host states. Such an unpromising situation, dominating inter-state relations as well as suffering of minorities is not likely to disappear so long as Balkan states and their minorities do not recognize the reality of a multi-ethnic coexistence within the framework of a state as a permanent given and not as a permanent and perpetual problem.

The study will be composed of three chapters. The first chapter entitled *Nationalism, Religion and Minorities in the Balkans* aims to shed light on the history of the peninsula, emergence of nationalisms in the Balkans, the extent to which nationalism and religion have been intertwined, as well as the situation of Balkan minorities within the process of the establishment of nation-states.

The second chapter under the heading, *The Balkan Minorities* starts off with an assessment of the factors that might help to define what a minority community in the Balkans is. Then, the chapter goes on to analyze each Balkan country with special reference to its minorities. It offers a historical background to the minority groups and then describes the current situation of these minorities. This perspective should be of some use in setting out why some minorities are more likely to be a part of a stressful relationship between mother and host states than others which seem to experience a more peaceful existence.

The final chapter, the *Security Dimension* begins with a theoretical review of the security concept and the dimensions of Balkan security. Then it attempts to determine the dynamics, underlying the triangular relationship between mother state, a host state and a minority. After a theoretical and an analytical framework, the final chapter proceeds to analyze likely triangular relationships of distrust in the Balkans. Seven cases are analyzed to shed light on the existing mutual perceptions of threat, mistrust and uneasiness. Identifying these as major causes of Balkan-wide instability, the concluding chapter sums up the general situation in the Balkans and then finalizes by making offers for possible solutions to break up this self-perpetuating vicious circle.

The contribution the present dissertation claims to make to the scholarship lies in the fact that most studies on Balkan minorities up to the present have either been mere surveys carried out by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), or works which examine the issue from the point of view of global or bi-polar security concerns, disregarding particular dynamics of the Balkans. This work that analyzes Balkan security from the perspective of minorities and the role played by them in inter-state relations contributes to the aforementioned studies, which are mostly descriptive. Among the very few studies which have focused on security

issues in the Balkans, few of them have put forward a framework in which to examine Balkan minorities similar to the one that the present study has come up with. ⁴ Though it is attempted here to classify the minorities in the region from a security point of view, care has been taken to avoid the trap into which most outsiders seem to fall as a previous article has put it:

"it appears fairly plausible to the outsiders to enumerate all minorities and then put forward over-simplified and over-generalized appraisal of the situation as well as solution proposals to all related problems. However, closer examination of the minorities and their relations with the *host* state in which they live and the host state's perception of a given minority suggests that every case in the region must be treated on its own merit. But, depending on from what perspective this question is handled, there may be some room for classification." ⁵

In analyzing Balkan security, the present study will thus classify minorities in the peninsula into two categories: minorities with mother states (i.e. minorities as actors in inter-state relations), and second, minorities without mother states (i.e. minorities without possible roles as actors in inter-state relations). Hereby there seems to be a number of ways, depending upon one's analytical perspective, to classify Balkan minorities. A classification as the one attempted here seems to be the most appropriate for this study.

It must be acknowledged at the outset that there are some practical difficulties regarding the boundaries of the Balkans. Therefore, the study limits itself only to the typical Balkan countries such as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Slovenia, Romania and the New Yugoslavia, for reasons discussed in Chapter 2.1. Thus, the present study excludes neighboring countries such as Austria, Hungary, Italy and Turkey from its analytical perspective. This is because of the fact that these countries seem to have at least as many non-Balkan features as their Balkanic features. Likewise, one should also note that these countries have a number of non-Balkan minorities and that the inclusion of these countries into a discussion of the Balkan minorities is likely to provide more confusion than clarity. Turkey, a typical example to these

semi-Balkan regional countries, for instance, has historically had strong Balkan features. However, especially given its 20th century history and demographic make-up, as well as the development of its political culture it is now a country that can hardly be placed into the Balkan framework as it would be the case for example, for Albania.

CHAPTER II. NATIONALISM, RELIGION AND MINORITIES IN THE BALKANS

2.1. BOUNDARIES OF THE PENINSULA

Geographically speaking, a roughly triangular land mass located in southeast Europe pointing to the Mediterranean to the south, its base facing central Europe to the north from which it is separated by the Danube-Sava river line might well be defined as the Balkan peninsula. It is flanked by the Adriatic and the Ionian seas to the west and the Black, Marmara and the Aegean seas to the east. A glance at the history of the Balkans points to the fact that the region, though fairly mountainous and to an extent insular protected by seas and a number of rivers, has lacked clear-cut political borders throughout centuries. These geographical features encircling the peninsula have by no means been sufficient to create barriers to politically isolate the region. If anything, numerous islands and bridge ways around the peninsula like the Aegean and the Adriatic islands as well as the Turkish Straits form springboards into the peninsula from its environs. This is how Orthodoxy, the Ottoman Empire, Turks and Islam from the east, and the Romans and Catholicism from the west have made inroads into the Balkans.¹

The northern boundaries, where geographical limits are even less concrete, have allowed more penetration for ages. For instance, the Danube with its various tributaries opens up gateways into the peninsula from Central Europe such as the vast Pannonian Plains. The Black Sea lowlands in the east, around the Danubian Delta also create another passage into the peninsula. It is through these gateways that the Goths, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Slavs, Protestantism, the Habsburgs and the Germans have made their way into the peninsula. In addition to the geographical features delineating the Balkans, the strategic location of the peninsula as a bridge between Central Europe and the Middle East has made these geographical barriers all but more penetrable.

That is to say that, while the geographical borders of the peninsula seem clear, there does not appear a general agreement among the scholars upon its political boundaries which have in fact fluctuated for ages.

Therefore, every study seeking to search on various aspects of the Balkans may make its own definition of the borders in accordance with its aims. For instance, the narrowest geographic delimitation of the Balkans would dictate a peninsula lying to south of the Danube-Sava line. This borderline, a reminiscent of the outer limits of direct, and uninterrupted Ottoman rule from 15th to 19th centuries would include modern **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia** and the **new Yugoslavia**.

Such a narrow delimitation would, however, ignore Balkan political experience. Therefore, political and cultural criteria is needed to clarify geopolitical boundaries of the Balkans. **Political unity** between lands to the north and south of the Danube, as well as **shared cultural and political features** as can be observed in the Romanian example between the Romanian speaking populations of the *Regat* and the Habsburg lands would make the above geographical definitions incomplete. It is clear that the political boundaries of the peninsula would exceed the geographically defined frontiers which have in fact never isolated the peninsula from its exterior. A wider Balkan picture should, therefore add the whole of ex-Yugoslavia and also **Romania** to the aforementioned countries. All these states cited will be referred to as **core Balkan** countries, in the sense that they reciprocate, to the largest possible extent, to the political and geographical definitions of the peninsula.

In addition, there appear some neighboring countries such as **Austria, Hungary, Italy** and **Turkey** which have distinguishing characters with regards to their relations with the Balkans. These states may well be referred to as semi-Balkan countries. These semi-Balkan countries seem to have some common features in their relations with the Balkans. First of all, all of them **exercised political control** over parts of the peninsula in the past.² Venetians and later Italy controlled the Dalmatian coastline; Hungarian Kingdom, later the Habsburgs and then the Dual Monarchy, held tight control in the form of sovereignty over northern and northwestern Balkans and finally the Ottomans maintained rule over much of the Balkan territory for about half a millennium. In addition, these four states have **special links with various minorities of their own national/ imperial heritage** all over the Balkans. For instance, Germans and Magyars in Romania, the new Yugoslavia and Croatia; Italians in Croatia and Slovenia; and Turks in Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia and Romania are only few examples worth mentioning. Their historical links as well as current

circumstances seem to place four countries into a special position vis-à-vis the Balkans. The political influence these countries have possessed in contributing to the flow of events of the peninsula and also the fact that these countries are in return vulnerable to inter-Balkan development further clarifies this unique position.

2.2. GEOGRAPHY AND LAND IN THE BALKANS

The Balkan peninsula has a rugged terrain, as its Turkish name denotes, with five mountain ranges; the Dinar, Pindus, Balkan, Rhodope and the Transylvanian/ Carpathian reaching altitudes well above 1000 meters. The Dinar and Pindus ranges extending in the west all the way from north to south as massive walls parallel to the Adriatic are pierced by various river valleys and passes, such as the Neretva, Drina, Drin and Shkumbi rivers and the Peach Tree Pass, allowing entry into the interior despite the difficult nature of the terrain.³

To the east of these mountains the Danube and low-lying plains around it dominate the landscape. This great river entering into the peninsula, then waters extensive plains together with its tributaries such as, the Tizza, Drava and Sava, flows in between the Moesian (Bulgaria) and Wallachian (Romania) plains before it reaches the Black Sea around the Moldovan plains and the Danubian marshlands Danubian delta.

To the north of the Danube, the Transylvanian range separates the upper Danubian (the Pannonian) plains from the lower Danubian (the Romanian) plains. In the southeast of the peninsula the Thracian and Macedonian plains are encircled by the Balkan and Rhodope ranges which allow through river valleys such as the Vardar, Morova and the Maritsa passage into the interior.

These features of the region present us the following features in relation to the demographic history of the peninsula: the geographical features and the morphology of the Balkans such as the natural corridors around and through the peninsula helped to increase the penetrability and the freedom of movement through the peninsula. This phenomena itself has produced two outstanding results: **the exposure of Balkans to foreign influence, domination and eventual conquest; and also possibility of continuous shift and movement**

of peoples throughout the region. The effects of such geo-political facts have contributed to a large extent to the making up of specific regional features: the never ending entry of new peoples into the Balkan stage, and the inescapable ethnic mix of the peninsula. These phenomena have been caricaturized by the French cuisine with the "**Balkanique**" name given to mix salad: the **Macedoine**.

2.3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE BALKANS BEFORE 19th CENTURY

The arrival of Slavs to the Balkans by the 7th century is no doubt a significant date in the history of the peninsula. The **Romans** and **Byzantines** who had entered the peninsula in the previous centuries to control the native autochthonous peoples (i.e. the **Greeks, Thracians and Illyrians**) of the region had not intended to inhabit the peninsula for good. The **Huns, Goths and Avars** coming from the north had been too restless to influence the peninsula with their permanent presence; instead they were to be assimilated by the locals.

After that, the **Slavic presence** giving the peninsula a strong flavour lasted till the arrival of the Ottomans from the east. The Ottoman conquest of nearly the entire Balkans was completed in less than 200 years, between the mid 14th and early 16th centuries. The long lasting **Ottoman rule** was balanced only by the arrival of the **Habsburgs** onto the stage. By the 18th century, the Habsburgs captured -in addition to Slovenia and parts of Hungary already possessed by Vienna- rest of Hungary, Croatia, Vojvodina, Transylvania and the Banat. From then onwards starting with the treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, by which the Habsburgs obtained northern and northwestern Balkans, until 19th century, the age of nationalisms in the Balkans, the borders were somewhat stabilized with little exception of gradual *Russian drang* from the northeast.⁴

2.4. NATIONALISM IN THE BALKANS

By the 19th century, the Habsburgs and Ottoman Empires shared similarities. They both included a large variety of Balkan peoples, who differed a lot in confessions and idioms as well as social and cultural features. The Ottomans and the Habsburgs had always paid great attention to the maintenance of their empires. In these imperial structures the diversity of the Balkans was given no particular attention. On the contrary, the **Millet system** and the non-ethnic monarchical tradition (materialized in the **Edict of Toleration** of Emperor Joseph) of these empires had maintained a balance in the peninsula.

This "**magic spill**" did not, however, last long. The emergence of nationalist ideas in Europe was a major turning point. "In West Europe nationalism arose in an effort to build a nation in the political reality and struggle of the present...(It) followed or coincided a certain period of centralization", to such an extent that societies were homogenized around the notion of a sovereign people living within the territory of an already existing state, aspiring to form a nation-state on that basis.⁵

These new ideas soon reached the Balkans. For the Ottoman and Habsburg establishments nationalism was at least a set of incomprehensible ideas, if not anathema. For the Balkan peoples, however, nationalism meant new horizons.

Nationalism entered the Ottoman Balkans through the links of Balkan societies with European milieu.⁶ The Balkans were definitely not experiencing the drastic social and political transformation Western Europe was undergoing at the time; therefore, nationalism was given by the Balkan peoples a different interpretation than what it had stood for in Western Europe.⁷

As nationalism began to be adopted for local use, it did not take long for nationalist ideas to spread around the Balkans. At first, nationalism addressed those segments of the society discontented with the establishment by offering them the opportunity to change the system to their advantage and take the matters into their hands. The peasantry and the intelligentsia were among these segments. Declining rural conditions, the gradual transformation of the timar system into the *chiflik* system which caused enormous distress among

the peasantry had already turned into a potential community of resistance.⁸ For such a community of resistance, nationalism was just the perfect course to create a shared identity, a feeling of belonging, which the community could use as a means of cohesiveness. To the intellectuals who were aspiring to follow European patterns, uniting the people around the idea of political resistance seemed suitable too. In addition, nationalism prepared the ground for the future goal of ousting foreign domination. Inasmuch as it was centered around the idea of creating a common identity to serve the goal of resistance and a prospective future state, nationalism produced peculiar results in the Balkans. Here a "nation was created out of the myths of the past and the dreams of the future, an ideal fatherland, closely linked with the past, devoid of any immediate connection with the present and expected to become sometime a political reality".⁹

In fact, foreign influence and domination were now regarded as nothing but barriers on the way of the nation-building, which was otherwise destined for success. Within that framework a need arose to convince the people about their greatness and superiority, "by making them aware of their past"¹⁰. Here, the use of **historical legacies** came in. The nation was united around the idea of a distinct but glorious past, which served as the basis of the national identity. In addition, as the Balkan peoples began to turn to past to dig for their national characteristics, linguistic affinities, historical evidence, religious features and historical rights, they came to realize that in the Balkans centuries of Ottoman imperial rule and the Millet system had blended all such features into a mixture that was marked by **religion**. Therefore, by the age of nationalisms when a search into history was conducted, **religion came to the forefront to serve as the vehicle for nationalism**.¹¹ Having preserved an heritage within its body, religion and its component, the church provided for the necessary basis to initialize nationalist movements. The existence of the nation was justified on the basis of past structures, such as medieval kingdoms and churches.

The political orientation of nationalism towards a nation-state produced two main results. First **historicism**, that is the idea of a national mission and distortion of history for that purpose. And based on this, **irredentism** in the search towards the maximum boundaries of the future state, which were to be defined through historical criteria.

Heavy emphasis on the past and history was placed to undermine present circumstances. Taking into consideration the ethnic mix of the Balkans, any such nationalist movement in the Balkans was doomed to face certain unpredictable problems. The existence of a multitude of peoples ("future nations") over a territory which by nationalist definition could belong to "one nation" only was likely to become a major issue. To cope with this issue of intermingled peoples, Balkan nationalisms developed another distinctive feature: **the elimination of other alien peoples, who were regarded as "potential enemies"** to the national cause as they would stand in the way of the establishment of the future state for the "nation". Therefore, efforts to overcome these "difficulties" were justified so long as they served the ultimate goal. Peaceful assimilation, physical extermination, where appropriate, as well as cultural manipulative tricks (i.e. denial of the identity of the "other", so as to make the other susceptible for integration) were all welcome. Through the entire 19th century, dealing with "others" became an important part of the agenda of Balkan nationalisms.¹² Even when a certain nation managed to establish its own state, such concerns did not evaporate. If anything, the new state apparatus functioned as a valuable means to achieve the ultimate goal of eliminating the "others" within the young nation-state.

In the case where a nation-state was established, the "others" therein also (i.e. the minorities) regarded this nation-state as alien to their presence. The minorities regarded the nation-state as barriers, cutting them off from the bulk of their nation, and their respective nation-state. Therefore, they nurtured aspirations towards joining their **mother states** (i.e. the state to which a minority would feel attached because of perceived political and national similarities). The forceful efforts of the **home states** (where the minority actually lived) only accelerated such tendencies of the minorities.

During the nation building process through the 19th century the Balkans witnessed two consecutive periods. The first period was one of a struggle through violent and political means to establish a nation-state while minimizing the threats posed to the realization of that goal by rival outsiders. The next period, coming with the nation-state, was again dominated by the continuing struggle between competing "nations". This last stage has in fact lasted into our age, only **strengthening the existing mistrust between the home states and minorities**, while causing deterioration in the relations

between the mother states and home states. This is the reason why the issue of minorities in the Balkans needs to be handled with great care with continuous references to the past and the present.

2.5. RELIGION IN THE BALKANS

2.5.1. Orthodoxy; the Patriarchate and the Balkan churches under the Ottomans

The Ottoman social system as of mid 16th century was organized on the basis of religious communities each existing separately within its own institution surviving the reorganization under the Ottomans. Therefore and especially on rural basis the church remained as an authentic entity sustaining a certain identity till the age of nationalisms. Where the Orthodox peoples of the Balkans were organized to be a single church community, this did not mean that they would finally adopt a common identity based on the notion of Orthodoxy.¹³

The Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople, under whose authority the Orthodox peoples of the Empire had been placed, had began to gain predominance following the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans. The Patriarchate with the appointment of Gennadius, a staunch anti-Catholic, to its head became a clear-cut Ottoman institution. In fact, the abolishment of the Tirnovo Patriarchate in 1393, and the Pec (Ipek) Patriarchate in 1459 consolidated the power of the Patriarchate by widening the scope and solidifying the nature of its jurisdiction. With the subjugation of the Ohrid Patriarchate, the last of the Balkan Orthodoxy centers, this scheme was completed. Therefore, as the Ottoman Empire expanded, so did the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate. The Patriarchate had been basically a Byzantine institution with its tradition and liturgy. With the enlargement of its jurisdiction, an event which lasted about a hundred years; the liturgy, language and tradition of the Byzantine-Greek church infiltrated the Slavic churches. Where education could be supplied only through the church under the Millet system, the Patriarchate enjoyed a form of cultural hegemony over all the orthodox Balkan peoples.

This hegemony was interrupted in the 16th century as the Empire expanded into the northern Balkans. The Byzantine-Greek influence came to a low tide with "the Turkish conquest of Hungary (1520), which finally persuaded the south Slavs that Turkish rule was durable, and that they had better accommodate themselves to it. Another reason was that, whereas few Greeks accepted Islam, a larger proportion of the Slavic inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina turned Muslim and thereby became eligible for high offices.¹⁴ As a result of this trend, "in 1557, the famous Grand Vizier Mohammed Sokolovic (Sokollu), a Serb by birth, used his influence to restore the Patriarchate of Pec. During the following centuries this institution assumed the functions of the former Serbian kingdom. It had its own law courts and administrative system, and when the occasion arose, it conducted foreign policy and even provided military leadership".¹⁵

In addition to the Pec Patriarchate, the recognition of authority of the Ohrid Patriarchate contributed to strengthening the Slavic element in the Empire, and facilitated its survival by providing it with its own institutions.

With, however, changing circumstances the Slavic tide came to an ebb soon. "If the Slavs had ruled the Empire in the sixteenth century, the Greeks had taken their place by the eighteenth. One reason for this was that the Slavs discredited themselves by supporting the Habsburgs whenever they crossed the Danube. Another was that from the mid-seventeenth century onward the Turks began to encounter formidable complications in the conduct of their foreign relations".¹⁶ Increased need for the know-how of the urban /Constantinoplese (Phanariote) Greeks brought them back onto the scene. As a result, "the Phanariotes and other Greek elements were gaining influence in Constantinople. This combination led to the abolition of the Ipek Patriarchate in 1766 and of the Ohrid Arch bishopric the following year. The Constantinople Patriarchate once more reigned supreme in the peninsula. It continued to do so as long as the Balkan peoples remained subject to the Ottoman authority".¹⁷

The Patriarchate obtained a prestigious position to the extent that in most cases the authority of the Patriarchate was to be associated with that of the Ottoman rulers. Meanwhile, continuing Greek domination in the establishment of the Patriarchate had reinitiated the previous trend of

Grekoification. Through association with the Greek tradition and use of the Greek language, the non-Greek speaking portions of the Orthodox urban population had lived through a phase of Grekoification.¹⁸ The persistence of non-Greek church traditions, especially in the countryside, however, prevented a mass scale assimilation of the Balkan peoples. In fact it could be argued that even under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Slavic Balkan masses retained their distinctive identities with the aid of their provincial churches.

The Millet system and the cooperation of the Patriarchate helped Ottoman rule to become more acceptable in the eyes of the peasantry. This acceptance lasted as long as the Ottoman system continued to function well. **Transformation of the timar system into the chiflik system**, increased financial and social burdens arising therefrom and a less prosperous and secure life were the results of a decline in the Ottoman system.¹⁹ And the Patriarchate became too associated with the misdemeanors of the Ottoman system. Now seen as a collaborator, the Patriarchate was viewed with dislike and distrust by the people just like the Ottoman rule itself. Therefore, as the imperial frontiers shrunk back to Constantinople, so did the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate. One after the other, the Balkan nations rebelled against the Ottomans to gain their independence and against the Patriarchate to gain their autocephalous churches. By the end of W.W.I, the Ottomans and the Patriarchate controlled overlapping territories in the Balkans: the mere environs of the city of Constantinople.

2.5.2. Islam and the Millet System in the Balkans

Islam came to the Balkans with the Turks who stepped on the Balkan soil in the mid 14th century through the Dardanelles port town, Gallipoli. In less than a century after their arrival, approximately by the time of the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottomans had managed to establish control over large sections of the peninsula covering Thrace, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Kosovo/a, Thessaly, Epirus and parts of modern Serbia.

The Ottomans had brought with themselves a different social and political system. The rural life and the land system regulated under the Timar system brought about relative wealth in the region thus deriving mass support for the

Ottomans especially among the peasantry stricken hard by financial burdens and social instability of the pre-Ottoman period. The loyalty of peasantry to, and its satisfaction with, the Ottoman conquerors did not, however, mean mass conversion to Islam. The Ottomans would in fact refrain from encouraging such conversion. Ottoman policy towards religions stemming from Islamic philosophy would eschew encouraging conversions as it was required to handle the **ehl-i kitab**, "people of the book" with tolerance. The people of the book, **dhimmi**s were requested under the Islamic law to accept specific obligations in return for the safety accorded to them.

The **Millet system** established to locate each of the three acceptable faiths (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) into a separate sphere granted a form of autonomy in communal affairs to each of the faiths.²⁰ It, however, involved placing numerous Orthodox peoples under the newly formed **Rum Millet** headed by the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople. Most of those peoples, previously under the reign of their respective Balkan churches, such as the Patriarchates of Tirnovo (in the Bulgarian kingdom) and Pec (in the Serbian kingdom), and also the Arch bishopric of Ohrid were now blended into the main body of the Rum Millet.

During the initial period of Ottoman rule until mid-15th century and within the framework of the tolerative Millet system -except for few minor cases of conversions- Islamicization in the Balkans came about only through colonization. It was an Ottoman policy to resettle peoples for the maintenance of demographic, political and social stability. Therefore, as the Ottoman armies proceeded into the peninsula, nomadic or semi-settled Turkic tribes from Anatolia were transferred into the peninsula to populate the newly conquered territories.

The colonization served various practical purposes: the repopulation of the war-torn and depopulated areas; maintenance of population balance in favor of the Ottoman Turks; rejuvenation of economic and social life; establishing logistics basis for the military such as garrisons; and finally providing a colonial destination for criminal punishment practices.

Through colonization the fertile lowlands of Thrace, Macedonia and Bulgaria were soon to be repopulated. Especially in these three regions the policy of

resettlement helped establish a strong economic, strategic and military basis for further Ottoman penetration into the peninsula. As soon as the Ottomans were secure about their position and thus regarded the Balkans as home rather than an alien land, the policy of colonization came to a low tide. The strengthening of Ottoman position in Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, the Peloponnese, the Danubian Principalities, Hungary and Ottoman Croatia helped to create such self-confidence. Ottoman position was to be further enhanced by mass conversion in Bosnia, an event after which this land turned into a stronghold of Ottoman defense line in Western Balkans.²¹

Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries witnessed two major developments regarding Islam's existence in the Balkans. The first was the loss of Hungary, Transylvania and the Ottoman Croatia and the exodus of the Ottoman Muslims out of these places into the rest of the Balkan territories thus creating a kind of **negative population pressure**.²² This increased Muslim population in the Ottoman Balkan lands and intensified competition for land and position, putting burdens on the local Christian population. The second development was a new tide of conversions. As **Inalcik** states, the introduction of firearms into the battle field had forced the Ottomans to make use of this new technology.²³ Lacking skilled infantry of this nature, the Ottomans turned towards the local peoples of the Balkans, mainly the Christian Albanians and the Bulgarians of the highlands, who had already started to benefit from rifles in the pursuit of their tribal goals. The introduction of these tribal mountain peoples, who had been peripheral in the Ottoman affairs till then, into the Ottoman mainstream brought about their gradual assimilation into the urban Ottoman culture. The process matured as mass numbers of Albanians and Slavobulgars (to be called later as Pomaks) accepted the new faith.

Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the decline of the Ottoman land system, whereby the non-hereditary and state sanctioned **timar** system was transformed into hereditary and arbitrary **chiflik** system. This came as a major blow to Ottoman presence in the Balkans. In fact, declining prosperity together with increased tax burdens and repression turned the Ottoman system in the eyes of the local population into less than being desirable. In tandem with this, Islam -which was identified with the Ottomans due to the fact that it was initiated, nurtured and practiced by the Ottomans- also suffered a loss of prestige.

In the nineteenth century, new territorial losses contributed considerably to the negative population pressure on the locals. Expelled from the newly or de-facto independent ex-Ottoman territories such as Greece or Serbia the **muhajirs** gravitated towards those territories still under Ottoman control. These Muslim **muhajirs** pulling back with the Ottoman armies to add up to the privileged ruling strata were less than welcome -if not totally undesired- by the Christians who were already under difficult economic and social conditions.²⁴

Islam's low tide came to a climax by the end of the nineteenth century, inasmuch as every time the Ottomans suffered from new territorial losses, the Islamic presence and influence in the Balkans did likewise. Thus the end of the Balkan Wars found the Ottoman territories in the Balkans minimized with large Muslim Balkan populations transferred into Anatolia. The population exchanges of 1920's only increased these centripetal tendencies towards Anatolia, with more and more Muslims pushed towards Turkey now and then. In fact, the **de-Islamization** of the Balkans has continued through the rest of the twentieth century, with repeated voluntary and/or forced migrations to Turkey occurring sporadically as late as 1990's.

2.5.3. Catholicism in the Balkans

Much of the history of the Catholicism in the Balkans stems from the rivalry between the Eastern and Western churches. Rome, as one of the five original Patriarchates of early Christendom (the other four being Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria) always struggled with Constantinople over the control of the Balkan territories, occasionally making common cause with other Patriarchates.

This rivalry became more pronounced following the division of the Roman Empire into two, which brought about a fault line to cut through the Balkans leaving the Pannonian Plains, Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina under the sovereignty of the West Roman Empire and, by implication the jurisdiction of the Papal authority. To our date, this cleavage has survived placing the east of this line under the sphere of Orthodoxy, except certain areas where Islam flourished during the long centuries of Ottoman rule.

The Church Schism of 1054 exacerbated the situation in the Balkans, by formalizing the religious cleavage, and further antagonizing the parties. The legacy of this ancient rivalry was to foster and escalate a number of political and social conflicts in the peninsula, as Orthodoxy and Catholicism condemned each other for being heretics, each claiming that it holds superiority vis-à-vis the other. There is little doubt that certain features of Ottoman social organization such as the establishment of ecclesiastical communities facilitated the survival of -if not actually perpetuated- these exclusive legacies.

Thanks to the Millet system the Orthodox Church became the sole Balkan institution that survived the Ottoman conquest. This not only facilitated a strengthening in the Church's position to the demise of certain ethnic differences, now that all the Balkan peoples identified themselves through adherence to it but also enhanced the position of the Orthodox Church vis-à-vis the Catholic Church through an improvement in its power and status.²⁵

The Catholics were less numerous in the Empire than the Orthodox, and much less numerous once the predominantly Catholic Hungary and Ottoman Croatia -where the bulk of the Ottoman Catholic Millet lived- as well as Transylvania and the Banat were lost to the Habsburgs by early 18th century. Even then the Catholic Church continued to nurture a religious identity - similar to the Orthodox church- that blanketed ethnic differences and claimed spiritual superiority towards the Orthodox.

2.5.4. Inter-religious clashes

It is not surprising, therefore, to see that in the age of nationalisms, newly emerging national identities and claims were nurtured, if not dominated, by religion. Given that Islam had by then made considerable headway in to the peninsula alongside these two principal Christian sects, religion began to play a determining role in defining national identities.

This phenomena is best exhibited by the example of Croatian and Serbian nationalisms.²⁶ Today, the main criterion for defining a Serb or a Croat is his religion. In a similar fashion, in Transylvania, where, during the Habsburg era, a majority Orthodox Romanian speaking population was controlled by a

minority of Magyar and German speaking -the former being predominantly Catholic together with a number of Protestants and the latter just the opposite- national identification was based strongly on the religious criteria.

Yet, the cleavage between Islam and Christianity has been another source for nurturing national identities. The association of Islam with late Ottoman misrule, corruption and hegemony has served the cause of Balkan nationalisms which were staunchly anti-establishment (anti-Ottoman that is) in the beginning. In tandem with this drive to get rid of the Ottoman political rule, Christianity (or Orthodoxy to be more specific) was one of the main components of anti-Ottoman nationalistic discourse. With its position as the religion of the ruling strata, and under the impact of Koran's **umma ecumenism**, Islam was a relatively late comer onto the arena of nationalisms. Even then, in the face of hostility from various Balkan nationalist movements to define Islam as alien, Islam has come out in specific cases defining national identities.²⁷ The Muslim national identity, however awkward that may still sound, as is the situation in Bosnia, is the most striking example. Although religion has been a major actor in the arena of nationalisms, there may be a few exceptions. The Albanian people, for example, composed of four different faiths, Islam (Sunni & Bektashi) and Christianity (Catholicism & Orthodoxy) have still been united around the common identity of being Albanian.

In focusing on how religions have formed the basis for national identities, another point to be born in mind is that such relationship, once established may turn the other way around as well. Especially in the example of the Orthodox nations, the sheer fact that religion determines national identity develops after a while into a case where religion gains a national character. The link established between religion and nationalism becomes after a while interwoven with the influence of nationalists practice. The more national conflicts are dominated by the church (as has been the case in Macedonia between Greek and Bulgarian nationalisms) the higher are the chances for the church to become a national one. The outcome of this process has been the establishment of national Orthodox churches in the Balkans. In that respect Orthodoxy proves to be far from being a cohesive factor -in the purely religious context- in the Balkan affairs.

2.5.5. Evangelism in the Balkans

Besides the three major religions of the peninsula Evangelism and Judaism are the two minor faiths of the region.

Historically, the presence of Evangelism, and various sects of it such as Lutheranism and Calvinism can be traced to the German presence in the Balkans. German penetration into the Balkans following the Habsburg domination introduced Evangelism to sections of the peninsula such as the Banat, Transylvania, Bukovina, Hungary and the Backa. By the 18th century, Evangelism was the faith of many German and Magyar communities in these areas.²⁸

Most of these Evangelical communities have not actually made it to our date due to 20th century developments. When, following W.W.II, most Germans living in Romania and Yugoslavia were removed from their respective countries -due to claims, some of them not groundless, that they cooperated with the Nazis during the war- in accordance with post-war settlements; Evangelical presence in the Balkans decreased considerably to a few predominantly Magyar speaking communities.

2.5.6. Judaism in the Balkans

It seems possible to draw similarities between the fate of the Jews in the Balkans and that of the Evangelicals, since, also in the Jewish case, we could find only traces of what was once upon a time a thriving community.

The Jews arrived into the Balkans via land and sea routes. Those arriving from the sea came originally from Iberia, **Sephardic Jews**, who, fleeing the inquisition, settled in the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans with permission from the Sultan.²⁹ Constantinople, Sarajevo and Salonica, actually called the second Jerusalem were only a few of the many Balkan towns in which sizable Jewish communities existed right up to W.W.II. Extermination in the hands of the Nazis and their local partners (in Greece and parts of Yugoslavia), or migration to Israel following the war (in Bulgaria and Turkey) were the two means through which the Ottoman Jewish population was reduced from a total of hundred thousands down to a few ten thousands.

The other Jewish community, the **Ashkenazi**, arrived into the Balkans from the north over land. Coming in with German penetration, the Ashkenazi Jews settled in the Habsburg dominated parts of the Balkans. In addition, as late as 19th century, more Ashkenazim, this time Russian Jews, escaping the pogroms settled in the Danubian Principalities. The Romanian, Hungarian and Northern Yugoslav Jews also suffered from W.W.II and the Nazi collaborators in these countries, to such an extent that the number of Ashkenazi communities in northern Balkans came down to a bare few thousands.³⁰

2.6. RELIGION AND MINORITIES IN THE BALKANS

The relationship in which religion has contributed to the nationalist cause has already been analyzed. The merger of religious identities into national identities has resulted in the fact that minorities -to a large extent- have been defined through their religion.

This has been true especially in the case where neighboring groups have been of different religious origins, so that a minority population living by a majority population is identifiable through its faith. It is not rare in the Balkans that the majority-minority dichotomy turns into a religious one. The case of the Turks, Pomaks, Roma of Greece and Bulgaria who are identified through their Islamic faith as opposed to the Orthodox majority, is a clear example to such dichotomy. Inasmuch as religion has been one of the most distinguishing factors defining one's nationality, other factors such as language, ethnicity taken to be related to the formation of national identity have been eclipsed initially by religion.³¹

Nevertheless the role played by religion in shaping up national identity should not be generalized to cover all cases. For instance, in the Macedonian case where three nationalisms, all Orthodox, lay claims on this land and its people, linguistic, historical and ethnic criteria most certainly upstage religious ones.

2.7. THE DILEMMA OF MINORITIES IN THE BALKANS

Some distinctive features of Balkan nationalisms as proven by historical evidence may be summarized as follows:

i. **a distinct political orientation** based on the need to establish a state for the nation and sustain the same state at whatever cost.

ii. **the impact of religion**, where religion shaping to nationalism as its main pillar, becomes in turn "**nationalized**".

iii. **the notion of an historical mission, a Great Idea** producing a unification around a messianic zeal to achieve a future goal.

iv. and last but not least, coming out of a synthesis of the above factors: a rather **unrealistic context**. Making continuous references to the past while looking to the future has contributed to a main dilemma of the Balkan nationalisms: **undermining present circumstances**. Given the nature of the Balkan populations as a mix of various religions, languages, cultures and peoples, any failure to take the present circumstances into consideration would deserve to be called as unrealistic. This dilemma has caused and still causes problems for Balkan nationalisms.

Irredentism, is one method Balkan nationalisms utilize in pursuing their goals should present circumstances inhibit them. Here, the definition of a **Great State** -justified by the use and distraction of historical legacies- which encompasses territories that actually overlap **other Great States** is one dilemma where the delineation of borders without any consideration of the ethnic make up of the territories is another one.

To these may be added the resultant severe problem faced by Balkan nationalisms: **the dilemma of minorities**.

As a product of the nation-state building process, and also owing to unrealistic aspirations which have given more credit to history than to existing circumstances, large minorities have been left within the boundaries of all

Balkan states. This coupled with the effects of continuing irredentist claims, has led the nation-states to be exceptionally cautious towards the minorities.

The presence of minorities in its territory irritates the **home state** (the state which hosts minorities). It feels insecure because of a perception of challenge to its integrity a different ethnic population) on its historically claimed territories. To make matters worse, the minority might act to contribute to such insecurity. Acting at times as a friend of its **mother state** (the state to which the minority feels ethnically and historically attached to), the minority begins to be regarded by its home state as a foe or a potential surrogate. Such a situation in fact creates a vicious circle, where, the minority, defined in the "modern" nationalist sense, as a threat more and more joins the "nationalist game" its ultimate goal becoming accession to another state.

The home state is likely to develop under these circumstances a perception where it sees the minority as a threat to its territorial integrity. This perception, together with the tri-lateral relationship involving the minority, its home state and mother state exacerbates the situation. Home states have, therefore, chosen at many times to deal with the minorities in a crushing manner, however high the costs may be. This line of policy often aims the final elimination of the minority - through assimilation, physical extermination, deportation, cultural denials etc.

CHAPTER III: THE BALKAN MINORITIES

3.1. THE DEFINING CRITERION FOR BALKAN MINORITIES

Every Balkan state established since 19th century -except for the two Yugoslavias in theory and the second Yugoslavia also in practice to an extent- was designed and destined to be a nation-state. The **raison d'etre** of a nation-state is the nation **per se**, that actually possesses, reigns over and dominates its very state. The whole state structure outwardly exists to serve "**the nation**" which enjoys exclusive rights over the state mechanisms; i.e. the education system, bureaucracy, army etc. and also the social and economic basis of the state. In that sense, a minority in the Balkans is a group that does not belong to the nation, that is in control of the nation-state.

In each Balkan state, a definition of the nation has been synthesized through political history of that state. The criterion defining the identity of a particular nation should therefore give us hints about who belong to that nation. We could use this criterion in an exclusive manner to define who would not belong to that nation, therefore a potential minority. To put it bluntly, **in a state, a minority is a group which -through historical experience- is defined to be out of , if not alien to the possessor nation of that nation-state.** Even simpler is the following explanation; a minority is defined through the fact of not belonging to the majority.

3.2. GREECE AND ITS MINORITIES

In 1985, Greece had a population of :

"9.950.000...Modern Greece is a sum of a diversity of influences from different civilizations and peoples; the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, merchants from the Near East, France, Venice and Italy, settlers and invaders from the Slavs, Albanians, Turks, Italians and British. While the majority of the population -perhaps 95%- is ethnically Greek, there remain substantial, often unacknowledged and considerably Hellenicized minorities -Vlahs, Pomaks, Roma, Albanians, 'Macedonians' and others. However the only minorities recognized by the government are those with a religious,

rather than ethnic or cultural identity and even here treatment accorded to them is not always equal to that given to Greek citizens of the Orthodox Church".¹

After its independence from the Ottoman Empire by the beginning of 19th century, Greece already possessed a sizable Albanian (Muslim and Greek-Orthodox) population. Continuous territorial enlargement to last till the end of W.W.II, the acquisition of the Dodecanese, brought into Greece a larger ethnic diversity. The Vlachs of Pindus and Thessaly; Albanians of Epirus; the Slav Macedons and Jews of Macedonia; Turks, Pomaks and Roma of Macedonia and Thrace as well as the Catholics and Muslims of the islands were all incorporated. When, for example, Aegean Macedonia came under Greek rule following the Balkan wars, the region had a population of 1.073.949, out of which only 240.019 were Orthodox Greeks, while a total of 326.426 was made up by the Orthodox Macedons, 289.973 by the Muslim Turks, 59.560 by the Jews, 40.921 by the Muslim Macedons and the rest by a variety of people including Muslim Greeks, Circassians (Mongols), Muslim and Christian Albanians, Vlachs and Roma.²

Not feeling secure by the existence of minorities, which were far from being minorities on local basis, and worried about the dilution of the Greek character of the state, the Greek governments utilized various methods to minimize the existence of these minorities and by implication "potential risks". One way was **voluntary assimilation**. Offering education in Greek to those non-Greek speaking peoples of the Greek church, Greece managed to assimilate large numbers of especially Albanians, Vlachs, Macedons and Roma. Here, shared religion worked well especially in the case of the Vlachs to integrate these people -nearly to the fullest extent- into the Greek society.

Assimilation through use of force was a second one. Especially utilized with regards to the Slav Macedon minority during the inter-war and post-W.W.II periods, this policy was resorted to in the forms of bans on cultural activities, deportations, exiles, resettlement and various police measures. Such efforts succeeded in integrating some of the Macedons while silencing some others.

A third was the **population exchanges**. Bilateral agreements with Bulgaria and Turkey, the population exchanges of post-W.W.I resulted homogenizing the population of Macedonia to an extent and some other parts of Greece. In these exchanges, 50.000 to 70.000 Bulgarians and 390.000 Muslims/Turks left the

Aegean Macedonia, the former for Bulgaria, and the latter for Turkey. 25.000 Greeks from Bulgaria and a total of 1.200.000 Greek-Orthodox Christians from Turkey arrived in Greece in return for the exchange.³ Most of the new comers were settled in those areas of Greece, not strictly Greek in nature, such as Macedonia, to influence the population balance of such regions.

A fourth mechanism used by the Greek governments has been the **denial of national identity**. This policy becomes most pronounced in the attitude of the Greek government towards the Turkish minority in Western Thrace. Not being able to assimilate or get rid of the Turks and the Muslims of Western Thrace, Greece has tried to erode the ethnic consciousness of this population by denying its identity. Despite all the efforts to eradicate the minorities, today Greece is still home to substantial numbers of minority groups.⁴

3.2.1. Turks, Pomaks, Roma of Western Thrace

Excluded from the population exchanges of 1920's by the virtue of the Lausanne Treaty, Western Thrace, by the census of 1928 had

"191.254 Turks...In 1981 census figures give a total of 110.000 belonging to religious minorities of whom some 60.000 are Turkish speaking Muslims, 30.000 Pomaks 20.000 Athingani (descendants of Christian heretics expelled from Asia Minor during Byzantine rule) or Roma Gypsies. However the Turkish Muslim sources claim a total of 100.000 to 120.000 Turkish speaking Muslims in Western Thrace and most observers between 100.000 and 120.000 Muslims out of a total population for Western Thrace of some 360.000 recorded in the census of 1981".⁵

Although the Lausanne Treaty guaranteed the Muslims in Western Thrace certain cultural and religious rights, this did not save them from discrimination imposed upon them by Greek government. Denial of identity and official discrimination have resulted in the emigration of large numbers of Muslims to Turkey. Thus the number of Muslims has shrunk in the last 70 years.

The efforts of the Greek government, however, resulted in a merger of identities. In the Balkans the Turkish and Islamic identities have long overlapped. Therefore, the denial of ethnic identity (be it Turkish, Roma or

Pomak) as well as discrimination towards the Muslims by the virtue of their religion have increased inter-confessional solidarity and a merger of Pomaks and Romas into the Turkish community. This Turkish identity which also means a Muslim identity in the Balkan sense has acted as a magnet for the non-Turks of Western Thrace to such an extent that it has now become difficult to distinguish different Muslims of the region, most of whom see themselves as Turks. Being the sole Turkish/ Muslim minority in the Balkans whose rights are guarded by Turkey through the Lausanne Treaty, this community occupies a very special place in the eyes of the Turkish government. Despite this fact, however, the community still suffers from deep-rooted discrimination and violation of its guaranteed rights and is therefore a source of conflict for Turco-Greek relations.⁶

3.2.2. The Macedonians

The Macedons living in the Aegean Macedonia have been subject to continuous assimilation efforts by the Greek governments. The fact that a sizable Slavic community -identified with Bulgaria for a long time as Bulgarian- had remained in the Aegean Macedonia despite the population exchange between Greece and Bulgaria was a serious headache for Greece. In due course, the identity of these people, who now regarded themselves as Macedons rather than Bulgarians, was always denied by the Greek government.

"The position of the Slav minority worsened in the period 1936-41 under the Metaxas regime which viewed the minority as a danger to Greece's security and large numbers of Macedonians were interned from the border regions with Yugoslavia. Night schools were opened up to teach adult Slavs the Greek language".⁷

Greece called the Macedonians first **Slav Macedons** to cut their links with the Bulgarian identity and later **Slavophone Greeks** as it tried to eradicate the Slavic consciousness among these people. The Macedonian participation in the Greek civil war on the communist side resulted in further antagonisms. Mistrust towards this community caused a new wave of expulsion to Yugoslavia following the defeat of the communists. In the post-war period, the Greek government continued its efforts to assimilate the now smaller Macedon minority or simply mutilate it. Despite these efforts, a community of circa 50.000 Macedons still exists in the most remote parts of Greek Macedonia as a

potential source of conflict between the Greek government and the newly independent Macedonian state.⁸

3.2.3. The Vlachs

The Vlachs actually a nomadic Latinophone people dispersed all around the peninsula including Greece have lacked a well defined national identity, except for late 19th century effort by the Romanian government to recruit them into the Romanian identity. "Many Vlachs have identified themselves with Greeks due to having received Greek education in Greek schools and took a leading role in the struggle for Greek independence...there is no apparent nationalist or separatist feeling among the Vlachs of Greece... -since 1980's the situation has improved as the Greek government apparently recognizes that the Vlachs, unlike the Turks or Macedonians constitute no threat, real or potential to the Greek state".⁹ Due to high assimilation, the exact number of Vlachs in Greece is not to be determined so easily.¹⁰

3.2.4. The Albanians

"There is very little information about the Albanian minority which remained in Greece after the founding of the Albanian state in 1913. Most of these Albanians were Orthodox by religion although there were Muslim Chamuris in northern Greece until immediately after W.W.II (they were deported to Albania then due to their war time collaboration with the Italians). Meanwhile, the Orthodox Albanians, similarly to the other Orthodox minorities, tended to become Hellenicized due to Greek control of the education system".¹¹

As in the case of the Vlachs, shared religion and common church must have played a significant role in the assimilation process of the Orthodox Albanians.¹²

3.2.5. Less Numerous Minorities

The small community of Jews who have survived the Holocaust, the **Orthodox Roma** (who just like the Orthodox Albanians and Vlachs have been also assimilated into mainstream Greek culture), the **Catholics** (as remnants of

Venetian and Italian presence over the Greek islands) might be cited as proofs to the ethnic, cultural diversity of Greece despite two centuries of indubious efforts to create an ethnically homogenous nation.¹³

3.3. ALBANIA AND ITS MINORITIES

Because of the particular nature of Albanian nationalism that did not make use of religious cleavages but united Albanian speaking peoples of all faiths, the Albanian state established in 1913 included Albanians of Muslim (Sunni & Bektashi) and Christian (Orthodox and Catholic) faiths.¹⁴ "At the end of W.W.II, over 70 % of the population was Muslim; approximately 17 % - including ethnic Greeks- belonged to the Orthodox church mainly in the south and central areas; and about 10% to the Roman Catholic Church in the mountains north".¹⁵ The wide definition of national identity arching over religious differences has minimized the possibility of religious minorities in Albania. Albania is the only country in the Balkans where one does not encounter minorities in the religious sense. In that case the only sizable minority in Albania is the Greek speaking Orthodox community living mainly in the south.

3.3.1. Greeks in Albania

The particular nature of Albanian nationalism does not mean that it is free of antagonisms towards non-Albanians. If anything, The Greek minority in Albania has particularly suffered from such antagonism. No recent statistics have to date been published on the number of the Greek minority and the others. "According to the 1955 census, it (the Greek community) then represented 2.94 % of the population. In the 1961 census, 95% of the population was given as ethnically Albanian".¹⁶ Although in Greece the Greek-Orthodox Church has been able to integrate the Orthodox Albanians into mainstream culture, integration through common religion has not been accomplished in Albania. The Albanian Orthodox Church has failed to assimilate the Greeks, because they possessed a church tradition older and more rooted than that of the Albanian Church. In addition to this failure, the official ban on religion in 1967 has helped the Greek community to keep itself intact by eliminating further encroachments by the Albanian Church towards the Greeks.

Today the Greek government claims the Greek community in Albania to number around 400.000, while Albanian authorities put it at 50.000. The Greek claim is based on membership to the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania which uses Greek for the services, but does not necessarily include Greeks only. This phenomenon is in fact a major source of confusion where Albanian speaking Orthodox people attend this predominantly Greek church, and are therefore identifiable as Greeks. Whatever the size, the Greek community has suffered from serious discriminations including a ban on use of Greek names and the Greek language, the trait which distinguishes the community most from the Albanians.¹⁷

The issue of the Greeks in Albania has continuously strained the relations between Greece and Albania. Today, Albania continues to deny the rights of the Greeks, while Greece seems to make irredentist claims to Southern Albania (Northern Epirus in official Greek terminology).

3.3.2. Other Minorities in Albania

In addition to the linguistically identifiable Greek minority, Albania has a number of other minority communities. Small communities of **Macedons**, **Pomaks** (both living in the tiny strip of the so-called Macedonia of nineteenth century allocated to Albania following the partition of the region at the end of the Balkan wars); **Montenegrins** in the north; **Vlahs** on the mountains; as well as the **Roma and Jews** can be cited among the smaller minority groups of Albania. Together with the Greeks, these communities make up 5% of Albania's population which is now around 3.2 million.¹⁸

3.4. CROATIA AND ITS MINORITIES

3.4.1. Serbs in Croatia and the Krajina

The largest minority in Croatia is the Serbs, who make up approximately 12% of the population, which now stands about 4.6 million. Most of Croatia, also Transylvania, Hungary and Slovenia were under Ottoman domination from 1530's to 1699 when the Ottoman Empire was forced to cede these provinces to the Habsburgs in accordance with the treaty of Karlowitz. Those sections of Croatia under Ottoman domination used to be known as Ottoman Croatia. After its incorporation into the Habsburg domains, Croatia formed a buffer zone between the two Empires. The Habsburgs promoted in this buffer zone

the settlement of Orthodox refugees who were fleeing the Ottomans after their abortive uprisings. The Habsburg policy was designed to minimize the effects of Ottoman raids into their territories by forming fighting units troops to face the Ottomans and even to establish counter attacks into the Ottoman lands.¹⁹

This special administrative division known as **Krajina** (meaning border in Serbo-Croatian) by the Habsburgs was given autonomy in its internal affairs and saved from incorporation into Croat territories. Krajina roughly encircled Bosnia and therefore turned into a magnet for repeated waves of Serbs coming out of the Ottoman Empire. The financial, military and administrative privileges granted to the Serbs did have a certain role in inciting the population flow. Krajina was to be integrated into the Habsburg Empire only by late 19th century, even then its predominantly Serbian character was to dominate the region. During W.W.II Krajina was incorporated into the Ustasha Croat state. This development not only ignited a wave of terror against the Serbs in the area but also drove Krajina into a chaotic situation with Serbiabn retaliations against the local Serbs. Fascist terror carried out by the Ustashas was countered by the rising communist movement in the Yugoslav lands. Thus Tito's partisans found natural ground for support in the Krajina. These atrocities left a memorable scar in Croatia's social memory.²⁰

After W.W.II Krajina together with Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia was brought together to form Croatia proper as one of the six constituent republics of the newly established Yugoslavia. In this new structure the cultural and political rights of the Krajina Serbs were recognized.

The well-known repercussions of Yugoslavia's dissolution resulted in a putsch among the Serbs of Croatia to join a Greater Serbia. The conflict in Krajina soon assumed a violent character as the Serbs there endeavored to break away from Croatia, on the grounds that the new Croat state would fail to recognize their distinctive historical position and rights. The JNA (Jugoslav National Army) became involved.²¹ Fighting came to an end when the Serbs occupied and ethnically cleared the Krajina composed of the former military regions of Croatia and Slavonia, namely, Lika, Kordun, and Eastern Slavonia.²² The policy of ethnic cleansing carried out in these territories making up more than 1/3 of Croatia had resulted in the extermination or expulsion of large number of Croats from the Krajina, which is now a self-proclaimed Serbian Republic. On the other hand, the UN Peacekeeping forces (UNPROFOR) deployed to Croatia to maintain peace there have exacerbated the situation. The forces

were stationed in Croatia at a very inappropriate moment, when all the fighting had ceased.²³ Thus their positioning in Croatia only froze the situation by making the Serb territorial gains, in a way, permanent. This is why today the Croat government insists that the UN peacekeeping forces withdraw.²⁴

3.4.2. Italians in Croatia

Though only a small community now (circa 20. 000) and settled mostly in the Istrian peninsula and the Dalmatian towns of Rijeka and Zadar, the Italians in Croatia have an important place and, therefore, a disproportionate influence on the life of the country. The community has been a symbol of Italian interest and presence on the Adriatic. Most of the community's prestige and wealth is an accumulation of a valuable past. Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia the Italians, not relating so deeply to the war in Croatia -together with much of the rest of the Dalmatia- have tried to avoid the general conflict in the country by distancing themselves from it. Autonomist tendencies arising in Istria and Dalmatia are only signs of such an attitude.²⁵

3.4.3. The "Yugoslavs" of Croatia

In addition to the Krajina Serbs there is a number of Serbs living in the major cities of Croatia, mainly in Zagreb, who migrated to Croatia as a result of huge labor discharge of the agricultural areas, a process initiated by post-war economic collectivization and restructuring efforts in former Yugoslavia. These Serbs are very much integrated in to the mainstream Croatian affairs. Similarly, there is also a good number of Muslims (around 100.000), Slovenes, Albanians and Macedonians who may be called as "Yugoslavs" in Croatia and who are again unlikely to create any serious problems to the country.²⁶

3.4.4. Slavonia, a Microcosm of Central Europe

Slavonia, now a part of Croatia, historically had a separate existence from Croatia proper. Lying between Croatia proper to the west and historical Srem, Backa and Baranja to the east, it is surrounded by the Drava and the Danube rivers. Slavonia, just like Baranja, its neighbor to the northeast has been and is home to various ethnic groups. **Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Ruthenian/ Ukrainian, German and Jewish** inhabitants are examples to the ethnic mix of these two regions.

The Habsburgs formulated and carried out a policy of population transfers to repopulate those territories recovered from the Ottomans. Starting with the 17th and 18th century various groups from all around the Danubian basin were moved to Slavonia and Baranja, and also to the Banat, Backa and the Vojvodina which therefore have similar ethnic make up to these regions. Among these the Germans in the area were deported to Germany following W.W.II, while the Jews were annihilated during the same period. Meanwhile the remaining communities have been influenced by the war fought in Croatia since the dissolution of Yugoslavia began. The Hungarians, the largest of these communities negatively influenced by the war and especially by the Serbian atrocities have expressed their discomfort with and disapproval of, the situation.

3.5. SLOVENIA AND ITS MINORITIES

Slovenia, located in the northwestern end of the peninsula is a country peripheral to the inter-Balkan affairs. It has the smallest (1.6 million) but at the same time the most homogenous population in the Balkans.²⁷ The Catholic Slovenes make up more than 90% of the country's population. The rest of the population is made up by the "Yugoslavs" and a small Italian community, a reminder of the past Italian presence in the country.²⁸ The "Yugoslavs" in Slovenia, settled in major towns and the industrial basins, are integrated into the economic, social and cultural life of the country.

Interestingly, Slovenia is the only Balkan country that possesses a minority in a non-Balkan state. The Habsburg provinces of Steiermark, Carnynthia and Carniola which were divided between Italy, Austria and the first Yugoslavia, following W.W.I had large Slovene populations. Today Slovene populations living in Austria and Italy are in a relatively comfortable position though their rights are not fully recognized by their host states.²⁹

3.6. MACEDONIA AND ITS MINORITIES

Prior to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, "the population of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was 1.912.257 according to the census of 1981 of which there were 1.281.195 Macedonians, 377.226 Albanians".³⁰ If one adds to this, the Turkish, Muslim, Roma, Vlah and Serb minorities and also a few lesser minority groups the ethnic diversity of Macedonia can be easily observed. In that case the latter cited groups make up more than 20% of the local

population. Together with the strong Albanian community the "minorities" in Macedonia in fact constitute an almost statistical majority.³¹ This, however, is in fact difficult to determine because Macedonia is a typical case where statistical data referring to the make up of the population vary depending upon the identity of the data gatherer. For instance, sources on the percentage of the Albanians in Macedonia cite figures from 21% to 45%.³²

3.6.1. Albanians in Macedonia

"The ethnic Albanians, by far the largest minority in the (ex) Socialist Republic of Macedonia, live in compact settlements in the west of the republic bordering Albania, the north-west bordering on the predominantly Albanian province of Kosovo/a, and in Skopje where they make up over 14% of the population. They constitute a majority of the population in many western areas".³³ The predominantly Muslim Albanians in Macedonia are culturally very similar to, and maintain close links with, those Albanians in Kosovo/a.³⁴

Treated earlier as a nationality in rump Yugoslavia but now down to the minority status, the Albanians of Macedonia seem dissatisfied with the situation in the new Macedonia. Their previously existing claims about discrimination within Macedonia are exacerbated by this new situation. "In 1989, the Macedonian authorities amended the Republic's constitution so that the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was defined as a 'nation-state' of Macedonian people instead of the previous formulation which defined it as a 'state of the Macedonian people and the Albanian and Turkish nationalities. This change reflected the growing uneasiness of the Macedonian authorities in the face of Albanian nationalism...which has manifested itself in a more aggressive Macedonian nationalism".³⁵ In fact despite efforts by the Macedonian government to win back the Albanians by various concessions, they tend to keep out of any serious rapprochement unless their rights under the previous constitution are restored and also they enjoy rights as one of the constituent nations of Macedonia.³⁶

3.6.2. Turks in Macedonia

Official figures put the number of Turks in Macedonia at 86.000 (3.5 % of the population). With the coming to an end of the Ottoman rule in Macedonia elsewhere in the Balkans, most of the Turks left Macedonia for Turkey. Being landholders -the previous timars having been metamorphosized into hereditary

chifliks- the Turks in Macedonia had always enjoyed a prestigious position. Continuing immigration to Turkey as well as land distribution programs especially during the second Yugoslavia, however, have diminished Turkish influence to a large extent.

Another reason for the decline in Turkish influence is the process through which the Albanians in Macedonia have distinguished themselves from the Turks. As has been touched upon earlier, in the Balkan context, Islam and Ottoman Turks have been associated for a long time to such an extent that Islamization was identified with becoming Ottoman and Turkish (not in the ethnic sense). Therefore, for a long time the identity of the Muslim Albanians coincided with that of the Muslim Turks. The Albanian identity finally broke away from the Muslim Turkish identity with the emergence of Turkish and Albanian nationalisms by early 20th century.³⁷ However, the new Albanian national identity found fertile grounds mostly in Albania proper, and the association with Turkish identity continued among the Albanian Diaspora. As late as 1950's large number, of Albanian speaking Muslims in Macedonia declared themselves as Turks.³⁸

"Lately, the direction of this association has shown signs of change. With the Albanians comprising the majority of the Muslim population in Macedonia and the Turks a minority, the trend among some Albanians has been to assimilate the Turkish identity into a larger body of Albanian identity".³⁹ However the strength of Turkish Islamic identity has proven strong and coherent enough to resist such efforts if not totally discard them. Such phenomena points to some kind of uneasy situation between the Turks and the Albanians of Macedonia.

Being one of the only two Turkish minorities in the Balkans (the other is the Turks of Romania) that has enjoyed full and inviolated cultural and political rights in the post-W.W.II period, the Turks in Macedonia have been generally on good terms with the Macedonians. As the third largest ethnic group in Macedonia, the Turks are in fact an element of balance between the majority Macedonians and the minority Albanians.

3.6.3. The Muslim Macedonians

Like the Albanians the Muslim Macedonians (about 3.5 % of the local population) have also regarded themselves as Turks for a very long time.

"This apparent confusion over identity of the different Muslim groups shows again, that in the Balkans religion has often been of paramount importance in ethnic differentiation. This is further illustrated by the Muslim Macedonians, known as Torbeshes, Pomaks, Poturs. Similarly to the Pomaks in Bulgaria, these Muslims often showed in the past greater identification with fellow Muslims, especially Turks".⁴⁰

Descendants of Slavic speaking groups converted to Islam by 17th century, the Muslim Macedonians also face a form of Albanian Muslim nationalism due to "the penetration of Albanian nationalism into this community by way of, among other things, Albanian speaking hodzhas".⁴¹ The Muslim Macedonian view concerning assimilation into the Albanian identity has been expressed by the community itself with the term "**quiet assimilation**". The Muslim Macedonians are under a real cross fire at the moment; possessing a deep rooted Turkish identity which is challenged by a fervent Albanian identity as well as the Macedonian government that stresses the Slavic roots of these Muslims.⁴²

3.6.4. The Serbs

The Serbs in Macedonia constitute around 5% of the total population.⁴³ And basically descend from those Serbs settled in Macedonia in the inter-war period as a result of the efforts of the first Yugoslav government to Serbianize/colonize the region. As a Serbian minority living out of but next to Serbia, the community bears the potential of -similar to the cases in Croatia and Bosnia- drawing Macedonia into a bloody conflict with the new Yugoslavia. Here, from the viewpoint of the minority, the issue of joining a Greater Serbia; and in the eyes of Serbia, preserving the safety of a Serbian community could ignite conflicts. The fact that so far such concerns -except for a few negligible cases- have not been expressed should be a serious consolation for Macedonia.⁴⁴

3.6.5. The Roma

Constituting 4% of Macedonia's population, the Roma in Macedonia are the most privileged Gypsy community all over the Balkans.⁴⁵ Enjoying extensive cultural and political rights, the Roma community deserves special attention in that respect. Macedonia is the only state in the Balkans where the Roma

category has been included into the censuses. Similar to the Muslim Macedonians, the Roma have also tended to identify themselves as Turks and are offered at the moment an alternative Albanian identity.

3.6.6. The Vlachs

Just as in Greece, so in Macedonia it is difficult to obtain exact numbers regarding the Vlach community. Traditionally a pastoral community of the Orthodox faith, the Vlachs in Macedonia tend to identify themselves as Macedonians with the help of shared religion and uniform education process, once they are urbanized. "Successive censuses have shown a gradual decline in their numbers in Macedonia from 8669 in 1953 to 6392 in 1982 and it appears that they are becoming assimilated by the majority Macedonian population".⁴⁶

3.7. BULGARIA AND ITS MINORITIES

One of the first Balkan lands to be captured by the Ottomans, as early as the mid 14th century- Bulgaria was densely populated by Turkic tribes transferred to the Balkans from Anatolia. Today with a population of 9 million, and despite continuous Turkish-Muslim emigration to Turkey since 1878, Bulgaria has the largest Turkish minority in the Balkans.⁴⁷

3.7.1. Turks in Bulgaria

As there have been no official figures for the total numbers of ethnic minorities in Bulgaria since 1965, it is hard to estimate the number of Turks in Bulgaria. The number of ethnic Turks varies between 900.000 and 1.5 million depending upon the source. In either case, the Turks constitute a sizable segment of the Bulgarian population and the majority in various areas of the country. Despite large scale emigrations since 1878, particularly during and after the Balkan wars, as well as in the 1950's and 80's, the number of the Turks in Bulgaria has been steady due to the high birth-rate.

The Turkish minority in Bulgaria did possess certain cultural rights under the Bulgarian kingdom and during the inter-war period.⁴⁸ The Turks were better off in 1947 with a new constitution declaring the Turks together with the Gypsies as a 'national' minority, a position which entitled them to special rights and privileges. "However this recognition was circumscribed by a general reservation about the very idea of minorities in Bulgaria and the 1971

constitution...(which) makes no specific references to ethnic minorities, cited them simply as 'citizens of non-Bulgarian origin' ".⁴⁹ Bulgaria's fears about the Turkish minority eventually becoming a constituent people of the country owing to its high population growth rate. This led to the policy of suppression of cultural institutions, abolition of education in Turkish and a ban on Turkish press. The situation got even worse with the well known assimilation campaign between 1984 and 1989. Attempts to eradicate the Turkish identity by banning Islamic practices and the Turkish language, however, proved futile.

Coinciding with the fall of communism, the Bulgarian government endeavored to restore the previous rights of the Turkish community. The forced assimilation policy that had resulted in increased tension between Turkey and Bulgaria caused a mass exodus of Turks and Muslims from Bulgaria. Gradually however as the situation changed, tension was reduced, and more than half of the 300.000 expelled Turks-Muslims returned to Bulgaria.⁵⁰ Today, with political and increasing cultural rights, the large Turkish community in Bulgaria is a main actor in the public life of the country. One of the significant parties, **Movements for Freedoms and Rights (HÖH)**, a covert partner in the former government is predominantly Turkish for example as relations between the Bulgarians and the Turks, despite sporadic mutual national outbursts are on the way to improve.⁵¹

3.7.2. The Bulgarian Muslims (Pomaks)

"The Bulgarian Muslims, usually called by the originally derogatory term 'Pomaks', are a religious minority. They are Slav-Bulgarians who speak Bulgarian as their mother tongue but whose religion and culture are Islamic. They are estimated to number in excess of 250.000...and live in compact settlements in the mountainous regions of the Rhodope mountains in south-western and southern Bulgaria and down the Mesta valley in the Pirin region".⁵²

During the Ottoman era where under the Millet system membership to one of the religious communities defined one's identity, **Islamization in the Balkan sense meant loosing one's identity**. So when various Slavo-Bulgars accepted Islam they also became Turks and ceased to be Bulgarians. This Turkish

identity has in fact been so strongly established that it has survived to our date.⁵³ The assimilation campaign targeting the Pomaks started as early as 1971. Alarmed by high population growth among the Pomaks, the governments at the time used various measures such as forced name changes, prohibition of religious practices and public discrimination towards the Pomaks. These measures, however, only strengthened the identities possessed by the Pomaks and enhanced the link between the Pomak and the Turkish identities. Increased solidarity with the Turks to face the Bulgarian government has produced a particular result that today only as opposed to the Turks the Pomaks are still Pomaks, whereas with regards to the outsiders they are now Turks.

3.7.3. The Roma

The phenomena of multiple identities -as is the case with various Balkan communities- is more apparent in the case of the Muslim Roma of Bulgaria.

"There is very little information available on the Roma minority in Bulgaria estimated to number over 550.000...while Bulgaria has made determined efforts to raise the living standards and educational opportunities of the Roma minority, the authorities have been equally firm in denying them the right to preserve their own national identity and culture".⁵⁴

As a result of the Balkan wide trend to see Turk and Islam as identical, the non-recognition of the Roma has led to their strengthened self-identification with the Turks. Assimilation campaigns are known to have targeted the Roma as early as 1965. With the conclusion of such campaigns, the Roma have slowly started to organize themselves into political bodies. Their self-identification towards the outer world which is now Turkish, like the Pomaks, is reflected by the fact that most of the Roma seem to support the predominantly Turkish **Movement of Rights and Freedoms (HÖH)**.⁵⁵

3.7.4. The Macedonians

The Slavs living in Macedonia used to be known as Bulgarians due to the shared language, religion and political experience as late as the Balkan wars. After the partition of Macedonia, the introduction of nation-state mechanisms

in Greece and Yugoslavia to deplete the Bulgarian identity, coupled with Bulgaria's failure to perpetuate the Bulgarian identity resulted in a gradual erosion in the Bulgarian identity in Macedonia.⁵⁶

The distinct Macedon identity coming out as a communist initiative found fertile grounds first among the desperately repressed Slavs-Bulgarians of Macedonia. The strength of the Macedonian identity came to such a tide that, following W.W.II, in accordance with Tito's initiative for a federal Balkan state, even Bulgaria -once an ardent supporter of the Bulgarian identity in Macedonia- threw in full support for the creation of a Macedonian state for the Macedonians. Bulgaria went so far as to offer the accession of its tiny share of Macedonia (the Pirin Macedonia which Bulgaria had gained following the Balkan wars) into the Yugoslav Macedon Republic. Though this did not materialize, Bulgaria recognized the "**Macedonians**", the inhabitants of the Pirin Macedonia, as a minority and accorded to them **minority rights**. However, following Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Communist block due to the dispute between Tito and Stalin, the initiative was dropped by Bulgaria. Nearly overnight, Bulgaria renounced all the rights it had accorded to the 'Macedonian minority'. Even then "the census of 1965 recorded 187.789 Macedonians , over 95% of whom lived in the Pirin region where they made up 63.8% of the population".⁵⁷ Bulgaria's continuous denial of the Macedonian identity and police measures, when required, outlawing the Macedonian identity in all contexts have eradicated the Macedonian identity to a great extent. So that by the census of 1965 only 8750 people declared themselves as Macedonians.

Bulgaria's denial of a Macedonian nation and an Macedon minority still continues. It is interesting to note that following the dissolution of ex-Yugoslavia, Bulgaria immediately recognized the new Macedonian state, but has made it clear that it will never recognize a Macedonian nation, let alone recognize a Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, an issue which is still a political taboo in Bulgaria.

3.7.5. Other Minorities in Bulgaria

The **Vlahs** living in parts of the Pirin Macedonia as well as in northern Bulgaria are estimated to be around a few ten thousands. The fate of the Vlahs in Bulgaria has been similar to those in Greece and Macedonia. Common religion, urbanization cutting the link with the pastoral way of life that forms

an essential part of the Vlah identity, lack of nationalistic orientation have resulted in the assimilation of large number of Vlachs into the Bulgarian identity.⁵⁸

Small number of **Albanians** as remnants of the Ottoman trade route extending from Varna to Dubrovnik; **Armenians** settled in Bulgaria after the establishment of the Ottoman rule; and **Jews** as left-over of the Bulgarian Jewish community who were never surrendered in to the Nazis during W.W.II thanks to the efforts of the Bulgarian king of the time and the Bulgarian people, but who nevertheless emigrated to Israel, may be cited as the less numerous minorities in Bulgaria. ⁵⁹

3.8. ROMANIA AND ITS MINORITIES

3.8.1. The Magyars, the "Minority" in Romania

According to the census of 1992, there is a total of 26 officially recognized minorities in Romania. Among these minorities which vary in size, the Magyars are in a very awkward position. The community now numbers around 1.6 million, according to official figures, making up 7.1% of the population, While the Hungarian government puts it at 2.000.000.⁶⁰ The Magyars in Romania are not only the biggest minority but also, in the actual sense **the only minority** in Romania.⁶¹

Populating the western Romanian regions of the Banat and the Transylvania, they are a blend of the **Szeklers** (descendants of the Avars who settled around the Danube around 7th century) and the later Magyars arriving into the Carpathian basin around 11th century.⁶² Following the Mohacs war, the Ottomans established control over the Banat and the Transylvania, possessed by the Magyar kingdom till then, but gave administrative autonomy to the local Magyar dynasty and rulers. With the end of the Ottoman rule, Transylvania and later the Banat were incorporated into the Habsburg Empire. Habsburg rule over what is now western Romania ran uninterrupted till the end of W.W.I, only to be modified by the establishment of the *Ausgleich* of 1867 through which Transylvania and the Banat were left under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian crown of the kingdom.⁶³ Through this entire period the Magyars enjoyed total monopoly over the cultural and economical affairs in the region, whose population and rural areas were heavily Romanian in character. The situation started to change when following the peace treaties ending W.W.I,

Transylvania and 2/3 of the Banat were given to the Romanian state. The Fascist Hungarian state of W.W.II which annexed Northern Transylvania, an area most distinctively Hungarian as opposed to other regions of western Romania, proved short-lived. The restoration of pre-war borders after W.W.II meant that a substantial Magyar minority would remain in Romania.

The **Tirgu-Mures Autonomous Region** designed for the Magyar majority in the center of Transylvania, formed in early the early 50's was in fact born out of inter-block political considerations. It was thought that by giving cultural autonomy to the Magyars in Transylvania the relations between Hungary and Romania -the situation of which caused major headaches for Moscow- might be improved. However, the project had a short life due to rising Romanian nationalism; Romania's fears that the region could secede from Romania; and Romania's more vocal opposition to Soviet dominated Comintern policies. The termination of the project was to be followed by increased problems. Cultural and political rights the Magyars had enjoyed till then were simply violated.⁶⁴ Increased discrimination towards the Magyars brought the Hungarian government into the play. The unrest of the Magyar minority grew in intensity, so much so that the end of the Ceausescu regime came with mass revolts and the demonstrations organized by the Magyars in western Romania which had a predominantly Magyar character after that.⁶⁵

With the fall of the communist regime, the Magyars organized themselves into the **Democratic Federation of Romanian Hungarians (RMDSZ)** to press for their rights. The fact that Magyars still constitute a majority in central Transylvania and substantial minorities elsewhere in western Romania forms an essential part of the conflict between this minority and the Romanian government.⁶⁶

The Magyar-Rumanian dispute is exacerbated by the religious cleavages. As opposed to the Rumanians who are Orthodox, the Magyars are divided into the **Protestant** (45% of the total) the **Catholic** (40% of the total) and the **Unitarian** and other minor Protestant churches.⁶⁷ The Magyar minority of the Protestant faith is the largest such minority in the Balkans. The religious dimension of the cleavage continues to have a determining impact on the course of relations.⁶⁸

3.8.2. Germans in Romania

German population of Transylvania and the Banat settled into the region in accordance with the Habsburg policies of colonization and repopulation. The **Saxons** (a word meaning masters in medieval German) arriving in the region as landowners and urban dwellers dominated much of the political and economic life in the area -together with the Magyars- throughout the Habsburg period as they were of the ruling elite. It was only after the land distribution programs of the inter-war period and the mass deportation to which they were subjected following W.W.II through which large numbers of the German speaking population was removed from western Romania as well as northern Yugoslavia due to war time collaborations with the Nazi invaders that the Saxon influence ebbed.

Today only a population of 110.000 remains in the country as the remnants of a once stark minority (.5% of Romania's population) .⁶⁹ Like the Magyars, the Germans are also divided into various churches, with the **Evangelicans** and the **Catholics** constituting large communities among them. Their religion is one of the main factors differentiating them from the Rumanian majority. The fact that it is a small minority with no secessionist aspirations has guaranteed this community is relatively comfortable security, particularly when compared to that of the Magyars with whom the Saxons share similar historical position. Today the minority enjoys full cultural and political rights.

3.8.3. The Roma

Official statistics give the Roma figure around 1.8% (409.723) of the population.⁷⁰ However the Roma and various third party sources claim that around half of world's Roma population lives in Hungary and Romania, and a substantial part of that in Romania. Therefore, it appears plausible to assume that the Roma figure should be well above the official numbers. As in Bulgaria, also in Romania, the officially recognized Roma have not been granted their cultural and political rights. Assimilation into main stream Romanian culture could be one reason why the Roma population might be actually higher than the official figures given.

3.8.4. The Muslims (Turks & Tatars)

Unlike most of the other Ottoman territories in the Balkans, the Romanian principalities were never placed under direct Ottoman rule. Therefore neither colonization nor conversions took place in the Principalities. By the time the principalities gained larger autonomy in 1812 on the way to independence, there was not substantial Muslim populations in these former Ottoman vassal states. Even then in accordance with the treaties signed to declare the principalities autonomous, the Muslim population of the towns and the garrisons was stipulated to leave by the treaties. That is why the Muslim Turkish population in Romania is confined to the **Dobrudja**, a land strip sandwiched between the Black Sea and the Danube historically never a part of the principalities. Like most of the other Balkan territories Dobrudja had a significant Turkish Muslim population at the time when it was ceded to the new Romanian state by the Ottomans despite the fact that Rumanians did not constitute a majority. The Muslims in Dobrudja, mostly wealthy landowners on the fertile plains, therefore, became a minority in the Romanian state.

The Muslims in Romania are divided into two categories, the Turks and the Tatars. The Turks (around 30.000) are direct descendants of the Ottomans, and the Tatars descendants of the Crimean Tatars settled into Dobrudja from the 18th century onwards.⁷¹ Now numbering 30.000, the Tatars settled mostly in Dobrudja fleeing their homes in the Crimea and the Ukrainian plains after these regions were turned over the Russians by the Ottomans.⁷² Today both the Turks and the Tatars enjoy full cultural and political rights in Romania, just as all the other minorities except r the Magyars.

3.8.5. Other Minorities in Romania

As a late comer into Romanian union and a low-lying natural passage from the Balkans into the Ukrainian steppes further north, Dobrudja is home to various minorities in addition to the Turks and the Tatars. The **Bulgarians** in southern Dobrudja, which for instance form such a bone of contention that southern Dobrudja has changed hands three times in twentieth century between Romania and Bulgaria, are one of the largest communities in that region. Various other communities, none exceeding a few ten thousands, such as the **Greeks**, remnants of the Phanariote Greeks who once dominated Romania from 1721 to 1821; **Armenians**, the 'merchant peoples' of the Ottomans who also made their way also into Romania; **Vlahs**, who arrived by late 19th century from all

around the Balkans south of the Danube as a direct result of the official policies pursued by the Romanian government to disseminate Romanian national ideology among this Latinophone population; and the **Gagauz**, Orthodox Turks whose homeland is the in environs of the Danubian delta may be cited as examples of the ethnic diversity of the country.

In addition, the **Ruthenians/ Ukrainians** (around 70.000) of northern Bukovina, living next to Ukraine, form the largest Slavic minority.⁷³ The **Serbs** of the Banat together with the **Slovaks, Czechs, Poles and Russians**, none of which exceeds a few ten thousands may be counted as examples of other Slavic minorities.

There is today only a handful of **Jews** in Romania. The Romanian Jews were one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe prior to W.W.II and made up around 10% of the local population. A bulk of the inter-war population had arrived into Romania, by late 19th century from the north, fleeing Russian pogroms. Forbidden to own property by law, the new comers established themselves as financiers and professionals in the urban centers. By W.W.I, like the Saxons and the Magyars in the West, the Jews in the east of the country enjoyed a monopoly over most of the economic life. The grievances towards this "alien" community were successfully manipulated by the Nazis to such an extent that the Romanian Jews were exterminated *en masse* at the hands of the Nazis and their local accomplices.

3.9. MINORITIES IN THE NEW YUGOSLAV FEDERATION

The new Yugoslav Federation that consists of two federal republics, and two so-called autonomous regions, whose autonomous status has been truncated in the late 1980s is ethnically colorful even by Balkan standards.

3.9.1 Serbia and Its Minorities

During the formation of the 2nd Yugoslavia, the two largest communities that were not given their own constituent states were the **Albanians**, the **Magyars**. Those two communities, especially the Albanians, who made up a majority in Kosovo/a therefore pushed their way for republican status with more constitutional and legal rights. With the adoption of the new decentralizing constitution of 1974, the Albanian and the Magyar dreams were fulfilled. The

autonomous regions were created and delegated so much power that on the actual level they became as influential as the constituent republics. The mechanisms allowing these provinces to interfere in the internal affairs of Serbia, to which they were still legally tied, but blocking Serbia from doing it the other way around gave comfort to the Albanians and the Magyars but resentment for the Serbs, who saw themselves as greatly underprivileged in these two **"provinces of their own"**. The tide of Serbian nationalism during late 1980s, based on claims of discrimination against the Serbs in Kosovo/a while dreaming a Greater Serbia that would also include Kosovo/a; and Albanian populations' claims to larger autonomy, exacerbated the already worsening relations between the Serbs and the Albanians. The rise of Serbian nationalism resulted in abolishing the autonomy of Kosovo/a, and as well the Vojvodina under duress of the central government and the JNA.⁷⁴

3.9.2. Albanians and the Situation in Kosovo/a

Regarded by Serbian nationalists as part of the **"Old Serbia"** and an inalienable part of the Serbian history, Kosovo/a is today populated heavily by Muslim Albanians who constitute absolute majority there.⁷⁵ Official figures put the proportion at 85%, while Albanians claim it to be over 90%. In either case, the Serbs make up a relatively tiny portion of Kosovo/a's population. The Albanian share in Kosovo/a has been on a steady increase with the Albanians having the highest birth-rate in Europe. In 1961, for instance, the Albanians made up 67.2% of the population.⁷⁶ Serbian attempts to counter-balance it by colonizing the region with Serbs brought from outside have proved futile with the Serbs now making up about 10% of the Kosovo/a's population of 2 million. In fact the Albanians now make-up 18% of new Yugoslavia's overall population.⁷⁷

Though all the non-Serbs are Muslims, the whole Muslim population in Kosovo/a is not Albanian. There is a small Turkish and a substantial Roma population in the region. Both of these are considered by the Albanians as Albanians because of the fact that one of the underlying factors of the Albanian-Serbian conflict is the religious cleavage; namely, Islam vs. Orthodoxy. There is no doubt that this cleavage increases inter-confessional solidarity. Nevertheless it disappoints the non-Albanians, in that their Albanian coreligionaries are out to assimilate them.

The situation in Kosovo/a is very tense now. By the early 80s where Tito's death had flashed warnings about the future of Yugoslavia for which the founding father had established a delicate and tender system of checks and balances of national issues, economic grievances exacerbated the issue. The questioning of the Yugoslav system was accompanied in Kosovo/a by mass demonstrations. These demonstrations were led by people who were not satisfied with Kosovo/a's constitutional status in the federation. Desiring to extend the scope of the de fact republic status Kosovo/a had possessed since the amendments in 1974, the group envisaged to make Kosovo/a a full-fledged republic of the Yugoslav federation. This action itself caused problems. The Serbs who were already weary of Tito's latest reforms, which according to them curtailed Serbia and decreased Serbian power in the federation to the benefit of other nations acted against the Albanian wishes. Mass demonstrations were countered by strict police measures and an eventual putsch that ended Kosovo/a's privileged position in the federation by turning it into as mere province of Serbia.⁷⁸ To oppose these and discrimination, i.e. firing of Albanians from their governmental positions and the closing of Albanian schools, the Kosovar Albanians came out with the establishment of an underground Albanian parliament (in 1990) and the formation of a well-functioning Albanian state structure. All these have increased the tension in the area.⁷⁹ The Serbs have in return retaliated with more police measures and human rights abuses.⁸⁰ The public discrimination against the Albanians continues today in Kosovo/a. The Albanians organized around the **Democratic League of Kosovo/a (LDK)** have so far pursued policies of non-violent resistance, but depending upon Serbia's attitude towards Kosovo/a and other developments around the Balkans, at any time the situation may turn into a bloody armed conflict with unpredictable consequences.⁸¹

3.9.3. The Magyars in Vojvodina and the Ethnic Make-up of the Region

The first Yugoslavia amputated Vojvodina from the Hungarian branch of the former Habsburgs. At the time no such entity as Vojvodina existed; the regions later to be unified to form Vojvodina were the Backa, the Srem and Yugoslavia's share of 2/3 of the Banat. Just as it is the case in Croatia's Slavonia and Baranja, Vojvodina formed as an autonomous region in the second Yugoslavia was and still is ethnically very much mixed. Although the substantial **German** and **Jewish** communities of the inter-war period are today seriously reduced (very much like other northern Balkan regions as a result of

the deportations of post-W.W.II and also Nazi extermination policies); Vojvodina still has a very colorful ethnic composition.

The region today has **six sizable** and many **small** communities (It is the languages of these major communities respectively, **Serbo-Croatian**, of the **Serbs and the Croats**, **Hungarian** of the **Magyars**, **Romanian**, **Czechoslovakian** of the **Czechs and the Slovaks** and **Ruthenian** of the **Ruthenians/ Ukrainians** that are still recognized as the official languages in Vojvodina).⁸²

The Serbs are the most numerous community in the region (around 54% of the population) and are remnants of those Ottoman Serbs fleeing over to the other side of the Danube, to the prospective Habsburg military frontier of Slavonia and the Srem. **The Rumanians** are another of the major communities in the Vojvodina. A total of 47.000 (around 3% of the local population) Rumanians live in the Banat, adjacent to Romania enjoying cultural and political rights as one of the major communities in Vojvodina. **Croats** living adjacent to Croatia (5.4% of the population) had enjoyed extensive rights in Vojvodina together with the Serbs, till the outbreak of the war in Croatia in 1991. Today the situation in Vojvodina is deteriorating as far as the Croats are concerned. The **Czechs and Slovaks** (together 70.000 and about 4% of Vojvodina's population) and the **Ruthenians/ Ukrainians** (around 20.000 and about 1% of Vojvodina's population) are both remnants of the Habsburg presence in the region.⁸³ Today, these communities all enjoy extensive cultural and political rights as the constituent minority groups in the region.⁸⁴

Unlike the smaller minority groups who -with the exception of the Croats for the last few years- have enjoyed and are enjoying wide cultural and political rights, the **Magyars** in Vojvodina are in a very difficult situation. At the moment animosity based on past grievances, is growing between the Magyars and the Serbian government.⁸⁵

There are two reasons for this: the first is the relatively large size of the minority, and the second is proximity of the Magyars to Hungary. The Magyars, the largest non-Serbian group in Vojvodina (around 25% of the total population) mostly live in the Backa, northern Vojvodina adjacent to Hungary. They accepted the confederalist constitution of 1974 with enthusiasm. The community, around 450.000 people formed itself into the **Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMDK)** during the dissolution process of Yugoslavia. Like in Kosovo/a, a constitutional putsch by the central

government has ended Vojvodina's privileged status in Yugoslavia as a de-facto republic. Though there have been large scale violations of the cultural rights of the Magyars, the situation in Vojvodina is by no means comparable to that of Kosovo/a. Therefore "Unlike the Kosovo/a Albanians who boycotted the December 1990 elections in protest of the removal of autonomy for two provinces, the VMDK did take part in the elections and won eight seats out of a total of 250.⁸⁶ The situation in Vojvodina is relatively calm and dependent upon further moves by the Serbian central government.

3.9.4. Muslims in the Sanjak

Serbia has a population of only 5.5 million should Kosovo/a and Vojvodina with a population of approximately 2 millions per each be excluded. In that population, the Muslims in the Sanjak make-up the largest minority group. (Serbs make up around 65% of larger Serbia, including Kosovo/a and Vojvodina, and 85% of smaller Serbia).⁸⁷

The Sanjak, or with its more proper name the Sanjak of Novi Bazar, was an Ottoman territorial unit, one of the six **sanjaks** of the Bosnian **pashalik**, linking the Pashalik to Kosovo/a in the south. When Bosnia went under the Habsburg occupation in 1878, the Sanjak, which was very similar to Bosnia with its predominantly Muslim population and characteristics remained in the Ottoman hands and was from then on separated from the Bosnian entity. The Sanjak later joined the first Yugoslavia after it was occupied by Serbia during the first Balkan war and was divided between Montenegro and Serbia when the Second Yugoslavia was designed as a federal republic. Since then frequent emigrations of the Sandjak Muslims -who have converted to Islam together with the Muslims in Bosnia and have seen themselves as Bosniacs through common history- have decreased the Muslim population in the Sanjak. Therefore today, the Muslims are not anymore a majority in the Montenegrin Sanjak, and only a slight one in the Serbian Sanjak.

In the Serbian Sanjak, the Muslims (around 350.000 people) constitute around 66% of the population.⁸⁸ During the disintegration process of Yugoslavia the Sanjak Muslims gathered around the **Party for Democratic Action (SDA)**, a local branch of the **Bosnian Muslim SDA**. Since then Muslims have organized elections for a local parliament and a referendum on political autonomy and independence. In this referendum, declared illegal by Serbia 69.4% of the population voted for independence.⁸⁹ The Serbian government has retaliated to

this with extreme police measures against the Muslims. At the moment, Sanjak is under very strong supervision of the central government and the Yugoslav National army (JNA), and is highly valued by Serbia as a strategically indispensable territory linking Serbia to Montenegro and then to the Adriatic.⁹⁰ The events to come in the Sanjak are likely to be determined by the result of the war in Bosnia, inasmuch as the Muslims in the Sanjak see the Muslims in Bosnia as their brethren and compatriots.⁹¹

3.9.5. Other Minorities in Serbia (Kosovo/a and Vojvodina excluded)

Bulgarians (totaling 30.000) who live in enclaves ceded to Yugoslavia by Bulgaria following W.W.II; **Albanians** (around 50.000) living adjacent to Kosovo/a and a serious bone of contention in the eye of Serbian nationalism which is growing anxious of what it calls "Albanian demographic roll towards north"; and finally pockets of small **Vlah** communities on the mountains, but, here again, very much integrated into mainstream host culture may be cited among the less numerous minorities living within Serbia.⁹²

3.9.6 Minorities in Montenegro

Montenegro has a population of 600.000, in which the Montenegrins make up approximately 65%, hardly an overwhelming majority. "The Montenegrins speak Serbo-Croat, are Orthodox in religion and have been traditional allies of the Serbs. Some Montenegrin claim that they are in fact Serbs".⁹³

3.9.7. Muslims in Montenegro

The **Sanjak Muslims** in Montenegro (90.000 and making up 15% of the country's population) live in eastern Montenegro in what was once a part of the Ottoman Sanjak of Novi Bazar.⁹⁴ As their counterparts, the Montenegrin Muslims also feel closely affiliated to the Bosnian Muslims, with whom they share a common history and identification. In the dissolution process of Yugoslavia, the Montenegrin Muslims have also been activated by the dissolution of Yugoslavia. They have united in the process with the Albanians around the **Democratic Coalition of Muslims**. However, unlike their brethren in Serbia, the Montenegrin Muslims have not been totally ostracized. They have participated in Montenegrin elections and have so far cooperated with the Montenegrin government. The relatively soft and compromise-oriented

policies of the Montenegrin government have accentuated such tendencies of the Montenegrin Muslims who are in a relatively favorable situation.

3.9.8. Albanians in Montenegro

There is around 40.000 Albanians in Montenegro. (6.5 % of the population). These Albanians were incorporated into Montenegro following W.W.I, when Montenegro acquired some Albanian populated enclaves along its long disputed border with Albania. Although the repercussions of the Kosovo/a events have been felt among the Montenegrin Albanians, still the methods chosen by the Montenegrin government and the Albanians have not produced any tension, certainly nothing close to the situation in Kosovo/a. The efforts of the Montenegrin government to differentiate itself from Serbia and not to duplicate the Serbian experience have resulted in a more conciliatory situation with the result that the Democratic Alliance of the Muslims and the Albanians have participated in the Montenegrin elections to win 13 seats out of a total of 125, thus forming a block in the parliament.⁹⁵ Yet, the future of the minorities remains to be an excitable issue, likely to be galvanized by the spill-over effects of what is happening in Bosnia and what might happen in Kosovo/a.

3.10. PEOPLES OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Among all the Balkan states, Bosnia-Herzegovina is the most striking example to what extent ethnic groups, religions and nations may be in the region. The situation in Bosnia is similar to that in Macedonia or the Vojvodina where it is difficult to speak about an overwhelming majority, but goes even beyond any similarities in that **there is no majority community in Bosnia.**⁹⁶

The country is now home to three different ethnic groups, the Bosnians (Muslims), Serbs and the Croats all of which are differentiated through their religions, respectively, Islam, Orthodoxy and Catholicism. During the Ottoman period, the Muslims at most times made up the largest portion. They were followed by the Serbs and the Croats in line. Muslim share in the population was around 50% by late 19th century when Bosnia went under Habsburg occupation. However, the migration of many Muslims into the Ottoman empire following the establishment of the Habsburg rule, which became permanent in 1908-9 resulted in a decrease in their population. At the time Muslims controlled much of the wealth in Bosnia: in 1918 70% of the Bosnian land was

held by the Muslims.⁹⁷ The Muslim "exodus" out of Bosnia continued unabated towards the Ottoman controlled Balkan territories and then towards Turkey once the Ottoman Empire was dismembered.

By the outbreak of W.W.II, Serbs had become the largest group in Bosnia. War time atrocities by the Ustasha government against the Serbs caused a decline in the Serbian population. After the war, the Muslim population at an increasing rate continued to form the largest segment of the population of Bosnia, which became now a constituent republic of the second Yugoslavia. The post-war industrialization efforts followed by massive urbanization caused a demographic shift in the country. Here, the tradition in Bosnia **to associate urban culture with Islam** led to a gradual voluntary assimilation of parts of the non-Muslim population into this urban Islamic identity. So much so that in the census of 1981 39.5% of the population was Muslim; another 32% Serbian and a 18.4% Croat and a final 7.9% "Yugoslavs" as they declared themselves. It is apparent that in the Bosnian case a large portion of this self-declared Yugoslav population were actually Muslims. According to the 1991 census, the Muslim share in the population -excluding those declaring themselves as "Yugoslavs"- had already gone up to 42-43%.⁹⁸ However, even that would fall short of making the Muslims as a majority in Bosnia.

The Bosnian population was so much mixed that prior to the war, although Muslims made up an absolute majority in 32, Serbs in 31 and the Croats in 14 districts, there were still 23 districts without an absolute majority, just like Bosnia itself.⁹⁹ The Muslims made up an absolute majority in central Herzegovina and south-central, central, north-central Bosnia, in the cities of Mostar, Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Tuzla, in eastern Bosnia all along the Drina valley, and also in the western end of Bosnia (around Bihac-Cazin). In addition, Muslims made up substantial minorities in eastern Herzegovina, western and northern Bosnia.¹⁰⁰

The Serbs made up an absolute majority in eastern Herzegovina, Western Bosnia (what is known as Bosanski Krajina), northeastern Bosnia, and the areas especially north-east of Sarajevo. They were substantial minorities in eastern Bosnia (on the Drina valley), northern and north-central Bosnia as well as central Herzegovina and the Bihac region.

Croats formed an absolute majority in western Herzegovina and sections of north Bosnia and also substantial minorities in central Herzegovina as well as south-central, southern and northern Bosnia.

This picture however only simplifies the situation in Bosnia. Even in the case where one village or town was populated predominantly by one ethnic group, in the next town or village the situation was just the opposite. And in cases where a city was predominantly of one ethnic group the rural areas around the city would be another group. This peculiar situation was extremely spoiled by the war in Bosnia which broke out in early 1992.¹⁰¹

Ethnic cleansing, massacres and deportations organized by the Serbs targeting the Muslims as well as those atrocities committed upon the Muslims and by the Serbs by the Croats coupled with mass fighting between the Croat militia, the Serbian paramilitary and the Bosnian army have drastically changed the ethnic make-up of the country.¹⁰² Serbian aggression has drastically "cleansed" western Bosnia (Bosanski Krajina), eastern and central Herzegovina, northeastern and eastern Bosnia (except for the enclaves of Zepa, Gorajde and Srebrenica) and the environs of Sarajevo from the Muslims. In addition, Croat actions have cleaned central and western Herzegovina as well as parts of south-central and north Bosnia from the Muslims. The Serbs have also managed to get rid of the Croats in northern and north-eastern Bosnia.

Today the Bosnian government, an alliance of the Muslims and the Croats, controls western and central Herzegovina; strip of territory running from north Bosnia (the environs of Brcko), through central Bosnia into southern Bosnia; enclaves in eastern Bosnia and the very western Bosnia (the enclave of Bihac). Among these territories the Croats have exclusive control only in western and sections of the central Herzegovina. As for the Serbs they control whatever is left from Bosnia, around 2/3 of the territories.¹⁰³

Despite all the horrors and crimes of the past neither the Serbs nor the Croats have been able to carve out meaningful territorial units. The Serb territories are still far from establishing a **geographical continuum** (the link between Serb controlled western Bosnia and the rest of the Serbian controlled territories is interrupted by the Muslims and Croats in northern Bosnia) or **touch to Serbia proper** (the Muslim enclaves on the Drina valley strategically threaten links to Serbia on the other side of the river).

Nevertheless, the war has changed the demographic balance of the country. Around 2.500.000 people (nearly 80% of which are Muslims) have been driven out of their homes. These people now live in enclaves, away from their home towns or in refugee camps, mainly in Croatia but also elsewhere in the rump Yugoslavia, all over the Balkans, in central and western Europe. Such population transfers have seriously disrupted the ethnic balance.

Moreover, war casualties are estimated to be over 200.000. A large number of these casualties (over 90%) are from the Muslims as a result of atrocities and war crimes.¹⁰⁴ Such casualties must have already changed the percentage of various groups in the Bosnian population. Whatever the situation may be, before the finalization of the war and its crimes it should not be possible to accurately know the "new position" of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁰⁵

CHAPTER IV. THE SECURITY DIMENSION

4.1. A THEORETICAL REVIEW

In the discipline of international studies security may be defined as depending on two aspects: "(1) the absence of objective dangers, whether or not they are recognized, and (2) the absence of subjective fears, whether or not they are recognized".¹ This definition makes the **nature of security a composite of the objective reality and the subjective perceptions.** "What determines governments' policies is their *perception* of threats and dangers, even if they may be under -or over- estimated. Therefore both perceived and actual dangers as formulated by the above definition of security need to be examined".²

This theoretical entrée brings us to the definition of **insecurity (a negative security perception in other words) which may be defined as the presence of objective dangers and subjective fears.** Perception plays a significant role in that it is the subjective perception that determines whether or not a threat exists.

4.2. SECURITY CONCEPT AND THE BALKANS

The literature covering the security dimension of Balkan affairs may be roughly categorized into two periods. The ending of the cold-war roughly marks the actual delineation between these two periods. Shoup's work **Problems of Balkan Security-Southeastern Europe in the 1990's** is a classical example for the first period, the cold-war years.³ Although published in the aftermath of the cold-war, this work still uses a cold-war analytical framework, looking at the Balkan affairs and the security issues in the region from the great power perspective. The work considers Balkan security simply as a product of the overall security designs of the world. Concentrating mostly on Western and Eastern interests in the region, the book fails to recognize Balkan dynamics such as the minorities and the region's **sui generis** history. By underestimating these factors, which have largely contributed to security concerns in the peninsula, this work remains far from being complete.

With the end of the cold-war in the literature covering security issues in the Balkans less attention was to be paid to global determining factors (such as

super power rivalry). Instead *sui generis* factors shaping security in the peninsula began to come to the forefront as parts of the analytical scheme.

Cowen Karp's work titled "Central and Eastern Europe: The challenge of Transition" may be cited as an example of the new analytical framework now used to approach security issues in the Balkans.⁴ With an entire chapter dedicated to the Balkans and another one to the former Yugoslavia, both of which focus on the post cold-war security concerns, the work aims to point deep rooted but somehow neglected factors molding the security perceptions in the Balkans.

The chapter by Daniel N. Nelson entitled "Creating Security in the Balkans" starts off by analyzing the historical legacies in the peninsula.⁵ Nelson calls the Balkans "a threat rich environment", one that lives with the legacy of empires.⁶ Trying to grasp the roots of negative security perceptions -those based on perceptions of threat- the author analyzes imperial traditions in the Balkans aiming to see how past experiences of Balkan communities have shaped and still continue to shape security perceptions.⁷

"The waxing and waning of these empires and their battles with each other and against indigenous peoples, fashioned the Balkan peninsula of today. Obvious, yet overlooked by external analysts, is the legacy of imperial conquest throughout the eastern half of Europe and particularly in the continent's southeastern corner. The distribution of ethnic groups, languages and faiths is a direct consequence of migration -often because of imminent threat- and colonization due to conquest. The residues of empires are the Diasporas of every nation and the irredentist claims of every state in the region. An intermingling of peoples and borders leaves a high-threat environment".⁸

Nelson goes on to analyze **the security perceptions of independent Balkan countries**. Excluding Yugoslavia, for it is covered by the next chapter of the book, but also Greece and Turkey, under the influence of the cold-war analytical framework of dividing the Balkan countries into categories as communist and non-communist; Nelson fails to develop an all inclusive analysis of the region. Even then taking Albania, Romania and Bulgaria into

consideration, the article points out the security concerns faced by these states with respect to the minorities within their borders. This is a basic **novelty** where **emphasis is placed on specific dynamics of each country (i.e. the Balkan minorities)** to see how these affect the security perception of each country towards its ethnic minorities.

The next article in the book, titled "**The Former Yugoslavia: Emerging Security Orientations**" goes one step further to link security perceptions as such to the **inter-Balkan affairs**.⁹ Focusing on Yugoslavia in particular, the author, Stephen Larrabee analyzes the relations of the republics of the rump Yugoslavia with other ex-Yugoslav and also non-Yugoslav states. In so doing, Larrabee touches upon the issue of **how minorities in the Balkans would influence a state's security perception towards its neighbors**. Pointing to particular cases of deteriorating security perceptions, due to links of minorities to states other than the Larrabee speaks about a good number of negative security perceptions based on perceptions of threat. Larrabee tries to see what sort of alliances, friendly and unfriendly relations, are likely to develop in the Balkans under the influence of current security perceptions.

With the exception of these few works cited above, the current post cold-war literature on the issue of Balkan security tackles the security issue basically on the inter-state level, without due reference to ethnic minorities and the internal dynamics of the Balkan states. This level of analysis regards threats to security as a creation of possession of arms and level of offensive and defensive parities.¹⁰

An approach to **Balkan security from a perspective including the minorities; the security concerns created by the minorities for the states they live in (their home states) and the states to which they feel attached (their mother states); and historical legacies** of the peninsula should be beneficial for the purpose of any study that aims to aggrandize particular Balkanic features that have shaped still do and shall shape the history of the peninsula.

It should be noted here that this study remains aware of other factors such as the possession of arms, level of offensive and defensive parities, regional and global security concerns or still, a much less debated factor, personal fears of the power elite (i.e. fear of losing administrative, financial, political power especially in times of uncertainty etc.) as possible determinants of Balkan security. For purposes of methodological clarity, however, this

study omits these factors and concentrates solely on the perspective explained above.

4.3. SECURITY IN THE BALKANS

In the course of the dismemberment of the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires, nearly without exceptions all the political boundaries in the Balkans were drawn after bloody wars in a rather arbitrary manner. This fact has left a bitter legacy in the peninsula. Great ideas that envisaged to rejuvenate some past kingdoms without any attention to who lived at the time on those territories to be conquered were especially popular in the Balkans during the period. As a result of these and also due to fiery struggles among the Balkan nations to establish separate states for themselves, ethnically non-homogenous Balkan states had come into existence. Ethnic communities left on the "wrong side" of the new political boundaries developed deep resentments towards their host communities (i.e. home states) whom they regarded as "villain masters", keeping them under slavery and away from their brethren.

Where independent Balkan states came into existence by each other's side two Balkanic trends exacerbated the existing resentments. These trends were **the maltreatment of ethnic minorities by the home states and minorities' collaboration with their mother states.**

Even before facing the maltreatment of its home state, the Balkan minority may have nurtured a certain feeling of mistrust towards its home state. After that, every unhappy experience of discrimination and maltreatment could only strengthen so much mistrust so that soon it became a deep rooted feeling, one that would survive into our time. In fact this mistrust was of bilateral nature. The home state could feel certain uneasiness vis-à-vis the minorities from the very moment of its independence.

The nature of nationalism worked here as well. The rivalry between Balkan nations for domination over the others and the territories of these others survived into the framework of the new Balkan states. The previous enemies were now to live within the same state, one as the possessor of that state, and the other as a minority of the same state. Possessing the necessary political and coercive tools, Balkan states would not hesitate to take action. Coercion used by a Balkan state towards its previous enemy and current hostage could

deteriorate bilateral relations between a state and a segment of its peoples. Needless to say, the minority communities played their share in the game. Always remembering pre-independence rivalries for territory, minority communities would never give up their demands. They keep alive their dreams of greater states into which they might join by seceding from their respective home states. Such aspirations voiced by a minority group could nurture and enhance the mistrust felt by the home state towards the minority communities.

The picture we draw here as a result of these historical experiences is as follows: **mistrust dominating relations between the home state and the minority community. Such mistrust shaping the security perception of each party vis-à-vis the other. Therefore mutual security perceptions turning out to be of extremely negative nature, the minority and the home state identifying its counterpart as a potential threat. And then as a result of the links between the minority and its mother state, the mother state also coming into the picture to share the negative security perception of the minority.** This on the other hand adding up to the negative security perception of the home state. To put it bluntly: **the home state starts to see the minority and its mother state as threats to its territorial integrity and its security, likewise the minority and the mother state perceive the home state as a threat to the existence of the minority.**

4.4. THE SECURITY TRIANGLE: THE MINORITY, ITS HOME STATE AND ITS MOTHER STATE

In dealing with relations between a minority community and its home and mother states, one needs to simplify that triangular network down to three set of relationships: **the first one between the minority and its home state; another one between the minority and its mother state; and a third one between the home state and the mother state.**

4.4.1. Relations Between a Minority and Its Host State

There appear various factors shaping the relations between a minority and its home state:

demographic factors: here the size, condensation and dispensation of a minority are important factors. Whether a certain minority is a sizable community in the overall population of its country or whether it makes up a majority anywhere in that country are important criteria that affect the security

perception of the home state. The Turks of Bulgaria, Magyars of Romania and Serbs of Croatia may be worth mentioning in this regard.

geographic location: strategic geographic location (such as one next to the territory of the mother state); or living on an historically disputed buffer zone area are of significant importance. For instance, the Turkish minority in Western Thrace of Greece or the Albanians of western Macedonia, Magyars of Transylvania and so on all bordering their mother states create a perception of threat for their host states, which view their geographic location as vulnerable to exploitation and prone to secessionism.

past experiences: conversion, deportation, genocide, massacre, forceful assimilation, cultural hegemony, economic advantages and disadvantages, rivalry over territory and historical feuds are examples to various historical factors that may be influential in determining the course of relations between a minority and its home state, if the minority was subjected to one or more of these in the past. The Turks of Romania or the Serbs of Slovenia both of which have no memorable experiences of maltreatment are good examples to minorities that feel no resentment towards their host states. The Magyars of Romania and the Turks of Western Thrace do form, however, a counter example.

cultural and linguistic features of the minority: a minority's cultural and linguistic affinity to its host community as well as shared religion also affect nature of relations between itself and its home state. It should, however, be noted that, depending upon the circumstances shared cultural, linguistic and religious features may or may not draw the minority and the host state closer. For instance, the shared religion, Orthodoxy in Greece seems to bridge the gap between the Greeks and Vlachs of Greece, whereas in Albania it does not suffice to bring the Greeks and Albanians of southern Albania together. More examples could be easily cited for other cases.

present circumstances: political-cultural rights a minority enjoys; social and economic status of a minority, i.e. the share of the minority in the political, administrative apparatus, business, education, military, intelligentsia and the opposition could also determine relations between a minority community and its host state.

4.4.2. Relations Between a Minority and Its Mother State

Using the upper classification it may be said that the following factors are of overriding importance in shaping relations between a minority and its mother state:

past experiences: common past experiences (i.e. the minority having lived under the rule of its mother state); minority's self-association with the nationalist cause of the mother state and collaboration with it in that respect are among historical factors that would determine the cause of relations between a minority and its mother state.

cultural and linguistic factors: minority's affinity in language, religion and culture to the mother state could also determine the cause of relations between the minority and its mother state, by defining to which extent that minority community may identify itself with its mother state.

present circumstances: the attitude of the mother state towards the minority community (i.e. whether it disseminates separatism among the community or gives logistics, political support to the same group) also contribute to shaping the relations between the minority and its mother state.

4.4.3. Relations Between the Host and Mother States

The nature of relations between a home state and a mother state is not independent from the relations between mother state and minority on the one hand and those between the minority and the mother state on the other hand. This is not to say, however, that the affairs between these two states are determined exclusively by the above set of factors. On the contrary, regional or global political considerations (such as a need to create inter-block solidarity); economic desiderata; the capacity of political will; and *real politik* concerns may influence the course of relations between the mother state and the home state regardless of the position of the minority community.

Having examined all factors molding the relations in the triangular network formed by the mother state, the home state and the minority community one also needs to see which minorities in the Balkan would fit into this framework of triangular relationship.

4.4.4. Minorities without Mother States in Existence

Not all the Balkan minority communities possess mother states. Communities such as the Vlachs and Gypsies fall into this category. A good number of the Balkan minorities which have the opportunity to relate to some states as their mother states have either chosen and/or have been directed not to do so. It is either the fact that the above factors structuring the triangular network of relations have worked to the benefit -and not the detriment of the minority- and, therefore, the minority does not feel compelled to look around for a protector; and/or the minority has never related itself to other states because the necessary circumstances were not there. The Turks in Romania, Czechs and Slovaks in the rump Yugoslavia, Serbs in Slovenia and Romania may be counted as examples to a certain number of Balkan communities that have declined to adopt mother states although prospective states for such a purpose did exist.

4.4.5. Minorities with mother states

History has proven that a good number of Balkan minorities possess mother states to whom they have linked themselves in their quest for security and safety. Here, by taking several cases of minorities with mother states into account we shall try to shed light on specific cases for an analysis of the factors defining these cases. The purpose here should also be trying to see the extent to which inter-state relations may be affected and shaped by the security perceptions of the home states vis-à-vis the minorities and the vice versa. For such an analysis, **Greeks in Albania, Turks (and Muslims) in Greece and Bulgaria, Magyars in Romania, Serbs in Croatia, Albanians in Kosovo/a/a and Macedonia** are among the well-defined exemplary cases of minority communities with mother states.

4.5. GREEKS IN ALBANIA

The Greek-Orthodox community in southern Albania is the sole community in that country that possesses a mother state. A community of 50.000 -according to official sources- , and 400.000 -according to the Greek sources- the Greeks in Albania mostly live in those southern sections of Albania bordering Greece. Whatever its size the community plays a very important role in the domestic political life and the foreign affairs of Albania.

Albanian official sources try to underestimate the importance of the issue by figuring the size of the Greek-Orthodox community as low as possible. Greek estimates trying to do just the opposite inflate the number of the community by including into their number not only the Greek speakers of the Greek-Orthodox faith but also Albanian speakers of the Greek-Orthodox faith. Whatever its size the Greek community in Albania is not a major community in any part of the country; nevertheless a majority community in southern Albania, the very vicinity of Greece. This fact itself is enough to worry the Albanian government. The southern portion of Albania, populated by the Greeks is referred to in Greek official terminology as the northern Epirus. Through this name, which symbolizes Greece's approach to the issue, Greece tries to link southern Albania (northern Epirus) to a part of its territory, southern Epirus of Greece bordering Albania.

In fact, in 1913 when Albania was established following the Balkan wars, Albania's border with Greece was never properly marked. Due to Greece's aspirations over the area, the major powers of the time intentionally postponed the issue of border demarcation, actually leaving southern Albania to nominal Greek rule.¹¹ Greek rule over southern Albania lasted till the aftermath of W.W.I. With the final post W.W.I peace settlements, southern Albania finally -and for the first time- became a part of Albania proper. Since then, this area with a mixed population has been a part of Albania. The Greek community's aspirations to join Greece, however, have been far from withering, on the contrary, rising at intervals. When during W.W.II central authority in Albania evaporated due to foreign invasions; envisioning a smaller Albania to which southern Albania would not belong, the Greek community hoped to join Greece. After that, in the cold war period, cautious of the past experiences, the communist Albanian governments utilized various methods to finish with the issue of the Greek minority for good. The result was that the Greek identity in Albania was constantly denied. By 1950's according to the Albanian official ideology there were Greek-Orthodox Albanians in southern Albania but no Greeks. This policy of denial, accompanied by means of voluntary assimilation through shared religion offered to the same community remained in effect till the end of the cold-war.¹²

With the fall of communism all forms of opposition started to flourish in Albania. The Greek community, now that the freedom of expression was more of a reality, organized itself around a political party, the **Omonia**. Albanian

officials did try to bar the Greek party from entering freely held elections. Even then the Greek party managed to send MP's to the Albanian parliament.

Meanwhile, with the issue being defroze, the Greek government and especially the Greek-Orthodox church have made efforts to re establish former links with the Greeks of southern Albania. The Albanian government has reacted sharply, especially in the case of dissemination of Greek identity through the Greek-Orthodox church. The government sees the Greek-Orthodox church as competing with the autonomous Albanian-Orthodox Church. On the other hand, the fact that Greece has not formally repudiated its links with the secessionist movements in southern Albania or relinquished its territorial claims to the same region further aggravates the problem. This situation seriously affects the relations between Albania and Greece and prevents the two countries from developing meaningful relations.

In the case of the Greek minority in Albania, **the minority community seriously affects the relations between its mother state (Greece), and home state (Albania) by providing uncertainty to the course of the inter-state relations.** In this particular case, Greece's current way of dealing with that minority and the position of the minority towards Albanian government and the vice versa have all worked to create a serious security problem for Albania.¹³ Whereas **the Greek minority perceives an imminent threat from the Albanian government; Albania feels that its territorial integrity is threatened by Greece and the presence of a Greek minority in southern Albania.** Therefore, Tirana is far from recognizing this minority as an integral part of Albanian population unless Greece drops its claims to the region and reforms its links with the Greek minority of southern Albania.

4.6. TURKS (AND MUSLIMS) IN GREECE

At the moment the only minority in Greece that possesses a mother state (other than the Macedons who are on the way to acquire Macedonia as their potential mother state in near future) is the Turks (and Muslims) of Western Thrace. United around a common Turkish identity, this minority feels closely attached to Turkey. Concentrated in Western Thrace, right on the border with Turkey, and forming about 1/3 of the province's population, the minority occupies a precarious position in the eyes of the Greek government.

Defined under the Lausanne Peace Treaty of W.W.I as a Muslim minority with equal treatment to be accorded, the minority now regards itself more Turkish than anything else.¹⁴ Greece's attempts to eradicate the Turkish identity of the minority by denying and punishing anything as such have paradoxically strengthened the solidarity and the sense of Turkishness, of the minority. Greece's violation of the terms of the Lausanne Treaty resulting in the abuse of cultural and religious rights has enhanced the historic ties of this community with Turkey. Facing outright discrimination, forced migration and economic burdens imposed by the Greek government, the community has lately organized democratic forums and sent MP's to the Greek parliament. Meanwhile, the more vociferous attitude of these MP's in the face of increased discrimination has contributed to the anxiety of the Greek government. At the moment uncomfortable about the presence of a Turkish minority living on the border with Turkey and in the middle of a sea of Hellenes, Greece still hopes to eradicate the Turkish identity in Western Thrace.

On the other hand, Turkey's direct -when compared to its official policy towards other Turkish/ Muslim minorities in the Balkans- interest in this minority has aggravated Greece's subjectively perceived security concerns. Although Turkey justifies its direct interest on basis of the Lausanne Treaty, which does give Turkey the right of a form of protectorate over the Turks of Western Thrace; **Greece still believes the Greek territorial integrity to be threatened by the existence of this minority and the close links it has with Turkey.**¹⁵ As the issue of the Turks in Western Thrace continues to negatively affect the Turco-Greek relations, in addition to many other issues between these two countries, **the case of the Turks in Greece shows to which extent the security problem created by a minority may contribute negatively the relations between the two states.**

4.7. TURKS (AND MUSLIMS) IN BULGARIA

Just like the Muslims in Western Thrace, various Muslim groups in Bulgaria, of Turkish, Bulgarian, Roma or Tatar origin, are also united around a Turkish identity. The above-mentioned specific Balkan circumstances as well as official Bulgarian hostility towards this minority have consolidated the Turkish identity among the peoples of Islamic faith to the extent that the Turkish identity has largely replaced other ethnic identities among the Muslims of Bulgaria.

A sizable community, over 10% of Bulgaria's population -according to official Bulgarian estimates- and more than twice of that -according to Turkish sources- the Turks (and Muslims) of Bulgaria are concentrated in two regions of the country; in the northeast on the southern Dobrudja plains ,and in the southeast on the Maritsa plains and the Rhodope mountains, bordering Turkey.

The minority forms the majority of the population in the southeast of Bulgaria, around Kirdzhali for example; and a substantial part of the population with an important share in the economic life in the Dobrudja. Having enjoyed certain cultural, political rights in Bulgaria in the inter-war period, the Turkish community in Bulgaria lived through several forced, semi-forced migrations imposed onto it by the communist regime in the cold-war period. As in the Western Thrace, the shared cultural, religious affinities and family links with Turkey have kept alive a gravitation among the Bulgarian Turks towards Turkey. Official discrimination towards the Muslims, violation of the minority rights granted to the Turks under Bulgaria's constitution came to a climax by early 1980's. The Bulgarian government had always felt uneasy about this minority, whose population growth rate surpassed by far the population growth rate of the Bulgarian population. The government's view was that with such birth rate, the Turks were on the way to become a constituent part of the Bulgarian population. This anxiety contributed in 1980s to an officially conducted policy of forced assimilation. A ban on educational institutions, religious practices, ethnic names and the use of native tongues, initiated by early 80s and accompanied by strict police measures lasted till 1989. With increased tension between Turkey and Bulgaria on the issue of the Turkish minority, the gravitation of the Turkish minority towards Turkey became more than ever. The Bulgarian government tried to decrease the ratio of the Turks in the overall population of the country by letting them emigrate to Turkey through a government organized mass exodus (1989).

However, the fall of communism bringing with itself a restructuring of Bulgaria's domestic and foreign policy terminated the policy of forced assimilation towards the Turks. Repudiating the policies of the "ancient regime", the new reform governments halted the policy of forced assimilation. A push for economic desiderata necessitating closer links with Turkey coincided with this softening. As a result, more than half of the 300.000 Turks who had emigrated to Turkey by 1989 returned to Bulgaria once the new regime made it clear that it would develop a new attitude towards the Turks.

Gradually cultural and religious rights were restored to the Turks. In this new atmosphere of freedom, the Turks and Muslims of Bulgaria rallied themselves around a political party, the Movement of Rights and Freedoms (**Haklar ve Özgürlükler Hareketi- HÖH**). The HÖH came out as the third largest force in the freely held elections of 1990. Becoming a key factor in Bulgarian politics, the HÖH successfully and cleverly distanced itself from Turkey. Unlike the situation in Western Thrace where a Turkish party meant more open links with Turkey, in Bulgaria the situation was the reverse. Contributing to the metamorphosis in Bulgaria, the HÖH helped the Turkish community to transform itself from an alienated minority community into an integral part of the Bulgarian political life. Today, except for the nationalist circles, the Turkish community in Bulgaria becomes day by day a part of the mainstream Bulgarian affairs.

When Bulgaria's security concerns and perception of a threat were maximized during the eighties, the Turkish minority was a bone of contention between Turkey and Bulgaria. By the late 80s the tension had built up to such an extent that Turkey and Bulgaria were on the verge of a war.

This has changed in the last years. **Confidence building measures between the armies and governments of the two countries together with the successful policies of the Turkish minority to distance itself from Turkey and Turkey's policy in return not to interfere the domestic affairs (i.e. the issue of the Turkish minority) of Bulgaria have ameliorated the Turco-Bulgarian relations.**¹⁶ Today the Turkish minority in Bulgaria is a unique case in the Balkans, in that its relations with its mother state and home state produce no conflict but cooperation.

4.8. MAGYARS IN ROMANIA

The Magyar community in Romania lives in the western provinces of that country, namely the former Habsburg regions of the Banat and Transylvania. Being the largest minority in Romania, the Magyars make up a majority of the population in central Transylvania, away from Hungarian border; but also a substantial portion of the population in northern Transylvania, a belt connecting central Transylvania to Hungary. Enjoying high cultural political and economic advantages over the local Rumanian population during the Habsburg rule, the Magyars of the region benefited well from the

administrative system of the Dual Monarchy through which they exercised almost absolute control in Transylvania and the Banat.¹⁷

Transylvania came under Rumanian rule following W.W.I, which altered radically the political situation there. The Rumanian government and Rumanians gradually gained control over Transylvania. The Rumanians, who had suffered discrimination through the acts of the Hungarian crown in the 19th century, retaliated likewise once they became the rulers. Meanwhile, Hungary never dropped its claims to Transylvania and sought to annex this territory back to Hungary. Siding with the Nazi Germany during W.W.II, the Hungarian government managed to receive from Romania central and northern Transylvania. This was, however, to be short-lived.¹⁸ When W.W.II came to an end, so did the Hungarian rule over the area.

A joint attempt by Hungary and Romania **to accommodate the Magyars into Romania** by providing them with autonomous region of their own during 1950's calmed down the tension to an extent. This unique trial in the Balkans was to prove short-lived because Romania doubted whether autonomy in the area was simply the first step in the direction of the region's annexation to Hungary. Due to lack of confidence between Bucharest and Hungary, the Magyar community continued to look towards Hungary and the experience of an autonomous Magyar region ceased to exist by late 1950s.¹⁹

Never again able to acquire their advantageous position, the Magyars in Transylvania continued to link themselves to their mother state through the entire cold-war period for safety and to regain their rights. As a result, Hungary and Romania became adversaries, creating the only case of enmity between any two members of the Warsaw Pact through the cold-war era. The need for inter-block solidarity only helped to freeze the issue. But the issue could reemerge as a serious source of discontent soon after the fall of communism and the dismemberment of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. By late 1980s ethnic unrest in Romania coincided with the opposition to the communist regime. It is not surprising that the first attempts to oust the Ceausescu regime were triggered off by the Magyar minority in the Banat town, Timisoara. In fact throughout the entire Balkan peninsula ethnic minorities contributed substantially to the overthrow of communist regimes and then many of them formed their political organization. The Organization of the Magyars in Romania, **the Democratic Federation of Romanian Hungarians (RMDSZ)** continued to be a stronghold of opposition before and after the fall of the

Ceausescu regime. Unlike Bulgaria where the situation improved for the ethnic Turks after 1989, in Romania no substantial changes occurred. This heightened the grievance of the Magyar community that had hoped for an improvement in its situation once and if communism fell.

Under these circumstances, **the Magyar community drew closer than ever towards Hungary. The Hungarian government on the other hand, instead of distancing itself from the Magyar minority and communicating with the Rumanian government, has acted as the protector of the Magyars in Romania.** A statement by the Hungarian Prime Minister Jozef Antall that he is the prime minister of 15 million Hungarians (a number which includes the population of Hungary circa 10 million, but also those Hungarians living in the Vojvodina, Croatia, Romania, Ukraine and Slovakia) is only an example.²⁰

The Magyar minority in Romania is a clear example of deep security problems that may be created by a minority in the Balkans.

"A sense of peril and the potential for unrest do not arise merely from the numerical strength of minorities. Instead Rumanians and any government in Bucharest recognize clearly the appeal of the Hungarian state to ethnic kin inside the Rumanian state. This attraction is particularly strong in so far as Hungary offers more economic, cultural and educational opportunities. Romania's suspect, not without cause, is that such appeal will reduce the control over Transylvania."²¹

Today the position of the Magyar minority in Transylvania vis-à-vis Hungary and Romania continues to affect unfavorably the relations between these two countries.

4.9. SERBS IN CROATIA

Never part of any Serbian state, the Serbian community in Croatia lived under the Habsburg domain in certain parts of today's Croatia, joined the First Yugoslavia with Croatia which then became one of the six constituent republics of Tito's Yugoslavia. Forming 16% of Croatia's population, and a majority of the population in eastern Slavonia (which borders Serbia) as well as the Krajina (in the regions of Lika, Kordun and Banija which surround Bosnia

to the west and the north); the Serbs of Krajina enjoyed extensive rights during the second Yugoslavia as the largest constituent nation of that state.

The historically strong movement to unite all the Serbs in one Serbian state always appealed to the Krajina Serbs. Atrocities committed during W.W.II by the Fascist Ustasha state against the Krajina Serbs only increased the tendency among the Serbs to join the Serbian state. Nevertheless, the tension eased, since the federal structure of the second Yugoslavia providing all ethnic groups widely defined cultural and political rights wherever the community lived and whatever its size did satisfy the Krajina Serbs. Therefore, it was not until the dissolution of Yugoslavia that the Krajina Serbs voiced their discomfort about having to live in Croatia.²²

But as soon as the disintegration of Yugoslavia became more and more pronounced they lost no time in expressing their desire for a larger Serbian state where their rights would be guaranteed and where they would not be treated as second class citizens. Being a part of the largest Yugoslav nation, the Krajina Serbs were alarmed by the prospects of becoming a mere minority in a new Croat state which would be designated primarily for the Croats. Croatia's irreconcilable attitude -based on its own perceptions of Serbian domination of the second Yugoslavia- towards the Krajina Serbs came as denial of their identity. To this may be added Serbia's open concern and direct interest in manipulating the Krajina Serbs. Choosing to fight rather than to remain in Croatia, the Krajina Serbs were aided by the Yugoslav National Army, that had by the outbreak of war in Croatia become a de-facto Serbian army in the dissolution process of Yugoslavia, in their quest to break away from Croatia.²³

The clashes soon turned into a full scale civil war. With the help of its mother state, Serbia, (a.k.a. the new Yugoslavia) the Krajina Serbs established military control over 1/3 of Croatia's territory. During this process, the entire Croat population living in these territories was "ethnically cleansed". Today the unilaterally declared Serbian Republic of Krajina still executes control over these territories while keeping alive its dreams to join its mother state when international political circumstances prove suitable.²⁴ After much killing and bloodshed the situation seems to be frozen, a part of Croatia amputated by a minority, that does not want to see Croatia as its home state.

The case of the Krajina Serbs shows to which extremes negative security perceptions (i.e. perceptions of existence of threat) may carry the day if the issue is not handled skillfully and carefully.

4.10. ALBANIANS IN KOSOVO/A

The Albanians make up an overwhelming majority in Kosovo/a's population and with that ratio a substantial minority in Serbia, to which Kosovo/a is attached.

The Albanian nationalist movement whose first manifesto was declared in the Kosovar town Prizren in 1878 basically aimed to unite all the Albanians in an autonomous state under the Ottoman rule. Rival nationalist movements, the Greek one to the south and the Serbian one to the north meanwhile aimed to devour portions of the Albanian inhabited lands. This is why following W.W.I Kosovo/a, passed to the Serbian hands to become part of the first Yugoslav state.²⁵

A satellite of Italy during W.W.I, Albania managed to capture the entire Kosovo/a and parts of Macedonia during the war as a reward for its support to Italy in the area. The experience of uniting all the Albanians in one state failed, however, with the end of W.W.II.²⁶ Kosovo/a was returned to Serbia to become an autonomous republic within the Second Yugoslavia, under Serbian control. In the immediate aftermath of the war when Yugoslavia enjoyed a monopoly over the running of Albania's domestic and foreign affairs, Kosovo/a acted as a bridge between the two countries. Therefore for the first time under Serbian rule the Kosovar Albanians were granted certain minority rights.

When Yugoslavia broke from away the Stalinist camp complying with the Comintern request, Albania, severed all its ties with Yugoslavia.²⁷ Yugoslavia retaliated by confiscating the rights of the Kosovar Albanians. The policy of discrimination towards the Albanians which included seeing them as second class citizens lasted till 1974. By that time with their high population growth-rate, the highest in Europe, Albanians had become an overwhelming majority in Kosovo/a. The principle of equal treatment and punishment against, the nations pushed Tito towards some kind of action against Serbia, once he had crushed the Croat nationalist movement in 1971.²⁸ Tito seems to have thought that the separation of Kosovo/a and Vojvodina would be a punishment of equal suffering to the Serbs. At the same time deciding to reform the Yugoslav

federal structure in order to quieten Croat and Serbian chauvinisms, Tito acted by changing the status of the two de jure autonomous regions, Kosovo/a and the Vojvodina, still under Serbian rule. The new legislation enacted turned these two republics into de facto constituent republics of the Yugoslav state although they legally remained under Serbian rule as autonomous regions. Increased administrative and political rights turned the Vojvodina and Kosovo/a into powerful mini-states to the extent that Serbia could not mangle with the internal affairs of these two regions whereas they could interfere with the legislative procedure of the Serbian parliament.²⁹

Eventually, this situation started to be perceived by the Serbs as a threat to Serbian unity and existence. The fact that the Albanians constituted an overwhelming majority in Kosovo/a which is situated next to Albania now had its own political structure worried Serbia. **Although Albania showed no serious interest in the region and the Kosovar Albanians showed no affection to Albania, but they struggled to obtain the status of full-fledged constituent republic instead of an autonomous region, Serbia was still anxious about Kosovo/a's annexation to Albania.**

Acting through such a subjectively perceived threat Serbia utilized all methods to suppress, strip them off from their rights and gradually alienate the Albanians.³⁰ Step by step all rights granted to the Kosovo/a autonomous region were abolished. Meanwhile discrimination against the Albanians together with police measures, human rights abuses and physical punishment added to the anxiety of the Albanians over their future. Desperate and worried about survival the Albanian minority gradually turned towards Albania. To note here, despite Serbian claims, Albania with its population of circa 3 million never -and could not have- acted as a mother state to a community of 2 million Albanians, till the very late 1980s when human rights abuses reached some massive scales. The tribal/ cultural differences between the Albanians in Kosovo/a, who are Ghegas and in Albania proper, who are Toskas; economic disparities between the more developed Kosovo/a and the poorer Albania proper as well as lack of common political memory since the end of the Ottoman rule -except a brief Albanian invasion of Kosovo/a during W.W.II- all made Albania a very unlikely candidate to be a mother state to the community. The fact that even the interpretation of Albanian nationalism differed was another factor contributing to the diversions between the Kosovar and Albanian Albanians. In Kosovo/a the predominantly Muslim character of the population has developed a sense of being Albanian that is equal to being a Muslim.

However, Albania proper that has a population divided into four different faiths the consciousness of being Albanian is in no case related to confession.

Despite all these differences, however, **increasing Serbian repression, Serbia's groundless phobia over Kosovo/a's annexation to Albania and the anxiety felt by Albania over the fate of the Kosovar Albanians gradually gravitated Albania towards Kosovo/a, and vice versa.** Today increased tension in Kosovo/a continues. Meanwhile now more vocal on the Kosovo/a issue, Albania has made it clear that, if tension in Kosovo/a escalates, it will not hesitate to act. This has fed Serbia's concern that Albania intends to annex Kosovo/a. Today the situation in Kosovo/a has brought Albania and Serbia (a.k.a. the new Yugoslav federation) to a situation of cold war. If the situation in Kosovo/a deteriorates, there is no guarantees that this will not turn into an armed conflict between Serbia and Albania over Kosovo/a. **The situation in Kosovo/a is a good example of how a minority repressed and left desperate about its survival by its very home state may look for, emulate and eventually create a mother state.**

4.11. ALBANIANS IN MACEDONIA

The Albanians in Macedonia form the majority of the population in Western Macedonia, adjacent to Albania in the west and Kosovo/a in the north. In the overall population of the country, Macedon official statistics claim Albanians to be around 20% while Albanians claim to be anywhere from 40% to 50%. Also in this case it seems difficult to tell the accuracy of both of the claims because of lack of objectivity in both of the estimates, where Albanians and Macedonians respectively try to inflate and deflate the percentage of the Albanian community in Macedonia's overall population.

Being Ghegas and having shared a common political history for the last 80 years with the Albanians in Kosovo/a, the Macedon Albanians show great similarity to their brethren in Kosovo/a. The already close links between the Albanians of Kosovo/a and Macedonia were strengthened during the second Yugoslavia as Kosovo/a became the center for Yugoslavia's Albanians. An example to increased affinities is the large number of Macedon Albanians who, for example, went to college not in Macedonia but in Kosovo/a. Till the dissolution of Yugoslavia Kosovo/a remained to be a magnet for Yugoslavia's and also Macedonia's Albanians.

Therefore, falling apart from Kosovo/a with the establishment of a Macedon state, the Albanian minority in Macedonia started to show serious signs of discomfort. To all intents and purposes, an independent Macedonia would mean for its Albanians a cut off from Kosovo/a for good.

At the same time the Macedonian government feeling uneasy about rival nationalisms -challenging the Macedon state and national identity- regarded the presence of Albanian majority on its border with Albania as a burden on its already questioned unity.³¹ There were perceptions that the Albanian minority could aspire for the Albanian state in the midst of all the confusion Macedonia was experiencing at the time. The constitutional amendment being realized as a result of these perceptions reduced the status of Albanians from a constitutionally recognized nationality to a bare minority. Feeling humiliated the Albanian community retaliated now that its centrifugalist tendencies were strengthened. The boycott of the general census in 1990 was just one example of this nature the Albanian community tried to make it clear that it did not like the idea of living in a Macedon state as a simple minority. The withdrawal from public life continued when the Albanian community unilaterally declared an independent Albanian state (the Ilirid Republic) in western Albania.³²

Since then, the Macedonian government, now alarmed about the serious situation, has stepped back trying to appease the Albanian community. Restoring certain rights back to this community the Macedonian state has, for example by establishing an all inclusive technocratic government, tried to re include the Albanians into Macedonian affairs. Despite this however there have been limited skirmishes between the Macedonian security forces and the Albanian demonstrators on various occasions, and this proves that the issue remains to be a delicate one.

As in the Kosovo/a case, the Albanian government is a late comer in the issue of the Macedonian Albanians. In addition to the links between the Kosovar and Macedonian Albanians, the cultural and historical differences between the Albanians in Macedonia and Albania proper makes the Macedon Albanians gravitate towards Albania and the vice versa very unlikely. In fact Albania started to express its concerns for the Albanian community in Macedonia very late, only when the Macedonian government initiated the violation of the rights of the Albanians.

Today as its initial negative security perception of the Macedonian government to see the Albanians as a threat to its unity wanes, the Macedonian government more and more tries to accommodate the Albanian community. Despite this fact however, the Albanian community -at least some certain segments of it- does not yet seem ready to settle the issue.³³

The problem here is that the Albanian community in Macedonia regards itself to be closely linked to Kosovo/a, a quasi-mother state. In that case where the outcome of the situation in Kosovo/a is still uncertain with possible spillover effects to Macedonia, it has fallen to Albania, the pseudo-mother state in that case to reconcile the Macedonian Albanians and the Macedonian government.

The Albanians of Macedonia constitute a particular case with two mother states, one quasi and one pseudo. The security perception of the minority is based primarily not on its own existence but on threats to the existence of its quasi-mother state. In that respect the case of the Albanian minority in Macedonia represents the relationship where the security perception of a mother state shapes that of the minority.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Today, as we have seen during the last few years, the Balkans seem to be an area ridden with conflicts. Many, if not all, of these conflicts seem to be of ethnic nature. If the was in Bosnia-Herzegovina with its history of ethnic cleansing, separatism, foreign involvement of neighboring powers and chauvinism could be cited as the most fore coming example to such conflicts, the deteriorating situation in Kosovo/a and also Macedonia should not be forgotten. Increasing tension in Kosovo/a between Albanians and the Serbian government on the one hand and that in Macedonia between the Macedonian government and the large Albanian government seem not only to be closely related but also possess equal importance as issues of extremely high tension with strong likelihood of flare-up. Another potential source of crisis in the southern Balkans, the issue of the Greek minority in Albania continues to deteriorate relations. A little to the north, the situation in Croatia between the Croatian government on the one hand, and the Serbian minority/ the self-declared Krajina Republic, that was seemingly deep-frozen until spring 1995 has once more proven its capacity to take a violent dimension with renewed fighting in the area.

In Northern Balkans, the Magyar community in Transylvania and the Banat of Romania, long restless, but especially so since the coup in Romania against Ceausescu remains a throne in the Hungaro-Romanian relations, to the extent that Romania feeling insecure about its territorial integrity and Hungary feeling uneasy about the future of this vibrant community refrain from developing warm relations needed for regional cooperation and development.

In the southeast of the peninsula, the issue of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace not only continues to be a problematic one, influencing, Turco-Greek relations but also stands yet another a proof as to which extent a minority could negatively deteriorate the course of relations between its mother and host states, increasing mutual feeling of distrust and perceptions of threat.

Also in the southeastern Balkans, the Turks of Bulgaria contribute to the course of Turco-Bulgarian relations in a slightly different manner. The Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria which once upon a time, by late 80's, brought its mother and host states to the brink of a full-scale war, today, occupies a very precarious position. The end of *scientific communism* in Bulgaria brought about few changes to that country, one of which was an *official end* to, and a

denouncement of, the assimilation policy. In return for this, the Turkish community appeared on the political spectrum of Bulgaria, as a community of Bulgarian citizens of Turkish origin. The Turkish government, responded quite positively: together with the Bulgarian government it initiated an *era of friendly relations*, while keeping its distance from the Turkish minority with regards to its political actions in Bulgaria. This process was followed by a stage of *confidence building measures* between the two countries and their armed forces and also *economic cooperation*, involving the private sectors of both countries. In the meantime, the Bulgarian government *gradually* took steps to ameliorate the legal situation of the minority.

Today, by no means, the issue of the Turkish minority is a problem-free one. On the contrary, nationalist circles within the minority such as the Kirdzhali group, which now speaks in favor of a federal solution, thus nurturing the *Cyprus syndrome* in Bulgaria, on the one hand; and certain groups in the Bulgarian public equating wider cultural/political rights for the minority with nothing but treason on the other, are among those that pose possible barriers to an eventual solution of the problem.

An analysis of the past and present situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria should be illuminating especially from the following points of view:

The issue of minorities in the Balkan countries is not likely to be tackled unless both the mother and host states show willingness and political commitment to solve the problem. Such political commitments in turn necessitate and should produce stages of confidence building measures, economic cooperation, rapprochement between the military and political circles.

A solution can not be arrived at until the host states start to regard the minorities as an integral part of their existence. Such an understanding, bringing with itself a gradual granting of cultural and political rights and an amelioration of the political situation, if necessary, should be carried out with caution. Such caution should aim at *graduality*, so as not to scare the public whereby a more speedy process could look to the people as if their government was promoting separatism, *dialogue with the minority* and finally an eye to *marginalize nationalist opposition within the minority and the general public* by following policies to be so devised, making there arguments sound irrelevant to the majority of the population.

Last but not least, it should not be forgotten that each Balkan country, and as well minority has its sui-generis history and, therefore, the Bulgarian case, which is in no way close to perfection given all its shortcomings, should not be treated as a Balkan wide applicable model. On the contrary, the Bulgarian case should be seen as a source of inspiration and a reference point by all these parties, who being aware of new bloodshed aspire for solutions.

CHAPTER I: NOTES

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² Stephen G. Xydis, "**Modern Greek Nationalism**," in Ivo Lederer and Peter F. Sugar, eds., **Nationalism in Eastern Europe**, (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1984), 195-258, and also Kofos. "**Macedonia: National Heritage and National Identity**," in Ivo Lederer and Peter F. Sugar, **op. cit.**, 109.

³ For a wider discussion of the concepts of Meğali Idea and Irredantism, see, John S. Koliopoulos. "**Brigandage and Irredantism in Nineteenth Century Greece**," in Martin Blinkhorn and Thanos Veremis, eds., **op. cit.**, 67-101.

⁴ See, for a previous attempt at classification, Joseph Rotschild. "**East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars**," (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 11-14. However, Rotschild left out Greece in his book and mentioned some sizable minorities with a mother country only tentatively.

⁵ See forthcoming article by Hasan Unal, "**Minorities in the Balkans and Balkan Security**," in **The World Today**.

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