

WEAK STATES AND SECURITY

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by

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ABSTRACT

WEAK STATES AND SECURITY

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Although the weak / failing states have often been described as the single most important problem for the international order since the end of Cold War (F.Fukuyama 2004:92) several dimensions of this phenomenon still remain unexplored. While this phenomenon has been present in the international politics even earlier, only the post Cold War period accentuated its relationship with security issues.

Following the Cold War's "peaceful" period and the bloody 1990s, the Balkan region today represents a mixture of weak states and international protectorates, positioned equally far from failure as from eventual success. This study proposes that there is a strong correlation between the weak state and security issues. By further investigating this kind of relationship it will analyze how state strength impacts security in the post Cold war world. The study will focus on domestic threats to security, concentrating on the Balkans, and in particular, analyzing the range of security problems for Albania and Macedonia. It therefore represents a genuine debate on the security dilemma at the domestic level in the post Cold war environment based on the argument that

internal security issues have gained more importance relative to external threats with the demise of the bipolar international system.

Key words: Weak states, Security, Albania, Macedonia, Security Dilemma, Balkans, EU NATO

ÖZET

ZAYIF DEVLETLER VE GÜVENLİK

RAKİPİ, ALBERT

Doktora, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Hasan Ünal

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Her ne kadar başarısız /zayıf devletler Soğuk Savaşın bitiminden bu yana Uluslararası Düzen açısından öncelikli bir sorun olarak tanımlanıyorsa da, bu konunun hala incelenmeyen boyutları mevcuttur. Bu konu Uluslararası Siyaset çalışmalarında dana önceleri tartışılmış olsa da, Soğuk Savaş sonrası ortamdaki gelişmeler zayıf/başarısız devletlerin güvenlik ile olan ilişkisini daha fazla gözle görünür hale getirmiştir.

Soğuk Savaş döneminin istikrarlı yıllarını ve 1990'lı yılların kanlı geçmişini geride bıraktığımız şu sıralarda Balkanlar bölgesi ne tam anlamıyla başarısız olmuş ne de tam anlamıyla başarı örneği olarak gösterilebilecek zayıf devlet örnekleri ve uluslararası himaye altında tutulan bölgelerden oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışma zayıf devletlerle güvenlik konuları arasında çok güçlü bir ilişki olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

Bu ilişkinin incelenmesi neticesinde devletin gücünün artışı ile güvenlik arasındaki ilişkinin de ortaya çıkartılması amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışma öncelikli olarak güveliğe devletin içinden kaynaklanan tehditler üzerine odaklanacak bu minvalde de genel anlamda Balkanlar bölgesini özel anlamda da Arnavutluk ve Makedonya örneklerini inceleyecektir. Soğuk Savaşın bitimiyle beraber devlet içi güvenlik sorunlarının devlet dışı güvenlik sorunlarına göre daha fazla önemli olmaya başlamasının ışığında bu çalışma genel olarak devlet içi düzeyde yaşanan güvenlik açmazları üzerine detaylı bir tartışma yapmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Zayıf Devletler, güvenlik, Arnavutluk, Makedonya, Güvenlik Açmazı, Balkanlar, Avrupa Birliği, NATO

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE ARGUMENT

1.1 THE CONTEXT

The Cold war period brought about a peaceful period in the Balkans. While this peace was significant from the perspective of an absence of local conflict, it was not self-sustained from a regional perspective. It was the nature of the international system at the time that “dictated” peace in the region, and not the evolution of a local regional system that made conflict irrelevant as it happened in Western Europe with the European Union. However, the forty years of peace in the Balkans were quite significant when considering the fact that since their creation, Balkan states had quarreled violently over a myriad of ethnic, religious or territorial issues.

The conflicts that occurred after the creation of Balkan states have been significant enough to warrant the attention of Great Powers, and international scholars.¹ Relative to other regions, the effects of Cold war peace on the Balkan region were

¹ For example, an International Commission was set up to investigate the massacres of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). See, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Report of 1913. Almost a century later another Commission was established to investigate the security situation after the disintegration of Yugoslav federation and very recently the third International Commission on the Balkans published a new report. See *The Balkans in Europe's Future*, International Commission on the Balkans, April 2005.

obvious. With the single exception of the Greek Civil War that ended in 1949 and in which Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and to a certain extent, Albania, were involved,² for almost fifty years the region was free of bloody conflict. The “national questions” that had immersed the Balkan peoples for so long in bloody struggles,³ were frozen due to the nature of the international system at the time—that is the bipolar balance of power resulting from East-West rivalry. On the other hand, many other regions experienced bloody conflicts during the Cold war. They resulted from the state building processes that were occurring throughout the post-colonial world but, more often than not, they were a result of superpower rivalry that tended to become “hot” in these peripheral states. However, the Balkans was a relatively dangerous area for the two superpowers to “allow local conflicts” in. In this context, the Balkans “enjoy” a specific characteristic that sets them apart from many other regions. Its political map resembles the “leopard's pelt”⁴ due to the incredibly rich ethnic mix of the various ethnic groups that inhabit the peninsula. Any local conflict within a state or between two states could escalate easily into a regional war. Given the clear division of the Balkans into two opposite camps, with Greece and Turkey being in the Western camp, a regional war may well have escalated into a conflict between the two rival camps.

The dangers of a possible superpower clash in the Balkans were exacerbated due to the fact that, historically, the Balkans have been located in the borders of great empires.

² Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania helped the Greek “democratic army” forces of ELAS with supplies, and in the case of Albania, bases within its territorial borders. The UN General Assembly condemned this help and called on the three nations to discontinue it.

³ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Report. According to the report, Balkan conflicts are not characterized simply by clashes between regular armies but between whole populations.

⁴ Quoted from Pedrag Simic, “Do the Balkans exist?” In Pedrag Simic, ed, *EU, NATO and Southern Europe*, (Belgrade- Institute of International Politics and Economics and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2002) :p.57.

This is not true for most other peripheral regions. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the peoples of the region won their independence from the old empires, the region remained as the nearest periphery of the Great Powers that shaped the nature of the international system. The region remained *in between* the European powers and Russia. This *in between* position remained valid after World War Two, as the international system was sliding quickly towards bipolarity. The famous "division percentage"⁵ of states in zones of influence in the Moscow Conference in October 1944, confirmed the strategic importance of this periphery. Traian Stoianovich writes that, "no region is fully open or fully closed to the rest of the world"⁶. A mathematical division of the Balkans between East and West carried with it the real possibility that local conflicts could spread into a "nightmare scenario" of a war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

The sensitivity of the two superpowers on the dangers of possible conflict in the Balkans became evident during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the first and last Cold war battlefield in the region. US intervention in this conflict occurred due to the conviction that the Soviet threat was not limited to Greece but constituted serious implications for Turkey and indeed for Western European Security generally.⁷ As a matter of fact, there are indications that Stalin himself applied pressure on Yugoslavia to cease its aid for the Greek communist forces of ELAS/EAM, due to the fear that a local

⁵ Stalin and Churchill agreed to the following distribution of great power influence in the Balkan States: 10 per cent Russian in Greece, 50 percent in Yugoslavia and Hungary, 75 per cent in Bulgaria and 90 per cent in Rumania, 90 per cent British (in accord with United States) in Greece, 50 per cent in Yugoslavia and Hungary, 25 per cent in Bulgaria and 10 per cent in Rumania see L.S. Stavrianos *The Balkans since 1453* (London-Hurst and Company, 2000), p.67.

⁶ Traian Stoianovich, "A dialogic Introduction", In L.S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, (London- Hurst and Company, 2000.), p.7

⁷ John S. Kollipoulos and Thanos M. Veremis, *Greece: The Modern Sequel From 1831 to the Present*. (London-Hurst & Company, London 2002), p.295

conflagration in the Balkans had potentially explosive effects for the tense peace that was uneasily settling between the Eastern and Western camps.

From the viewpoint of security, the effects of the Cold war on the Balkans were two fold. First, the Cold war imposed peace, or at least, it did not allow conflicts *between states* in the region of the Balkans, for a relatively long period of time. More than a sustainable peace, the Cold war froze any possible Balkan conflicts, and, in so doing, also froze the process of searching for solutions to the "unsolved" national issues.⁸ It is important that we underline that irrespective of the fact that the Cold war did impose a "kind of peace," it did not necessarily produce, for all the Balkan countries, cooperation and communication. For instance, in the case of Albania, the order provided by the Cold war was a negative peace. In other words, whilst between the units (the republics), within the Yugoslav Federation, the Cold war produced cooperation and national ties, in the case of Albania, the Cold war produced only total isolation. Beginning in 1948 with the Cominform denunciation of Yugoslavia and culminating with the break with the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin, Albania had practically no ties with other Balkan nations. Second, apart from peace between the states in the Balkans, the Cold war imposed peace and order within these states. By propping up states or regimes that may have otherwise had difficulty in maintaining the monopoly over the means of violence, the two antagonistic camps moved Balkan societies even further from the Hobbesian state of nature than they would have otherwise been. Since any internal conflict could have led to

⁸ Almost all the Balkan peoples were displeased with the post WWI peace agreements. Apart from the Albanians, whose territories on which they lived, were left outside of the borders of the state that was internationally recognized, both the Serbs and the Macedonians also claimed that there is a Serbian/Macedonian national issue still waiting to be solved.

a regional conflict and thus an East-West escalation, all the powers concerned made certain that they did not pour fuel on the Balkan fire.

During the Cold war, the security concerns for all the Balkan countries were both international and domestic. The external security threat was the foreign enemy, in other words, the imperialist world – and in the case of Albania, in the vernacular of Enver Hoxha, there was also the revisionist world headed by Soviet social imperialism and its supporters. The domestic security threats were the internal ideological or class “enemies,” of the party where “the party” stood for the regime, the state and the people.

Within this strategic thinking of security, a number of states that could have otherwise fallen pray to external aggression or internal implosion survived successfully.. From an external perspective, as James Dobbins has argued, during the Cold war, the United States and Soviet Union each- and in some cases, both- propped up a number of weak states for geopolitical reasons. But with the disappearance of the Soviet Union, Moscow lost its capability and Washington its geopolitical rationale for sustaining such regimes.⁹ On the other hand, internally these states were propped up by powerful organizing ideologies and extensive security apparatuses that were justified by the needs of the Cold war.

To sum up, the end of the Cold war removed the “*defensive shell*” that provided security for the region for forty years in terms of the conflict *between states*. This

⁹ James Dobbins , *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA; Rand Corporation,2003), p.xiv.

historical moment posed the challenge of reformulating security policies: How each country individually, and, the region as a whole, would integrate into the new international security system. At the same time, the end of the East-West conflict was accompanied by the collapse of communism as the organizing ideology of a number of states including Balkans ones. In practical terms, this meant the end of a regime of terror which was the fundamental instrument that had maintained the domestic order. This also signified that in the post Cold war environment, the former communist states were not *free of domestic conflict*.

Immediately after the end of the Cold war, it became clear that the remaking of the Balkan States could be based on the principles of liberal democracy since many scholars saw the end of the Cold war as the triumph of the liberal philosophy. But, in terms of internal security, the triumph of liberal democracy would require a new type of thinking for providing internal stability without the extensive means of coercion available in communism. In this context, the traditional analysis of the range of security problems as a review of threats from abroad or, in other words, a review of the security dilemma at international level does not suffice. In the past, the security agenda in the Balkans was conceived only in terms of interstate relations because there were a number of serious interstate conflicts that remained unsolved. But, this conceptualization may have often acted as a self-fulfilling prophecy with states breaking the precarious regional balance of power in the hope of gaining comparative advantage over their neighbors. Yet, in the post Cold war world practically all the conflicts that took place in the Balkans were intrastate ones. Even after the "Wars of Yugoslav Succession", the security agenda of Southeastern

Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century remains radically different.¹⁰ Moreover, this security agenda dominated essentially by domestic threats was not just a Balkan phenomenon. As Georg Sorensen points out, since the end of the Cold war there have been very few interstate wars. Instead, domestic conflict (intrastate conflict) is sharply increasing in very weak states.¹¹ Other authors also argue that today's security issues are related to the nature of individual states.¹² This study proposes that there is a strong correlation between the weak state and security issues and it will investigate that relationship in order to find out how state strength impacts security in the post Cold war world. The study will focus on domestic threats to security, concentrating on the Balkans, and in particular, analyzing the range of security problems for Albania and Macedonia. In other words, this thesis aims at discussing the security dilemma at the domestic level in the post Cold war environment based on the argument that internal security issues have gained more importance relative to external threats with the demise of the bipolar international system.

1.2 THE SECURITY DILEMMA AT THE DOMESTIC LEVEL

Generally speaking, is it sufficient to study the range of security issues of a state by merely analyzing the security dilemma at the international level? More specifically, can a clear and final tableau of the security concerns of Albania and Macedonia in the first post Cold war decade be formed merely by studying the external security threats which arise from the relations these states have with other countries?

¹⁰ Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver, *Regions and Powers, The structure of International Security* (Cambridge-University Press, 2003), p.384

¹¹ George Sorenson, *The transformation of the state Beyond the Myth of Retreat* (London - Palgrave 2004), p.xiv

¹² Buzan and Weaver, p. 385

Traditionally, the security/insecurity of a state has been gauged by studying the threats from abroad to a given state. However, while the national security of both states was threatened – Albania in 1997 and Macedonia in 2001- the threat was not external. In short, in what circumstances was the national security of the two countries seriously put in peril, if not as a result of outsiders' actions? What conditions led to the creation of a security dilemma at domestic level? In essence, the post communist systems are marked by constant conflict over the most basic criteria of how power is to be legitimate, distributed, applied and generated.¹³

Theoretically speaking, is there any such thing as a security dilemma in the domestic realm? A number of authors argue that with the end of the Cold war the security dilemma has been adapted from its applications in international relations to explain rivalries in domestic politics.¹⁴ The concept of Security Dilemma was first introduced by John Hertz (1950). The efforts of states to enhance their security may guarantee greater defense (protection), but in the conditions of the existence of international anarchy, the upgrading of security measures for a state could lead to a growth of insecurity for other states. Hence, in a self-help system, the upgrading of security in any given state, inevitably leads to a growth of insecurity for other states.

¹³ George Schopflin, *Nations, Identity, Power, the New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 174.

¹⁴ See for example Nelson Kasfir "Domestic Anarchy, Security Dilemmas and Violent Predation" in Rotberg Rotberg, ed. *When States fail causes and consequences* (Princeton -University Press 2004), pp.54-76. See also Barry Posen "The security Dilemma and ethnic conflict" in Michael Brown, ed, *Ethnic conflict and International security* (Princeton, - University Press, 1993), pp. 103-24.

According to George Sorensen,¹⁵ John Hertz's reasoning is directly related to a way of thinking about national security that goes back to Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes' account of security is essentially that of personal, individual security. Hobbes argues as to what life would be without the existence of the state, using the abstraction "state of nature." Since people are self-regarding and egoistic, the set of relations between people in the state of nature is anarchical. According to Hobbes in the "state of nature," there is no security for human beings, but only a permanent insecurity, a "state of war" of every man against every man."(1946)

As the only solution to salvation from the "every man against every man" situation, Hobbes proposes the creation of a sovereign state. With the creation of the state, Hobbes maintains, there is no more domestic anarchy, and if we were to use John Hertz's concept, the security dilemma is valid only at the international level and is connected to relations between states.

The Hobbesian account of security is closely related to the existence of the state. The state is supposed to provide protection for the population from within and from outside. Based on the reasoning of Hobbes, without the creation of a sovereign state there is no security and protection for the population as regards external and internal threats. But is it inevitable that with the creation of the state and the establishment of a central authority, order and security are installed in the domestic realm?

¹⁵ Sorensen,p.75.

Hobbes' reasoning, according to which domestic anarchy can be eliminated immediately after the creation of a sovereign state, is challenged by a number of scholars. There is no reason to believe that the recognition of a sovereign state in the international system will solve forever the issues of domestic anarchy. In fact, precisely because the international system does not easily recognize the collapse or fragmentization of states, they tend to keep on-going even when they cannot guarantee domestic order. This problem has been coined, "the Hobbesian paradox" or "Hobbes' dilemma."¹⁶ Hence, beside the classical Hertz-Hobbesian security dilemma which exists at the international level, there is another security dilemma at the domestic level.

According to the realist account of international relations theory, the security dilemma evolved simply as an outcome of the international anarchy in conditions of the lack of international government. In the case of weak / failed/ collapsed states, domestic anarchy either prevails or is a serious and constant threat. And, when states break down, the notion of anarchy can be applied in the same manner as in interstate relations.¹⁷

According to Sorensen the actual shape of the security dilemma is directly related to the domestic structures of the states. It cannot merely be assumed, as Hobbes did, that states provide political goods for their citizens.¹⁸

¹⁶ Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 82.

¹⁷ Nelson Kasfir "Domestic Anarchy, Security Dilemmas and Violent Predation" in Rotberg, ed. *When States fail causes and consequences*, (Princeton -University Press 2004), p. 56.

¹⁸ See Bary Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 12.

In realist IR theory, states are characterized in terms of power and traditionally the concept of power has been closely related to the phenomenon of war. In theoretical and practical literature, the problem of war in itself has been characterized essentially as a Great Power phenomenon. But according to Kalevi Holsti, war in the second half of the twentieth century has not been predominantly a great power activity. Most wars, since 1945 have occurred in the Middle East, Africa, Central America, South Asia and South East Asia and more recently in the Balkans. So he proposes that to study war, the focus will have to be on states other than the "powers."¹⁹

To put it differently, while the security dilemma at international level is dependent on the power of the state vis-à-vis other contenders for power, the security dilemma at domestic level is dependent on the strength/weakness of the state in the domestic realm.

For our analysis, state strength is not measured in terms of military capability. In order to define the state strength we used the Kalevi Holsti definition based on Max Weber concept:

'The state strength can be measured in the capacity of the state to command loyalty-the right to rule-extract the resources necessary to rule and provide services, to maintain the essential element of sovereignty. A monopoly over the legitimate use of force within defined territorial limits, and to operate within the context of a consensus-based political community.'²⁰

¹⁹ Holsti, p.82.

²⁰ Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.83.

Further, in order to understand and explain the security dilemma at the domestic level, Barry Buzan invites us to investigate the strength/weakness of state, proposing as the central variable: the strong/weak states.²¹

1.3 THE THESIS: THE WEAK STATES AS THE MAIN SECURITY THREAT

This study will argue that in the post cold war environment, the main threat to Albanian and Macedonian national security is the *weak state phenomenon*. The analysis from this perspective of the security *problematique* for both countries, will allow us to make some modest generalizations about the correlations between weak states and security.

Weak states are not a new phenomenon in the arena of international politics. They have been part of major historical turning points in history as, for example, during the process of decolonization. After the demise of the Cold war, weak states have become a common phenomenon in post-conflict situations such as in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslav Federation.

Traditionally, the weak/ failed state phenomenon has not been analyzed from the security perspective. The issue of failed states presented itself forcefully on the international agenda with the collapse of Somalia's central government in January 1991.

²¹ Buzan and Waever, p. 34.

Yet, Somalia- and subsequent crisis in Haiti, Zaire Cambodia, East Timor, Sierra Leone - was at that time primarily seen as a humanitarian and /moral problem in the western world.²² However post Cold war developments suggest that weak/failed/ collapsed states are presenting a serious security threat not only to national security but also to regional and international level as well. According to Francis Fukuyama, since the end of the Cold war, weak and failing states have arguably become the single most important problem for *international order*²³. The tragic events of September the eleventh 2001 marked the turning point on the debate on weak/failing states both at the academic and policymakers level. Before September 11 attacks, U.S policymakers viewed states with sovereignty deficit exclusively through a humanitarian lens.²⁴ While the theoretical debate on the security problematic reestablished the state at the center of the debate, the discourse at the policy makers level suggested the need to revise the strategic thinking and planning to face this new security threat, namely weak or failing states. Therefore, the American administration introduced a new National Security Strategy with completely new strategic vision:

For most of the twentieth century the world was divided by a great struggle over ideas: destructive totalitarian visions versus freedom and equality. That great struggle is over. America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones²⁵

²² Louise Andersen *International Engagement in Failed States Choices and Trade-offs* (Danish Institute of International Studies ,(2005),p.13.

²³ Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and world order in the 21 st Century* (Ithaca,N.Y - Cornell University Press, 2004),p.92.

²⁴ Stewart Patrick "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?" *Washington Quarterly*(Spring 2006):p.27.

²⁵ "National Security Strategy of the United States , 2002, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss1.html>.

Stewart Patrick argues that this new preoccupation with weak states is not limited to the United States. In the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit has advocated a government-wide approach to stabilizing fragile countries and Canada and Australia are following suit. The United Nations have been similarly engaged: the unifying theme of last year's proposal for UN reform was the need for effective sovereign states to deal with today's global security agenda.²⁶

Especially since the Kosovo war, the Balkan security agenda was dominated both at theoretical and practical level by state building issues. A decade after the Dayton Agreement, and five years after the fall of the Milosevic regime in Belgrade, the Balkan region is as close to failure as it is to success. For the moment, the wars are over, but the smell of violence still hangs heavy in the air. The region's profile is bleak- a mixture of weak states and international protectorates.²⁷

Generally speaking the transitions of Eastern European states in general and those of the Balkans in particular, from totalitarian and autocratic regimes towards democratic ones have been considered to be largely unsuccessful. The reasons can be found in the phenomenon of weak states. With few exceptions, the process of transition was conceived simply as the demolition of the former system, while the challenge of creating new political institutions based on liberal democracy was hampered by weak and weakening state institutions.

²⁶ Stewart Patrick "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?" *Washington Quarterly* (Spring 2006): p.28.

²⁷ Ivan Krastev *The Balkans in Europe's Future, International Commission on the Balkans* (Sofia- Center for Liberal Strategies, 2005),p.24

The challenge to stability in the Balkans comes from the presence of a chain of weak states in the region. Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina can be classified as 'weak states'. If we define state-building as the creation of new government institutions and the strengthening of existing ones,²⁸ the Balkan states are weak as the state-building process is still under way. For example, this process in Macedonia is based on the new Ohrid Agreement²⁹ between the Albanians and the Macedonians. Its population being ethnically mixed, Macedonia has to prove that it can ignore the old temptation to build a state based on the idea of ethnicity.

In 2003 Serbia and Montenegro, with EU mediation, signed an agreement to completely revise the relations between the two constitutive units of the ex-Yugoslav federation. In the meantime, both of these units embarked on a process of internal state building which lead three years later to their separation from each other³⁰. Albania, after a number of internal challenges such as the 1997 implosion when almost all state institutions ceased to exist, has started the difficult process of rebuilding these institutions. Finally, in Kosovo the state-building process and the buildup of institutions are on-going regardless of its final status.

²⁸ Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and world order in the 21 st Century* (Ithaca, N.Y. - Cornell University Press, 2004), p.17.

²⁹ On August 13, 2001, the Macedonian and Albanian political leaderships signed the Ohrid Agreement - a political agreement that ended the Albanian armed insurrection in FYROM. For more details regarding the Agreement, see: "Macedonia: War on Hold", International Crisis Group, August 15, 2001, <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects>.

³⁰ The 21st May, 2006 referendum in Montenegro where a majority voted for the independence of the youngest Balkan country broke up the Union of Serbia and Montenegro.

The strengthening of these states is dependent on the success of the state-building processes. Furthermore, the Balkan states are moving slowly towards regional and European integration. Thus, the processes that these states are working on are threefold: state building process, regional integration, and European integration. While the state-building and regional-integration processes are vital for the integration of the Balkans with the EU, these processes are happening simultaneously rather than consecutively.

Two dilemmas arise from these challenges: First, will the states of the region be able to move away from the European state-building model according to which “war makes states”?³¹ Second, will the Balkan states be able to cope with the challenges of regional and European integration? We must not forget that while the integration of the Western European countries emerged from the economic and political needs of these states, in the Balkans regional integration is simply offered as a model from outside.

The following study is an attempt to research the weak state phenomenon, especially as it has been developing in the Balkans. This phenomenon cannot be studied independently of the variables that influence it. The identification of the root-causes that bring about the “weak state phenomenon” will serve as the basis for following the security dynamics in the region. The study will analyze the relations between the “weak state” concept and intra state conflict. Furthermore, the study will focus on the potential implications of this phenomenon for regional and European security.

³¹ Charles Tilly, *War Making and State -Making*, (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1978), p.68.

1.4. THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The first part of this study focuses on the creation of a theoretical framework for studying the weak state phenomenon and the relationship between weak states and the security problematique on the regional and international systems. Very often, the realist thinkers of international relations have used the weak state concept in order to define the power of one state vis-à-vis another state. Generally, for all traditional theories of international relations, the unifying characteristic of all weak states is the absence of power or strength. For example, Michael Handel has adopted a systemic approach by using the term “weak state” to refer to state power and behavior in the international system, looking at power-state relations through an international perspective. Marshall Singer has also focused on the dynamics of changing relationships between weak and powerful states. However, Singer says, “the power dynamics operate in all relationships, whether among individuals groups, or states”.³² On the other hand, Barry Buzan and John Migdal have studied the power dynamics within the state—that is the relationship of individual groups or the whole society to the state. In these two studies, the semantics “strong/weak wtate” refers to the dynamics of power-state relations in the domestic environment.

However, for the purposes of this study, we are interested in determining a state’s strength only from a domestic perspective. Further, from the perspective of the international system, the first part of the essay will answer the question: why have weak

³² Marshall Singer, *Weak States in a World of Powers: the Dynamics of International Relationships*, (London-The Free Press, 1972), p.3.

states become a source of regional or even global instability in the post Cold war environment?

In the second part, this theoretical perspective on weak states and security will be applied to the case studies of Albania and FYROM, respectively in the fourth and the fifth chapters of the second part. The fall of the communist regime in both countries propelled the state building process into a new phase, completely different from its dynamics in the communist period.

Five years after the fall of communism, when Albania was seen as making progress with institution building and reforms in the economic and political fields designed to achieve the two-fold transformation towards liberal democracy and market economy, in 1997 this small Balkan country was turned into an international protectorate. As a result of the chaos following the fall of the pyramid schemes, the Albanian authorities by their free will invited a multinational force to restore law and order in their country. State institutions collapsed under entirely domestic pressures. What were the reasons for the complete loss of security and the transformation of society into the Hobbesian “state of nature”?

On the other hand, Macedonia, which for almost a decade was regarded as the most successful model of a multi-ethnic state in the Balkans, in 2001 was ravaged by internal turmoil, which threatened to become a civil war, raising serious question marks

for the very existence of the state. Yet, no external threat sources were identified during that conflict.

The identification of threats *from within* both in Albania and Macedonia will be analyzed through the state building process that both countries are going through after the fall of the old communist regime. These two chapters are preceded by a review of the historical context that has influenced the weakness of these states from the internal perspective. This review of the historical context and of current developments during the first decade after the Cold war constitutes the third chapter.

The choice of Macedonia and of Albania to study the correlation of the weak state with on the security problematique is not a coincidence. Whilst Macedonia presents a case of a multi-ethnic state, Albania is almost a mono ethnic state.³³ Or, to put it differently, state weakness in Macedonia flows from its multi-ethnic make up while in Albania it has nothing to do with ethnicity. The analysis of the phenomenon of the weak state and of security/insecurity in the two states with different ethnical compositions will allow us to make useful theoretical generalizations about the impact of weak states on international relations.

Part three of the study endeavors to reply to the question: how can state weakness be overcome? This is one of the fundamental questions in the study of security problems, not only at domestic, but also regional and international levels, with which the thinkers of

³³ According to the latest census, 1989, the ethnic minorities in Albania constitute no more than 2 per cent.

international relations and policy oriented researchers are coming up against on the theoretical as well as practical levels.

Although this study makes an analysis of the security dilemma at the domestic level through the weak state perspective, it is necessary to also take into account the interplay between domestic and international levels—by no means an easy task since there are no clear divisions between the international and domestic realms. The impact of outside interventions on Balkan developments in the last sixteen years has been such that it has shaped the very institutional fabric of the new and old states in the region. Barry Buzan and Ole Waever argue that the interplay between domestic and international factors will determine the future of international protectorates in Bosnia and Kosovo and international involvement in Macedonia.³⁴

Based on these concepts, the sixth chapter of the study analyzes the foreign policy account of weak states. The research on weak states foreign policy will facilitate the discussion of the role which international institutions could play in order to mitigate the negative effects of state weakness.

Since the League of Nations, the weak state phenomenon has coexisted with great power interference in the security dilemmas created by the existence of such states. After the end of the cold war, the return of this phenomenon has been accompanied by the reactive policies of the international community. Thus, the seventh chapter of this study

³⁴ Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.12.

will look at the role the international community has played in assisting the state building process in weak states. This role will be studied from the point of view of the two institutions that have been most deeply engaged in the Balkan region, namely the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

CHAPTER 2

WEAK STATES AND SECURITY: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

There is much confusion on the separation between the concepts “weak state” and “strong state”. Thus, any mention of Milosevic’s Yugoslavia or Hitler’s Germany as weak states will be vehemently rejected by human rights workers and even by liberals who understand the term “strong state” to mean a state with, at the very least, a dominant coercive apparatus. Such perceptions are understandable if we keep in mind that a liberal democratic state is, by definition, “weak”: preservation of a sphere of individual rights means a sharp delimitation of its power.³⁵

Many people may be surprised to hear that “China is a weak state” and “Luxembourg is a strong state”. Milosevic’s Serbia was a weak state while modern Slovenia is a strong state. Enver Hoxha’s Albania and Ceausescu’s Romania were weak states and so are modern Albania and Romania. Switzerland and the United States of America (USA) are strong states. Macedonia is a weak state. At a first glance, it appears that these categorizations are based on a comparative logic of one state vis-à-vis another.

³⁵ Francis Fukuyama, *The end of History and the Last Man*, (New York : Avvon Books Inc., 1992.), p. 15.

Thus, China is compared to Luxembourg and according to our statement China, one of the world's stronger powers (according to variables such as population, territory, and relative economic and military power) is a weak state while Luxembourg, a little "village" (in terms of size, population etc.) is a strong state.

Clearly, the above statements contain a power relationship. Michael Handel (1990) Barry Buzan (1991) Marshall Singer (1972) and Joel Migdal (1972)- just to mention a few authors – speak of weak states and power state relations. However, despite the fact that they all use the same definition for the term "weak state" and they all base their analysis on the power/state relation rapport, they do not analyze the same phenomenon. For all of the above authors, and more generally for all traditional theories of international relations, the unifying characteristic of all weak states is the absence of power or strength. For example, Michael Handel has adopted a systemic approach by using the term "weak state" to refer to state power and behavior in the international system, looking at power state relations through an international perspective. Marshall Singer has also focused on the dynamics of changing relationships between weak and powerful states. However, Singer says, "the power dynamics operate in all relationships, whether among individuals groups, or states".³⁶ On the other hand, Barry Buzan and John Migdal have studied the power dynamics within the state that is the relationship of individual groups or the whole society with the state. In these two studies, the semantics "Strong/weak State" refers to the dynamics of power-state relations in the domestic environment.

³⁶ Marshall Singer *Weak States in a World of Powers: the Dynamics of International Relationships*, New York: The Free Press, 1972), p.3.

Thus, if we return to our previous assertion that Albania is a weak state while Luxembourg is a strong state, the degree of strength in both states has been determined from the domestic perspective. On the other hand, from the international perspective, both states are weak since they possess none of the requirements of power projection necessary to show one's strength. However, for the purposes of this study, we are interested in determining a state's strength only from a domestic perspective.

According to John Migdal, a state's strength depends "on the capabilities of the state to achieve changes in the society that their leaders have sought through state planning, policies and actions. State strength as be measures not only in terms of state's capability but also in terms of state's willingness. History provides repeated examples of corrupt, incompetent or venal regimes- Zimbabwe today under President Robert Mugabe, for example - that have driven promising countries into the ground"³⁷ Capabilities include the capacities to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources and appropriate or use resources in determined ways."³⁸ From an international perspective, the term "weak state" sometimes has been used to convey the low economic and military capabilities of a given state vis-à-vis other states.

In order to clarify the concept of weak states from a domestic perspective, Barry Buzan emphasizes the fundamental difference between weak and strong states and weak and strong powers. According to him, the terms "weak" or "strong" states refer to the degree of socio-political cohesion; weak and strong power will refer to the traditional distinction among states in respect to their military and economic capability in relations to

³⁷ Stewart Patrick "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?" *The Washington Quarterly* 29:2 (2006): p.29

³⁸ Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 67

each other.³⁹ The term "state" will be defined according to Max Weber's notion of the state as an institution - an organization- enforcing regulations, at least in part through a monopoly of violence.⁴⁰ Weber's model's is a matter "of development of certain instrumentalities whose purpose is to make the action of the state effective: bureaucracy, courts, and the military for example. Clearly, the more complex and highly developed these instruments are, the greater the capacity of the state to act on its environment and autonomously impose collective goals distinct from the private goals generated within the social system itself."⁴¹

Methodologically, in defining "weak/strong states" and the effects of state power in security matters we will focus our attention on the type of analysis that Waltz calls *the second image*.⁴² This analysis focuses on the nature of the internal structure of states. Therefore, our outlook will be from the bottom up, which will allow us "to open the box"⁴³-to observe the workings of the state-unit structures.

However, while we look at the capabilities of a certain state or the lack thereof in the domestic realm in order to pinpoint its degree of strength, it is clear that these domestic capabilities are interrelated to the given state's relations with other states and with the international system. In this context, we have to pick the perspective through

³⁹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear- an Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, (London: Pearson Longman, 2004), p.97.

⁴⁰ Migdal, p.72 .

⁴¹ B. Badie and P. Birnbaum, *The Sociology of the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,1983), p.35

⁴² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, (New York- Columbia University Press,1968.), p.74.

⁴³ Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and understanding International Relations*, (Oxford University Press, 1991), p.96.

which we will analyze the weak state phenomenon: the domestic perspective, the international perspective, or a combination of both.

This study will focus on a combined perspective for two reasons. First, a state does not exist independently of the international environment and therefore it is not immune from the events that occur in the international system. Second, the research of weak states is not our aim *per se*. We intend to understand the dynamic of relations between weak states and the security concerns from a domestic and an international perspective. For example, though the main reasons for the failure of the Macedonian and Albanian states are found within the two polities, the regional conflicts have also influenced negatively the state-formation process in these countries. Historically, changes in the international defense environment have affected state structures and effectiveness. According to Michael Dech, as the nation-state grew into a large and intrusive government apparatus, it was required to raise the revenue necessary to support the armed forces by taxing peasants, urban artisans and merchants. The basic assumption is that during the last centuries, the insecurity of the international environment has strengthened modern states by broadening their scope and cohesion.⁴⁴

In order to understand the internal structures of the state we may use Barry Buzan's simple descriptive model, made up of three elements: the idea of the state, the physical base of the state and the institutional expression of the state. According to Buzan, these elements are crucial because they are "distinguishable from each other, and the

⁴⁴ Michael Dech, "War and Strong States, Peace and Weak States", *International Organization*, 64 (2000) : p. 237.

examination of the linkages between them is a fruitful source of insight into the security problematic."⁴⁵

The idea of the State

The physical base of the state _____ The Institutional expression
of the state

Buzan's model gives us all the tools needed to tackle the state-formation process. This multifaceted process combines historical perspectives with the ever-changing dynamics of state and nation relations and the organizing ideologies that have metamorphosed constantly. However, a clearer focus is needed when dealing with the modern failed state problem. Thus, we will have to borrow from Buzan's model those components that have an immediate correlation with state capabilities in the domestic realm.

The second element of Buzan's model, the physical base of the state, does not impact directly on our research object. As we will see, weak states are recognized internationally as sovereign entities.⁴⁶ This means recognition of the state as sovereign over its territory, borders, and population, natural and human resources-all elements that make up the physical base of the state. Since our analysis will focus on states that have obtained international recognition, we will take the variables that make up the physical

⁴⁵ Buzan, p. 65.

⁴⁶ Weak States are internationally recognized. Whereas there are states that are not recognized internationally but they are strong units in terms of functional performance. Northern Cyprus is one such political unit.

base of the state as exogenous. Second, these variables do not enjoy an immediate and direct correlation with the state's relations with its populace, and thus have no impact on a state's weakness or strength. For example, let us consider the variables population size and territorial size. For the purpose of our analysis, the size of the population that is located within a given state is taken as exogenous to the model. The size of populations or territories becomes important if the strength or power of a state is being studied from the international perspective, but not from a domestic perspective. Thus, it is not population or territorial size that make Luxembourg a strong state from the domestic perspective. On the other hand, Russia with a relatively large population and territory continues to exhibit the features of a weak state internally though, from an international perspective, these variables do contribute to Russian strength. When viewed from the domestic perspective, strong states do not have to be large states. But, population and territory become important variables when dealing with states that may be called middle or great powers. Even a state that is weak from the perspective of its domestic capabilities may be included in the group of powers that have an impact on the international system.

In today's increasingly globalized economy, the role of natural resources in the success of a state has greatly decreased. According to Enriques Juan, it is the quality of a nation's resources that facilitates its fast-paced development". Israel is only about 20,000 square kilometers in size and has a population of just 5.7 million. But whereas Israel lacks the oil resources of some of its Arab neighbors, its population publishes ten times more scientific and technical articles per person than the closest runner up does, the United

States, does.⁴⁷ However, the quality of natural or human resources is not a given, constant variable. Why does Israel demonstrate high capabilities to extract resources and to create and mobilize qualified personnel?

We have to observe the internal dynamics of the variable "population" from a qualitative point of view that seems to have an immediate correlation with the security problem. For example, the birthrate in Western European countries does not impact the ability of those states to penetrate society by fulfilling its needs efficiently, or in the law-abiding attitude of their citizens towards state institutions. But, if this is taken as a true proposition, how do we explain the perception that the high birthrate of the Albanian ethnicity in Macedonia has direct effects on the functioning of the Macedonian state and, therefore on its security problems. The high birthrate of Albanians in Macedonia is perceived as a threat to the Macedonian ethnicity that risks becoming a minority in the next decades. The Macedonian State that now is "firmly in the hands" of the Macedonian ethnicity may fall in the "hands of the Albanians". However, this perception does not come simply from the difference between Albanian and Macedonian birthrates, but from the basic principles on which the Macedonian state has been build, or the "organizing ideology of the state" in Buzan's terminology. If the Macedonian State were build on the inclusive principles of citizenship rather than nationality, the high Albanian birthrate would not constitute such a threat.

The territory of a state is a dynamic element as well. The processes of state creation and consolidation have been accompanied with changes in territory. This

⁴⁷ Enriquez Juan, "Too many Flags?", *Foreign Policy*, 116, (1999) : p. 30.

historical process of territorial gains/losses continues but “territorial losses do not necessarily or even usually threaten the state with extinction. Germany, Pakistan Mexico and Poland have all lost substantial areas without disrupting the historical continuity of the state.”⁴⁸ Also, the struggle for territory amongst states, or even the “arbitrary” divisions of land, has not impacted the internal processes of state formation. Ethnic minorities constitute a threat to a state when they engage in separatist movements or agitate for unification with the “mother-country.” Or, territories that have remained outside “the natural geographical borders” of a nation may encourage irredentist politics in the state that considers these territories as its own. This would have a direct impact on the domestic politics of the state unit.

The Balkans is a typical region in this regard, where almost all states have territorial claims towards each other. In this case, the process of state formation may slow down, and the impact on regional security dynamics may be quite extreme.

Thus, we cannot have a thorough understanding of the state formation process in the Balkans without considering the historical baggage of ethnic grievances. However, territorial disputes and minority problems do not have an immediate impact on domestic state capabilities. This is true if we consider the case of Macedonia. While the “state capture” phenomenon is present in Macedonia, it would be wrong to propose that this follows from the rejection of the state by the ethnic Albanian minority. The traditional perspective on the correlation between these two phenomena states that the armed Albanian movement represents an attempt to carve out an ethnic Albanian state out of

⁴⁸ Buzan, p. 92.

Western Macedonia.⁴⁹ Another view states that the Albanians are simply asking for more rights within the framework of the existing Macedonian state.⁵⁰ Then, what are the motives that compel the Albanians, and more generally, an ethnic group within a multiethnic state structure to challenge the state and reaffirm themselves through the use of their own national symbols? On the other hand, it would be illogical to state that the failure of the Albanian state to collect taxes or provide a reliable supply of water and electricity follows from the fact that the state borders do not correspond to the “natural geographical borders” of the Albanian nation. Without ignoring, the historical baggage, contested borders or ethnic grievance the present state form is relevant to understand security issue. In the Balkans the state – form has some parallels with the African situation in that the states are more an arena, for than the agent of, power politics. Elites-being them ethnically pure or not - fight unscrupulously to stay in power irrespective of the ideological transformations necessary.⁵¹

Another component of Buzan’s model, *the idea of the state*, although vitally helpful for classifying a state as weak or strong, has elements within it that are not directly related to the failed state phenomenon. According to Buzan, the two main sources of the idea of the state are to be found in the *nation* and in *organizing ideologies*... the importance of the nation to the idea of the state is hinted at by the term national security

⁴⁹ T. Gocevski *Ethnic Coexistence in the Post Conflict period*, (Skopje - Macedonian Center for Peace and Euro Atlantic Integration, 2003), p.115.

⁵⁰ Peter Atanasov “The Progress of the ‘Ohrid Process’ in Macedonia” in Jean-Jacque de Dardel, Gustav Gustenau and Plamen Pantev, eds, *Post- Conflict Rehabilitation Lessons from South East Europe and Strategic Consequences for the Euro—Atlantic Community*, (Vienna and Sofia, 2006): p. 115.

⁵¹ Barry Buzan and Ole Waver, *Regions and Powers, the Structure of International Security*, (Cambridge University Press, 2003): p.384.

itself. Why national security?⁵² Nations and organizing ideologies have played a vital role in the creation, strengthening and eventual demise of states. However, the influence does not flow one way only. First and foremost, it has been states that have taken a primary role in the creation of nations. Mohammed Ayoob⁵³ says that the early modern European states became states before they became nations. For example, the unification of states such as Germany and Italy in the nineteenth century was achieved through the vital involvement of core states such as Brandenburg-Prussia and Piedmont-Savoy. This relationship is well illustrated by the famous remark of Massimo d'Azeglio on the first séance of the Italian Parliament: "We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians."⁵⁴ Charles Tilly points out that the category of National States has preceded and helped the process of nation-state formation. According to him, the national states are relatively centralized, differentiated, and autonomous organizations successfully claiming priority in the use of force within large contiguous and clearly bounded territories" while nation states are those "whose peoples share a strong linguistic, religious and symbolic identity."⁵⁵

Despite the fact that the dynamic, two-way state-nation relations have given birth to a number of models,⁵⁶ there is no model that takes a strong state from a domestic

⁵² Buzan, and Ole Waver, p. 70.

⁵³ Ayoob, Mohammed, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System*, (Bouller: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p.175.

⁵⁴ E.J Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1990): p.44.

⁵⁵ Charles Tilly, *Coercion Capital and European States: A.D. 990-1990*, (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.43.

⁵⁶ Buzan suggests four models of possible state- nations relationship. First is the primal nation state, exemplified by Hungary, Italy and Japan. The second model has been called the State nations. Here the state plays an instrumental role in creating the nations rather than the other way around. The third model is the part nation - state. This is where a nation is divided up among two or more states. The fourth model can be called the multinational- state and comprises those states which contain two or more substantially complete

perspective as a given. For example, the USA and Nigeria are similar according to the state nation model, but while the USA is a strong state, Nigeria is not. Another example would be Macedonia and Switzerland, similar in the multinational states model, yet worlds apart in terms of domestic capabilities. The former is a typical weak state exhibiting weak institutions and limited capabilities, while the latter is an example of a strong state domestically. Since a relatively large number of strong states belong within the nation-state model - France, Britain Italy, Japan, Hungary etc.- one might suggest that this is the most appropriate model for a strong state. If we consider the efficient penetration of society as a variable, Switzerland, the USA and Belgium also belong within the strong state category despite the fact that they are not nation-states.

Remembering that when Albania was recognized as an independent state in 1913, almost half of Ottoman Albania that coincided with the geographical spread of the Albanian nation remained outside its borders, than Albania belongs to, in the words of Buzan, the part-nation-state category. However, since less than 3 percent of Albanian population is comprised of ethnic minorities, we can consider Albania as a nation-state in its own right.⁵⁷

Thus, one cannot look for the factors that make Albania a weak state within these two models. To sum up, the relations between nation and state have a rich historical tradition that has given rise to a number of models that attempt to explain it. Despite the

nations within their borders. See Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear- an agenda for international security Studies i the Post-Cold War Era*, (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 72-75.

⁵⁷ Theoretically, social divisions in Albania may occur on a religious basis since the population is divided into Muslim, Christian Orthodox, and Catholic. However, in practice Albanians have built their identity around language and not religion. Thus, these divisions are practically non-existent.

dynamic nature of these relationships, in order to identify the causes that lead a state to fail in fulfilling its obligations we will look beyond these models. Thus, these models will be taken as exogenous to our analysis, and Albania's classification as a part-nation-state or Macedonia's as a multinational state will be taken as a given in our search for the factors that lead to a weak state.

Organizing Ideology – historically, organizing ideology, one of the two basic elements of the concept 'state', has played a critical role in the creation, flourishing or ultimate disappearance of states. Organizing ideologies such as liberal democracy, communism, fascism, or religious ideologies such as Islam and Christianity have actively shaped the structures that make up the state. For example, Nazism dictated the change that occurred in the institutions of the German State in the thirties. The state came to resemble a military machine and military and coercive institutions became dominant. This ideology reshaped the mutual relationship between society and state. State bureaucracy seemed to be efficient, and state institutions seemed to enjoy legitimacy, yet within hardly more than a decade the German State was destroyed. On the other hand, communism created a state bureaucracy of another kind⁵⁸ but citizen loyalty to the state was based on terror and fear, not on legitimacy. Both, communist and fascist states seemed to be strong in terms of their presence and penetration in society. This is a special category of weak states: the seemingly strong one, always an autocracy, which rigidly controls dissent and

⁵⁸ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (New York: Avvon Books, Inc., 1992.) p. 16.

is secure but at the same time provides few political goods. In extreme case – such as North Korea, the regimes permits its people to starve⁵⁹

Let us take the example of Albania. Many of the elements that make today's Albania a weak state flow from its communist past. However, Hoxha's state was able to penetrate Albanian society quite effectively. It is also true that in the early years, the regime enjoyed popular legitimacy. As we will see in the following chapters, the communist state had a powerful presence throughout state territory not only through the coercive security apparatus. Even in the most remote areas, together with the police and state security services, the regime built health centers, postal services, schools and cultural centers. The urbanization process was speeded up, which brought about closer relations between different regions of the country. The creation of a unified official language may be interpreted as a forced process that stopped the development of local dialects that may have enriched the language, but it also served as another catalyzer that brought disparate regions closer together and facilitated communication throughout society.

Up to now, there exists no definitive answer for the question of which organizing ideology provides the most help in the strengthening of state capabilities in the domestic realm. However, to analyze the weak state phenomenon, we will choose the liberal democratic framework.

⁵⁹ Rotberg I. Rotberg "The failure and Collapse of Nation-State, Breakdown, Prevention and Repair", in Rotberg I. Rotberg ed, *When States Fail Causes and Consequences*, (Princeton University : 2004),p. 5

Why choose liberal democracy as an organizing ideology? Can a state be classified as strong only if it uses this framework as its organizing principle? Strong European states have not functioned only within this ideological framework. As a matter of fact, often they have used more than one organizing ideology to shape their institutions. Nationalism has been a natural precondition for the establishment of nation states in Europe, the majority of which are considered today to be strong states. Outside the European realm, Saudi Arabia is an example of a strong state that has never been a liberal democracy.

Also, as Francis Fukuyama pointed out, it is possible for a country to be liberal without being particularly democratic, as was the case of eighteenth-century Britain.⁶⁰ However, from a domestic perspective, eighteenth-century Britain may be considered a strong state. As we have already mentioned, totalitarian states too may be considered as strong for at least a time, according to the criteria we have used to define strong states.

Our decision to consider only liberal democracy as an organizing ideology is dictated by the simple fact that the object of our research is the weak state phenomenon in two countries, Albania and Macedonia, that have chosen liberal democracy as their organizing ideology.

The second reason is the model of the state that we will use as a reference point to compare the models that have been built in Albania and Macedonia. Thus, when we say that Switzerland, Luxembourg and the USA are strong states, or Macedonia and Russia are weak states we make this statement only after comparing these states to a particular

⁶⁰ Fukuyama, p. 34

model. This model is the liberal democratic state. As time passes by "sovereign states share many characteristics in common and over time they become more and more alike..."⁶¹ Karl Marx ventured that backward states saw the image of their future in more developed capitalist states. Also, liberal modernization theorists such as Walt W. Rostov expect states to end up at the same level of development, sharing the same characteristics, once they have passed through the stages of growth.⁶²

From this point of view, all the strong Western European states are also similar. In the last fifty years, all these states have organized their institutions according to the liberal democratic framework. After a decade of strife, Balkan states are trying to function within this very ideology as well. Lately, even in Afghanistan attempts are being made to build a state on more or less liberal principles. This model is being offered to governing elites everywhere as the only way to gain real legitimacy through the electoral process and the free vote. Consequently, the theoretical ground that has been chosen in this essay in order to analyze the weak state phenomenon and security problematic is liberalism.

2.2 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

There are no widely accepted definitions of the concepts 'weak states' and 'failed states'. However, as we have already discussed, the way to go the heart of the problem is by analyzing the domestic perspective. The degree of strength of a state will be measured in terms of its domestic capabilities - not in terms of its strength vis-à-vis other contenders

⁶¹Georg Sorenson, "States are not 'like units': Types of State and Forms of Anarchy in the Present International System," *Journal of political Philosophy*, Vol 6,(1998): p.79.

⁶² Sorenson, p.82.

of power.⁶³ Within the domestic perspective, the problem will be analyzed in terms of capacity to command loyalty- the right to rule- to extract resources necessary to rule and provide services, to maintain that essential element of sovereignty, a monopoly over the legitimate use of force within defined territorial limits, and to operate within the context of a consensus based political community.⁶⁴ If we accept that "nation states exist to deliver political goods"⁶⁵ to their citizens, than their weakness varies according to the relative capacities of the state to provide these public goods. Although empiricism does not allow us to define clearly the terms according to which a state may be classified as "weak", we can identify three types of states that fail to provide public goods efficiently and satisfactorily: weak states, failed states and collapsed states.

According to Robert Rot berg, the collapsed state is easily identifiable as an extreme version of a failed state. It has a total vacuum of authority.⁶⁶ As the capacity to provide public goods is a matter of degree, than the scale of power on the domestic realm becomes an essential element to define the concept of weak states. In these terms, a collapsed state exists in a *de jure* clearly defined sovereign territory where there is a complete vacuum of central power and, *de facto*, no functioning government or central state institutions in place. The order that prevails is the rule of guns. From the point of view of the existence of a central authority, a failed state possesses two, or more, *de facto*

⁶³ Michael Stohl and George Lopez, *Westphalia, the End of the Cold War and the New World Order: Old Roots to a "New" Problem*, at http://www.ippu.purdue.edu/failed_states/1998/papers.

⁶⁴ Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.), p.72.

⁶⁵ Security, education, health services, economic opportunity, environmental surveillance, a legal framework of order and a judicial system to administer it, and fundamental infrastructural requirements such as roads and communications facilities See Robert I. Rotberg, "The New Nature of Nation-State Failure", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Summer 2002): pp. 85-96.

⁶⁶ Rorberg , p. 90.

governments. One government is recognized internationally, but it has lost all domestic legitimacy. In these conditions, other ethnic, religious or other groups set up parallel structures that control *de facto* part of the territory or take over many of the duties and responsibilities of the *de jure* government.

From the point of view of "authority", a state may be considered a "failed state" even when there is only one central government. In this case, "authority" does not provide a good enough yardstick. In this case, we will use the capacity to provide political goods as the necessary yardstick. A failed state and a collapsed state are concepts that are very close to each other. According to Robert Jackson, "a failed or collapsed state would be indistinguishable from the state of nature" in which anarchy is way of life By failed states- Jackson says- I shall be referring exclusively to states which cannot or will not safeguard minimal *civil* conditions, i.e. peace, order, security, etc. domestically.⁶⁷

According to Robert Rot berg, failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and bitterly contested by warring factions. In failed states, government troops often battle armed revolts led by one or more rivals. Other features that characterize failed states are the loss of control over their territories, extreme levels of crime, physical violence and corruption. From the point of view of delivery, failed states are completely unable to provide public goods.

⁶⁷ Robert Jackson, *Surrogate Sovereignty? Great Power Responsibility and "Failed States"*, (Institute of International Relations, The University of British Columbia November 1998,), p.35.

On the other hand, while weak states are clearly differentiable from collapsed state, they are similar to failed states. It is entirely possible, but not unavoidable, for a weak state to degenerate into a failed state. For example, Albania and Macedonia may be classified as weak states in the sense that they have proved incapable to provide an acceptable amount of public goods. However, while Albania did degenerate once into a "collapsed state" during the 1997 crisis, Macedonia has never slid into a "failed" or "collapsed" state condition.

From the point of view of authority, weak states have a government in place and, differently from failed states, they are usually quiet. Although tense, the simmering tensions rarely "spill out in the streets" and, when they do, the state takes control of the situation rather quickly. In this context, weak states are quite similar to failed states. The difference is that the degree of weakness is smaller than in failed states. Often, weak states may lose control of part of their territory in times of crises, but they quickly find a "good enough" solution to regain it. This was the case in Albania in 1991 and in Macedonia in 2001. Weak states have very limited capacities, although the degree of weakness does vary from one weak state to another.

For Waltz, states vary only in terms of their status as powers⁶⁸ but states vary also in terms of their degree of socio-political cohesion.⁶⁹ According to Buzan, "when the idea and the institutions of a state are both weak then that state is less of a state than one in

⁶⁸ Waltz, p.113.

⁶⁹ Buzan, p.68.

which the idea and institutions are strong."⁷⁰ More concretely, the strength of a state depends from its capacity to obtain domestic political legitimacy.⁷¹

Consequently, political legitimacy is the main criteria used to define the weak state phenomenon. Any government in any regime needs some kind of legitimacy in order to stay in power and to take actions on behalf of the society. We can observe a number of sources of state legitimacy:

- *Legitimacy through Long practice of Statehood:* Political legitimacy may come from a long practice of statehood. In countries with a long tradition of statehood, states do possess legitimacy. According to Buzan, "the existence of a strong state may simply reflect a long history during which the state had time to consolidate and mature. France and Britain clearly benefit in this way."⁷² Thus, legitimacy pertains to the experience that the people have to get organized in a modern state and to the extent that the state is accepted by its citizens as necessary in order to fulfill their need to be politically and socially organized. In this respect, Balkan states do not enjoy a high degree of legitimacy.⁷³ Historically, Balkan countries were closed agrarian economies with a very limited industrial sector. The low level of economic development meant that it took a relatively long period of time for the idea and need of a state to emerge in the region. In

⁷⁰ Ibid, p.76.

⁷¹ Holsti., p.113.

⁷² Buzan, p.66.

⁷³ There is an ongoing debate among scholars as to why the state developed in Europe as the form of social organization. The modern state emerged in Europe "along with the coming of industry and of complicated commercial arrangements... the modern industry and commerce needed something like the state. See Charles Tilly., *The formation of Nation States in Western Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975.), p.76. See also Phillips Shvely, *Power and Choice*,(McGraw-Hill, Inc, fourth edition 1987),p.135.

the meantime, Western Europe had begun for at least two hundred years to practice liberal ideas in both the social and the economic realm. For most Southeastern European countries, liberal ideas and practices would develop simultaneously with the democratic ones. The idea and the need for a state in Western Europe is more deeply felt as compared to that in societies of Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina etc. After more than 500 years of development, states in industrial societies have become "strong" in the sense that, for the first time in history, they enjoy popular legitimacy.⁷⁴ In the Balkans, as well as in all the third world countries a state tradition is lacking and therefore this could not be the source of legitimacy for the state.

- *Legitimacy by Results:* Another source of legitimacy comes from the success of a particular state in fulfilling its obligations towards its citizens. "A government may gain and retain legitimacy from its people by providing for them the things they most want: security against physical assault, security for their country's borders against invasions, pride in their nation, economic security and so on."⁷⁵ Thus, in the first decade after WWII, communist states did enjoy some legitimacy as a result of the short-term economic results they achieved. In the case of Albania for example, the communist government strengthened its legitimacy by conducting land reform on a massive scale. In a similar fashion, the popularity and legitimacy of the Soviet government increased due to the rapid economic development of Soviet Union in the first decades after WWII. Hitler's Germany in the thirties is another example on how a government attains legitimacy through

⁷⁴ Holsti, p.124.

⁷⁵ See Phillips Shvely, *Power and Choice*, (London : McGraw-Hill Inc., 1987), p.110.

successful economic reforms and development.⁷⁶ After the fall of communism, the states of the Eastern Bloc enjoyed limited short-term legitimacy, but this had nothing to do with the economic results they achieved. Legitimacy by results does not imply simply economic results. John Migdal defines the strength of the state as the capability to implement policies, to penetrate in society and to serve as a regulator.⁷⁷ In fact, this definition coincides with the meaning of the term 'state-making' since this process in Europe was "extracting resources, building institutions, acquiring political legitimacy and deepening and broadening the state's penetration of society".⁷⁸ According to the criteria 'Legitimacy by Results', a number of Balkan countries are weak states because they are unable to implement development policies, to collect taxes, and to achieve for its citizens the basic needs of human security, economic security and social security. Sometimes, Balkan states even lose control of parts of their territories and find themselves unable to control their borders effectively.

- *Legitimacy by Procedures*: Another source of legitimacy is 'legitimacy by procedures'. A state may strengthen its legitimacy by following certain procedures "... in which many people have confidence."⁷⁹ In the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Great Powers kept in mind precisely this principle of legitimacy while discussing the peace agreements. The reestablishment of the old monarchical dynasties that had existed before 1789 occurred because of the need of these states for legitimacy. This legitimacy through

⁷⁶ 'What solidified Hitler's hold on Germany and gave him a degree of legitimacy by the end of the 1930s was the results of his early policies. See also Phillips Shvely, *Power and Choice*, (London : McGraw-Hill Inc., 1987), p.120

⁷⁷ John Migdal, *Strong societies and Weak States*, (Princeton: University Press, 1998) , p.156.

⁷⁸ Ayoob , p.231.

⁷⁹ Shvely, p.113.

inheritance depended on a traditional, long-established procedure.⁸⁰ Presently, the legitimacy of modern governments must flow from democratic procedures. If at the present time a number of Balkan countries *are* classified as weak states, the reasons should be sought in the distortions of those democratic procedures that legitimize the state's institutions. A precondition for self-sustainable stability in these countries is the consolidation of democratic procedures to regulate the transfer of power from one political party to another. Yet, in most Balkan countries power has not yet been transferred through free and fair elections. The Macedonian experience, together with the experience of other multiethnic states poses the critical question: is the institution of free and fair elections sufficient in order for the institutions of the state to be legitimate and the state to be strong? By winning the majority in free elections, a certain ethnic group may set up its own state while depriving other ethnic groups from the right to participate in state institutions. The Macedonians tried to cover up the national state they are building ever since their UN membership with the presence of a few Albanian ministers in the cabinet. In the meantime, Albanian presence in the army, police, education, secret service, Foreign Service, etc. is inhibited by the governing ethnic group. The Macedonian example brings to our attention the substantial need for socio-political cohesion in order to build a strong state. If divisive ethnic and national cleavages dominate a society, the gap between society and state will widen and the state will be weakened, particularly if the state itself is not ethnically homogenous.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Until a few years ago, it was generally accepted that political leadership was most properly passed on by inheritance. One king ruled; when he died his heir became the new king. This procedure was so important as a basis of legitimacy that great care was taken to lay out precise rules of inheritance; if no clear heir was available, the result was sometimes civil war. Phillips Shvely, *Power and Choice* (McGraw-Hill Inc., fourth edition 1987), p. 112.

⁸¹ Gartner Heinz, *Small States and Alliances*, (Vienna- Austrian Institute for International Affaires, 2000.), p.118.

- *Legitimacy through International Community:* The international community is another source of legitimacy for weak states. Through programs for economic aid and reforms financed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund or other financial institutions it becomes possible for weak states to achieve positive results.⁸² In the Balkans, the international community serves as a source of legitimacy for weak states also through the special role that institutions such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has taken upon itself. Although OSCE Missions have the status of observer in electoral processes and write reports containing suggestions, it is fair to say that their conclusions are widely accepted as the final say regarding the validity of the elections. Furthermore, in some parts of the region, the international community has assumed a direct responsibility in day-to-day governance. Bosnia and Herzegovina constitutes such an example. Also, Kosovo is another example where the UN administration is responsible for security, defense, border controls, foreign policy etc.

2.3. WEAK STATES AS A THREAT TO REGIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

From the security perspective, the existence of weak states is directly related to conflicts within these states, the most extreme cases of which are civil wars. Usually, weak states exhibit a low level of political legitimacy, and therefore their institutions are

⁸² Thus, at least initially, a lot of economic aid from the European Union, or from EU members, in countries like Albania, but also Romania and Bulgaria, helped the first non-communist governments to reduce the social costs of the reforms that were necessary in order move from a centrally planned to a market economy. At the same time, a series of economic agreements or simply economic programs of the International Monetary Fund, European Union and so on, were viewed and propagated by the post communist governments as achievements in the field of democratic transformation. Almost all the first post communist governments viewed NATO and EU membership, or any steps towards such membership as an indicator of their democratic rule, or as a passing grade for their legitimacy See Albert Rakipi, *Weak States a view from within*, (Vienna : PFP Consortium of Academies and Security Institute, 2002).p 17

ill equipped to deal effectively with these internal conflicts of interests. The solutions are usually sought outside state institutions, thus sometimes degenerating into armed insurrections and anarchy.⁸³ The state may fail to solve the conflicts that arise amongst different social groups even when these groups belong to the same ethnic group. The Albanian implosion in 1997 is a good illustration. The turmoil followed the collapse of high-risk "pyramid" investment schemes which was preceded by the breakdown of political consensus within the country political elite.⁸⁴ As a result, the Albanian state lost control of its territory, the monopoly of the means of violence and all capacity for autonomous action. Indeed, the state enjoyed continuity only *de jure* in the international arena as a member of the United Nations (UN).

However, when the opposing factions represent different ethnicities, the potential for violence increases dramatically. Such was the case in Macedonia during the armed conflict there in the spring of 2001. The violent struggle between the National Liberation Army (NLA) and government security forces had the potential to divide Macedonia. For a while the Macedonian administration and Macedonian elite as well failed to realize that the state was attacked from within by stressing or claiming that the crisis was the result of outside aggression from the UN Protectorate of Kosovo⁸⁵ or as a result of terrorist groups infiltrating from Kosovo.⁸⁶

⁸³ Robert Kaplan, *The coming Anarchy. Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), p.7.

⁸⁴ Gabriel Partos, "Albania: Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management" (London -*The International Security Information* (1997), p.11.

⁸⁵ Branko Crvenkovski, Interview of the President of the Republic of Macedonia, *Vreme*, 31 December 2004 sec 3/ 7.

⁸⁶ V. Buckovski, "Macedonia: A step ahead before exiting the crises," *Contemporary Macedonian Defense* II :4 (2001): p. 85.

In the decade after the end of the Cold War, we may notice a considerable number of internal conflicts—from the Balkans to the ex-Soviet republics—which reinforce a trend that is rapidly becoming dominant: *war within states*. It is in this sense that Kalevi Holsti argues that the phenomenon of war has not become less frequent. Instead, its nature has changed dramatically. War within states, or as he calls it “the third kind of war”,⁸⁷ different from “institutionalized war” and “total war”, does not correspond with Clausewitz’s thinking of war as an organized combat between the military forces of two different states.

According to Van Creveld, in the wars of the “third kind” there are no fronts, no campaigns, no bases, no uniforms, no publicly displayed honors, no *points d'appui* and no respect for the territorial boundaries of states.⁸⁸ Wars of the third kind are usually long wars of attrition, fought with a vicious mixture of guerilla’s tactics and terrorism. More often than not, they are not fought over territory *per se* but over issues of statehood and relations among communities within states.⁸⁹

Holsti believes that the primary if not exclusive etiology of internal wars resides in the fundamental quarrels about the nature of communities and the processes of state building with its accompanying problems. The third kind of war is typical for weak states. On the other hand, the majority of “hot” conflicts that took place during the Cold War occurred between states.

⁸⁷ Holsti, p.36.

⁸⁸ Martin Van Creveld, *The transformation of war*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), p. 206.

⁸⁹ Heinz Gartner, *Small States and Alliances*, (Vienna: Austrian Institute of International Affairs, 2000), p.97.

A number of studies prove that from 120 wars fought between 1945 and 1976, 102 were intrastate. Also, a study by Michael Kidro and Ronal Segal that covers the period between 1973 and 1986 shows that in that period sixty-six wars were intrastate while 30 wars were fought over border changes.⁹⁰

Often these border wars originated from state building processes, regime protection or the desire to create a new regime. The fact that the majority of these internal conflicts occurred in the Third World reinforces the idea that they arose out of the state building process.

If we accept the assumption that weak states are a source of internal conflicts, and the fact that the weak state phenomenon is not a novelty in the international arena, we must attempt to answer the question: In the post Cold War period, why do internal state conflicts threaten international security more than ever before?

During the Cold War, internal conflicts within weak states had detrimental effects on the security of the neighboring states and regions. This is evident in the Third World environment. However, these conflicts proved unable to destabilize the international system.

On a practical and theoretical level, the borderline between interstate and intrastate wars cannot be identified easily. According to Raymond Aron, it is quite possible that if

⁹⁰ Quoted by Kalevi Holsti (*The State, War and the State of War*(Cambridge- Cambridge University Press ,1996), p.78.

an integrated portion of a state's territory or a fraction of the population, refuses to submit to the centralized authority and undertake an armed struggle, the conflict, though a civil war with regard to international law, will be considered a foreign war by those who see the rebels as the expression of an existing or nascent nation.⁹¹ Nevertheless, in the last fifty years, this borderline has become much more emphatic.

As Kalevi Holsti points out, the most external armed interventions classified as interstate wars were actually the result of internal rebellion and wars. Soviet interventions in Hungary and Afghanistan and American intervention in Vietnam are examples.⁹²

The fact that the community of independent states is becoming quickly larger⁹³ with new members, most of which are classified as "weak states", cannot serve as an argument for explaining the increasing instability of the international system according to the proposition: More weak states bring about more conflicts. The reasons for the greater threat to peace and stability in the international arena after the Cold War must be investigated beyond the simple quantitative increase in states that are considered to be weak. The first reason must be found in *the systemic change in the international system after the end of the Cold War*. During the Cold War the nature of the International System with the deep separation into two opposing camps and a third unallied bloc (Non Aligned Movement) one limited the impact those weak states and intrastate conflict could have on

⁹¹ Raymond Aron, *Peace and War*, (New York- The Free Press, 1981), p.7.

⁹² Holsti,, p.23.

⁹³ The number of sovereign states in the United Nations has increased from 51 to 185 . The rate of new-country creation has varied. From 1950 to 1990 2,2 new states were created per year, up from average of 1.2 per year from 1900 to 1950. The 1990s have seen extreme instability: From 1990 to 1998 the rate was 3,1 new countries per year. See Enriques Juan, "Too many Flags?", *Foreign Policy*, (Issue 116, 1999): p. 30.

the international arena. The Cold War itself, through the balance of power that it spawned, secured a reasonable degree of stability in the international system.

According to the realist theory of international relations, the bipolar nature of this system, and nuclear deterrence, were the main factors for the relative peaceful resolution of disputes at the time⁹⁴ The weak state phenomenon was present in both adversarial camps. It is not difficult to see that a great number of states in the Eastern Bloc could be classified as 'weak' according to the criteria we have set above. However, the overriding ideological conflict of the time meant that a number of unsolved problems such as national and minority questions were frozen. Even in the Western bloc, despite the fact that its core was made up of strong states, there were a number of weak states, or states that did not enjoy extensive legitimacy. For example, post-war Germany's situation, domestically and internationally, was desperate. Despite the fact that countries like Germany and Italy had a relatively long tradition in state building, and therefore their citizens accepted the existence of the state, social cohesion was badly damaged. Political institutions and elites had lost their legitimacy and were responsible not only for the destruction of their own countries, but also for the great horrors they had perpetrated during the war. The new institutions were constantly threatened by poverty and the 'imposition' of democracy from above that impeded their search for legitimacy. Other countries, such as Greece and Turkey, were under the constant threat of violent domestic conflicts, which could have threatened the cohesion of the entire Western bloc. This was one of the reasons why the US adopted the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine. The

⁹⁴ John Mearsheimer *The Tragedy of Great power Politics* (New York: W.W Norton & Company. 2001),p.52

Marshall Plan was out of the need to prevent and neutralize the potential threats that came from the possibility of "imminent economic and political collapse of Western Europe itself. The fear that communist parties in Italy and France would gain power in the event of economic chaos was enough to convince Americans that massive aid was necessary".⁹⁵ In the words of George Marshall, the Marshall Plan was directed not against any country or doctrine, but against poverty, hunger, desperation and chaos.⁹⁶

Some of the internal conflicts that occurred at the time, such as in 1956 in Hungary or Czechoslovakia in 1968, had no repercussions on the *status quo*. This explains the West's inaction after the military interventions of the Soviet Union in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, these internal conflicts threatened the security of the entire pro-Soviet bloc, which explains the quick and resolute military interventions undertaken by the USSR.

Also, the East-West conflict brought about an improvement on the traditionally problematic relations between the Great Powers. As Lawrence Freedman points out, most of the old great powers facing the common threat of communism were banded together in alliance, which in turn created the conditions for ever-closer economic and political cooperation. So successful was this process that it has now become unthinkable for France and Germany to renew their traditional antagonism.

⁹⁵ Robert Wegs, *Europe since 1945: A Concise History*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 15.

⁹⁶ Stephen Valone, *Two Centuries of US Foreign Policy*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 128.

Indeed, some analysts argue that it was the bipolar nature of the international system, and the rivalry between the two superpowers, which prolonged the instability of Third World countries. Often, the clash between the two superpowers has occurred on the periphery of the system, the Third World.⁹⁷ However, "the superpowers' shared interest in avoiding direct military confrontations might have led them to enforce a degree of restraint on the behavior of their more adventurous Third World clients and hereby averting dangerous escalations of certain regional conflicts (in the Middle East and East Asia)".⁹⁸

To support our argument that the weak state phenomenon has increased the instability of the international system after the Cold War, we must look to one more factor: *Organizing Ideology*. In 1815, the international system functioned on the basis of balance of power amongst the victorious European powers on the war against Napoleon and defeated France, which was accepted as an equal in the Congress of Europe. Thus, security was build around the concept of balance of power, where all powers were relatively equal to each other in strength and thus acted as a constraint on each other. The members of the Concert were the guardians of European peace with the right to interfere against any power that tried to increase its power relative to the other powers in the system. The European powers of the time banded together in the name of systemic stability despite the fact that they did not share the same organizing ideology.

⁹⁷ Angola, Iran, Iraq, Vietnam.

⁹⁸ Amitav Acharya, "The periphery as the Core: The Third World and Security Studies," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p.306.

Metternich's system consisted of a new kind of cooperation: a liberal monarchy such as Great Britain was united with European autocracies such as Russia.

The security framework in the Cold War era was fundamentally different not only in the structure of the balance of power (i.e. bipolarity) but even from the perspective of the role organizing ideologies played within it. The Cold War system exhibited a great chasm according to the organizing ideologies of its member-states, liberalism and communism. Both blocs created their own independent security institutions, NATO and the Warsaw Pact for the Western and Eastern camps respectively.

During its lifetime, communism, as the organizing ideology embraced by the members of the Eastern Bloc, froze national and minority problems, thus tackling the state building problem on entirely different foundations. The new rulers of Eastern Europe were engaged in a major enterprise of socialization in order to eliminate the "false consciousness" of nationhood and to develop the 'proper' proletarian ethos.⁹⁹ This specific relationship between ideology and state building was not homogenous throughout the eastern bloc. In multinational/multiethnic states such as Yugoslavia and the USSR, the elites tried to build a new identity from scratch. Thus, the aim was the creation of a "Yugoslav identity" and a "Soviet identity" in order to override existing identities. Nationalism and national questions were declared to be 'heresies' in both countries.

⁹⁹ George Schopflin, *Nations Identity Power The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 150.

Albania too represents a specific case study on the relationship between ideology and nation. The Albanian communist regime shaped a more “deformed” identity. Thus, high-achievers within the system embraced a communist identity that overrode their Albanian identity. This does not mean that nationalism was censured completely. However, the glorification of the nation was subordinated to the preservation of the regime. From this point of view, Enver Hoxha’s Albania represents a somewhat paradoxical state where despite the endless talk about the nation, its survival and glory were closely tied to the survival and glory of the regime and the communist ideology. This may be due to the fact that the communist regime came to power based on the guerilla fight against the Nazis and it was not handed power by the Red Army which gave it more legitimacy than in other case of Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁰ Under no circumstance did the regime encourage an objective look at the national problems, and even less did it map out any nationalist or expansionary policies.

From the security and stability point of view, communism seemed to bring peace and order. However, this was true only as long as the ‘ideological shell’ of the system remained unassailable. The fall of the ideological shell meant that nothing could prevent the frozen national or border questions from ‘melting’. Indeed, these problems were used by the elites in the 90’ to build up and consolidate their power. Similarly to the end of the colonial empires, the end of the communist regimes brought about a regeneration of the dilemmas on ‘regime nature’ and ‘state building.’ Thus, the security dilemma was not simply related to the national questions or disputes over territories. More fundamentally, the dilemma consisted on the relationship between the state and the society it represented.

¹⁰⁰ Elez Biberaj, *Albania in Transition The Rocky Road to Democracy*, (USA : WestviewPress 1998),p. 20

The communist regimes in the Eastern Bloc by and large identified themselves with the state. Thus, the fall of the regimes in some countries brought about the demise of the state with it. The state rebuilding dynamic became more problematic from the security perspective, in multinational/multiethnic states such as Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union than in countries where the population was largely purely ethnic, such as in the case of Albania.

If we accept the assumption that communist regimes were able to impose order internally by freezing border and national questions, we are not implying that these states were necessarily strong. Thus, liberal democracy, the organizing ideology in the Western Bloc, gave a great deal more legitimacy to states by ensuring economic growth and by helping to shape society in a more cohesive fashion. Albanian society, like all other communist societies, appeared to be cohesive but communism had silently created a great dichotomy within it. Half of society was considered to be an enemy by the other half. Also, we have to remember that civil society institutions could not deal with this dichotomy since at the time they were completely absent.

With the end of the Cold War, we are facing what Ronnie Lipshutz calls an "insecurity dilemma."¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Ronnie Lipschutz, "The Insecurity Dilemma", *Romanian Journal of International Studies*, Vol. VIII, 12, 2002,): p. 94 .

CHAPTER 3

ALBANIA AND MACEDONIA: WHERE DO THEY COME FROM: THE REGIONAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Our analysis of the weak state phenomenon in Albania and Macedonia must start with a brief examination of the historical and geographical factors that have determined the character of the state building process in these countries. Clearly, the weak state phenomenon is not unique to Albania and Macedonia. Neither is it unique to the Balkans. However, the geographical location of the peninsula and the history of the region continue to directly influence the processes of state formation and consolidation.

Albania and Macedonia are only two links in the 'weak-states chain' that exists in the Balkans and, especially in the western part of the peninsula. Despite the different degrees of weakness exhibited by Balkan states, the entire region seems to be destined to remain home to a composition of weak states for quite some time. One of the reasons for the weakness of the Macedonian and Albanian states lies in the lack of state tradition.

State tradition in the Balkans does not go back very far, Balkan states being relative newcomers in the European political map. According to Charles Tilly, the modern nation-state first appeared in the sixteenth century. Thus, "it was after 1500 that the

national state won out (as a results of) territorial consolidation, centralization, differentiation of the instruments of the government from other sorts of organizations and monopolization (and concentration) of the means of coercion.”¹⁰²

It is clear that the state concept in Europe became a reality much earlier than the Balkan states. The latter started to be created after the Ottoman Empire started to retreat from its European possessions. Serbia and Bulgaria were the first regional states to win their sovereignty. But, for Albania and Macedonia, the concept of statehood starts throwing firm roots only in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Thus, for Macedonia this process started becoming a reality when the old Ottoman province became part of the Kingdom of Serbs and Croats in 1928. On the other hand, while it is true that Albania proclaimed its independence in 1912 and the Great Powers recognized it soon after, only when King Zog I took the reins of power did the modern concept of statehood start to materialize.¹⁰³

The Ottoman tradition has constituted another problem for the state building process in the Balkans. The governing system adopted by the Ottoman Empire allowed little room for the type of institution building that characterizes a modern state. For example, in Ottoman Albania the Empire failed to create a central administration, a main prerequisite of the modern centralized state. Obviously, this helped the Ottomans retain their power by the ancient divide et impera logic, but from the point of view of state

¹⁰² Charles Tilly, *Coercion Capital and European States: A.D. 990-1990*, (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 63.

¹⁰³ Bernd Fischer, *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), p. 195.

formation, the country's regions developed in different ways. Even within the four vilayets (administrative territories) that made up Ottoman Albania, state administration was very segmented. Finally, the Ottoman tradition meant that the region was cut off from the economic and political developments in the rest of Europe.

The reasons for the creation of states in the Balkans are different from the ones that existed in Western Europe. The Balkan State was not born out of a need for the further development of the local economy. It was not the result of economic pressures or the desire to expand markets. Let us remember that the organized British state was born precisely out of the need for managing economic development and conquering emerging markets. In the Balkans, the creation of independent states was seen as the only alternative to Ottoman occupation.. The Albanian state was formally established in 1913, in the wake of Turkey's disintegration.¹⁰⁴ Thus, it was national movements that gave birth to the new states. But, these movements, when successful, could only create the façade of a new state by winning international recognition. They were ill equipped to build robust internal institutions to encourage the development of the new states on the road charted by their much-older European counterparts.

From an international perspective, the Balkan Peninsula has always constituted a battleground for the great powers. Since the end of Metternich's Concert of Vienna, almost all of the great powers have vigorously pursued their contradictory interests in this region. In this context, the Cold War proved to be an exception to the rule. But despite the

¹⁰⁴ Darek Hall, "Albania in Europe: Condemned to the periphery or Beyond" *Geopolitics*, Vol .6, issue 1,(2001): p. 107.

changes in the international system, the traditional relations between the great powers and the Balkans continued to be influenced by the legacy of the past. It seemed that rising antagonism between the Balkan peoples revived their alliances with western powers dating back to the time of the Second World War¹⁰⁵ For example, Germany pushed for and achieved international recognition for Slovenia and Croatia, the old Habsburgian provinces. While as France is concerned one should remember the speech of French President François Mitterrand : We should not ignore traditional friendship. For us as for Russia it is Serbia. Slovenes and Croats rather turn to the Germanics.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the nature of the relationship between the US and Russia was challenged in 1995 by their opposing viewpoints on the Bosnian conflict. Great power politics in the Balkans has not only created border problems, but it has also harmed the state building process in the region. Often, weak states have been under the influence of one or another outside power, thus being unable to focus on their domestic challenges effectively.

From the point of view of state boundaries, the peace settlement of both Balkan wars and the First World War created at least as many problems as it solved. The post-Versailles order left most of the Balkan states unhappy with the status quo, though it must be said that it is quite possible that any peace settlement would have left some of them unsatisfied. After the Second Balkan War, Albania preserved with Austrian and to a lesser extent Italian, help her 1913 borders that had been decided in the London Conference of Ambassadors. Huge swathes of territory inhabited by Albanians remained outside the borders of the nascent state. As a result of the peace settlement, the political map of the

¹⁰⁵ Daniela Heimerl and Wim Van Meurs " The Balkans Between Paris and Berlin" *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol.4 No.3 (2004): p.346.

¹⁰⁶ Roland Dumas, *Le fil et la pelote* (Paris: Plon 1996:), p. 354.

region resembled a *salade macedonienne*, from the point of view of the complex ethnic, religious and cultural mix that inhabited the new states. It was in this difficult environment that the newly independent Balkan states embarked on the processes of state consolidation. They were not only threatened from the outside – something that often helps in strengthening state and national cohesion – but also domestically, due to the presence of hostile national minorities that rejected the statehood of “the other.” Macedonia finds itself in such a position, thus prompting observers to call it a “mini-Balkans.” This has caused a number of conflicts between Balkan states, often closing the lines of communication between them and even degenerating into open warfare.

The complex nature of the ethnic problems in the region has often translated into wars within a state spilling over into wars between states and nations. According to a 1913 report by the US-based Carnegie Endowment, in the Balkans warfare does not remain within the framework of opposing armies, but among the respective peoples as well. This has caused large-scale massacres of civilians, which have been remarkably well preserved by Balkan memory.

The processes of liberal economic development started late and continue to proceed slowly. This is the second reason for the classification of the states in the region as ‘weak.’ Traditionally, short-term political goals and security concerns have sapped Balkan energies away from economic problems and concerns over institution building. The agrarian structure of Balkan economies did not favor the state-building process. Not only has agriculture dominated the Balkan region but its basic structure did not evolve

either from the perspective of capital or from that of labor. For example, in the case of Albania, Michael Kaser argues that the agrarian and petty mercantile economy of the Vilayet of Shkoder and the Albanian- inhabited zones of the Vilayet of Yanina changed little in the four centuries of Ottoman rule.¹⁰⁷ Even after Balkan states achieved independence, the region remained poor and, quite often, states continued to be isolated from each other. More often than not, a state emerged from its isolation only when it declared war on a neighboring state. Economically, the peninsula's markets have been hard to penetrate and, more importantly, the incentive to penetrate them is small because of the lack of economies of scale. Constant isolation and periodical returns of instability and open warfare have not helped in this regard. Finally, the persistent economic insecurity that characterizes many Balkan states has resulted in aid dependency syndrome that, in its turn, makes sustainable economic growth difficult in the long term.¹⁰⁸

Traditionally, the Balkan community has been an agrarian community. This has constituted another stumbling block in the state building process. It also explains why Balkan national movements started relatively late. According to Eric Hobsbawn, in agrarian societies national consciousness is developed late or not at all.¹⁰⁹

Later on, the Cold War completely separated the region from Europe, and for a time, all states except Yugoslavia continued to operate in isolation. This does not mean that the state building process did not continue to evolve at this time. But, this process

¹⁰⁷ Michael Kaser "Economic Continuities in Albania's Turbulent History" *Europe-Asia Studies* No4(2001): p. 628.

¹⁰⁸ Ruby Gropas "Functional Borders. Sustainable security and EU- Balkan relations " *Southeast European and Black Sea studies*, vol4, No.1(January 2004): p. 57..

¹⁰⁹ Eric Hobsbawn, *Nation and Nationalism since 1878*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 89.

would have proceeded faster and more efficiently if regional states functioned within a more open framework of cooperation and exchange with the European mainstream.

At the time, the Balkan states were divided not only along the Iron Curtain but also among themselves. The case of Albania is the most extreme: isolated from the West, isolated from the Eastern bloc after the 60s and isolated from its Balkan neighbors. Let us remember that while the Eastern bloc was isolated from the West, its member states were cooperating with each other quite intensively in the political and economic fields.

The wars of the last decade have contributed negatively on the state building processes in the region as well. By the early nineties, Balkan states had achieved different levels of development according to the different policies that they followed during the Cold War. Yugoslavia followed a relatively liberal economic policy, and its different republics kept up intensive communication lines with each other and with the outside world in the realm of capital markets. Albania, as the most isolated country in the region, inherited a failed economy and absolute poverty from the communist regime. However, the ten years of conflict gravely damaged economic development in the ex-Yugoslav republics. Communication lines were cut, and potential foreign investment was scared away. Presently, to travel from Tirana to Belgrade takes as long as travelling from Tirana to Washington D.C. After ten years of conflict, Balkan states are "forced"¹¹⁰ to sign Free Trade Agreements with each other as the way to European integration. For Yugoslavia,

¹¹⁰ In the EU's regional approach to the Balkans, free trade agreements are considered to be a necessary but not sufficient condition. Albania already has signed one with Macedonia and is presently negotiating with other countries.

this sounds like back to the future, since before the Milosevic era, Yugoslavia functioned as a common market with robust lines of communication between its republics.

Another serious obstacle to the state-building process remains the war crime legacy. The events of March 2004 in Kosovo confirmed that the war crimes legacy continued to be an obstacle to the full restoration of peace and security throughout core parts of South East Europe.¹¹¹ The way of dealing with the war crime legacy is a real test of will for both governments and societies to adopt democratic principles. Further, addressing properly the war crime legacy is part of EU conditionality. The freezing of negotiations with Serbia by the EU when the former failed to respect the deadline and hand over Mladic to The Hague is the latest example of such conditionality.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Gow James "Security in South Eastern Europe: the war crimes legacy" *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* vol.5 No1 January 2005): p.13.

¹¹² Tirana Times 12 April (2006), p.19.

CHAPTER 4

ALBANIA, A WEAK NATION STATE

4.1.HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Albania emerged from the harshest Stalinist system as one of the weakest states in the region. Yet, the approach taken by this small Balkan country to address security issues and its own national question may have an impact on the stability of the entire region. Historically, Albania represents one of those rare cases whose important geopolitical position in a volatile region has threatened its political existence, while at the same time serving as a *casus belli* for seeking protection by an outside power. Every strong power that has arisen in the Italian Peninsula has expanded in the Balkans by using Albania as a bridgehead. On the other hand, whenever a powerful state has emerged in the Balkan Peninsula, it has tended to reach the Adriatic coast and use Albania as a springboard for expansion to the West.¹¹³ At the end of the Balkan wars, Albanian territories became the objects of negotiations for partitioning among the neighbors.

¹¹³ Stavro Skendi *Albania East –Central Europe under the Communists* (London : Atlantic Press, 1957), p.9.

On 16 December 1912, the Ambassadors Conference of the Great Powers supported the creation of an independent Albanian state within its present borders as a compromise between the divergent approaches taken by the Great Powers vis-à-vis the Albanian question. The motives behind the support that Austria-Hungary and, to a lesser extent, Italy, gave to the creation of the independent Albanian state, sprung from fears of Serbia's threat to expand into the Adriatic and the resulting expansion of Russian influence in the area. Austria-Hungary advocated the creation of Greater Albania with Kosovo and a large part of modern Macedonia's territories, while Russia vehemently opposed the plan. During the First World War, Albania became a transit route for the armies of the warring powers, but also of the neighboring countries, among which quite a few were planning to remain in occupation of the country, thus placing its existence in jeopardy almost from the day of its inception. In one example, Italy went so far as to declare on 3 June 1917 "The unity and independence of all Albania under the aegis and protection of the Kingdom of Italy".¹¹⁴

At the end of the First World War, Albania's future as an independent state was seriously threatened again. The Allied Powers and the armies of the neighboring countries invaded its territories. One of the options apparently enjoying even the consensus of the Allied Powers was the splitting up of Albanian territories among Greece, Italy and Yugoslavia. One of the options upheld by Italy at the Peace Conference in Paris was to place Albania under Italy's full control. Were this to be rejected, the next option was division, if independence was not agreed upon. Albania achieved real statehood after the

¹¹⁴ Skendi, p.12.

World War I, in part because of diplomatic intercession of the United States.¹¹⁵ Woodrow Wilson, President of the US, strongly opposed Albania's division. He advocated Albania's integrity and independence due to the principle of self-determination, one of the leading principles of the League of Nations.

From another perspective, the very creation of the Albanian State brought about the problem of insecurity. The Great Powers' consensus in 1912 to support the creation of a small independent Albania left outside its borders large chunks of Albanian territories historically populated by Albanians. In 1912, the Albanians had a state, but a divided nation. In spite of the insistence of the League of Nations, Albania's borders remained undefined for a longtime. Even when this was finally done, Greece refused to recognize its borders with Albania. Moreover, even today it continues to ignore the Florence Protocol since it maintains the State of War¹¹⁶ Law with Albania. Furthermore, Albania's existence was questioned immediately after the end of World War II, when Tito's Yugoslavia was trying to make it into a seventh republic of the Yugoslav Federation. In 1946, Albania signed an Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation with Yugoslavia, which was followed by a number of other economic cooperation agreements. By signing the treaty, both countries agreed to coordinate economic policy (or 'plan' in communist jargon), standardize their monetary systems and create a customs union. This ensured

¹¹⁵ Eugene K. Keefe, *Albania a Country Study* (Washington D.C: Library of Congress, 2004), p.12

¹¹⁶ Greece has not abrogated the State of War law with Albania that has been adopted during the Second World War. At the time, Greece considered Albania as an aggressor since Italy used Albanian territory as a launching pad for its invasion of Greece. This is a rather absurd situation, since this same law with Italy, the real aggressor, does not exist anymore. Despite the fact that Albania and Greece signed a Friendship and Cooperation Treaty in 1996, the State of War remains valid. One of the explanations is the "Cam problem". Keeping the status of this Law unchanged, Greece preempts any possible court cases by people of Cam descent in search of their lost property. The Cams were ethnically cleansed from Northern Greece during the Second World War.

Albania's complete dependence on Yugoslavia and paved away for an eventual union of the two countries.

After Yugoslavia's break with the Soviet Union, Albania abandoned its former ally and entered into the Soviet sphere of influence. During the Soviet-Albanian honeymoon, a number of large-scale investments and reforms were undertaken in order to preserve the legitimacy of the regime.

In the fifties, Hoxha broke off relations with the USSR in order to start a new love affair with China. This new relationship provided the last dose of oxygen for the Albanian economy. By the seventies, the regime opted for the complete isolation of the country, thus ensuring its economic collapse. The campaign to collectivize the remnants of private property only hastened the process. Albania's relations with the West had remained frozen since 1945. The USA and other Western countries refused to recognize the elections of 2nd December 1945 and thus they considered the communist government that emerged from these elections as illegitimate.

Threats from outside, and especially from neighbors, who historically harbored territorial claims and conceived projects for splitting up Albanian territories, were also frozen during the Cold War. Up until the fall of communism in 1992, Albania's tragically absurd isolation was a shield against outside threats. National Security Strategy was based entirely on the military dimension and the country's economy was designed entirely to

serve such policies.¹¹⁷ However, it is hard to assert that the country's survival was a tribute to its defense potential, as this potential did not amount to much, regardless of the high levels of militarization. The militarization of the economy and society was a way for Hoxha's clique to solidify their grip on power and achieve internal unity in the face of an imaginary enemy, hardly an incentive for genuine preparations against an imaginary foreign aggressor. Although Albania never faced any real threats of foreign aggressions during Hoxha's entire communist rule, Hoxha himself continuously amplified imaginary threats and created external enemies simply for the purposes of domestic politics.

As the Cold War ended and Albania emerged from communism, the country was faced with the task of reformulating its security. But almost 100 years from the time of its creation, the state risked war with Yugoslavia over the issue of Kosovo, while it always had problematic relations with Greece. The main security concern for Albania became its relations with neighboring countries, in the first place relations with Yugoslavia, because of the Kosovo question and the problem of the Albanians in the other Republics of the Federation.

4.1.1. The Emergence of a Modern State

Obviously, international recognition for the new Albanian state in 1913 did not mean that the new state functioned efficiently from the domestic perspective. The creation of a new, centralized bureaucracy and the production of public goods were no easy tasks to achieve. The great power's decision to leave half of the territories of Ottoman Albania

¹¹⁷ Biberaj, p.69.

outside the borders of the new state foreshadowed the fact that, while recognized as a state *de jure*, Albania's chances of becoming a viable state were rather slim. This becomes clearer when we look at the vital economic importance of the territories that were not included within the new state. Thus, the traditional, natural trend of the present-day northern regions of Albania has been to develop trade and other economic ties with Kosovo and, especially the Gjakova Highlands. Armstrong, the Private secretary of Prince Wied that the great powers named as king of Albania in 1914¹¹⁸ wrote in his memoirs:

“In 1913 Albania was divided in half and was left without some of its major cities. Some purely Albanian cities such as Gjakova, Prizren, Dibra and Struga were given to Serbia and Montenegro. The mountaineers of northern and Northeastern Albania were cut off from their traditional markets and civilizations.

Recently, the view that “size does not matter” when determining the viability of a state, has become quite strong. However, in the case of Albania the problem does not lie with the country's size, but with the fact that the new borders interrupted the natural existence and way of life of the nation. Also, the territorial division of Albanian lands, the existence of strong Albanian minorities in the neighboring countries, and the objectives of the latter to further aggrandize themselves at the expense of the Albanian state created a number of problems domestically in the struggle to build a viable state.

Every Albanian administration in the past one hundred years has faced two simultaneous challenges: preserving the territorial integrity of the country and imposing the will of the state throughout this territory.

¹¹⁸ Armstrong, *Albania 1914 The six month Kingdom* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies 2004,), p. 16.

After the declaration of independence in 1912, the Albanians created their first government, *The Vlora Government*, which was relatively short-lived. Headed by Ismail bey Qemali, this administration failed to achieve international recognition and to monopolize power and impose its will throughout Albanian lands. However, the first real test for the new Albanian state was faced by the administration of Prince Wied. The great powers named Prince Wied as king of the Albanians. The king arrived in Durrës in March 1914 but he was forced to leave the country six months later due to domestic and external pressures. Only a few months after the king's ascendance to the throne, an anarchist peasant movement known as *the movement of Haxhi Qamil*, started an armed insurrection designed to bring the Ottomans back in Albania. In the meantime, Greek troops in the South and Montenegrin and Serbian troops in the North prevented the new regime from extending its reach throughout the country. Finally, the outbreak of World War I completed the failure of the king to fulfill his duties.

The next administration was born during the Congress of Lushnja in 1920. In December of the same year Albania was accepted in the League of Nations, thus consolidating its international recognition as an independent country. The great powers were unable to achieve a consensus on the international borders of the new state, but in 1921, after a few minor changes on its northern borders, Albania's 1913 borders were recognized. These borders have remained static to this day. However, despite the *de jure* recognition, the state barely existed *de facto* on the domestic scene. Albanian society remained largely agrarian, with profound regional differences. While it is true that religious differences were not crucial in reinforcing the divisions that plagued Albanian

society, the Catholic community in the North was quite sensitive towards a possible domination from the quasi-feudal Muslim bey class.¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, the anti-government rebellions of the time were sparked by the attempts of the central administration in Tirana to extend its reach in the country's remote regions rather than due to religious differences. The infamous "Republic of Mirdita" created in the Mirdita region in 1921 is one of the most famous of these movements. In the very same year, parliamentary life started with deputies being elected from two recently formed political parties. This was the first attempt at political pluralism in Albania, and despite the fact that the parties or the framework in which they competed fell far below their Western equivalents; their birth signaled new foundations on which to start the process of state building.

The modern Albanian state started emerged only under the governance of King Zog¹²⁰. Ahmet Zog, the man that came to dominate Albanian politics so completely for fifteen years, came to power in 1924 with Yugoslav support. Throughout this period, Zog pursued a pragmatic foreign policy towards the country's neighbors and especially towards Italy. This allowed him to consolidate his power base internally, while keeping security concerns more or less under control.

From the domestic perspective, Ahmet Zog's statesmanship led to solid foundations for the modern Albanian state. President Zog, and later King Zog I, was able to impose state control throughout the territory of the state, sometimes through violent

¹¹⁹ For more information on religion and national identity, see Albert Doja, *The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identity: The Albanian Situation*, (Tirana : Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2001)

¹²⁰ Ahmed Zog became Prime Minister of Albania in 1924.

means but mostly diplomatically. Respect for the law increased a great deal, especially in the traditionally problematic areas of the North. Zog's administration passed a number of vital laws that dealt with great social problems such as blood feuds. The law also regulated the private possession of weapons. During this period, for the first time Albania possessed a government bureaucracy shaped according to Western models. Of course, this does not mean that the administration functioned as efficiently as its Western counterparts, yet its performance was greatly improved vis-à-vis the pre-Zog era. The government achieved a monopoly on the use of force. The *gendarmerie*, whose duty it was to ensure internal order, was modeled and trained by retired British officers that turned it into a respectable force.¹²¹

King Zog introduced the first centralized state in Albanian history. He started building a national network of roads that was essential not only for security reasons, but also for the economic development of the country's often-isolated regions. This enhanced internal communications, and started to promote the unification of the country. Thus, the state was able to penetrate from the center to the periphery, uniting regions that, up to that point, had developed independently of each other. Despite the country's very limited means, the budget started supporting the creation of schools and hospitals thus making the state presence felt beyond the simple instruments of violence, such as the *gendarmerie*. Finally, reforms in education and less-effectively, in agriculture, helped reinforce state power in the eyes of its subjects. After the year 1925, Albania embarked upon a slow process of state-induced industrialization.

¹²¹ For a better understanding of King Zog's attempts to build a modern Albanian state, see Bernd Fischer, *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*. (Tirana – Duda, 1999)

However, despite these successes, the state building process advanced very slowly. The main reasons for this may be found in the Albanian reality prevalent at the time. An overwhelmingly agrarian population was naturally hesitant to accept a strong, centralized state. The divisions plaguing Albanian society and its elites were too strong to be dealt with effectively within such a short period of time. According to Bernd Fischer, Zog himself, on whose hands power was concentrated, possessed "a limited education, tendency to intrigue, the inability to attract in his staff able men."¹²²

The almost proverbial poverty of the population and the absence of economic development and urbanization also prolonged the process of state building. An historical account of Albanian economic development shows three persistent continuities from the creation of the Albania state to the post-communist state. First, poverty and subsistence economies at household level have made a poor tax-base for state building. Second, the demands of modernization and state building have conditioned heavy dependence on external capital. Third, persisting economic disparities between different regions of the country have showed no signs of amelioration.¹²³

The international context also plays a major role in the state building process. The danger of foreign intervention never really dissipated. Usually, the history of nation-states shows that the danger of a foreign intervention has positive effects on the domestic

¹²² Bernd Fischer, *King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), p.59.

¹²³ Michael Kaser "Economic Continuities in Albania's Turbulent History" *Europe-Asia Studies* No4(2001): p. 629.

politics of the state through the rally-around-the-flag effect and the strengthening of the state. This did not happen in Albania's case, where the elites often allied themselves with foreign powers in their fight for domestic political supremacy. Despite the fact that Albania had a constitution,¹²⁴ governance was centered on clan-based alliances and many vital institutions such as the judiciary, defense, and finances were in the hands of persons that had no formal relationship to these institutions.

4.1.2 The Communist Legacy

Let us return to the definition of the term 'state' using the ideal type definition of Joel Migdal - a definition that is based on the Weberian formula - as an organization, composed of numerous agencies led and coordinated by the state leadership (executive authority that has the ability or authority to make and implement binding rules for all the people as well as the parameters of rule-making for other social organization in a given territory, using force if necessary to have its way).¹²⁵ If we accept this definition, it becomes impossible to argue that a real Albanian state did exist at any time during the Second World War. As a matter of fact, in this period the Albanian state experienced a 'segmented existence', since at no time was it able to bring all of the regions under centralized control. Whole regions remained outside its reach, while state penetration in society remained weak. Since the population saw the Italian and later German-sponsored governments as illegitimate, the whole government machinery quickly came to a standstill. After the Axis victories in the Balkans in 1941, the first ethnic Albanian state

¹²⁴ Between 1914 and 1939, Albania adopted five constitutions. The first one was elaborated by the International Commission of Control after the recognition of the country's independence. One important constitutional change to be noted is the one of 1928 when Albania was declared a Monarchy. This allowed the new King Zog to have absolute power.

¹²⁵ Migdal, p. 60.

came into being. Its borders corresponded with the ethnic distribution of the Albanian nation.¹²⁶ For the first time, Kosovo, northwestern Macedonia and a part of Northern Greece were included within the borders of the Albanian state. Formally, this state continued to exist until late 1944, but in practical terms it did not function normally.

It certainly is cynical to look for positive effects in the military occupation of a country by another. Undoubtedly, the overall effect of both World Wars on Albania was a slowing down of the state building process. In its efforts to find an arrangement that would bring about peace, stability and growth, Albania tried three different political orders within twenty years and all of them collapsed under the weight of weak bureaucracies, financial difficulties and corruption.¹²⁷ However, it is also true that the building of new roads and the improvement of existing ones made for the benefit of the occupying powers did improve communication between the regions and their ties to the centers of power. Steps were taken to modernize the country's infrastructure and develop its industry. However, if we use the Weberian definition of the state on the fifty years of the communist period we may say that the Albanian state existed in a complete and palpable manner. But, as we have already mentioned, such a definition is not sufficient for our purposes because it does not determine the strength or weakness of a state.

As the communist regime started disintegrating in 1990, Albania exhibited the typical characteristics of a weak state. However, in order to understand the reasons for the weakness of the post-communist Albanian state, we have to investigate the dynamics of

¹²⁶ Bernd Fischer, *Albania at War 1939-1945* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999), p. 68.

¹²⁷ Eno Trimcev, *Democracy Intellectuals and the State* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2005), p.98.

state building under the communist regime as the longest and qualitatively different period of continuity in the existence of independent Albania.

What were the features of the state in the communist era? Was the state weak or strong? The answers to these questions must be based on strong theoretical analysis that provides some understanding to the following: Can a dictatorial and autarchic regime build a strong state? If an autocratic regime can only build a weak state, does this imply that a state may be strong only in a liberal regime?

With the creation of the League of Nations after the First World War, nationalism and the right to self-determination came to be considered as stabilizing factors for the unstable regions. Since the Wilsonian vision did not translate into stronger, more stable states, can we make the derivation that liberal democracy may be considered a destabilizing factor?

Let us return to the Albanian state during the communist era. At a first glance, the state at the time seemed to be strong. Its presence was powerfully felt in all of the country's regions and its authority was unquestionable. The bureaucracy functioned from the center to the periphery quite effectively. The citizens obeyed state laws to the point that even now some people remember the peace and security of the time with nostalgia.

But from the functioning communist state that was present in the most remote areas of the country, Albanians were faced with a state that could function and deliver

public services sporadically at best. From 1993 on, in newspapers and among common people, the complaint that the state had become deadweight unable to enforce its own laws became widespread. The recent memory of a "strong state" that could enforce its will irrespective of social opposition made the post communist state seem even weaker by comparison.¹²⁸ During the communist regime, it was unthinkable for people to attack state institutions or steal weapons from military depots as they did in 1997. In Hobawm's terms, the issue of the future existence of the state as an institution relates to its ability to adapt and function according to popular expectations. Given the memory of a functioning communist state, this issue becomes particularly difficult for the future of the Albanian state.¹²⁹

According to most of the criteria we used to define a strong state such as the monopoly of the use of force, state presence from the center to the periphery, state penetration in society, and the citizens observation of state laws, Albania may be classified as a strong state. However, here we have not included one of the most essential functions of the modern state, which is the obligation to provide public goods. The weakness of this type of strong states becomes apparent when we consider the capacity of the state to plan and implement policy, and more importantly to provide public goods. Let us investigate the internal workings of the communist state in order to find the foundations of its legitimacy. The Albanian state seemed to perform strongly and palpably throughout its territory. The question arises: What was the basis of this strong performance? The

¹²⁸ Clarisa De Wal, *Mbijetesa Shqiperia nen postkomunizem* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies 2005), p. 12.

¹²⁹ Quoted by De Wal, *Mbijetesa Shqiperia nen postkomunizem* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies 2005), p. 9.

answer is violence. Direct or indirect, physical, moral or psychological, violence was sanctioned by constitutional law and if the degree of repression and terror was not enough, the arbitrary use of power was also another legal way for the authorities to carry out their will. The secret police that went so far as to dictate to people what they thought was free to use its powers arbitrarily.

The strong state concept in its most simple-minded form is connected with the state's military or coercive capacities. "The increase of state power is often seen as an increase in arbitrariness, that is as an increase in despotism seen as something hostile to civil liberties. This always has been a terrible mistake," says John Halland who reminds us of the advice of Tocqueville who warned that "the attempt to control could lead to sterility, to a low total sum of power within a social formation. Real strength comes from a politics of reciprocal consent."¹³⁰

States exist due to the need of citizens for security, education, health services, and economic opportunities including the legal framework of order, a judicial system and public goods. At a first glance, the communist regime was able to ensure security and public order for its citizens. However, if we look deeper into the mechanisms of the communist state machinery, it becomes clear that a person was physically endangered on a daily basis. According to government statistics, crime remained at minimal level but in Albania it was the government machinery that was the perpetrator of tremendous

¹³⁰ See Hall.J.John, *The return of the State* at <http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/hall>.

crimes.¹³¹ The state with its omnipotent institutions of violence constituted the real danger to the individual.

Behind the propaganda of successes in the realms of education and health the reality was an extreme backwardness in both fields. The alleged success remained within the boundaries of the eradication of illiteracy and the creation of health institutions throughout state territory. But, health and education services could not even pretend to keep abreast the technological achievements of the times because of the extremely backward economic base of the country. In 1987, infant death rate in Albania according to Western sources was 44 percent according to official sources it was 28.2 percent-while in certain regions of the country it jumped to over 60 percent. In the same year, in Europe the mean infant death rate was 11 percent.¹³²

From the economic perspective, the Albanian state failed completely. The government's infamous five-year plans, with their excessive emphasis on heavy industry, failed repeatedly to achieve their objectives while their side effects included frightful environmental damages.¹³³ The main income source for the state budget was agriculture. In 1970, bread constituted the staple diet for the population, while per capita income -

¹³¹ According to official statistics, the number of people persecuted by the regime was more than half a million. This includes prisoners, exiles, shot or disappeared people.

¹³² Roberto Morozzo Della Rocca, *Albania le Radici della Crisi*, (Roma: Angelo Guerini e Associati SpA, 1997), p.126 .

¹³³ One example is the monstrous steel plant in Elbasan, about 50 kilometers from Tirana. This gigantic plant caused huge economic damage by sucking in yearly loans while damaging the environment through pollution.

according to official Tirana- was only US\$750. This sum comes closer to Angola's US\$ 610 than to Italy's US\$ 15,120.¹³⁴

The process of land collectivization coupled with the elimination of any type of public property caused enormous economic harm.¹³⁵ Even in the most remote villages, peasants were incarcerated for maintaining a cow or goat in their dwellings. The system of communication also remained in its infantile stages. It is true that Albania inherited a grossly inadequate road infrastructure after World War II. Hoxha was interested in improving communication between different regions in order to keep a tighter hold on the country, and some improvements were made particularly in railway-construction where the regime inherited a small and non-functional infrastructure.¹³⁶

The centralized economy came to a standstill in the seventies when the complete isolation of Albania began. After a brief honeymoon with Yugoslavia after the Second World War, Hoxha broke off ties with Tito and turned the country into a Soviet satellite. After Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, Albania sided with China during the Sino-Soviet conflict. These ideological alliances helped the Albanian economy by providing investments and new technologies. The political break with China signified the end of the oxygen supply for the Albanian economy.

¹³⁴ Della Rocca, p.132.

¹³⁵ Blendi Kajsiu, Aldo Bumçi and Albert Rakipi, *Albania a weak democracy a weak state* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2002), p.38.

¹³⁶ For a more complete survey of the transportation and communication infrastructure from the First World War to the end of the communist regime, see Stavro Skendi, *East- Central Europe under communist: Albania*, (New York: Atlantic Press, 1957)

When considering the post-communist state building process, the communist past becomes important when considering the fact that citizen loyalty to the government was ensured not due to the citizens' faith towards its institutions but due to their fear of the state and its coercive powers. In Albania, the state was identified with the communist regime. It was to be expected that the state would be blamed for the extreme poverty and persecution. Thus, the citizens' refusal to obey state laws in the first post-communist decade may be viewed as an attempt to free themselves from the evils that the central authority had rained on them for a period of fifty years. Today the Albanians have a low degree of trust in the judiciary because they have never experienced a judicial system that functions purely on the basis of state laws. In the communist period, the judicial system was but one of the links in a chain of terror institutions. The judiciary was reduced to a tool in the hands of the executive.

In Albania the state was identified with the Party of Labor.¹³⁷ In Albania, as in other communist countries, there were two types of bureaucracies coexisting with each other. The first one, normal for any kind of state and the party bureaucracy that acted as a complete duplicate of the government machinery. Thus, parallel to the different levels of the executive bureaucracy, there were the different levels of party *apparatchiks* recruited mostly from the working and peasant classes. As a matter of fact, this second bureaucracy overruled the first one. This inheritance has created a problem for post-communist Albania where every party in power has staffed the state bureaucracy with its own supporters. Thus, a change in power from one party to another is accompanied with a

¹³⁷ Ivan Krastev, *The inflexibility Trap Frustrated Societies Weak States and Democracy, the State of Democracy in the Balkans* (Sofia: Center for Liberal Strategies, 2001), p.115.

complete rebuilding of state institutions where bureaucratic appointments are made on a political basis.

While the state was identified with the party, the party itself was wholly identified with its leader Enver Hoxha. The reigns of power were firmly concentrated on his hands.¹³⁸ While in pluralist Albania there are certain constitutional limits on the concentration of power, the individuals at the top of the political apex have tried very hard to concentrate power in their own hands.

Religious institutions also presented a problem. In Albania, three different religions coexist though this religious divide does not affect social cohesion much.¹³⁹ Even during the Ottoman period, Albanians were generally indifferent towards religion. In 1967, during the heady days of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, religion was outlawed and religious institutions were physically demolished or they were converted to sport halls, warehouses etc.

To the factors of total insulation of the country, extreme economic backwardness, the absence of cultural and scientific opportunities were added the outlawing of religion and the loss of the right to faith. This had unprecedented destructive effects on Albanian society. Communism tried to build a new type of human being/citizen that official propaganda named "the new man". This hybrid embodied the Marxist-Leninist ideals and

¹³⁸ Since the end of the Second World War until the sixties, Hoxha was Party Chairman, Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Foreign Minister at the same time.

¹³⁹ Albert Doja, *The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identity: The Albanian Situation*, (Tirana : Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2001), p.34

he was free of religious superstitions, material or carnal desires and any other of the 'vices' of the capitalist world. The inevitable dissolution of moral principles build by tradition and national pride and self-respect proved extremely harmful to society. All the values that Albanians historically held dear became crooked under the Marxist prism.

The process of state making was not based on a parallel process of nation building. In Albania, nationalism was jettisoned in favor of proletarian internationalism. An Albanian communist took pride in his internationalist rather than Albanian outlook. Despite some improvements, the country's urbanization remained in critically low levels. Balkan societies as agricultural societies generally lack cohesiveness, but in Albania's case the class struggle¹⁴⁰ increased the gulfs that separated different segments of society.

4.2. STATE BUILDING IN POST COMMUNIST ERA

Ten years after the end of the Cold War, almost all the Balkans¹⁴¹ has been transformed, one way or another, into an international protectorate. At first, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a protectorate in 1995 after a destructive war. Macedonia and Albania have become half-protectorates due to the strong influence of the international community in their internal affairs. The defense of the Macedonian state during the armed clashes there became an obligation of the international community despite the fact that no formal international agreement was signed to this effect. The influence of the international

¹⁴⁰ Not only did Hoxha's regime amplify the imaginary danger to national security coming from abroad, but it also created an imaginary internal enemy. This allowed the regime to periodically undertake internal purges in the name of "vigilance against the domestic enemy."

¹⁴¹ After the Bosnian War, the international community started to replace the term "Balkans" with "South Eastern Europe" in an attempt to get away from the negative connotations that the former term had taken.

community grew in the realm of domestic politics as well. From the very beginning it was clear that the deployment of United Nations troops for monitoring Macedonia's borders carried implications beyond the preservation of the country's territorial integrity.¹⁴² Also, in 2002, after the start of the armed conflict between ethnic Albanians and government security forces, Macedonia deepened its dependence on the international community. NATO's military presence is seen as vitally important by its political elites irrespective of their ethnicity.¹⁴³ Finally, the EU and other institutions such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe carry enormous weight in the formulation and implementation of domestic policies.

After NATO's military intervention in Yugoslavia, Kosovo has become an official protectorate of the United Nations. Moreover, even Montenegro during its flirtation with the idea of independence found itself under *de facto* international guarantees for its security. Six months ago, Serbia and Montenegro agreed through EU mediation to create a new state under EU guarantees. Presently, this state needs a large amount of help from the international community with all the implications that this carries for their policy-making.

In 1992, Albania accepted the realist maxim that small countries find the guarantee of their security in alliances with more powerful countries, due to its near-zero defense

¹⁴² The former -president Gligorov has admitted that the international military presence in Macedonia has had a positive effect on the dynamics of the country's domestic politics. See Albert Rakipi, "The return of Macedonian question," in Aldo Bumci ed, *Albanians in the Balkans*, (Tirana - Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2002), pp.74-95

¹⁴³ As we will see, the Macedonian political elite held contradictory stances towards the involvement of the international community, and especially NATO. At the beginning of the conflict in the spring of 2001, the Prime Minister implied that there was an "international complot" against Macedonia. However, before the parliamentary elections of September 16th, 2002, it was the same government that requested an extension of NATO's mandate in the country.

capabilities. Thus, the government handed over defense and security matters to the international community. The presence and role of the international community in Albania grew quickly starting with the assistance of international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank and culminating in 1997 with an international force headed by Italy whose unofficial mission was to help restore internal security.

At present, it seems that the 'international protectorate' phenomenon constitutes a natural trend in the Balkans. According to Henry Kissinger, the US is playing the same role that the long-gone Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires have played in the past.¹⁴⁴ Urs Altermatt agrees when he states that in the Balkans peace becomes possible only when a great power plays the role of the referee between the antagonistic ethnicities and religions. According to him, this role has been played in the beginning by the Ottoman Empire, then the Austro-Hungarian Empire and other European powers. After the Second World War, it was the Soviets and Tito that became the guardians of peace, while in 1995 this role was taken over by the Americans.¹⁴⁵

It does not take a very thorough understanding of history to prove that peace in the Balkans has been guaranteed by the powers of the time. Nevertheless, it is important to look at the way the international system has evolved through time and the role that the Balkans has played in the great powers' *Weltpolitik*.

¹⁴⁴ Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001.), p. 168.

¹⁴⁵ Urs Altermatt, *Etnocizmi në Europë*, (Tirana: Phoenix, Shtëpia e Librit dhe e Komunikimit, 2002.), p.124 or see German edition Urs Altermatt, *Dan Fanal von Sarajevo. Ethnonationalismus in Europa* Verlag(Zurich: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 1996), p.127.

With the end of the Cold War, there has been a fundamental change in the system dynamics as far as the Balkans are concerned. The Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires ensured order and stability in the area by militarily occupying the peninsula, integrating it in their respective empires and oppressing any attempt by Balkan nations to build independent states. Communism, if we consider it an imperial power due to its homogeneity, ensured peace by freezing the nation-state building process. At present, the international community is assisting the restart of this process. However, there seems to be a consensus around the fatalist approach that there can be no peace and stability in the Balkans unless an imperial power is interested in enforcing it. The religious and ethnic problems seem to be too overwhelming to be solved by Balkan states alone. This logic implies that only nation-states may be strong enough to manage their affairs successfully, and since the map of the Balkans resembles the leopard's skin this is practically impossible. The state building process will be accompanied by endless conflicts, unless peace is imposed by outside parties. Obviously, the state building dynamic differs in different Balkan states. However, the idea that states where different cultures, ethnicities and religions coexist will be unable to achieve internal stability and growth is often an *a priori* conclusion. It is true that the state building process presents more challenges in multiethnic states. This statement is particularly true in the Balkans considering the historical legacy of war and hatred amongst its nations. Must we look for the explanation of weak and often failed states in the ethnic mix of their population? For reasons that will be explained below, we will look beyond this traditional paradigm in order to isolate the factors that bring about the weak state phenomenon. Albania is the best illustration for the

reasons of our search beyond the ethnic paradigm since it is a nation state whose population belongs by and large to only one ethnicity.¹⁴⁶

In almost all the Balkan states that have ended up in official or unofficial international protectorates, the process has culminated with a military intervention in the part of the international community. This is true for Albania as well despite the uniethnic nature of its population.

All the Balkan states, including Albania, embarked on a new state building process after the end of the Cold War. What nature did this process take in the ex-Yugoslav republics? Did their political elites return to the nationalist standards after fifty years of forced silence under Tito's reign? Remembering Peter Lukas' maxim that nationalism is the only populist political religion,¹⁴⁷ we may understand that the pull towards this 'new' creed was almost irresistible. Even more so when liberal principles offered the possibility to freely choose the forbidden road. In 1990, almost all the ex-Yugoslav republics were embracing nationalism in order to pursue their territorial ambitions while internally they were, at the very least, paying lip service to liberal democratic principles in the building of their domestic institutions.¹⁴⁸ The study of this dual approach has certain theoretical implications such as: is it possible for two antagonistic ideologies like nationalism and liberal democracy to coexist successfully?

¹⁴⁶ Albania has a Greek minority (2%), a Slav minority (0.8%) and a Roma community, *CIA World Fact book*, 1998.

¹⁴⁷ Urs Altermatt, p. 78.

¹⁴⁸ Aldo Bumci, *Macedonia and the Albanians: The Confines of Ethnic Conflict* (Tirana – Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2001), p.32

In the case of Albania, the communist regime created a number of historical myths, as was the case usually in the Balkans. However, at no point did the regime build its propaganda on the main concept of nationalism—in the words of Altermatt— the idea that the nation represents a natural unit. In practical terms, this would mean the unification of all Albanian territories in the Balkans in a single state. During the communist era, Kosovo or the other Albanian territories in Yugoslavia were never mentioned in school textbooks or official propaganda. Neither were they a target of state policy. Instead, proletarian internationalism was practically sanctified. A professor of the University of Prishtina remembers that in the seventies Albanians spoke incessantly about their “Chinese brothers” while they hardly mentioned the Kosovo Albanians.¹⁴⁹ Thus, after the fall of communism, Albanians were presented with a dilemma: Should they embrace nationalism as their political ideology in order to build an ethnically clean state? Fifteen years later, we know the answer. It is a resounding “no”. However, the juxtaposition of the two different experiences becomes necessary in order to answer the question: Why did countries that wholeheartedly embraced nationalism and countries that wholeheartedly rejected it end up as weak states? Why did both case studies end up with potentially explosive conflicts that may threaten European security?

Analyzing the developments in the Balkans also opens up new insights on the debate on the return of nationalism¹⁵⁰ as an ideology at a time when liberal democracy was considered to be triumphant by most academics.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ The communist regime adopted extremely harsh punitive measures towards Kosovo Albanians that crossed the border to Albania. Moreover, Kosovo Albanians that lived in Albania were under the constant surveillance of the secret police, and a great number of them ended up suffering prison terms or exile.

¹⁵⁰ Urs Altermatt, p.124.

4.3. IN SEARCH OF LEGITIMACY

Ten years after the fall of communism Albania is a weak state. The degree of its weakness has varied throughout the decade. During the transition from the old to the new regime in 1991-1992, state institutions by and large stopped fulfilling their functions. There were no internal conflicts, but occasional bursts of anarchy provoked hardly any response by the state. The communist regime had completely lost its legitimacy. The state tried to win back its hold on power by a clumsy use of force that did not work. Except for the secret service, the other institutions sharing the state monopoly on violence, the police and the army, chose a neutral stance or tried to stop the violence. After the free elections of 1992, the new democratic government started a process of stabilization that by 1995 seemed to have succeeded. However, in 1997 the state imploded losing control of the whole country except for parts of Tirana. Presently, it has been able to reestablish its control throughout its territory with international assistance. If we define 'security' beyond the narrow sense of physical security, than the citizens of Albania do not have security. Despite being protected by law, property rights and other fundamental freedoms are abused by the judiciary.

¹⁵¹ Fukuyama, p. 167.

The system does not function well because of pervading corruption and the politicization of state bureaucracy. The crime rate has varied according to the weakness of the state. Blood feuds, based on the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini, have reappeared in the North of the country as a sign of distrust on the ability of the state to impose law and order.¹⁵² Nepotism and politically oriented appointments have created a bureaucracy that is professionally incapable and wholly corrupt. Tax collection, the main indicator of a reasonably competent state, is still a problem. According to official statistics, over ninety percent of the population in Vlora and Shkodra, two main cities, do not pay their electricity bills. The state has failed to provide society with some of its most immediate needs such as energy and water supply. Economic opportunities are few and far between. A large proportion of the labor force has emigrated to Greece¹⁵³ or Italy and other Western countries. Parallel with the massive migration waves for security or economic reasons, the country is also facing with "brain drain"¹⁵⁴ phenomenon. According to empirical studies on the brain drain, Albania has the highest rate in South East- Europe with the possible exception of Bosnia and Serbia which have gone through dilapidating wars in the last decade. Up to 1998, 35,8 percent of graduate degree professors had emigrated. The University of Tirana alone has lost some 40 percent of its academic staff of which 90 percent are under 40 years old.¹⁵⁵ The reason for this migration is not simply to be found in the lack of opportunities. The absence of fair competition and the arrogant disregard for values contribute to it as well. The state does not offer bureaucratic placements to the

¹⁵² It is important to point now that the modern version of the bloodfeud phenomenon is a crude corruption of the provisions of the Canon of Leke Dukagjini.

¹⁵³ There are no reliable statistics on the Albanians that work in Greece since the majority cross the border illegally.

¹⁵⁴ The term "Brain Drain" was first coined by the Royal Society of London to describe the outflow of scientist and technologists to the United States and Canada in the 1950s.

¹⁵⁵ Eno Trimcev, *Albanian Brain Drain Turning the Tide* (Tirana : Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2005), p. 21.

most deserving candidates but to members of the political clan in power. Or, sometimes, job placements are decided in favor of the candidate that is willing to pay the highest bribe. The psychosis of migration as the only way to assure one's survival is still prevalent. The country's recurring instability and the resulting absence of faith in the future continue to fuel this trend. As in a number of other Balkan countries, the "state capture" phenomenon remains a clear and present danger. This is not simply a Balkan phenomenon. But, its dynamics do vary from country to country.

From the security perspective, environmental concerns have reached a critical level. During the communist era, environmental problems were mitigated somewhat by the strong degree of public order. These problems sprung from the outdated technology of great industrial plants and even the implementation of statements of the type "Let us turn the hills and mountains into agricultural land." However, after the fall of communism, people profited from the weakness of the state and caused heavy damage to the environment for economic profit.

The fall of communism as an ideology and as an economic model-and Albania had adopted a purely Stalinist one- brought about the fall of the coercive state machinery and marked a severe drain on state legitimacy. As a matter of fact, the regime started to lose its legitimacy slowly but surely since the fifties although the process really picked up its pace in the regime's last decade after the complete isolation of the country. At the beginning, it based its legitimacy on the peasants who made up the overwhelming majority of the population and were extremely poor. At the beginning, reforms in agriculture and

education and initial improvements in health care increased the state's legitimacy. At the end of World War II, Albania was economically, culturally and politically backward. The country had undertaken no reforms in agriculture, which was its more important economic sector. At the end of the Second World War, the communist regime gradually started the process of collectivization in the industrial sector first and, after the mid sixties, in agriculture.¹⁵⁶ Between the end of 1945 and the end of 1950 the share of industrial production from private enterprises fell from 83% to 3 %. Against this background, even minimal advances in the quality of daily life increased the state's legitimacy. Moreover, the fact that the communists were identified as the ones that most ably fought the Nazi invaders definitely helped.

These good foundations of legitimacy were gradually lost as a result of the gradual failure of the economic and political system until in 1990 the regime had lost any persuasive reason to stay in power.

With the victory of the first opposition party in 1992, the state won back a large degree of legitimacy. This legitimacy was based on moral reasons even more strongly than on the electoral results. The communists were the ones that the population identified as guilty for its extreme poverty. Many of the reforms undertaken by the first non-communist government provided another immediate source of legitimacy. As a matter of fact, it was still too early to evaluate the success of the reforms. However, their early effects in a country where terror had been the glue that held the system together triggered

¹⁵⁶ Michael Kaser "Economic Continuities in Albania's Turbulent History" *Europe-Asia Studies*, No.4, (2001): p. 628

enthusiasm among the masses. Thus, despite the fact that the state could not provide the services that it was obliged to, it was seen as legitimate. Human rights reforms, and the gradual improvement of the economy-mostly thanks to EU help were other sources of legitimacy.

Another source of legitimacy for the new government flowed from the economic and political support that the international community provided the new regime. The West supported the new political processes unequivocally. Thus, with the approval of the opposition, in 1991 Albania was accepted as a member of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The political elite officially adopted the objective of breaking down the barriers of isolation and bringing Albania back to the family of European nations. International institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) set up office in Tirana in order to assist the country's transition to a market economy. Despite the government's rather populist legitimacy, the Albanian state at this time remained weak due to its inability to provide public goods and its absence in the more remote areas of the country. What is more, given the lack of resources and bureaucratic tradition, it was quite possible that after a short period of consolidation due to favorable circumstances the state would weaken again. Looking back at the first post-communist decade, we may conclude that the state's inability to increase or even preserve its existing legitimacy remains the main cause of its weakness.

Almost all the post-communist governments¹⁵⁷ have suffered a "legitimacy crisis" which has meant that the Albanian state has been seen as illegitimate by large segments of its population. This legitimacy loss has caused a cycle of recurring internal crises, of which the 1997 implosion was the most challenging. It is important to make a distinction between the concepts 'government' and 'state.' At a first glance, the two concepts are synonymous. However, if we define 'government' as representative of the political grouping that has earned the mandate to govern through free elections or violence, the two concepts acquire different meanings. For example, in a liberal democracy a government may lose its mandate through elections, while the state as a set of institutions and rules continues to exist undisturbed. Even in an authoritarian regime where governance has been earned and lost through violence, despite the fact that some of the states institutions may cease to work briefly, the state itself continues to exist. A state is not the offices of the prime minister, president, or cabinet ministers. The state is the daily tradition of its citizens.

The loss of state legitimacy starts with the loss of government legitimacy. In a state where the government is viewed as illegitimate, state institutions become less able to do their work. The identification of the government with the state has serious implications for weak states especially during transitory periods from one regime to another. As we will see later in more detail, in Albania and Macedonia the creation of a new government as a result of more or less free elections, has been accompanied by the rebuilding of the state

¹⁵⁷ From the point of view of the procedures of the turnover of power, the only government that may be considered as legitimate was the first anti-communist government that came to power through the free elections of March 22nd, 1992.

through the creation of a new bureaucracy loyal to the party in power. Two are the main causes of loss of legitimacy:

- 1- Weak economic performance that deteriorates in complete failure (as was the case in 1997 in Albania);¹⁵⁸
- 2- A lack of regime accountability as Daniel Byman and Stephen van Evera termed it. "Regimes that are not accountable to their populations have less incentive to serve their public well, so they serve them poorly. Incompetence and corruption are their hallmarks. They often cannot be removed from power peacefully, thus often compelling their opponents to resort to force."¹⁵⁹

During a transition period, governments tend to lose their accountability due to the deformation of the institutional procedures through which they come to power and the absence of procedures that make them transparent to the public and their political opponents. A combination of these two causes may lead to a weak institutional performance and, in the worst-case scenario, to a 'perfect failure' as was the case of Albania during the 1997 crisis. Moreover, the failure to win back the lost legitimacy may bring about social unrest with potentially grave implications for national security.

Let us investigate the dynamics and implications of the loss of legitimacy as a result of poor economic performance. However, we have to keep in mind that this factor is

¹⁵⁸ Genc Ruli, "Albania: The weakness of the State" in Wim van Meurs, ed, *Prospect and Risks Beyond EU Enlargement Southeastern Europe: Weak states and Strong International Support* (Leske + Budrich, Opladen, 2003): p. 154

¹⁵⁹ Daniel Byman and Stephen Van Evera, "Why they fight: Hypotheses on the causes of contemporary Deadly Conflict", *Security Studies* 7, no 3 (1998): p. 32.

closely related to the other factor of legitimacy loss: regime accountability. As a matter of fact, loss of legitimacy starts with the absence or loss of government accountability.

In 1990 the Albanian economy hit what we can safely call 'ground zero'. The tasks of any new government were so complex that they could discourage even the bravest souls. Sali Berisha (Albanian President, 1992-1997) remembers a meeting with French President Chirac only a few months after being elected the president of the poorest country in Europe:

"After speaking to him about the country's economic situation, the wasteland left behind by the communist regime, the absence of infrastructure, the primitive technology, the deplorable situation in the healthcare system, and the absence of even staple foods, I started presenting to him with some enthusiasm the reforms that we had to undertake in order to begin the rebuilding process. However, Chirac interrupted my enthusiasm with the question: Are you not afraid of being President of a country in Albania's situation?"¹⁶⁰

In 1992, one could notice a number of factors that threatened the country with complete economic collapse:

First, the "economic inventory" that the country inherited in 1992 was rich only in its poverty across the board: agriculture, the most important economic sector, was in disarray with uncertainty over the future of the public agricultural land and primitive technology. The heavy industry had stopped producing anything of value in the last twenty years and had become a heavy burden on the state budget. Road and

¹⁶⁰ A conversation with the ex-President of Albania Sali Berisha. Mr. Berisha was elected President of Albania after the victory of the Democratic Party in the elections of March 22nd, 1992.

communications infrastructure was thoroughly backward in a country where private cars were prohibited by law and only a fraction of the population owned telephones.

Second, the old communist regime had stifled any type of private or individual initiative. The state controlled all economic property, communication media and political debate. Not only was it responsible for the security and defense of its citizens, but it also undertook to secure them job placements, education, and healthcare. The state even controlled the movement of its citizens within the country. Thus, the individual had become completely dependent on the state. This mentality coupled with ignorance about the new system and its values, promised to create a real problem for the new state. Moreover, citizens' ignorance about the market system created unjustifiably high expectations.

Third, the creation of a new economic system and the process of rebuilding state institutions had to take place simultaneously. A new government bureaucracy was needed to take over the new functions of the state. Ten years ago, the task of institution building was taken very lightly. It was supposed that the new state would spring up naturally on the ashes of the old one and the goodwill of its citizens.¹⁶¹

Fourth, the beginning of economic reforms in Albania in 1992 coincided with the start of the bloody Yugoslav conflict. This impacted negatively the success of the reforms

¹⁶¹ A similar mentality plagued all the countries that jettisoned communism in 1989 as well. But, within a few months it became obvious that the most challenging task in these countries was the building of the new post-communist order rather than the victory over communism. Leaving Russia –the obvious example aside– even the Central European countries like Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic ‘suffered’ from nostalgia for the good old days of peace and order. The euphoria of the revolution and the high expectations that most people harbored towards the new regime were the main factors for this phenomenon.

in two ways. First, the start of the Yugoslav wars made communication between the countries of the region very difficult and, more importantly it scared away many potential investors. Second, at a time when the economy should have been the main concern of the Albanian government, the danger of a war with Yugoslavia (Serbia) over Kosovo diverted government energies away from domestic problems.

Fifth, the political elite that came to power in 1992 lacked any policy-making experience and, despite the fact that large segments of its members were educated in the West, it was by and large formed in a dictatorial system. This had left deep imprints in the mentality of the new elite, which tended to be exclusionary, authoritarian, and non-democratic in practice though not in form.

The first challenge for the democratic government that emerged from the March 1992 elections was to arrest the rapid economic deterioration that had paralyzed most aspects of social and economic life.¹⁶² A number of immediate reforms such as price liberalization, fiscal reforms and the beginning of privatization process aimed to break the vicious cycle of deteriorating economic parameters. They were successful to a degree. At the same time, a considerable amount of international help in food and clothing served to cover the immediate needs of the population. After a number of structural reforms that included the privatization of agricultural land, dwellings, and small and medium-sized enterprises and the creation of a legal framework vital for the beginning of a market economy, came the first encouraging signs of macroeconomic success. The West greeted

¹⁶² For a better understanding of Albania's economic situation before the transition period, see "Albania: From Isolation Toward Reform" (IMF Occasional Paper No 98, IMF, Washington D.C September 1992)

Albania's early successes warmly. The IMF and the WB presented Albania as a shining example of a successful nation in transition. In 1993 the real GDP growth rate was 11 percent, in 1995 it was 13.3 percent and in 1996 it was 9.1 percent. Yearly inflation fell from 250 percent in 1991 to single digit numbers by 1995. However, in 1997 as developments in Albania were being applauded by the international financial institutions, the country was engulfed by a heavy economic crisis triggered by the bankruptcy of the pyramid schemes.

In Albania, an informal market existed since 1990-1991. Mainly foreign exchange dealers and companies taking deposits and making loans made it up. According to Chris Jarvis, these companies were illegal because they were not licensed by the state. There is no evidence of the deposit rates that these companies offered to their clients. However, local authorities and foreign observers, including the IMF, considered these companies as benign and indeed making an important contribution to economic growth. Given the manifest deficiencies of the formal banks, these companies were probably the best intermediaries for savings in Albania and the investment they funded among the most profitable. At the same time, other companies appeared that started borrowing by offering very attractive interest rates of up to 5 percent monthly. More importantly, these companies were neither investing nor lending to companies with palpable investment opportunities. Their numbers started multiplying until, by 1996, 16 such companies operated in the informal Albanian market. Five of these pyramid schemes held the majority of the savings of Albanian citizens.

In 1996, almost all of these companies, such as Vefa, Gjallica, and Kamberi increased their interest rates from 4-5 percent to 6-10 percent. In the second half of 1996, Xhaferri- one of the pyramid schemes that together with Populli had accumulated the savings of 2 million investors – increased its interest rates to almost 50 percent calling on the investors that it would triple their money deposits within three months. In response, the other pyramid schemes increased their interest rates to similar levels. According to Jervis, pyramid schemes are similar to the Ponzi model where the latest investors pay off those that have invested first. Approximately 1,600,000 citizens, almost half of the population, had deposited their savings in these pyramid schemes. In the words of Carlos Elbirt, head of the World Bank's Resident Office in Tirana, investing in these schemes became overnight a national sport in Albania.¹⁶³ In 1997, the invested sum reached a staggering US\$ 1.2 billion or over 50 percent of the country's GDP. These funds included the remittances of about 400,000 Albanians working abroad mainly in Greece and Italy. Although there is no clear evidence, there is a suspicion of a possible connection between the pyramid schemes and financial crimes such as money laundering. What were the reasons that brought about this economic catastrophe?

According to Jarvis, one of the main causes for the start of the 'pyramid schemes phenomenon' was "the inadequacy of the formal financial system."¹⁶⁴ Despite the reforms undertaken in the 1992-1997 interval, the fiscal system in Albania suffered from severe distortion. However, the defects of the fiscal system do not explain the whole story. Another reason is the fact that the state as a phenomenon appeared in the Albanian scene

¹⁶³ Carlos Elbirt, *Albania under the shadow of the pyramids*, at <http://www.worldbank.org>.

¹⁶⁴ Chris Jarvis, *The rise and fall of the pyramid schemes in Albania*, IMF Working Paper, WP 99/98, IMF 1999.), p.17.

before the beginnings of industry, free markets and their regulatory pressures. However, we still do not have a complete understanding of the reasons of Albania's economic catastrophe in 1996-1997 that caused the fall of state institutions within a few weeks. Citizens blamed the government for the loss of their investments. State institutions were paralyzed by the fury of the masses, the state lost the legitimacy of the use of force, and the country was engulfed by anarchy soon after the start of mass protests in some of its main cities. A study of the dynamic of the events of 1997 shows that economic and historical factors alone cannot explain the collapse of the state. The main reasons must be looked for in the performance of state institutions. It is these institutions that proved to be weak and, moreover, their political legitimacy squandered.

From an economic perspective, even without the pyramid schemes crisis, state legitimacy was weak. In the timeframe 1992-1996, Albania's economy was unable to supply the tax base necessary for the provision of public goods. Thus, since the state was unable to fulfill its obligations, it remained weak. Other reasons, which go beyond loss of economic legitimacy, explain the 1997 collapse. Potentially, weak states may implode completely. According to George Sorenson, some countries may be less developed economically, but they are not weak states (although they may exhibit some elements of weak statehood). On the other hand, not all economically underdeveloped states are weak in political institutional terms as demonstrated by China or Egypt.¹⁶⁵ Albania is a typical case study of a weak state in economic and political- institutional terms. The reasons for

¹⁶⁵ Georg Sorenson, *Changes in Statehood: The transformation of International Relations*, (London-Palgrave, 2001), p. 86.

the 1997 failure, and to a lesser extent for the present failure as well, must be looked for in the weak development of its institutions and the low level of legitimacy that they enjoy.

4.3.1. Democracy and State Building

In 1990, the process of state building in Albania was entering a new phase. As we have already seen, if we consider the country's early communist and pre-communist tradition, and the absence of an efficient economy, this process could not be easy. However, theoretically it is supposed to be easier than the same process in post-colonial states, which make up the majority of the community of weak or failed states. According to Georg Sorensen, the reasons for this are found in the legacy of colonialism and the cultural, ethnic and religious divisions that plague their societies.¹⁶⁶

Albania has a uniethnic society that is not beset by cultural divisions. Even though the Albanians have embraced three different religions, there are no actual religious-based social chasms. Traditionally, the different religions have coexisted peacefully. Having built their identity on secular grounds, Albanians have never identified themselves closely with religious faith. From this point of view, the on-going state building process in the post-communist era was supposed to be a great deal easier than in Macedonia where different ethnic, cultural and religious groups have to coexist and participate in nation building.

¹⁶⁶ Sorensen, p.184.

According to Alltermmat (2000) and Sorensen (2001), a state may not be considered a nation-state merely on the basis of the existence of a single homogenous ethnic group. If most strong states happen to be nation-states, it does not mean that a common ethnicity and culture is enough to achieve this success. Even if they do not represent a single group, societies of strong states exhibit a remarkably high sense of cohesion. On the other hand, Balkan societies, even when uniethnic, tend to lack cohesiveness. More specifically, Albanian society has been doubly isolated and divided. First, due to the policy of isolation followed by the communist regime, economic, political and even simple social links with other countries have been almost non-existent. Official propaganda constantly propagated the existence of an eminent danger from abroad. This danger usually consisted of a coalition of enemy states whose aims ranged from the penetration of bourgeoisie ideologies in the country to the military overthrow of the regime. But, despite the imaginary external threat and the constant attempts at mobilizing Albanian society in response to this "threat", cohesiveness was not achieved. Second, the isolation and divisions *within* Albanian society have had deeply negative effects. The categories "us" (the Albanians) and "them" (the multitude of foreign enemies) was applied to the domestic scene as well. According to official propaganda, domestic enemies were more dangerous than the foreign ones. The constant tension and divisions that ensued caused a long-term chasm in Albanian society.

The relative lack of industrial development that slowed down the processes of urbanization and modernization contributed negatively as well. The Communist state took over all industrial and commercial enterprises, asserting a monopoly in both domestic and

foreign trade in accordance with the Stalinist economic model, Albania's economic plan emphasized the rapid development of heavy industry over agriculture and a light industry¹⁶⁷ In 1990, over 60 percent of the population lived in villages, usually leading a rather isolated lifestyle. The state-nation relationship in strong states encompasses the relationship between society and state and vice versa, with its duties, obligations and rights and privileges. In the Balkans, and particularly in Albania, the idea of a state with its rights and obligations has not taken firm root yet. Traditionally, the individual has obeyed the state only due to fear. The state never hesitated to make use of its monopoly of violence in order to impose its will on the individual.

The absence of cohesion in Balkan societies coupled with the weak society-state relationship and the backward agrarian economies have slowed down the state building process and the strengthening of the respective states. To the general low degree of legitimacy that these states normally enjoy, we must add the loss of political legitimacy that the post-communist regimes suffered in the last decade of the twentieth century.

After 1990, the new regimes' political legitimacy and accountability had to be based on the principles of liberal democracy since almost all Balkan states embraced liberal democracy as the new organizing ideology. The legitimacy of the new post-communist governments depended on their ability to obey the rules and fulfill the obligations pertaining to a democratic regime. "Legitimacy in 1991 flows not from the

¹⁶⁷ Elez Biberaj, *Albania in Transition the Rocky Road to democracy*, (New York: WestviewPress , 1998), p.21

barrel of gun but from the will of people”¹⁶⁸ wrote US Secretary of State James Baker after the failure of the *coup d'état* in the USSR. It was thought that the creation of democratic systems of governance in the Balkans would restore the state's legitimacy lost in the last years of communism, and it would open up the way to economic development and political emancipation. Furthermore, the transformation of communist, authoritarian regimes to liberal democracies was a vital investment for maintaining peace and order between the different Balkan countries.

In 1990, the legitimacy of the emerging regimes was being based on democracy, since democracy “is beginning to be seen as the *sine qua non* for validating governance...” and “it is not merely the law of a particular state. It is also becoming a requirement of international law, applicable to all and implemented by all through global standards...”¹⁶⁹ A decade later, all Balkan states are weak, and often non-functional, democracies. The failure to build a functional democratic system is one of the main causes for the weakness of Balkan states such as Macedonia and Albania.

4.3.2 Albanian Democracy - a zero sum game

The first immediate reason for the government's loss of political legitimacy stands in its failure to organize free and fair elections. In Albania, the tradition of free elections

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Franch, “The Emerging Right to Democratic Governance”, *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 86, 1992): p. 46.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Franch, p. 47.

with multiple candidates and different political parties came to a tragic end in 1945.¹⁷⁰ The war's victors manipulated those elections and as a consequence the candidates of the Communist Party, who ran under the banner of the National-Liberation Front, won a landslide victory.¹⁷¹ Immediately afterwards, the regime undertook a massive campaign of repression and terror against the liberal opposition that was just appearing in the Albanian political scene. In 1946, a number of leaders of the opposition, men that stood in the forefront of the struggle for democracy, were arrested and shot or suffered long prison terms. Since then, elections were proof of the tragic absurdity that made up the political realities of the time in Albania. They were organized every four years in order to 'elect' candidates for the members of the unicameral legislature, without any alternative political parties – their creation was considered to be a 'betrayal of the Fatherland' – or even alternative candidates militating within the party in power. Obviously, the candidates of the Democratic Front, a front organization for the Communist Party, won repeatedly with fantastic results such as 99.99% of votes cast. On the other hand, almost 100 percent of voters would routinely participate in the elections. Any citizen that dared not to vote was immediately labeled an "enemy".

Such was the background with which Albania went to the first multi-party polls.¹⁷²

Candidates from the first opposition party to be formed in Albania, the Democratic Party

¹⁷⁰ The US and other Western governments refused to recognize the government that emerged out of these elections because of the refusal of the Albanian Communist Party to hold free and fair multiparty elections.

¹⁷¹ The APC was not yet a legal political subject.

¹⁷² The first pluralist parliamentary elections in Albania were held in March 31st 1991. Although the Albanian Labor Party (the Communist Party) remained in power, the elections foretold fundamental changes in Albanian society and politics. The Democratic Party, the first opposition force in the communist regime in Albania had won sweeping victories in the major cities of the country. The climate of radical changes that had already taken place in the former communist East forbade similar transformations in Albania. In

(DP), together with the candidates of a few smaller parties, ran against the candidates of the Party of Labor (the Communist Party).

The electoral process took place in an anarchic atmosphere with sporadic acts of violence. The government tried to use violence in order to intimidate its citizens, while opposition candidates were often prevented from campaigning by the secret police. Episodes of violence, though often isolated, engulfed even a number of the main cities. Three opposition supporters were killed in the city of Shkodra during an electoral meeting. The opposition parties denounced the manipulation and they were very close to rejecting the elections' final results. The government's attempts to manipulate the first multiparty elections produced two dilemmas that were critical for Albania's future. First, would future governments have the willingness to, or even be capable of organizing free and fair elections? Second, would any future transfer of power happen peacefully? Would the losers gracefully accept the decision of the electorate? Unfortunately, even today the answer to these questions is not unequivocally positive.

Except for the first post-communist government that came to power due to the opposition's victory in the elections of 22nd March 1992, all the governments of the last decade have suffered from a crisis of legitimacy originating from the controversial electoral processes through which they came to power. The 1992 elections were the only uncontested parliamentary elections in Albania, during the last ten years. However, they were not representative of the electoral processes that took place later on, since they

less than a year the country embarked on early elections that brought to power the Democratic Party replacing the communists who had been ruling the country for almost half a century.

brought about a regime change rather than a change in government. Since then, the history of parliamentary elections has become a history of the loser always contesting the results.¹⁷³ Since 1992, there has been no case – except the municipal elections of 26th June 1992 and the constitutional referendum of 1994¹⁷⁴ – of a transfer of power through free and fair elections. Thus, the country's stability has suffered, state institutions have been progressively weakened, and after the controversial elections of 1996, they collapsed and the country was engulfed by anarchy.

The transition model goes some way towards explaining some of the problems with the new democratic system being build in Albania. However, according to a study by the Albanian Institute for International Studies, manipulated elections and violent power transfers cannot be explained simply by the difficulties presented by the transition process.¹⁷⁵ Many of the phenomena Albania's democratization has been going through

¹⁷³ In May 26th 1996 parliamentary elections were held. This was the first of the many tests the fragile Albanian democracy would fail. The Socialist Party (the former Communist Party) the major opposition party at the time along with some other smaller parties, such as the Democratic Alliance and the Social-democratic party walked out of the electoral process in its concluding phase, condemning it as an electoral charade. The socialists and their allies did not recognize the election results and boycotted the parliament that resulted from these elections. The parliamentary elections of June 29th 1997, held under extraordinary conditions brought to power the Socialist Party and its smaller allies, the Social Democrats, Democratic Alliance, the Party for Human Rights. The Democratic Party did not recognize these elections as free and fair. In October 1st 2000 periodic local elections were held. Local government was in the hands of the Democratic Party at the time. The candidates of the Socialist Party won these elections. The Democratic Party did not recognize the results of these elections, claiming that the electoral process had been manipulated and calling on its wining candidates to boycott municipal and commune councils. In June 24th 2001 parliamentary elections were held in a very confrontational political climate. This was the second test, after that of 1996, in which domestic actors had to show whether they were capable to conduct electoral processes that would be accepted by all the parties involved. The opposition, united in the Coalition for Victory, denounced the June 24th parliamentary election results, claiming that the process had been manipulated. Consequently the opposition set as a precondition for its entry into parliament the return of those seats that it considers stolen by the Socialist Party.

¹⁷⁴ Municipal elections were held on June 26th 1992, four months after the parliamentary elections that brought DP to power. Despite the fact that the results confirmed a notable increase in support for SP, the DP government recognized the results. Furthermore, the opposition victory in the constitutional referendum of November 1994 were recognized as well.

¹⁷⁵ Blendi Kajsia, Aldo Bumci, and Albert Rakipi *Albania a Weak Democracy, a Weak State*. (Tirana : Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2002), p. 27.

can no longer be considered transitional. Weak or failing institutions, eroding legitimacy of political institutions, distrust of political parties... can no longer be considered temporary distortion or symptoms of transitions toward democracy.¹⁷⁶ It is true that the holding of multiparty elections is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a system to be called 'democratic'. As previous research has shown, it is very difficult to build a functioning democracy without a sound economy and a strong civil society. However, analyzing the reasons behind the failure to conduct free and fair elections will provide us with a basic understanding of the weaknesses of Albanian democracy.

The failure to hold free elections and the violence and anarchy that has often been a part of Albanian electoral processes have changed the nature and the extent of the international community's involvement. Domestically, Albanian democracy may be defined as 'contested democracy'. On the other hand, from the point of view of the role of the international community in it, Albanian democracy may be defined as a 'negotiated democracy'. The reasons behind the present situation lie behind the fact that Albanian democracy has been built and practiced in *zero-sum game* terms.

The formula that has been used in policy formulation and implementation has been "*self/other*", rather than "*both/and*". The political elite has chosen to promote the social chasm in good vs. evil or, in local terms, *democrat vs. communist*, as the way to political triumph. Both political camps have tried to convince the electorate that they represent the good, while the other side represents evil.

¹⁷⁶ Blendi Kajsia *Albanian Democratization in Search of Accountability* ed. Eno Trimceev (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2005), p.13.

The extremely polarized Albanian political scene has been and continues to be dominated by two political parties: the Democratic Party (DP) and the Socialist Party (SP). A number of smaller parties exist as well, but they behave as the satellites of one or the other major parties, largely depending on the latter's largesse for their existence.¹⁷⁷ The polarization of Albanian politics is largely based on the ideological "baggage" of the social divisions of the communist era. However, despite the fact that those social divisions have been projected into the present, other factors influence the present polarization as well. The fact that political elites have tried hard to promote this divisiveness into the electoral masses for their own political gains, they have been largely unable to polarize Albanian society and divide it into two bitterly opposed enemy camps. The conflict in Albania has remained within the realm of the political elites and a small number of their militants without being transformed into a social conflict. With the DP victory in 1992, the society was highly polarized and the need for reconciliation was stronger than ever. It is quite possible that the landslide DP victory was achieved thanks to the opposition's motto: "together in suffering and guilt". But, despite such a promising beginning, the new elite slowly distanced itself from the slogan "oppositionists but brothers", formulating its strategies in "win/lose" terms.

¹⁷⁷ Some of these satellite parties around DP are the National Front, the Legality Party and the Republican Party. On the other hand, the SP satellite parties are the Social Democratic Party, the Agrarian Party and the Party of National Unity. As a matter of fact, the Social Democratic Party and the Democratic Alliance Party have tended to cooperate with whichever of the two big parties was in power. All of the satellite parties have been unable to secure their own parliamentary seats. Instead, they have always profited from DP or SP largesse. Only in the last parliamentary elections the Reformed Democratic Party, a break-away party from the larger DP, won 6 percent of the national vote thus becoming the first party to win parliamentary seats on its own merits.

The struggle to win elections through any means possible is based on the "winner takes all" principle. Also, the holding of elections after the country passed some great crisis meant that the winning party secured an absolute majority (two thirds or more) of seats in parliament. Such a complete control of the legislature has translated into total domination of state institutions and the bureaucracy by the party in power. With this mentality, even if it would win 49 percent of the seats, an Albanian opposition party would be completely sidelined from the country's political processes. It has no said in the decision-making process and sometimes, its cadres are persecuted. It is absent from policy-making discussions, and its access to public media is severely limited. And, the last ten years have shown that the governing party may use state institutions that by law are supposed to be depoliticized (the courts, police and the secret service) against the opposition. Albanian political parties function on "either/or", "self /other" and not "both/and" principles, which are part of the zero-sum game strategy. The political party in power applies these principles in the building of state institutions and in policy formulation and implementation processes.

The post-communist state has represented only a part of society. This is one of the main characteristics of weak states, be they nation-states as in the Albanian case, or multinational states as in the case of Macedonia.¹⁷⁸ In Albania, the state represents that part of society that is formally tied to the party in power through ideology and party membership. In practice, this part of society remains united through clan ties more than political belief.

¹⁷⁸ See Albert Rakipi, "Weak State – New Dynamics of Security", *Romanian Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 4, (1999.): p. 75

The multiple personnel changes that have occurred in state bureaucracy during the SP period in power constitute a clear example. Despite the fact that the party had overwhelming control of the legislature, it changed Prime Ministers several times a process that was accompanied with extensive new appointments in the cabinet and government departments.¹⁷⁹ The Albanian state is primarily identified with the Government. This has legitimized the changes in bureaucratic personnel every time the government is changed. As a result, state bureaucracy has been extremely politicized. The state is also identified with the party in power. Thus, when a party comes to power, it reshapes the state appointing its party members in the armed forces, police, secret services, Foreign Service, fiscal administration, customs, and even in the universities and other academic institutions. Political appointments are also practiced in the justice system and the courts of all levels.¹⁸⁰ In this way the governing party ensures a complete control of the state, while unwittingly guaranteeing the state's weakness since every time there is a power transfer its institutions have to be rebuilt from the ground up. In this way, with the triumph of the party-state formula, the state building process in post-communist Albania resembles the same process during the communist regime. Thus, the Albanian state

¹⁷⁹ Even during the short-lived socialist administration of Prime Minister Majko one of the first orders of business was the replacement of most of the regional police chiefs. When another socialist leader, Nano, became Prime Minister, the bureaucracy was staffed with his supporters although the existing bureaucrats were socialist appointees as well.

¹⁸⁰ When the first opposition party in Albania, the Democratic Party, came to power in 1992, many replacements were made in the state institutions. The changes affected mostly the political directors of the institutions, and even though a certain number of experts remained in the new institutions, there occurred unmotivated or politically motivated dismissal of experts. Later on when the Socialist Party—the former communist Party of Labor—came to power in 1997, it undertook a new campaign of dismissals in public administration for political motivations which led in turn to the further weakening of institutions, in panic and lack of job security. A number of experts in state institutions resigned voluntarily from work for this very reason.

resembles a private fiefdom controlled by a single man or political group. Whenever this man or group of men loses control, the new group remakes the state in the way it sits fit.

4.4. THE CRISIS OF 1997: FROM STATE WEAKNESS TO STATE COLLAPSE.

The 1997 crisis may be analyzed from a number of different perspectives.¹⁸¹ For example, sometimes it has been interpreted as part of the traditional North-South conflict. The hypothesis on which this explanation is based, states that the Northern and Southern regions of Albania have been traditionally divided on cultural, linguistic and ideological terms. More immediately, the North supported the right-wing DP while the South supported the left-wing SP.¹⁸² In more traditional terms, the social chasm is based on cultural, linguistic and religious differences.

The existence of real differences between these two regions made it all too easy for some analysts to prescribe to the North-South thesis. However, this explanation does not stand. Despite the fact that the dynamic of the crisis, including the international military intervention, suggests that the events unfolding in Albania's cities were escalating towards a Civil War, there was never any real danger of a North-South conflict. It is true that there are differences in terms of language and urbanization between the two regions. Religious differences in Albania exist only in nominal terms, while in reality they do not have an impact on social development.

¹⁸¹ Other interpretations have been given as well. For example, the conspiracy theorists believe that the 1997 crisis was caused by foreign powers intent on overthrowing Berisha's government.

¹⁸² See Roberto Morozzo Della Rocca, *Albania: le Radici della Crisi*, (Rome: Angelo Guerini e Associati SpA, 1997), p.235.

From the religious standpoint, Albania definitely is the typical example of multi-religious society¹⁸³ They become even less important when looked at from the North-South perspective. In both regions, the three religions have coexisted peacefully and thus, it becomes very hard to pinpoint any geographical divisions in terms of faith. Muslims make up the majority of the population in both regions. In terms of the Christian faith, traditionally Catholics have been concentrated in the North and Orthodox in the South, but in modern times the situation has become more 'confused' due to internal migration, intermarriages, and voluntary conversions. Although one would have expected a religious dimension to Albanian conflicts in the post communist era, neither in 1991 nor in 1997 was there any discernible religious element in the social unrest.¹⁸⁴ The structure of Albanian society seems to guarantee the peaceful coexistence between religious groups in the country.¹⁸⁵

The ideological divisions too are highly exaggerated despite the fact that there has been more support for DP in the North while the South has tended to support the SP. However, DP support has concentrated in the city of Shkodra, which is well known for its anti-communist feelings, while support in the other cities has varied greatly. Also, the fact that in Shkodra the Muslim, Catholic and, to a lesser extent Orthodox religions coexist peacefully in what is a miniature Albania, shows the fallacy of the religious divisiveness

¹⁸³ Prior to world War II, about seventy percent of Albanians were Muslims, twenty percent Eastern Orthodox and teen percent Roman catholic. "Since the second World War, no reliable census based on the religious denomination of individuals has taken place. See Tonin Gjuraj "A Stable Ecumenical Model? How religion Might Become a Political Issue in Albania" East European Quarterly, vol.34 Issue 1,(2000) : p.34.

¹⁸⁴ Miranda Vicker and James Pettifer, *Albania: From Anarchy to Balkan Identity* (London: Hurst& Company, 1997), p.107.

¹⁸⁵ Gjuraj ,p.27

argument.¹⁸⁶ Indeed, the 1997 implosion caused a number of victims but, excluding the five secret service employees that died in direct confrontation with armed rebels, the other deaths were caused simply by the anarchy, the sudden wide availability of weapons, accidents and other crimes. There was no frontal or guerrilla war, and thus there was no Civil War.

The 1997 crisis gives us a good opportunity to find out what a state is and what a state should be beyond – in Barry Buzan’s terms – holding a seat in the United Nations.¹⁸⁷ As such, similar to a number of other Balkan states, post-communist Albania exhibits some characteristics of post-colonial states, such as “a captured autonomy” based on weak administrative and institutional structures, rule based on coercion rather than rule of law, low level of state legitimacy, world market dependence, and structural heterogeneity and an underdeveloped national economy.¹⁸⁸ The reasons that caused the 1997 crisis must be looked for in the weak performance of state institutions and loss of state legitimacy. A number of signals indicated that Albania’s President Sali Berisha and the government controlled by his Democratic Party had embarked on an increasingly authoritarian course. This was evidenced particularly by the conduct of parliamentary elections of 26 May and 2 June 1996.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ See Aldo Bumci, *Debating National security* ed. Albert Rakipi, (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2004), p. 89.

¹⁸⁷ Buzan, p. 74.

¹⁸⁸ George Sorensen, *The Transformation of the State Beyond the Myth of Retreat* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), p.174.

¹⁸⁹ Ettore Greco “International Reactions to the Albanian Crisis”, *Security Dialogue*, vol 29(2) (1998): p. 203.

While the primary the roots of the crisis were political, other causes lay in the weakly developed market economy. Normal economic growth had almost come to a standstill due to the explosive growth of pyramid schemes in a country where there was no trust in the embryonic banking structures. Nine pyramid schemes stepped in the credit vacuum and were rapidly embraced by an inexperienced population eager for quick profit.¹⁹⁰ Their simultaneous collapse in early 1997 triggered a popular uprising and the country slid into anarchy.¹⁹¹

The modern state represents a specific stage in the development of human society. The state exists beyond its institutions and bureaucracy through a solid and complex relationship with society. The state cannot exist solely through its coercive institutions. In the communist era, which makes up the longest period of existence of the Albanian state, not only did the state fail to create a solid relationship with society, but the relationship, such as it was, was a very conflictual one. Loyalty to the state was based on fear and coercion, and not on faith. Social institutions remained in a primitive state of development. Not only did they fail to develop, but also they became deformed in their mandate or they were even outlawed, as was the case with the country's religious institutions. The communists undid the country's old social fabric but failed to replace it with a new, healthy one of their own making.

Seen from the point of view of the state-society relationship, the 1997 crisis was a failure of the institutions of the state. They remain weak, and their ability to pressure or

¹⁹⁰ Derek Hall "Albania in Europe: Condemned to the Periphery or Beyond" *Geopolitics*, Vol. 6, Issue 1 (2001): p. 628.

¹⁹¹ Greco, p. 204.

lobby policymakers effectively remain almost nonexistent. Albania entered the 1997 crisis as if it was a celebration. In what may be called 'collective dementia' people hurried to invest their money in the pyramid schemes. They saw their savings grow quickly, while they were living the 'capitalist dream' in the country's bars and restaurants. Getting rich quickly and without working was the new rage. By late 1996 an estimated 70 per cent of Albanian families had committed their savings to these schemes for returns of up to 50 percent per month¹⁹²

Civil society institutions failed to do anything about the coming disaster. The leaders of the religious communities did not mention a word about the danger ahead; indeed the managers of the pyramid schemes were often present in religious ceremonies. The academic community was silent too. The 'independent' media kept broadcasting or publishing the paid advertisements that called on citizens to invest their money in the "get-rich-quick" schemes. Economically weak and highly partisan, the media was still far from achieving any real independence from other actors.

Although there were no warnings from any domestic forces about the looming financial disaster, several statements by international institutions and especially from financial institutions alerted the Albanian government about the dangers of pyramid schemes. In 1996 the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund repeatedly warned that shadow economy activities and the evidently fraudulent "pyramid" money making

¹⁹² C.Elbert "Albania under the Shadow of the Pyramids", *Transition* 8/5, (1997): p.9.

schemes, ... could jeopardize Albania's economic future and its overall stability as well.¹⁹³

More arguments may be found on the weak state of Albanian economy, and especially the lack of meaningful reforms in the fiscal system. However, the main causes of the 1997 crisis were political. The 1997 implosion meant the failure of the frail Albanian democracy that was born in 1992. The citizen protests were triggered by the bankruptcy of the Ponzi schemes, but they quickly turned into an armed rebellion on the state and its institutions. In the meantime, the state had lost its right to the use of force due to the fact that the already-weak legitimacy it possessed was completely eaten away by the indifference of its institutions towards the schemes. When DP came to power in 1992, the legitimacy enjoyed by the government and by the new post-communist state was powerful. Despite the fact that this level was impossible to maintain due to painful economic reforms undertaken by the Berisha administration, the government and the state continued to be viewed as legitimate. By 1995, the success of the administration's reforms was tangible. Within a small period of time, Albania was able to pierce through the extreme isolation inherited by communism. In 1995, what used to be the most isolated country in the world, was a member of OSCE, the European Council, and the first member of NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative. Good relations with European countries and the EU helped the government as an important source of legitimacy. At least as important was the wholehearted support the administration received from the USA? American support for the Albanian government was based on the progress of the reforms

¹⁹³ Ettore Greco "International Reactions to the Albanian Crisis", *Security Dialogue*, vol 29(2) (1998): p. 203.

but also on the strategic importance of Albania, which was ready to offer NATO and the US all the support they needed in a region that was becoming increasingly problematic. However, after the 1996 elections the government quickly started losing its legitimacy.

After the 1997 crisis, another theory arose according to which the extent of the DP victory in those elections was positively influenced by the operation of the pyramid schemes. According to a poll commissioned by the US Information Agency, and overwhelming majority of Albanians, 86 percent, said the economy was better, while 75 percent had a favorable opinion of Berisha.¹⁹⁴ However, the democratic electoral process suffered a great setback. The socialist opposition and its minor allies boycotted the process in its closing stages, claiming that the government had manipulated the elections. According to the international observers "32 articles out of 79 dealing with the pre-election period and Election Day were violated".¹⁹⁵ The opposition did not recognize the election results and the authority of the new institution. The SP and its allies boycotted the parliament and the "political warfare" that was supposed to take place within an institutional framework spilled out in the street. Since 1996, parliamentary boycott became the rule rather than the exception in Albania.

¹⁹⁴ US Information Agency, Office of Research and Media Reaction, Albanian Public Broadly Positive on Economy, (Washington, D.C.), M-74-96, 2 April 1996 quoted in Elez Biberaj, *Albania in Transition*, Westview Press, 1998, p. 280.

¹⁹⁵ "Observation of the parliamentary elections held in the Republic of Albania: May 26 and June 2, 1996." Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights: http://www.osce.org/odihr/documents/reports/election_reports/al/alb1-2.php3

The government's legitimacy loss picked up the pace even more when it became clear that international support, and especially US support, was weakening. The American Embassy in Tirana boycotted the inaugural session of the newly elected legislature.¹⁹⁶

The election problems were compounded by the bankruptcy of the pyramid schemes. The government was undeniably guilty of not stopping them from operating in time. The opposition joined the protesters accusing the government not only for its failure to act against the bogus companies, but also for stealing the citizens' savings.¹⁹⁷ While proclaiming itself as not responsible for the "pyramidal fiasco", the opposition had been absolutely silent about the problem, failing to warn the citizens and patiently waiting for their eventual bankruptcy hoping to use the inevitable popular discontent to come back to power.¹⁹⁸

As a result of the total failure of its political elites, the country was engulfed in senseless violence and anarchy. The opposition, by uniting with the protestors, was identified with a number of criminal gangs that profited from the anarchy and ended up controlling large swathes of territory. This cost the socialist administration that came out of the 1997 parliamentary elections, more than a few problems because it had to share power with these armed gangs that had helped propel it to power.

¹⁹⁶ According to Gabriel Partos and Fron Nozi The severing of - US - special links with Berisha Administration had been made easier for Washington by the decline in Albania's strategic importance following the Dayton peace accord on Bosnia Herzegovina... and the danger of a spill-over of the conflict from Bosnia to Kosovo appeared to be receding. Besides, the Clinton Administration was determined to build up democratic institutions in Bosnia and elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia as a way of bolstering peace. It wanted to use Albania as an example of its tough approach to countries that were turning away from the democratic path.. See Gabriel Partos *Albania: Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management* Working Papers, Ciao Columbia international Affaires on line <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps>.

¹⁹⁷ *Se also Fron Nozi "Washington Goes Socialist"*, London - War Report, No.53 August 1997), p.12.

¹⁹⁷ A parliamentary commission appointed after the 1997 crisis to investigate the pyramide schemes did not bring forward any proof to substantiate this claim.

¹⁹⁸ The President of one of the SP satellite parties owned one the "Xhaferri" pyramid scheme.

The DP government declared an “emergency situation” and attempted to win back its control and legitimacy by the use of force against the protestors. Sali Berisha, Albanian President at the time, says:

“We had started a political process for solving the situation and the use of force was aimed towards the criminal elements. This is the reason why I called on the SP to divorce itself from its armed wing.”¹⁹⁹

From the very beginning, the use of force in order to reimpose government control seemed destined to fail since large numbers of police and army units had deserted and handed over to the rebels depots full of weapons and ammunition. Thus, almost all state institutions collapsed. Their disintegration created a security dilemma for all citizens. The state ceased to exist, and society seemed to resemble Thomas Hobbes “natural state” model. Although there was no territorial conflict, - neither north vs. south, nor civil or religious war – basic human security was endangered, control of state territory and borders disintegrated, and the state lost the legitimacy necessary for the use of force. Instead, it invited an international force, which had no clear understanding of the conflict, to restore order.

4.5. INSIDE THE BOX

The modern political discourse on weak states seems to spring a trap for any researcher that tackles it. When one thinks that he has achieved a well-rounded and insightful explanation of the problem, he discovers that his conclusions are widely known

¹⁹⁹ Interview with former Albanian President Sali Berisha.

to the public. Thus, saying that Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro are weak states is equivalent to saying – quoting Cehov - that “horses eat grass.”

We have used legitimacy as the necessary criteria for defining “weak states”. The degree of legitimacy a state enjoys is positively related to the impact it makes on the everyday life of its citizens, the degree to which the “state” idea has become an accepted tradition and the degree to which the governing elites and state institutions are accepted by the population. We have mentioned that legitimacy may be achieved through procedures and/or results. But, despite an improvement of our theoretical framework, we have not said much more than “the Volga flows in the Caspic Sea” which, according to Cehov, is not saying much.

Also, it is clear to many that most states in non-industrial societies, with backward economies and primitive technologies are classified as ‘weak’. These states have failed to provide the most basic services to their citizens, such as security, education, health care, and a basic infrastructure. For example, in the case of Albania, the weakness of the state is obvious when we consider that it fails to provide its citizens with a regular supply of energy and water. All of these parameters may be used to classify states as ‘weak’ or ‘strong’. But, although we have identified the weak state, we have made no attempt to understand how this type of state functions. Ivan Krastev says that “state weakness is like an elephant: you do not know exactly what it is, but you are sure that when you see it you will recognize it”.²⁰⁰ We must try to get away from the elephant metaphor, because it is a

²⁰⁰ Ivan Krastev, *The Inflexibility Trap, Frustrated Societies, Weak States, and Democracy* (Sofia: Center for Liberal Strategies, 2002), p.14

trap where all political discourse on the weak state ends up. Let us look *inside the box*. What is a “normal situation” like in a weak state? What is the order provided by a weak state if there is any?

In 1991, parts of the Albanian state collapsed temporarily. Anarchy engulfed the countryside and some of the cities, which meant that the state practically ceased to exist. In 1997, the Albanian state ceased to exist for a second time, and Albanian society reverted to something like the Hobbesian “natural state” where the normal state of things was “a war of every man against every man.” In the interval between these two implosions, Albania was a failed rather than just a weak state. Obviously, if there is anarchy, even if it is only sporadic, there is a lack of order. But, looking beyond the power vacuum moments, what is order in a functioning weak state? Free of Law (versus Rule of Law) – the order that prevails in weak states:

“Freedom Works” was directed to US secretary of State James Baker more than to the one hundred thousand Albanians in Scanderbeg Square in 1991. In no other case in the old Eastern Bloc has there been such a spectacular enthusiasm for a high official of the United States government. In fact, Albanians were celebrating their newly found freedom, and the United States was a vivid symbol of this freedom. A decade later, even the most cursory look at Albanian society shows that there has been a great misunderstanding of the word “freedom”.

More often than not, freedom has been identified with *freedom from law*. In 1991-1992, this misunderstanding triumphed in Albania for three reasons. First, there was the fifty year long total absence of freedom. Second, the law was identified closely with the previous regime that had abused it for its own benefits. Liberty from communism was conceptualised as freedom from all law. Last but not least, this misunderstanding occurred because state institutions were weak and often non-functional. It seemed as if everyone was completely unconstrained in their actions. Families were building or enlarging their dwellings at will, economic enterprises were being started without legal permission or registration and companies were embarking on illegal construction projects. Individuals and firms were stealing energy and water from the public distribution systems. Nobody felt obliged to pay taxes.

Man felt free from legal constraints. This situation prevailed between the 1991-1992 and 1997 crises. During the crises periods, the dynamics of the citizen/state rapport and vice versa show a different and more problematic reality. The power vacuum that occurred during the 1991-1992 and 1997 crises is not the only factor that prohibited the *free of law* relationship from being transformed into *rule of law*. This becomes obvious if we recall the changes of the free of law relationship in the times of a functioning central authority.

Thus, analyzing the state making process in post-communist Albania, we notice that the relationship of the individual with the law remained *free of law* irrespective of the presence or not of a functioning central authority. As already mentioned, Albanian

political parties continued to operate within the *free of law* mentality. There is no real difference between a citizen that, feeling free of the burden of law, steals energy from the public electricity grid and the arbitrary decision of a prime minister that hires and fires people at his leisure despite the existence of laws that regulate public administration employment. The citizen behaves with public property as if it was his private property, while the statesman treats the state as if it is his own pie that is to be divided among his supporters, with whom he is related by political belief or, more often, clan ties. Always in the name of reform, the authorities have waged repeated crusades on state bureaucracy. Within the space of two months in a government that lasted no longer than four months, the Prime Minister Pandeli Majko overhauled the entire personnel of police regional chiefs and most of the police commissariat chiefs.²⁰¹ Thus, while the free of law relationship reaches its high point in times of crisis and anarchy, even during a “normal” period in a weak state the “free of law” relationship dominates although it remains a privilege of only part of the community.

Rules of corruption and capture of the state in peaceful times, when there are no crises and power vacuums, the “free of law” relationship is a privilege of only a part of society. From a political perspective, this privilege is reserved to the party in power and especially a particular clan-based faction within it. From an economic perspective a part of society is privileged by taking part in the privatization process, thus earning the right to develop business enterprises. Often, the result is monopolies in particular economic fields. Members of the governing oligarchy or their close friends and relations become private

²⁰¹ Ilir Gjoni, “Cleansing the Aegean Stables: Corruption in Albania Disrupts Democratic Development and undermine quality of life”, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Summer 2002): p.13.

owners of the privatized public property. They control the division of the privatization pie and the handing out of contracts. The new monopolies often asphyxiate domestic production. Thus, although due to its Mediterranean climate Albania can harvest vegetables three times a year, she ends up importing tomatoes, vegetables and other agricultural products from Macedonia that does not have such a favorable climate. This occurs because the businessmen that operate in this market pay no import taxes and dues, and offer these products to the domestic market cheaper than domestic producers. Monopolies created in the oil and gas markets have built formidable barriers to market entrance, thus keeping prices artificially high.

Following the “free of law” dynamic to its logical conclusion, in weak states we see that this law breeds *Rule of Corruption*. In Albania, where corruption has become a way of life, this phenomenon has permeated all facets of public life. Now corruption defines political culture. Patients have to pay for public healthcare services, while crime suspects have to pay off lawyers and judges. Bribes are paid to ensure a place in the public administration or a service from it such as getting a passport. Drivers and motorists often have to pay traffic policemen a “penalty” even when they have not broken any traffic rules. According to the World Bank, 7 percent of the firms’ turnover in Albania is paid as bribes. Everyone is forced to pay bribes, thus seemingly creating a tragicomic vicious circle in which everyone is a loser and a winner since the policeman has to pay off the physician, the physician has to pay off the policeman, and both of them have to pay off the judge or whomever public official they require a service from. However, this is not true since the majority of people do not hold a public office, and these people are the real

losers. This kind of corruption is identified as administrative corruption, that is “when the implementation of laws and rules is influenced by bribes to public officials (i.e. to gain licenses, remove customs barriers, or win public procurement contracts).²⁰² Thus, corruption is the privilege of members of the public administration. In a different level, corruption has a direct influence on the functioning of state institutions and policy formulation and implementation from the governing elite.

This type of corruption has resulted in the creation of a special type of governing elite that, due to its composition, we will call Quasimodo Oligarchy. The Quasimodo Oligarchy includes politicians that are united first and foremost on a clan membership basis. Political ideologies are important, but a Quasimodo oligarchy may include politicians of the enemy camp who are nevertheless members of the clan. Entrepreneurs that manage business enterprises yet are intimately connected to the clan that has political power are part of the oligarch as well. A fourth category of this type of oligarchy are a different kind of businessmen, that hand out contracts, and parts of the privatization pie to the third category under the orders of their political bosses. Within this oligarchy, we notice a fifth category of people: the bodyguards. The bodyguard phenomenon is unique to Albania. Politicians, legislators and senior officials almost all have bodyguards who practically execute personnel policies. They can hire and fire customs officers, police commissioners, and other officials according to their liking, albeit with the blessing of their “boss”.²⁰³

²⁰² World Bank *Anticorruption in transitions- contribution to the policy debate*, (World Bank 2000), p.46.

²⁰³ Gjoni., p. 37.

Analyzing corruption from the security perspective, there is some evidence to count corruption as a security threat. This understanding of corruption has not been dominant in local discourse and policy making bodies at the national level, but mainly at the level of international institutions which presently are assisting the state-building process in a number of countries in transitions. Yet, corruption and organized crime do not constitute a threat *per se* but a symptom or consequence of weak institutions and the lack of a state-building ethos in the bureaucracy, judiciary, healthcare and in other forms of state-sponsored vertical hierarchies.²⁰⁴

The consolidation of this type of oligarchy may bring about the “state capture” phenomenon - the ability of powerful individuals or firms to influence the formulation of laws or governments policies to their own advantage²⁰⁵. The warning signs are already visible in Albania, while they have become predominant in Macedonia which, according to the International Crisis Group, presents a “hybrid” case, that is “full state capture together with administrative coercion”.

Such an environment creates favorable conditions for the independent development of organized crime. For example, in Albania a number of local drug traffickers, part of a larger international organization, tried to create their own political party and, failing that, attempted to buy off politicians aiming at the complete capture of the state. Organized crime may try to become part of the governing oligarchy in order to

²⁰⁴ Eno Trimcevi, *Local Government and Corruption: the case of Albania* (Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2006), p.17.

²⁰⁵ International Crisis Group, *Macedonia's Public Secret: How corruption Drags the Country Down*, Report No 133, 14 August 2002.

start the process of criminalization of politics. But, even without the intervention of organized crime, the consolidation of a corrupt oligarchy may bring about the complete collapse of the political system and illegitimate the procedures that legitimate power in a democracy: free elections. Thus, in Albania elections may not be won fairly, but bought by politicians and their businessmen supporters who than use the state solely for the advancement of there own interests. Furthermore, the degradation of the "free of law" relationship may gradually bring about a dangerous phenomenon for national security. That is:

- The creation of parallel institutions;
- The motives behind the development of parallel institutions in weak states must be found in the failure to transform the "free of law" relationship into a "rule of law" relationship.

The trend towards parallel institutions has been obvious in post-communist Albania. Opposition parties – and being an opposition party in Albania means that you are excluded completely from policymaking – have even celebrated Independence Day separately from the state-organized celebrations. Since 1997, the two political parties have celebrated all official celebrations including religious ceremonies, separately. This symbolic rejection of "the state of the other", may lead to the creation of parallel institutions. Thus, the DP controlled Public Order Ministry accused SP that it had formed armed groups aiming at the disruption of the elections of 26 May 1996. The opposition did not reject the charge, answering that it had taken measures to prevent police interference in the election process. Thus, the police was identified as the armed wing of

the party in power rather than a depoliticized state institution. Since 1997, the socialist administration has leveled repeated accusations on the opposition, accusing it of creating parallel institutions. On the other hand, in weak multiethnic states such as in Macedonia, parallel institutions maybe more visible. The ethnic group that is not represented in state institutions considers the creation of parallel institutions as a preventive, self-defense measure. However, this may bring about a clash between the two ethnic groups and, in a worst-case scenario, the break-up of the state.

The last question we will have to answer is: looking *inside the box*, what is the behavior of the rest of society toward the governing oligarchy. Keeping in mind that theoretically the state has to provide public goods, what is the relationship that the state has build with its citizens? The modern state's main function is to build a legal framework and a judicial system to administer it. In weak states such as Albania, the judicial system is usually a tool of the executive reflecting its communist past. The communist regime transformed the judiciary in a tool of the executive or, more precisely, in a tool of the governing oligarchy. Institutionally this was done by abolishing the Department of Justice and the institution of the defense attorney. In post-communist Albania, despite the fact that legally all the necessary justice institutions reflect the Western model, the judiciary functions as an extremely politicized and corrupt institution.

In Albania, the failure of the state goes beyond this, since it has been unable to ensure society even reliable energy and water supplies.²⁰⁶ Thus, the state has hardly any

²⁰⁶ A country with rich water and hydro energy reserves, in the last ten years Albania has been immersed into a deep water and energy supply crisis.

impact on the majority of society. This great gap between society and state becomes clearer when we look at voters' participation in elections. Although other variables influence voter' participation, the failure of the state is the main reason for the low election turnouts (sometimes less than 50 percent) that have characterized elections in the last five years. This is the reason that Hyden coined weak states such as Albania *balloon* states suspended in the air with no firm connections to their underlying societies.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Hyden 1983, quoted in Georg Sorensen, *Changes in Statehood. The transformation of International Relations*, (London - Palgrave, 2001), p. 85.

CHAPTER 5

MACEDONIA, A NATION STATE IN A MULTIETHNIC SOCIETY

5.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Macedonian question made its debut on the international scene by the end of the nineteenth century as an integral part of the larger Eastern question.²⁰⁸ However, the debate surrounding it goes back as far as the antiquity.²⁰⁹ While the Macedonian question has existed for a long time, there has been no Macedonian state in the way we understand that concept today. Until the Balkan Wars of the early twentieth century, Macedonia has existed only as a geographical concept, part of different empires, starting from the Roman one and ending with the Ottoman Empire. As a matter of fact, this is very similar to that of the other Balkan peoples, but the important difference is that Macedonia did not have its own sovereign state after the Ottoman demise. The national movement in "Geographic Macedonia" did not lead to an independent state as it did for the other Balkan nations. The Krucevo Republic, born out of a bloody anti-Ottoman insurrection, lasted only two months. The republic and the insurrection that lead to it has been mythologized and has

²⁰⁸ Elisabeth Barker "The origin of the Macedonian Dispute", in James Pettifer ed, *The New Macedonian Question*, (London: Palgr ave, 2001), p.3

²⁰⁹ Kyril Drezov "Macedonian Identity: an Overview of the Major Claims" in James Pettifer *The New Macedonian Question*, (London: Palgr ave, 2001), p. 48

provided the moral and emotional ground for Macedonian nationalism. They are not a record of the beginnings of a modern Macedonian state.²¹⁰

With the end of the First Balkan War, Macedonia was “liberated” from Ottoman occupation but a Macedonian state failed to materialize. The end of the Second Balkan War found it divided between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. And, after the end of the Second World War the first Macedonian Government was established in 1947, but the new republic, proclaimed in 2 August 1944, was only one of the six republics that made up the Yugoslav Federation. This is the constitutional arrangement that started the Macedonian state. Although *de jure* Macedonia was not an independent state, modern statehood started to develop precisely at this time. The international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia sealed the fate of the Yugoslav Federation that was already weak. However, Macedonia and Bosnia were less interested in independent statehood because of a number of reasons. First, they were much poorer than either Croatia or Slovenia. Second, the ethnic make-up of the two republics made them resemble a miniature Balkans. Third, both republics, and especially Macedonia, were dependent on the integrated economy of the federation. Last but not least, an independent Macedonia would awaken the old rivalries of its neighbors, especially Greece and Bulgaria and potentially Albania. It was this reality that forced President Gligorov, in cooperation with President Izetbegovic of Bosnia, to try to save some sort of a federal arrangement between the six republics. Thus, Kiro Gligorov and Alija Izetbegovic met in Sarajevo and agreed that the preservation of the Yugoslav Federation was their overriding aim.²¹¹ This occurred only

²¹⁰ Barker, p. 16.

²¹¹ James Pettifer *The New Macedonian Question*, (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.137.

five days after the Macedonian Parliament approved the Declaration of Independence and established a platform for talks on the continued existence of the Federation. Despite the support that these internal attempts received from outside powers (especially the US Government), it became clear that with the independence-minded Slovenia and Croatia and Serbia's nationalist backlash, the Yugoslav family was in its death throes. All the summits of the republican leaders, where the Slovenes and the Croats insisted on a complete dissolution of the Federation, and Serbia and Montenegro with lukewarm Macedonian and Bosnian support, insisted on a new "democratic federation", failed one after another. The last summit in Sarajevo in June '91 rejected the Glavitch-Zetbegovic proposal that aimed to transform Yugoslavians into a commonwealth of sovereign Republics. The only option left to Macedonia (and Bosnia) was independence. Despite the obvious dangers and uncertainty of the road ahead, it was obviously safer than the status quo.

After a referendum held in September 1991, on November 17th the Macedonian Parliament approved the new constitution that declared Macedonia an independent and sovereign state. International recognition was postponed due to the procedures put in place by the European Community (with the Badinter Commission) and later on it was vetoed by Greece²¹² which protested against the name and the flag of the new state. However, from this point in time Macedonia started to function de facto as an independent state, thus becoming one of the youngest states to come out of the ashes of the Communist empire.

²¹² For a comprehensive analysis of the Greek positions on Macedonian questions see Evangelos Kofos "Greek Policy considerations over FYROM independence and recognition" in *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 226-263.

5.1.1. The Macedonian National Question

In order to understand the on-going state building process in Macedonia, we must have an understanding of the "Macedonian National Question". Its beginnings and its post World War II transformation have a direct impact on today's Balkan security problematique. The definition of Macedonia as "fundamentally a transition area both physically and culturally" of Hey Louis Kostancik stands out among other definitions.²¹³ There is an important element within such a concise definition that needs to be understood in order to comprehend the conflictuality of the area. This element is the fact that "Macedonia is a region and not a nationality and most of all a region with a mind boggling number of nationalities."²¹⁴

According to Stavrianos, the people inhabiting Macedonia near the Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian borders could be classified more as Bulgarian, Greek and Serb respectively. The rest of the population, with the exception of distinctive minorities like the Turkish, Vlachs and Albanians could be considered Macedonian. These Macedonians have a characteristic dialect and culture that justifies their classification in a special South Slav category.²¹⁵

Another important stumbling bloc has been the geographical definition of Macedonia. The most consensual definition of Geographic Macedonia has been also the most inclusive one, consisting of Aegean Macedonia in Northern Greece, Pirin Macedonia

²¹³ Hucy Louis Kostancik, Ph.D. dissertation presented in Clark University in 1947 and quoted by George Prevelakis in "Western Europe and the Balkans" *Security Dialogue*, vol.4, 1991): p.24.

²¹⁴ Vanni Cappelli, "The Macedonian Question again", *Washington Quarterly*, vol.21, Issue 3, (1998):30

²¹⁵ L.S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), p. 617.

in Southwestern Bulgaria and Vardar Macedonia, which is the present day FYROM. Due to its strategic importance- all the major roads north south and west east cross this region- geographic Macedonia has enticed small and big powers from antiquity to the arrival of the Turks in the 14th century. Yet the "Macedonian Question" appeared first during the demise of the Ottoman status quo. The retreat of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of twentieth century created a vacuum in these territories.

It seems that the Macedonian question appeared in its full complexity in the Saint Stephen Treaty (March 3rd 1878 after the defeat of Turkey by Russia). The treaty gave birth to Greater Bulgaria that included almost the entire Ottoman Macedonia. The Great Powers, and especially Great Britain and Austro-Hungary, that viewed the treaty as an enlargement of the Russian sphere of influence, dictated another treaty, that of Berlin which, under the guidance of Bismarck, resulted in a much smaller Bulgaria.

At the same time, the vacuum left by the Ottoman retreat created the necessary space for the development of Balkan nationalisms that were in the making, while also giving rise to the security dilemma for each of them. In the anxious attempts to control these territories both during the Balkan Wars and during the First World War, an autonomous Macedonia was not viewed as a viable option. According to an international commission for the Balkans set up immediately after the Second Balkan War to investigate the causes of conflict in the region "there is no political future in the near

future (for the region) and in particular in the case of Macedonia.”²¹⁶ Thus, after the Balkan Wars and the First World War, the territories of what came to be known as geographic Macedonia were divided among Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, 51%, 39% and 10% respectively.

The conflict over the Macedonian question was sustained by these states until the end of the Second World War. The end of the Second World War marks a qualitative shift in the Macedonian question. The part that was given to Serbia developed as an entity of its own. The Albanian territories of present day Southwestern Macedonia were left out of the Albanian State recognized by the London Conference. Therefore, to the existing rivalry among Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria over Macedonia was added, at least theoretically, the rivalry and the potential conflict between the Albanians and the Slavo-Macedonians. This conflict could be twofold, first within Macedonia as well as the potential conflict between Albania and the Federal Yugoslav Republic.

In the new post WWII dynamics Tito applied a new strategy in order to control Macedonia. First he recognized the existence of a Macedonian nation entitled to a state of its own—a republic within the Yugoslav Federation, combining thus the idea of the Macedonian nation with that of the Macedonian state. With the founding of Yugoslav Macedonia came the creation of Macedonian Slav nationality possessing its own officially

²¹⁶ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Other Balkan Wars*, a 1913 Carnegie Endowment inquiry in retrospect with a new “Introduction and Reflection on the Present Conflict” by George F. Kenan (Washington D.C Library of Congress, 1993), p. 68.

recognized language, culture and institutions.²¹⁷ In his strategy Tito applied the ideas of Jovan Cvijic who in order to challenge the idea that Macedonians were a Bulgarian ethnicity put forth the thesis that the slavo-Macedonians were a separate ethnicity neither Greek, nor Bulgarian or Serbian.

In the aftermath of WWII, the old Greek-Serbian-Bulgarian rivalries would fade away and the Macedonian question was transformed at its very core. For the first time since the appearance of the Macedonian question, a separate entity – a state within the Yugoslav Federation – was taking shape. Since then, the Macedonian question would develop between Albanians and Macedonians. Despite this new profile, the Macedonian question has not been completely free of old rivalries and interventions from powers outside of the region.

5.2. THE TRANSFORMATION OF MACEDONIAN QUESTION

By the end of World War II the Macedonian question was temporarily forgotten. For the first time in the twentieth century, Macedonia was not a dangerous component for Balkan security. This did not mean that it was solved.²¹⁸ All the disputes that had created it, and especially the “contested nation”²¹⁹ character of the Macedonian people (national

²¹⁷ Duncan M. Perry “Macedonia: A Balkan Problem and a European Dilemma” *International Relations*, Vol.1 No.25,(1992): p.36.

²¹⁸ Up to the end of WWII, Serbia considered the part of Macedonia given to it after the Balkan Wars simply as Southern Serbia. After the War, this changed and Macedonia earned republican status within the Yugoslav federation.

²¹⁹ The Greeks consider ancient Macedonians to be simply a Greek tribe. Bulgarians consider them simply as Bulgarians. Finally, until WWII, Serbs considered Macedonians to be Serbs and they called Yugoslav Macedonia as South Serbia. For more details see Elisabeth Barker, ‘The origin of the Macedonian dispute,

identity, language, culture) and territory (traditionally contested by Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and, after WWII, Albania)²²⁰ remained very much on the table. This temporary archiving of the issue was a result of two factors. First, communist Yugoslavia froze any discussion of the Macedonian question and, consequently, any potential conflicts as well. The part of Macedonia that was given to Serbia started to develop as a republic within Tito's Yugoslav Federation. This policy automatically neutralized any Serb designs on Macedonia. Secondly, the Cold War itself acted as a freezer of national questions in the Balkans and other regions. Thus, potential Greek or Bulgarian designs were frozen as well. As for the danger presented by Albania, that was practically zero. Although Tito broke the promise of creating a single Albanian republic in the Balkans, Tirana continued its honeymoon with Belgrade until 1948. Hoxha declared in the Paris Peace Conference that Albania had not territorial designs on Yugoslavia. As a matter of fact, until 1948, Albania was voluntarily striving to unite with Yugoslavia.²²¹

Historically Albania has been seen as the mother country for Albanians in the Balkans but it has never formulated irredentist policies or actions. Even after the break with Yugoslavia, Albania remained strictly neutral in its stance towards Kosovo and Macedonia. Being a small country and a chronically weak state, Albania was permanently concerned with its survival in a very unstable region. This would be a Realist reading of Albanian foreign policy in the Balkans. Yet, it is interesting to note that since the

"and Kyril Drezov, "Macedonian identity," in *The New Macedonian Question*, ed., James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.145.

²²⁰ See Elez Biberaj "The Albanian National Question the Challenges of Autonomy, Independence, and Separatism" in Michael Mandelbaum, ed. *The New European Diaspora National Minorities and Conflict in Eastern Europe*, (New York- Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2000), pp. 214- 289.

²²¹ After the War, within two years Albania had signed a number of economic agreements with Yugoslavia that included a customs union and steps towards a common currency.

Macedonian question resurfaced in the post cold war era, Albania did not carry out any aggressive actions towards the Albanian-inhabited territories of western Macedonia not because it was weak vis-à-vis Macedonia but because it was not willing to pursue such policies. Even after the break with Yugoslavia, Albania remained strictly neutral in its stance towards Kosovo and Macedonia.²²²

While the Cold War helped freeze Balkan rivalries over Macedonia, the political nature of the Yugoslav regime imposed peace between Albanians and Macedonians within the Macedonian Republic. Although Tito's regime did not lack liberal aspects, from the point of view of national matters it was very authoritarian. This explains why although the Albanians were completely excluded from the state building process – indeed, during the Rankovic era, they were treated brutally and their rights were drastically curtailed – there was no massive ethnic-based movement to oppose the regime.

5.3. THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND THE REEMERGENCE OF MACEDONIAN QUESTION

During the dissolution of Yugoslavia, “the return of the Macedonian Question” was one of the most dangerous issues that could replicate the tragedies of the first decade of the twentieth century. The post-Cold War situation resembled in many ways the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans; a power vacuum had been created at the end of the Cold War and nationalism was on the rise. Therefore, old rivalries over Macedonia could reappear on the Balkan scene. These old rivalries could involve

²²² See Aldo Bumci *Macedonia and the Albanians: The Confines of Ethnic Conflict* (Tirana – Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2001), pp.34-38

Yugoslavia-Serbia,²²³ Greece²²⁴ and Bulgaria²²⁵. In view of the large Albanian population in Macedonia, in territories that were cut off from Albania during the Balkan Wars, it was quite conceivable that Macedonia could find itself surrounded by four belligerent countries.²²⁶ Since the break-up of Yugoslavia was accompanied by political pluralism and multiparty elections, it was entirely possible that another front would open up within the larger Macedonian Question. Albanians in Macedonia created their own political parties in 1991-1992. Suddenly, the future of Macedonia as an independent state or a republic within a reformed Yugoslav Federation was also institutionally dependent on the will of the Albanians that pretended to be 40 percent of the population. Thus, not only did the end of the Cold War and the break up of Yugoslavia bring about a regeneration of the old rivalries between Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and theoretically Albania, but they also created a new dimension of the Macedonian Question: what would be the impact of Albanian-Macedonian relations in the new state building process?²²⁷

In 1991, both dimensions of the Macedonian question proved to be crucially important for the state building process. First, the future of Macedonia became very uncertain with the return of the old rivalries. Although neither Bulgaria nor Greece openly

²²³ For a Serbian point of view see Nina Dobrkovic "Yugoslavia and Macedonia in the years 1991-6: from Brotherhood to Neighborhood" in *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer, (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp.79- 96.

²²⁴ For a Greek point of view see Evangelos Kofos "Greek Policy considerations over FYROM Independence and recognition " in *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer, (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 226- 263.

²²⁵ For a Bulgarian point of view see Milena Mahon "The Macedonian Question in Bulgaria", *Nations and Nationalism* 4(3) (1998): pp.389-407

²²⁶ Sofia Clement "Former Yugoslav Macedonia, the regional setting and European Security: towards Balkan Stability" in *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.187.

²²⁷ James Pettifer "The Albanians in Western Macedonia after FYROM Independence" in James Pettifer, ed. *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.32.

advocated for their old positions, their policies deeply endangered the further existence of the Macedonian State. Let us look at the reaction of Macedonia's neighbors to its independence. We know that Macedonia was the only Yugoslav republic that achieved independence without bloodshed in 1991. This small republic gained even the "consensus" of Milosevic in its way towards independence since the latter did not put up a fight.

It seems that Milosevic accepted the Macedonian independence for a variety of reasons. Perhaps he was too "busy" with the other republics: Slovenia, Croatia, and especially Bosnia. Another important reason could have been the fact that an independent Macedonia would inevitably be a weak state and given its large Albanian presence, an alliance and even a future union with Serbia could not be ruled out. Although Serbia did not resort to the use of force, it openly displayed its opposition to the Macedonian move as well as its desire to win back Macedonia. Besides public demands to open up the southern front (Kosovo and Macedonia) Serbia also relied on the Serbian minority in Macedonia (30 000 according to Skopje and 300 000 according to Belgrade) who influenced by the political climate in Serbia asked for a referendum on joining the Yugoslav Federal Republic. Although Belgrade did not react militarily, it neither recognized nor clearly opposed the Macedonian independence. Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic was visibly reluctant to offer Macedonia explicit assurance of its territorial integrity. Further Serbia did not extend formal diplomatic recognition to Macedonia until April 18, 1996.²²⁸

²²⁸ Fabian Schmidt "Enemies Far and Near: Macedonia's Fragile Stability" *Problems of Post-Communism* vol 45, 1998; p.27.

This meant that if Macedonia could not survive on its own the union with the Federal Yugoslavia remained a viable option.

Until the end of 1995, Rump Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) viewed the Macedonian border merely as administrative, rather than as an international one. At the same time Belgrade in order to undermine the existence of the newly independent Macedonia either started or supported diplomatic moves to this purpose. During the spring of 1991, bilateral talks on Macedonia between Serbia and Greece, and Serbia and Bulgaria were held that resulted on joint statements that "only Serbs, Bulgarians and Greeks live in Macedonia", i.e., there was no "Macedonian nation".²²⁹ Greece on its part declined to recognize Macedonia, conditioning its recognition of the new state with the change of its name. In a similar move to that of Serbia, Greece tried to mobilize similar stances against an independent Macedonia. According to ex-President Gligorov, Serbia and Greece often combined their efforts against an independent Macedonia.

"We have closely followed the Greek interests against the existence of an independent Macedonia. Micotaqis initiated a meeting of the countries that were signatories of the Bucharest agreement in order to discuss the future of Macedonia. There have been two or three attempts, one coming directly from Milosevic and another from Jovic, suggesting to us that for the sake of Balkan peace and a prosperous future we need to create the Athens-Skopje-Belgrade axis."²³⁰

Bulgaria, who had traditionally viewed Macedonia as Western Bulgaria, although in many cases it joined Serbian and Greek initiatives, recognized the new state of Macedonia, but not a Macedonian nation. It seems that Bulgaria viewed an independent Macedonia as a "buffer state" against Serbia. The only neighbor that recognized the

²²⁹ Bumci, p.37.

²³⁰ , All the Apocalyptic Scenarios, Skopje- Center for Strategic Research and Documentation (2000), p.6

independence of Macedonia unconditionally was Albania despite the prevailing belief that this country was very interested in the dissolution of Macedonia. In fact, Albania broke the Greek blockade against Macedonia securing an alternative corridor to the collapsing Macedonian economy.

The Albanian stance could, to a certain extent, be also attributed to realpolitik considerations. Albania viewed Macedonia as a buffer zone against Serbia and Greece, two countries whose relations with Albania were not too friendly.²³¹ However, there were two other factors that influenced Albania's policy. First, different from the ex-Yugoslav republics, in Albania the fall of communism did not bring about a resurgence of nationalist feelings for that which Albanians have historically called the "unsolved Albanian question." In Albania, no political party or government has been able to mobilize society by appealing to its nationalist consciousness. Second, the capabilities of the country to back up a more aggressive policy were almost zero. The country's development was entirely dependent on foreign aid and thus the Albanian government supported Western policies on Macedonia wholeheartedly.

5.4. THE MORPHOLOGY OF NATION STATE BUILDING

Macedonia represents one of the rare cases in history where state building and nation building start from the same point in time. Thus, it eludes the historical paradigm in which the state is created before nation building has begun or vice versa, mature national

²³¹ Biberaj, Elcz, *Albania in Transition: The Rocky road to Democracy*, (New York- Westview Press, 1998), p.68.

consciousness has led to a state as a homeland for the nation. For example, the creation of Germany and Italy in 1861 and 1870 was based on the national identity of a people united by common language and culture that were different from surrounding peoples' languages and cultures. Moreover, the statehood of these two nations was facilitated by small states (Prussia and Piedmont) that led the quest for the formation of a national consciousness and statehood. On the other hand, Macedonia is a rare example of a case study where components of the nation and territory are claimed by its neighbors.

Ottoman Macedonia was made up of a number of different identities. Largely considered as a transit area, the people living in it claimed Greek, Bulgarian or Serbian national identities. Since most of the rural masses of the population had not yet developed a definite national identity for many observers of that period, this rural Macedonia was therefore malleable and could accept any of the three dominant Balkan National identities based on Orthodoxy (Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian).²³²

Until the end of WWII, geographic Macedonia remained a transit area carved up between its neighbors, where different identities clashed with each other. Once the Macedonian Republic was recognized as a component of the Yugoslav Federation, the only part of Macedonia that started developing its national and state building processes was the part that was handed to Serbia after the Balkan Wars.

²³², George Prevelakis, "The Return of the Macedonian Question", in *The Changing Shape of the Balkans*, H. Carter and T. Norris, eds, (London 1996), p.140

In the history of national state building, cases where the territory and the national identity (ethnicity, language, culture) are contested and claimed by other nations are hard to find. The creation and existence of such a state has always been questioned and, more often than not, the most probable option for Macedonia has been a division between its neighbors.²³³ Kiro Gligorov the first President of FYROM explained the difficulties that the external environment and the claims of its neighbors presented for the nation state building process.

“A state was born which in a way came up as an “illegitimate child”. Everybody believed that the Macedonian issue after the Balkan wars of 1913 had been definitely resolved and that according to the Bucharest Agreement everybody had a right to the territory that they had adjoined, to call the Macedonian people its own. This is what happened with Greece Bulgaria and Albania. In Serbia in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia they acted identically, declaring us to be Southern Serbs, with no rights to create, something that would signify some kind of cultural mark of our people”²³⁴

Although the Macedonian state idea has been present much earlier, (the IMRO movement) its projection in reality was difficult because of the ethnic mix of Macedonia and the challenge to its national identity by its neighbors. Thus, Tito’s policy of combining the Macedonian state idea with the idea of a Macedonian nation was based on an attempt to create a Macedonian national identity. In this context, a Macedonian iconography and a Macedonian Autocephalous Orthodox Church were established.²³⁵ The selection of the Bitola-Veles dialect as the foundation of a Macedonian language was aimed at making that language different from Bulgarian. A Macedonian literature was

²³³ One such option was reborn after the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Yugoslav Federation and, more recently, during the conflict between the National Liberation Army and Macedonian government forces in 2001.

²³⁴ Eleonora Karanfilovska *All the Apocalyptic Scenarios*, Interview with Former President Gligorov. Center for Strategic Research and Documentation, April 2000), p. 5.

²³⁵ Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia refused to recognize The Macedonian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

created and Macedonian history was rewritten in order to strengthen national identity. The authorities championed the establishment of the Republic of Macedonia as a "final settlement of the Macedonian National Question."²³⁶ Thus, while Yugoslavia seemed to achieve its aims, Greece and Bulgaria remained discontented "prisoners" of the new realities of the Cold War.

It seemed as if the process of nation state building was anchored in its traditional ideology: nationalism. However, Macedonian nationalism was created and controlled by Belgrade. The development of a Macedonian national identity was the only way to bring about a Macedonian entity. But, Tito's "Bratstvo i Jedinstvo" (Brotherhood and Unity) policies aimed at creating a Yugoslav identity and thus swept under the rug all national question including the Macedonian one. It was on these shaky foundations that a Macedonian state was created as one of the six republics of the Yugoslav Federation.

From the domestic perspective the entire nation state building was based on the ethnic concept, which, in the case of multiethnic Macedonia, was contested by different neighbors. For about a half century Macedonia existed as a nation state while its population was very much ethnically mixed. Other than the Albanian ethnic group of 22 percent according to the last Macedonian Government census (although according to Albanians, their proportion is much higher) other ethnic groups such as Serbs, Roma,

²³⁶Jens Reuter " Policy and Economy in Macedonia," in James Pettifer , ed. *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), p.36 .

Muslim (Torbesh) and Turks live in the country.²³⁷ The roots of the present Macedonian conflict are found exactly in the morphology of the nation state building process that started to be implemented after WWII. Now, Macedonia has come back to the fundamentals of this process by declaring that its objective is “to create a nation of citizens”²³⁸ after five decades of basing its state building process on a solely ethnic basis.

For a long time, the “turtle shell” of the Yugoslav state preserved the nation state building process in Macedonia. However, its fall in 1990 uncovered the fearful gap between the two main ethnic groups: Macedonians and Albanians. In the midst of Macedonian enthusiasm for the independence of the new state, there existed the real possibility of a possible violent comeback of the national questions that boiled under the surface.

In the case of Macedonia – but also in Bosnia - ethnic resentments were just as deep and whose viability as a state was also suspect. A lack of confidence in their statehood, which Macedonia and Bosnia shared from the outset, had united their Presidents in a last-ditch effort to save some sort of Yugoslav federation or Confederation²³⁹

²³⁷ Hugh Poulton, *The Balkans: Minorities and States in Conflict*, (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1991), p.56.

²³⁸ Ljubomir Frchkovski “*All the Apocalyptic Scenarios*,” (Skopje- Center for Strategic Research and Documentation. April 2000), p.41.

²³⁹ Dana Allin, *Nato's Balkan Interventions*, (London Institute of Strategic Studies Adelphi Paper No.347,2002), p.24.

5.5. ALBANIAN AND MACEDONIANS BUILDING A SECURITY DILEMMA

The post-WWII accommodation of the Macedonian Question as a republic within the Yugoslav Federation gave renewed vigor to the state building process. This process was helped by the frozen historical rivalries of Greece and Bulgaria. On the other hand, Serbia, who viewed the new Republic as its own creation and dependent on it – until 1990 the Macedonian economy was the weakest of all Yugoslav republics and it was completely dependent on the Yugoslav market – was happy with the status quo. Macedonia's moves towards independence in 1991 were viewed as a betrayal. The mood prevalent in Serbia at the time was that Macedonia could not get its independence since the status that it already enjoyed was simply a gift of Yugoslavia and especially Serbia.

From the economic point of view, the development of infrastructure and industry also helped the state building process. The liberal elements in Tito's regime created enough scope for economic development. Although its economy was the poorest of all Yugoslav republics – although it was better off than Kosovo – Macedonia was incomparably better off than Albania. However, state making dynamics of that time in Macedonia were responsible for the creation of its modern security dilemma. Not only was the nation-state building process unable to unite Macedonia's disparate ethnic groups, but also it actually exasperated the long-term gap between them. The geographic division of the country along ethnic lines facilitates this. Albanians live mainly in the Western part, along the border with Kosovo and Albania. Both communities converge in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, where the population is roughly divided in two numerically equal

ethnic groups. Historically, the two groups have coexisted relatively peacefully thanks to Yugoslav policies and the protective ideological shell provided by Tito's regime. Violent clashes were rare and far between. The first one occurred in 1960 after the fall of Rankovic and the second one occurred in 1981 after Tito's death. In the first case, Albanians requested to unite their lands with Kosovo in an attempt to create a seventh Yugoslav republic. On the other hand, the 1981 demonstrations were but an appendage to the clashes that were occurring in Kosovo. These clashes proved that, despite the relative calm, discontent was raging under the surface and it would explode on the first opportunity possible. The state building process had created a parallel security dilemma for the Albanian ethnicity in Macedonia.

From the very beginning, the Republic of Macedonia began to function as a nation state within Federal Yugoslavia although a substantial part of its population was Albanian. "State and party institutions all reflected and were part of the nation building process."²⁴⁰ Albanians were left out of the decision-making processes in the republic and were viewed as second-class citizens. The representation of the Albanian population in the Communist League of Macedonia and in the state administration was insignificant. In 1959 Albanians and Turks put together represented 2,29 % of the party membership and until 1959 no Albanian or Turk was elected in the executive committee of the Party.²⁴¹

Albanian demands to participate in the decision making process were perceived by the Macedonians as undermining their control of the state institutions. Although in its

²⁴⁰ Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?*, (London – Hurst & Company, 2000), p.116.

²⁴¹ Blumi, Isa. "The Question of Identity, Diplomacy and Albanians in Macedonia", *International Journal of Albanian Studies*; <http://www.albanian.com/IJAS/vol1/is/art4.html>.

constitution Macedonia was described as “the state of Macedonians and of the Albanian and Turkish minority”, Macedonian political culture treats Macedonia as a nation state that does not allow for the participation of the Albanians. A symbolic number of Albanians could be found in the state administration for the sake of the “brotherhood and unity” principle.²⁴²

From the death of Tito in 1980 until the end of the eighties, a process of national consolidation was taking place within all Yugoslav Republics. For example, in Macedonia it meant introduction of the Macedonian language, as the only state language in the territory of Macedonia, unlike the previous situation when the Albanian language had a similar status in the parts where the majority were Albanians. The institutions for high education of the Albanians were curtailed and economic measures were undertaken to reduce the exceptionally high Albanian birth rate.²⁴³ After Macedonia’s recognition as an independent state, this tradition was continued. Thus, after the dissolution of the old Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Macedonia had to establish its own independent state institutions in the same fashion as the ex-Soviet republics had to do vis a vis the Soviet Union. However, in the last ten years, not only did Macedonia build institutions that were independent of the FRY but they were build independent of the will of the Albanians that pretend to constitute 40 percent of the population.

Although during the last decade the Albanians’ conditions with regard to education and representation in the public administration were improved as compared to the

²⁴² Bumçi, p.32

²⁴³ Mirjana Maleska, "The Power of History and Religion over Human Hearts", *New Balkan Politics Journal of politics* Vol1 (2000): p. 117.

communist era, it can be argued that the improvement came about not as a result of good will on the part of Macedonians, but rather due to the democratic changes that swept over the entire region.

The Macedonian regime of 1992 was certainly very different from that of Milosevic. The core difference between the two regimes is the fact that the Serbian state model operated within an authoritarian regime, whereas the Macedonian state was a poor imitation of the Serbian one since Macedonia was a democracy after all, although a distorted one. The presence of Albanian ministers in the cabinets provided a stark contrast with the cabinets during the time of Federal Yugoslavia. However, it was used to cover up the national character of the Macedonian state and portray it as a multi ethnic state.²⁴⁴

The conflict that broke out in spring 2001 tore up the multi ethnic veil of the state that had been constructed by Macedonian authorities and praised by the international community, revealing some of the inner workings of the Macedonian State. The control of the state, and all the security structures were in the hands of the Macedonians. The army, the police and other security forces were almost entirely composed of Macedonians. All post 1992 Government have had some Albanian representation although generally in tokenistic positions often as Assistant Ministers.²⁴⁵ The decisions to crush the rebellion by force indicated that the Albanians, although present in government and parliament,

²⁴⁴ Albert Rakipi, "The weak states a new dynamics of security." In *Democracy and Security*, ed. Albert Rakipi (Tirana – Albanian Institute of International Studies, 1999): p. 16.

²⁴⁵ James Pettifer "The Albanians in Western Macedonia" in. *The New Macedonian Question*, ed. James Pettifer (London: Palgrave, 2001), p. 36

were not being consulted or included in the decision making process. The media as well as other elites reflected the deep division between the two ethnic groups.

It is difficult to sustain that the security dilemma between the two ethnic groups in Macedonia is inevitable since they represent different civilizations, cultures and religions. Both ethnic groups for different reasons perceive each other as possible threats. The Macedonians that have built their state as a nation state perceive Albanian demands as a menace to their control of the state. Albanians on the other hand do not feel included in the state institutions and their sense of insecurity pushes them to demand autonomous protection. Macedonian Albanians assert that they were discriminated against in hiring for government jobs and that, in areas where Albanians made up 80 percent of the population, the Police Force is 97 per cent ethnic-Macedonian. According to Albanian Democratic Party, only two out of 400 employees of the Ministry of Labour, Urban Affairs and Finance, were ethnic Albanians, only one in the Ministry of Culture while none were working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁴⁶ This mentality of exclusion of Albanians from state institutions has created the security dilemma in today's Macedonia.

The ethnic composition of governments and the public administrations of the first decade since independence prove that the state in Macedonia was representing only a segment of society. That is the basic criteria of the weakness of the Macedonian state. The roots of this security dilemma should be sought in the model of the state that continued to be applied when Macedonia became independent, a model that was not very different

²⁴⁶ Zidas Daskalovski "The right to rebel: The Nation Liberation Army and the Macedonian crises of 2001" *Romanian Journal of International Studies* 124 (2004): p.52.

from the one in the Yugoslav Federation. While it is true that the Macedonian model of a multiethnic state was not the same as the Serbian one it is probably true to say that it was its poor imitation. The state that has been built during the last ten years in Macedonia is not a civil but a nation state whose future lies in the domination of one nation over the others. Thus, the new state was not founded on citizenship but on nationality. The absence of political legitimacy was the number one cause of the weakness of state institutions and the start of armed conflict.

5.6.DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY DILEMMA

After the 1991 Declaration of Independence and the establishment of political pluralism, the socio-political conditions of Albanians in Macedonia improved slowly. According to official Macedonian sources, Albanians enjoyed increased access to education and employment in the public service up to the start of the 2001 conflict. Thus, the percentage of Albanians in public administration increased from 3.5 percent in 1993, to 8.3 percent in 1997 and 10.2 percent by the time the conflict started. In education, the University of Skopje started enrolling more Albanian students.²⁴⁷ But, these figures alone may paint a distorted picture of the real inclusion of Albanians in public administration and employment. The employment and university enrollment figures are not compared to the proportion of Albanians in Macedonia. Its usefulness is comparable to the statement of the Albanian Government that energy supply increased by 2.5 percent in the 1998-2002 periods. Given the low starting base – in 1998 the Albanian State ensured 6-8 hours per

²⁴⁷ Civil Service Agency, *Information on the Personnel Structure of the State Administration in Macedonia based on Nationality*, (Skopje, July 2001), p.14.

day of energy supply for its citizens – the figure suddenly seems to illustrate failure rather than achievement. Arber Xhaferri, one of the main political leaders of the Albanian community in Macedonia, claims that only 3 percent of Albanians are employed in the public administration, armed forces, security structures and the justice system.²⁴⁸ But, he does not negate that the relative position of Albanians has improved. Official figures are contested by Albanians and often by third sources as well. In some areas, the figures are simply catching-up with the quotas that were valid when Macedonia was a Yugoslav republic. Finally, the changes are occurring as a consequence of the change in the nature of the regime rather than because of the desire of the Macedonians to improve the situation. Albanians are now represented by two main political parties, the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) and the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) which are partners of LSDM and IMRO.

During the Yugoslav regime, Albanian membership in the Communist Party was very low and it was much lower in its leading organs. In 1981, Albanians made up only 6.49 percent of the membership of the League of Communists as opposed to 19.3 percent of the membership that was made up by Serbs. At the same time, Serbs made up only 4.88 percent of the population of Macedonia²⁴⁹ or four times less than the Albanians

During the last ten years of the existence of independent Macedonia, Albanians have created several political parties but their political scene until 2001 has been dominated by PDP and PDA. Although Albanian political institutions do not have a proportional

²⁴⁸ Interview with Arben Xhaferri, Chairman of The Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA).

²⁴⁹ Hugh Poulton, *The Balkans- Minorities and States in Conflict* (London-t Minority Rights, Publication , 1993), p. 85.

voice in the decision-making process, their very existence within the system has improved the institutional standing of the Albanian community. Albanian political actions within the framework of the Macedonian system have brought about positive results. So, assuming that progress has been made, why did an unprecedented conflict between the two ethnicities explode in Macedonia? The conflict that started in the spring of 2001 between government forces and the National Liberation Army (NLA) was an interethnic conflict that almost turned into Civil War. During the Tito era, despite the deplorable conditions in which Albanians lived especially in Rankovic's heyday, an armed insurrection was unthinkable. Does this mean that democracy acts as a destabilizing factor during the transition period from authoritarian to liberal democratic regimes? Superficially, this view may seem to be correct, especially for multiethnic states. The introduction of political pluralism opens up maneuvering room for oppressed ethnic groups and automatically improves their position vis-à-vis the state. Yet at the same time, democratization opens up the possibility for separatist feelings to be strengthened. Previously oppressed ethnic groups may use their newly won breathing space to push for more concessions up to and including the creation of a new homeland. In ethnically divided societies, democratization provides competing groups means and opportunities to mobilize against each other that they never had before²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ Bernard Jack "Nationalism, Popular Sovereignty and the liberal democratic state", in *T. V Paul, G. John Ikenberry and John Hall eds., The Nation State in Question (New Jersey -Princeton University Press 2003.)*, p. 30

Mansfield and Snyder have noted that the initial stage of democratization is extremely dangerous at the initial stage.²⁵¹ Based in these conditions other authors argues than democracy is more the problem than the answer to the problem²⁵²

However, empirical evidence proved that liberal democracy provides us with the solution of the problem even if it had a hand in creating them.²⁵³ One can bring a modest evidence form the Macedonian case The leadership of the Albanian fighters declared repeatedly that their political aim was not the division of Macedonia, but a Macedonian state that reflected the multiethnic nature of its population. However, there existed the possibility of a military escalation, a hardening of attitudes and of the frontlines, thus causing the de facto partitioning of the country. As a matter of fact, during the confrontation between the NLA and the Macedonian army, the frontlines roughly divided the territory of Macedonia along ethnic lines. The conflict came very close to escalating into a Civil War where the fighting would have crossed into areas such as Skopje, where the ethnicities lived together and boundaries were impossible to be determined. However, even a cursory look at the Ohrid Agreement that brought an end to the internal conflict between Albanians and the Macedonian government illustrates the idea of democracy as a solution to competing nationalisms. The framework agreement outlines the ways in which hostilities will cease, the political status of Albanians will be strengthened, cultural and language issues of Albanians will be solved and the

²⁵¹ See Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, " Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security*, 20, (1995.): p.134.

²⁵² Donald Horowitz," self-Determination: Politics, Philosophy, and law" in Ian Shapiro and Will Kymlicka,eds, *Ethnicity and Group Rights*, (New York: New York University Press,1997), p.451

²⁵³ Bernard Jack "Nationalism, Popular Sovereignty and the liberal democratic state", in T. V Paul, G, John Ikenberry and John Hall eds., *The Nation State in Question* (New Jersey -Princeton University Press 2003.), p. 31

decentralization of government will be carried out²⁵⁴ - all of them the basic components of functioning liberal democracy.

An armed insurrection by an ethnic group in a multiethnic state does not mean necessarily an attempt at dividing the state in two separate entities. Even when armed movements do not aim to divide the country, their very presence may escalate the situation so that an eventual division becomes inevitable. However, the argument that the democratization process serves as a destabilizing factor because ethnic groups use democratic freedoms in order to advance their political objectives is flawed. Not all countries that respect democratic freedoms are functional liberal democracies. The situation in multiethnic countries is particularly complex and often problematic. A democratic system in transition may open up possibilities for increased representation of all ethnic groups in the decision-making process. However, a democratic system may be used for the marginalization of ethnic groups as well. As Daniel Byman and Stephen Van Evera have pointed out minorities might fight because they fear that majority rule would install in power a permanent elected majority that allows the minority no voice in decision making.²⁵⁵

According to some of the criteria used to evaluate a democratic system, Macedonia appears to be a fragile democracy but with ever healthier institutions, especially in the justice system and the freedom and independence of the media. Moreover, all

²⁵⁴ Petar Atanasov "The Progress of the Ohrid Process' in Macedonia" In, *Post- Conflict Rehabilitation* eds, Jean-Jacques de Dardel, Gustav Gusenau Plamen Pantev, (Vienna and Sofia 2006), pp. 179-194

²⁵⁵ See Daniel Byman and Stephen Van Evera, "Why they fight? Hypotheses on the causes of Contemporary Deadly Conflict", *Security Studies* 7, No.3, Spring (1998), p.32.

Macedonian political parties that have come to power in the last ten years have decided to build a coalition with Albanian political parties and have included them in the government. Thus, Branko Cervenkovski's LSD governed in coalition with PDP between 1992 and 1998 and Georgievski's IMRO-DPMNE governed with the DPA of Arben Xhaferri, the most popular Albanian politician in Macedonia, between 1998 and 2002.²⁵⁶ Except for the 1990 parliamentary elections which did not provide a clear majority and the government was made up of technocrats some of whom were Albanians, in all other elections it was possible for the Macedonian parties to govern by themselves or in alliance with smaller Macedonian parties. Thus, the Macedonian-Albanian governing alliances were a result of the good will of the winning Macedonian parties rather than a reality enforced by election results. They were perceived as a way to preserve peace and coexistence between the two communities. These alliances, especially in the first years after Macedonia's independence, have been crucial in preserving peace at a time when the country was faced with a number of crises such as the Yugoslav wars and the dangers they created for Macedonian security and the Greek blockade. Undoubtedly, the Albanian presence in government lowered tensions and eased Macedonia's security concerns. It is also responsible for the improvements that occurred in Albanian participation in state institutions.

However, these alliances have largely been used as window-dressing in order to hide the uniethnic character of the new Macedonian state. Although with its benefits, the

²⁵⁶After the 2002 post-crisis elections, a new party, the Union for Democratic Integration (UDI) was invited to govern with the Macedonian LSD which won the elections. UDI is led by the ex-political leader of the National Liberation Army, Ali Ahmeti. The UDI victory within the Albanian community showed the extent to which support for the older Albanian political elite has eroded.

alliances between the Macedonian and Albanian political elites have deeply distorted the democratic system. The Macedonian elite has been willing to share with Albanians only cabinet posts,²⁵⁷ but not the state itself. Its main institutions are largely directed and staffed by Macedonians. Albanians have not had enough clout in parliament in order to strengthen this alliance throughout state institutions. Their presence in government has been simply a gift of Macedonian goodwill. But, the percentage of Albanian seats in parliament would have been greater if the Macedonian authorities had not distorted the rules of democracy. Thus, the number of Albanian MP in the Macedonian parliament would have been greater had it not been for the gerrymandering on part of the Macedonian authorities. The number of voters in the Albanian constituencies was almost 1.5 times greater than that of the Macedonian constituencies.²⁵⁸

In conclusion, although Albanians in post-independence Macedonia have governed together with the Macedonian elites, their voice has barely been heard in the decision making process. Consequently, the situation today resembles very much the time of Tito when Albanians had neither political parties nor representation in the leading organs of the LCY. The reasons for the defeat of both mainstream Albanian parties PDP and PDA lie exactly in their failure to convert co-governance into a greater acceptance of the Albanians by the state.

²⁵⁷ Even in the latest governing alliance, Albanians have been given cabinet seats of a secondary importance such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Work and the Ministry of Agriculture.

²⁵⁸ Albert Rakipi, *The Return of the Macedonian Question*, in Aldo Bumci, ed, *"Albanians in the Balkans"*, (Tirana- Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2001.), p.16

In order not to fall in this “trap” of the Macedonian democratic system, a “trap” that may continue to exist for as long as Macedonians enjoy complete parliamentary supremacy, the Albanian political parties have requested “partner nation” status for the Albanian ethnic group in Macedonia. This would increase Albanian input in the decision making process and would transform the Macedonian state from its present nation-state character to a civil state. The present decision making procedures resemble Albania’s, although Albania is a nation state. In the last decade, the political opposition has had no input in the decision-making process and state institutions have been built by the governing party. The difference between the two states stands on the fact that while the foundation used for the state building process in Macedonia is ethnicity, in Albania it is political or clan membership. This phenomenon has forced the subgroup that is excluded from real participation in the system to take action outside state institutions by creating parallel institutions or by using armed force in order to change the nature of these institutions. Therefore, conflicts tend to be solved outside the institutional framework, often through violence and armed clashes, as was the case in the spring of 2001 in Macedonia.

CHAPTER 6

WEAK STATES' FOREIGN POLICY

Do weak states really have a foreign policy? A long time ago Thucydides said, "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must"²⁵⁹. Modern history has not really challenged the observations of Thucydides that foreign policies of the weak are governed by the foreign policies of the strong. However, can this rather desperate reality lead to the conclusion that weak states do not need foreign policy? The powerlessness of the weaker states does not prevent them from entering into relations with other states. Even though they may not be capable of making any impact on the conduct of the bigger Powers towards them, weak states still try to awaken the interest of these powers, to be under the protection, or at least, secure neutrality.²⁶⁰ On the other hand, again in a real world where power determines, it can be said that the big powers too sometimes find they need the weak states. For instance, during the Cold War, with a division into two opposing blocs, any attempt of a state, irrespective of its strength, to make the transition from the line-up in one bloc to the line-up in the other, never failed to be the focus of attention of both superpowers. Even more so in a 'liberal world' in terms of the changes introduced by international institutions, the vote of a weak state is just as valuable and equal to the vote

²⁵⁹ Quoted from Michael Handel *Weak States in the International System* (London – Frank Cass, 1990), p.3

²⁶⁰ Buzan, p. 137.

or veto of the Big Powers. In this chapter we will strive to provide an answer to the question: *What does foreign policy do for weak states? What is the behavior of weak states in the international realm?* By providing the answers to the above questions, the aim is to give a theoretical view of weak states' foreign policy, in order to facilitate our discussion on the role such international institutions as the EU and NATO could play in making weak states stronger.

6.1. FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY

Certainly this theoretical ground on weak state foreign policy does not attempt to test whether or not the driving force behind the weak states foreign policy is the search for security, but how through foreign policy the weak states can contribute to increase their security. George Modelski defines foreign policy as "the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment".²⁶¹ Traditionally this international environment has meant other states and their foreign policy. Foreign policy is rather more broadly conceived these days than in early part of twenty century. Now economic interactions and not just those between states, have become a major features of foreign policy²⁶²

According to the realist school of International Relations, the primary goal of foreign policy is to ensure state survival, to preserve the territorial integrity of the state, but also to defend and develop capacities so that the state itself decides on its own fate.

²⁶¹ Quoted from Charles W. Kegley, JR and Eugene R. Wittkopf *World Politics, Trend and Transformation* (New York – Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2001), p. 54

²⁶² Michael Nicholson *International Relations* (London- Palgrave, 2002), p.22.

The international system has no world government that can supervise order between states via its own mechanisms. However, the Realist account of international relations determines that insecurity and fear are standing features of international relations, irrespective of whether the states are big or small, powerful or weak. For the realists' security is the fundamental interest. Waltz says that in anarchy, security is the highest end. Only if survival is assured can states safely seek other such goals as tranquility, profit and power²⁶³. For realists, the history of international relations is the history of the Great Powers. And if for the Great Powers, security is the primary interest, then, even more so for the middle sized and naturally the smaller states, the need to guarantee survival is undoubtedly primary.

The other school of International Relations theories, Liberalism, also views national security as an important state goal. At first glance, it appears there is a difference, for instance, between the neo-realists and the neo-liberals in relation to national security as the neo-realists stress security as the top priority, while the neo-liberals believe that states devote more attention to economic welfare. But for both schools of thought, the international system is anarchic. However, contrary to the thinking of the realists, neo-liberals think that the anarchical structure of the international system could be reformed through the creation of global institutions.

²⁶³ Waltz, p.118.

Stephen Krasner also says, along these lines, "all states share the same minimalist objectives of preserving territorial and political integrity. According to Raymond Aron "politics, insofar as it concerns relations among states seems to signify simply the survival of states confronting the potential threats created by the existence of other states." Quoted in Joseph Grieco, "Realist International Theory and the Study of World Politics," (1998), p.16.

According to realists thinkers anarchy has two principal consequences. First, there is little room for trust among states. Second, each state must guarantee its own survival since no other actor will provide its security. On the opposite end, institutional liberals such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye claim that the high level of institutionalization significantly diminishes the effects of anarchy.

However, from the security perspective it is clear, that by excluding the big powers, which make up the category of "the strong," all the other states are incapable of guaranteeing their protection on their own. Subsequently, all states, minus the Great Powers are obliged to rely on other factors and resources to increase their power, with the aim of coping with potential dangers. According to Michael Handel²⁶⁴ there are two sources of strength: internal and external (Foreign Policy). The internal elements of the strength or weakness of a state, according to him, are: *geographical data*, the area of the territory and the nature of the frontiers, *material data*, for instance the absence or the presence of natural resources and industrial capacity (technological development and capital) *human resources* such as the size of the population, ethnic homogeneity and social integration (cohesion and unity) national character and morale.

Another component is *organizational capabilities* such as the structure and the stability of political institutions, administrative capabilities, the quality of command and military preparedness, the quality of diplomacy and capacity for adoption. While the external sources of strength are relations with other states realized through foreign policy. The total strength of a state is a combination of these available sources of strength.

²⁶⁴ Handel, p. 119.

However, Handel suggests that the external sources of strength available are more crucial for the weak states and constitute a relatively greater part of the total strength than in the case of Great Powers²⁶⁵

Although the object of Handel's analysis is the weak state in an international perspective, it is obvious that his conclusions on the sources of strength, are, in general, valid also for those states that are weak from the internal perspective. It is unimaginable that a weak state, from the viewpoint of domestic capacities, could be strong in international policy. In this sense, for all states, minus the Great Powers, foreign policy is crucial and constitutes a relatively major part of the overall strength, and automatically, this is true of states that are weak according to our definition of state weakness. But, irrespective of the conclusion that foreign policy is almost the determining factor also for the category of states that are the objective of our discussion, in order to explain and understand their foreign policy behavior, it is important to observe what influence the domestic 'factors of weakness' have. Although the very division between 'home and abroad', domestic and foreign, inside and outside has been brought into question²⁶⁶ our argument rests on the proposition that the interplay of domestic factors has a direct effect on the behavior of weak states in the international arena.

For our analysis, for a state to be weak or strong from the domestic perspective, such elements as geographical data, material data and, partially, human resources which Handel defines as internal resources making a state strong from the international

²⁶⁵ Handel, p.125.

²⁶⁶ See Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (London- Palgrave, 2003), pp.1-23.

perspective, are not indispensably necessary. For instance, take the case of Switzerland and Albania. Obviously, such components as size of population, territory, national resources, and ethnic homogeneity, do not play any first hand role for these states to be classified weak or strong from the internal perspective. It is a known fact that Switzerland is classified as a strong state, in terms of capacities and effectiveness in domestic realm, while Albania, is a typical weak state although both these countries are almost the same size in territory and population, and Albania appears even more favored in terms of ethnicity, being almost ethnically pure. On the other hand, from the international perspective, both these states are weak. However, to explain and comprehend behavior in the foreign policy of Albania, we will see what other factors play a role besides size of population, territory or ethnic homogeneity. More concretely, what threatens weak states and how do they solve these threats through foreign policy?

6.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WEAK STATE BEHAVIOR

Handel suggests that it is not always easy in reality to draw a line between strength and weakness of a state-from the international perspective. And there is not a satisfactory definition of weak or powerful states, again from the international perspective, so he proposes two ideal types of states: *weak* and *strong*. This division is not very helpful to observe conduct in the foreign policy of the states defined as weak, from the domestic perspective. However, within this division, general features of the conduct of states defined as weak can be observed from the internal perspective.

The general division itself into weak and strong, suggest that weak states in the domestic perspective are the first that should be grouped in the category: "weak" vis-à-vis the "strong" category which includes states perceived as having the status of big powers. By excluding the big powers, the rest of the states constitute a very broad category which could include micro states, tiny states, small powers, middle powers or otherwise all states minus the Great Powers. Although not in every case, the behavior of a sub-category is the same as the behavior of another category. Within the "weak" division, there are obviously many common features.

Jeanne Hey²⁶⁷ says that research on small states behavior coincided with that on the "weak States" and "small powers"²⁶⁸ Hey suggests a series of characteristics in the behavior of small states, which, she claims, are also valid for weak states. According to her, small states tend to:

Exhibit a low level of participation in world affairs, address a narrow scope, of foreign policy issues, limit their behavior to their immediate geographic arena, employ diplomatic and economic foreign policy instruments, as opposed to military instruments, emphasize international principles, international Law and other "morally minded" ideals, secure multinational agreements and join multinational institutions whenever possible, choose neutral positions, rely on superpowers for protection, partnerships, and resources, aim to cooperate and to avoid conflict with others, spend a disproportionate amount of foreign policy resources on ensuring physical and political security and survival.²⁶⁹

As the majority of states today are small the above features are, to a certain extent, valid for all categories of states minus the big powers- irrespective of how and from which viewpoint we define them. These features are also valid for the object of our study: states that are weak from the viewpoint of capacities in domestic politics. However, irrespective

²⁶⁷ Jeanne Hey, *Small States in World Politics* (London: Boulder, 2003), p. 45

²⁶⁸ Hey, p.4.

²⁶⁹ Hey, pp 4-7

of a general trend of behavior which all states reflect, minus the Big Powers, there exist differences which could be fundamental. Especially when we analyze states defined as weak in relation to the level of the implementation of internal policies, domestic capacities and public goods which they should offer the citizens. As the ultimately aim of Foreign policy is strictly security²⁷⁰ the almost completely different agenda of security control and dominate the behavior in foreign policy. More concretely, do Luxembourg and Albania have the same behavior in foreign policy? Both these states are small, both could be classified in the "weak" group, vis-à-vis the "strong" group which includes the big powers. Luxembourg is a strong state in the domestic realm, in other words a state that functions properly and is effective vis-à-vis its citizens, whilst Albania, on the other hand, is a weak state in the domestic realm with weak institutions. What relevance does this difference have in behavior in foreign policy?

6.3 THE SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA OF WEAK STATES

As far as traditional security threats are concerned, the conduct of weak states in foreign policy does not, in general, appear to differ from that of small states. According to Handel,²⁷¹ the general trend for all states that are far from the status of the bigger powers from a systemic perspective is the *search for alliances* formal or informal to be able to address security threats. As a matter of fact, this is a traditional instrument of addressing security concerns—mostly threats from other countries.

²⁷⁰ Karen Smith, *The making of EU Foreign Policy*, (London – Palgrave 2004), pp.3-17

²⁷¹ Handel, p.267

Given the traditional perceptions of insecurity, alliances with other states were seen as a means of augmenting one's strength in the international system while decreasing the number of potential foes. But, as Buzan argues, with the end of the Cold War the domestic level of security became more prominent even in international relations because of the problems of internal instability.²⁷² Alliances with other countries cannot bring law and order within weak states. That is, alliances cannot increase a weak state's security in the way it has been traditionally conceived. As we have already mentioned, weak states are often, but not necessarily, small states. Consequently, the behavior of weak states in the international realm is similar, but not identical to the behavior of small states that are weak powers from the point of view of hard security. In this regard, the expectations are the same: weak states and small states use foreign policy in order to ensure their security against threats from outside.

The two main streams of International Relations theories – Liberalism and Realism – differ only in the way these states use their foreign policy. According to realism, weak states aim to ally themselves with strong states within a subsystem or, if they are lucky, with strong states in the international system. On the other hand, liberals argue that weak states look for their security by seeking to gain membership in international organizations, such as the League of Nations or the United Nations. Membership in these organizations gives them a voice in international affairs that exceeds their actual power. Also, they

²⁷² Barry Buzan Ole Waer Regions and Powers, the Structure of International Security (Cambridge – University Press, 2003), p.145

seek to strengthen these organizations because they provide for an orderly arrangement of the international community and limit the maneuverability of stronger states.²⁷³

However, differently from small states that are strong in terms of domestic capacities, the internal instability of weak states may be projected on their neighbors. According to Michael Handel (1990), while the main characteristic of strong powers is their military strength and their capacity to project their power on the international system, weak states are mainly concerned with their survival. They have difficulty in defending themselves against the Great and middle powers, against a coalition of weak states or even against a single weak state.²⁷⁴

As we have already mentioned, Handel analyzes weak states from an international perspective. Clearly, from this perspective all small states are weak regardless of their strength in the domestic realm. But, the subject of our study, the foreign policy of weak states that are classified as such in terms of their domestic capacities, differs from Handel's. The foreign policy dynamics of Albania, a small and weak state in terms of domestic capacities, and a small and strong state like Slovenia cannot be assumed to be identical.

One important element that must be taken into consideration when we study the foreign policy of weak states is the nature of the international system. For instance, the behavior of weak states during the Cold War differs from that reflected in the period

²⁷³ David Armstrong, Lorna Lloyd & John Redmond *International Organization in world Politics* (London-Palgrave, 2004), p.117

²⁷⁴ Handel, p.264.

between the two World Wars and is most certainly different again in the post Cold War environment.

In general, in a multi-polar system, weak states tend to be at risk yet have some maneuvering space. A set of circumstances of rivalry between stronger states allows them to choose from different foreign policy options—however, they cannot control the outcome of great power interaction on their own security. The case of Albania is a typical illustration of this argument. For example the Ambassadors Conference of the Great Powers of Europe supported the creation of an independent Albanian state within its present borders (16 December 1912) as a compromise for the divergent approaches taken by the Great Powers vis-à-vis the Albanian question.²⁷⁵

Yet, in different circumstances, but within the same nature of the international system, the Albanian state seriously found itself in jeopardy. So during the First World War, Albania became a transit route for the armies of the warring powers, including those of the neighboring countries, among which quite a few were planning to remain in occupation of the country whose existence was placed in jeopardy from the day of its inception. So much so, that Italy declared on 3 June 1917 “the unity and independence of all Albania under the aegis and protection of the Kingdom of Italy”.²⁷⁶ As we have mentioned in the first chapter, the nature of the international system during the Cold War allowed the weak, and in fact not only the weak states, to have very little maneuverability

²⁷⁵ The motives behind the support that Austria-Hungary and, to a lesser extent, Italy, gave to the creation of the independent Albanian state, sprung from fears of Serbia's expansion to the Adriatic Sea. Though Austria-Hungary advocated the creation of Greater Albania, corresponding with territory inhabited by an Albanian majority with Kosovo and Western Macedonia, Russia vehemently opposed the plan. See Stavro Skendi *Albania East –Central Europe under the Communists* (London : Atlantic Press, 1957), p.9

²⁷⁶ Skendi, p.11.

in foreign policy. The division of the world into two opposing blocs imposed state alliances vis-à-vis the two superpowers. Therefore states that did not become involved in the non-aligned movement belonged to either the eastern or the western bloc.

The post Cold War environment is quite the contrary since it creates far more maneuvering space for weak states. This is a new relation of states, including weak ones, in which their security or lack of security is not defined by rivalry between the big powers. Irrespective of this, the above observations on the behavior of weak states in foreign policy, generally confirm the realist account of international relations where the nature of internal regimes, whether liberal democratic, authoritarian or totalitarian is of relatively little significance. However, in the post Cold War environment-the nature of the internal regime of a state is a major determining variable on the behavior of all states including the weak one in the international realm.

In the traditional concept of security which regards threats to states only or almost from outside of the security-foreign policy relationship, all categories of states minus the big powers have to enter into alliances with other states to cope with the perils that could potentially come from abroad. Here, it is not just the states considered as weak from their level of effectiveness and the implementation of domestic reforms, but this category is the first that must be involved in such a dynamic.

But however, in the case of the weak states there is a fundamental feature that should be taken into consideration in the security-foreign policy relationship. This feature

is that weak states are threatened from within. Historically, a not too small number of new states which began to be registered on the world's political map, particularly in two periods, such as the post-colonial period or the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, were more threatened from inside rather than from outside. In such a situation, the question is what role foreign policy can play to address such issues as for instance: control of national boundaries, establishment of the control of the state over the entire territory of the country, the creation and operation of a functional legal system, the strengthening of state capacities to provide public goods like infrastructure, roads communication systems, the system of education, health etc. In general, experience reveals that weak states try through foreign policy to overcome the lack of political legitimacy, which is in fact their essential characteristic.²⁷⁷ It is clear that the only way to overcome the lack or the low level-vertical or horizontal-legitimacy²⁷⁸ is to build a functional state, something that could never be achieved outside of relations with other states.²⁷⁹ Hence the solution of the problems of security via foreign policy too, in fact is addressing issues, which means that actually the security agenda for weak states is a development agenda.²⁸⁰

6.4 THE DETERMINANTS OF FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR

According to the realist account of International Relations, all states operate in a similar manner to defend their interests, including foreign policy. This conclusion emerges from the central assumption of realists that the international system anarchical. Alternative

²⁷⁷ Kalevi Holsti, *The state, war, and the State of War*, (Cambridge University Press), p.104.

²⁷⁸ Holsti, p.105.

²⁷⁹ Holsti, p.106.

²⁸⁰ Holsti., p.107.

theories of international relations, on the contrary, assume a role is played by other factors, such as domestic policies and the nature of regimes, determinants which for realists are of second rate importance. Due to the fact that the objective of our study is the observation of behavior in the foreign policies of states defined as weak, in the domestic policies it is essential to observe, first and foremost, those internal factors that generally determine foreign policy behavior.

From all the domestic determinants of states' foreign policy behavior - *Geographic location, military might, economic powers and system of government*²⁸¹ - it is obvious that in the case of weak states, only *the geographic location and the system of government* could influence the formulation in a traditional sense. On the other hand, the economic and military weaknesses of weak states promote a foreign policy of dependency in search of a Big Brother that is willing to provide the weak state with these goods. Foreign policy becomes a strategy for sponsoring the state's existence and, as such, plays a vital role in the state's policies. For example Albania's relations first with the Soviet Union and later on with the People's Republic of China can be interpreted as purely ideological. Without doubt ideology was decisive for Hoxha's communist regime in choosing allies. However it could be truthfully said that Albania's economic subsistence is dedicated to the economic aid and programs of the Soviet Union and China respectively. This rapport of dependence was clearly witnessed, when after the disintegration of relations with China, the Albanian economy was in collapse. The irrelevance of ideology is further underlined by the constant search for Big Brother sponsorship throughout Albania's existence

²⁸¹ Charles W., Kegley, *International Events and the Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1975), p.176

irrespective of the internal regime: monarchical Albania found Italy, communist Albania found Yugoslavia, the USSR and China in that order and post-communist Albania has a foreign policy that is fully subservient to Western policies on the Balkan region. In the Balkans, Albanian foreign policy has foregone traditional strategic aims in order to win Western sponsorship and make up for its internal state weaknesses.

The other determinant –military might – plays a similar foreign policy role. A weak state either refrains from military adventures or it embarks upon brinkmanship in a short-term effort to enhance its strength. Generally, foreign policy becomes a search for security through dependency. In our Albanian case-study, the state never fought a single international war although it constantly searched for military aid. In cases where weak states are military regimes, expenditures on armed forces and security are predominant. In these cases, the domination of national expenditures for defense and security and the strengthening of military institutions all serve domestic policies, and even for the repression of opponents to the regime and to the government. Moreover, these kinds of weak states, or other states that are involved in transition processes, national security is identified with securing the government and also safeguarding the elite in office alone. However, there are also cases when even weak states manage to gain possession of nuclear weapons.²⁸² It appears a paradox that states which in some aspects are classified as weak, manage to gain possession of nuclear weapons—but nuclear weapons are a good tool for blackmail and brinkmanship in order to achieve security and foreign aid that mitigates internal weaknesses.

²⁸² For example, in the case of India and Pakistan, which to a lesser extent could be classified, in one way or another, as weak states, whose military might derives from the possession of nuclear weapons—and hence it is a determining factor in foreign policy.

Finally, geographical location is a factor that could play an important role in the issues of security and of foreign policy of weak states. For example Albania presents one of those rare cases whose important geopolitical position in a volatile region has been cause for threats to the its political existence, while at the same time serving as *casus belli* for protection. Every strong power that has arisen in the Italian Peninsula has had the tendency to expand into the Balkans by using Albania as a bridgehead. On the other hand, whenever a powerful state has emerged in the Balkan Peninsula, it has tended to reach the Adriatic coast and use Albania as a springboard for expansion to the West²⁸³

²⁸³ Skendi., p.18.

CHAPTER 7

THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Historically, the weak phenomenon has brought about the intervention of strong states, and especially the Great powers. This “mentorship” of the Great Powers towards weak states has occurred due to the role of the Great powers as main guarantors of global peace and security. Michael Brown argues that this “historical mentorship” of the strong states is required to address the regional and international dimension of the internal conflict.²⁸⁴

Generally speaking the International Community has been encouraged to intervene for the following reasons:

- First, the security problematic that accompanies the failure of a state has been the main driving force behind the reaction of Great powers towards weak states;
- Second, the geo-strategic or simply economic interests of individual or a coalition of Great powers may have dictated such interventions;
- Third, and most recent, the reasons behind such interventions may be humanitarian.

²⁸⁴ Michael Brown *The International Dimension of Internal Conflict* (London - The MIT Press, 2004), p.9

Weak states are unable to fulfill their security obligations towards their citizens. Thus, even when they do not implode in domestic conflicts, their weak existence becomes a potential threat that may escalate into a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe for their citizens. Other than armed conflict, these disasters include epidemics, environmental degradation and extreme poverty.

Despite the lack of a direct threat on the security of other states or the international system, humanitarian catastrophes have powerful, indirect negative effects on security matters. This is particularly the case when weak states are located geographically close to important states in the international system. The Balkan Peninsula has such a correlation vis-à-vis Europe.

On the other hand, it is clear those Great powers and international organizations have intervened to help weak states primarily when security concerns have been primal. Furthermore, military interventions have been quicker, more robust and have yielded more palpable results when the immediate national interests of at least one of the Great powers have dictated such actions. The cases of military interventions dictated solely by humanitarian concerns have been very rare (Somalia is the only one that fits this category well).

Even more rare are the cases of international intervention and assistance stemming from geo-strategic goals, security and economic interests and humanitarian concerns together. One case study that fits this type of category is the immediate military

intervention of the international community against Iraq during the Gulf War. The international community, led by the United States, had a direct security concern on the perils of Iraqi aggrandizement in the Persian Gulf area. This concern was closely related to the vital economic interests on further access to Middle Eastern oil in case it fell under Iraqi control. However, this case is not very helpful for the purposes of this essay since it has little to do with our area of concern: foreign interventions generated by the weak state phenomenon. Instead, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait constituted a clear act of aggression against a sovereign country.

In the Balkans, foreign interventions and assistance, and consequently local dependence on such actions, have been present since the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from the region. Historically speaking, this relationship has been determined by the geo-strategic position of the region. The dynamics of the relationship have shown that the Great powers have generated problems at least as frequently as they have found solutions. The rapport of the region with the international system suggests that the Balkan Peninsula has generated parallel security concerns and interest clashes between the Great powers.

Consequently, the Balkan security problematic is determined by the following factors:

- First, the security or lack thereof of the Peninsula is positively related to the security of the European continent and thus to the security of the international system;
- Second, the Balkan states have been unable to create their own security system;

- Third, as a result, the region has been in constant need of international attention from the security perspective.

7.1. TRADITIONAL APPROACH

The first actions of the international community that have been sparked by something like the weak state phenomenon hark back to the beginning of the twentieth century and the League of Nations.²⁸⁵ These first experiences had nothing to do with sovereign weak states. Instead, the Great powers were involved in helping and tutoring non self-governing territories on their way to complete independence. The League of Nations, and later the United Nations, created the Trusteeship System as a means to this end. But, despite the fact that these early beginnings had nothing to do with weak states, the experience accumulated by the international community proved to be useful later, when interest on weak state interventions increased.

The mandate of the Trusteeship System under the Covenant of the League of Nations, or later the UN Charter, was to assist in the formulation and implementation of domestic policies for the economic and cultural development of peoples that were in the nascent phase of nation state building. In practical terms, this meant that the business of governing was trusted to the international community. For example, in 1962-1963, with

²⁸⁵ The League of Nations was formed after World War I through the Versailles Treaty. The League did make a powerful contribution to world peace in its first years. However, the absence of the United States and the reluctance of some other Great powers to recognize its authority, weakened the League although it continued to exist until the creation of the United Nations.

the request of the Netherlands and Indonesia, the UN governed territory of Irian Java during its transition from Dutch to Indonesian rule.²⁸⁶

Sometimes, the aim of the intervention of the League of Nations has been “the domestic agenda”. Between 1920 and 1925, the League took over the administration of the German Saar region. Also, it prevented Austria’s economic collapse. Hungary accepted 250 million gold Crowns (about US\$ 5 billion) from the League as “reconstruction help” in July 1924.²⁸⁷ In the Balkans too, the League of Nations played an active and important role. However, its initiatives produced mixed results.

Albania owes its creation and existence as an independent state to the decisions of the Great powers and the League of Nations. The decision of the Great powers (1913) to recognize the sovereignty of the new Albanian State was accompanied by the creation of an international commission of Great powers responsible for monitoring the governing of the new state. In a significant example of policy continuity, the international community dealt roughly in the same manner with the case of Bosnia. In the latter case, it created the Contact Group, made up of the United States, the European powers and Russia, in order to formulate a solution to the crisis.

²⁸⁶ Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner, “Saving failed States”, *Foreign Policy Winter*, (vol.4, 1993) : p.46

²⁸⁷ Laura Garces, “The League of Nations’ predicament in Southeastern Europe”, *World Affairs*, , Vol. 158 (1995): p. 5.

During the administration of President Zog (1924-1928), the League of Nations undertook a number of initiatives to help Albania in its state building process.²⁸⁸ The League sent advisors that proposed a number of reforms such as the restructuring of the armed forces and administration of finances. Some of the proposed reforms, such as the reduction of the size of the army, were refused by the Albanian administration.

Thus, starting with the League of Nations, one of the aims of the international community's initiatives towards weak states has been to assist the state building process. However, at the time, this aim was secondary. The main purpose of the assistance of the League for the young and weak Balkan states was to solve the myriad of border demarcation problems in a clear and acceptable way to all sides.

Due to the intense lobbying of US President Wilson, from the legal point of view the League accepted the principle of self-determination. This principle was often too cumbersome to become a reality, especially in the Balkans. Thus, the League had no choice but to deal with border disputes and minority problems.²⁸⁹ The nascent phase of that nation state building process in the area forced this type of interference by the international community. In other words, at the beginning of the international community's involvement with weak Balkan states the problems that were tackled had to do with the interstate relations rather than intrastate relations. Domestic conflicts

²⁸⁸ Albania was accepted in the League of Nations in 1924. Albania's membership signified a negative response to the designs of its Balkan neighbors to divide its territories among themselves.

²⁸⁹ For a more in-depth look at the League's role in solving border disputes and minorities' issues, see Laura Garces, "The League of Nations' predicament in Southeastern Europe", *World Affairs*, (Summer 1995): p.43.

remained outside the scope of this assistance, since at the time they did not threaten the region's security.

It was only with the beginnings of a new international organization, the United Nations (UN) that the attention of the international community began to shift to the state building processes that were occurring in weak states. In 1992, the UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros Ghali, in his Agenda for Peace report, expressed clearly the philosophical and practical concepts on which the assistance of the international community towards states that are unable to stand on their own must focus. This new strategy aimed to strengthen democratic governance and institutions. The resources of the UN and its agencies, UNDP, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Program, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), coupled with the resources of other international institutions (IMF, World Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, The European Bank for Reconstruction, etc) were focused on improving the domestic political and economic climate in these states. From this point on, the international community vested itself with a new primary role: assisting the internal state building processes in weak states.

Despite the similarities between the traditional and modern international approaches, post Cold-War international relations demand a greater attention and clearer strategy towards the weak state phenomenon for at least three factors. First, weak states are the main cause of wars in the international arena today. Second, the globalization of economic relationships and rapid technological changes has decreased the capacity of the

state to fulfill Max Weber's criterion of having the legitimate monopoly of the use of force.²⁹⁰ Last but not least, the emergence of a new face of international terrorism in the attacks of September 11 highlighted the need to address the problem of weak states and state building as a security threat that had not been so obvious before.²⁹¹

Domestic armed conflicts make up the dominant paradigm in the post-Cold War period. In modern times, internal violent conflicts do not constitute a problem limited to the warring sides. Moreover, the dominance of such conflicts is becoming undeniable. In 1996, Kalevi Holsti warned:

The assumption that the problem of war (conflict) is primarily a problem of relations between states has to be seriously questioned. The security between states in the third world, among some of the former republics of the Soviet Union, and elsewhere has become increasingly dependent upon security within those states. The classical formulae were: International peace and security provide an environment in which domestic politics can unfold untroubled by external disturbances. The equation is now becoming reversed. The problem of contemporary and future politics, it turns out, is essentially a problem of domestic politics. The issue now is how to secure peace within states.²⁹²

However, despite the clear correlation between internal conflicts and weak states, and the security concerns that these conflicts bring up, the international community remains reluctant to act in order to solve these problems. Because of a number of reasons, the international community has failed to act, acted too late or did not take the appropriate approach. First of all most of the instruments available to the International Community depend on the existence of an effective state. But in weak states and especially in a failed

²⁹⁰ Robert Cooper *The Breaking of Nations Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*, (London –Atlantic Books ,2003), pp. 17-18

²⁹¹ Francis Fukuyama *State Building Governance and World Order in the Twenty – First Century* (Profile Books LTD, 2005), p.2

²⁹² Holsti,p 15.

state, it makes little sense to exert pressure on or to work with a state to change situation.²⁹³ For example, in the case of Albania when almost all state institutions ceased to exist, the international community faced a real dilemma: to cooperate with the armed rebels or not?²⁹⁴

The legal framework of International organizations cannot deal adequately with internal conflicts. According to article 2(7) of the UN Charter, the UN is not authorized to get involved "in matters, which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state."²⁹⁵ The reluctance of the international community is fueled by the different nature of the conflicts that predominate the international arena today. The legal mechanisms to deal with these new problems are not in place yet.

Domestic armed conflicts are not waged by regular armies. Often, they are communal conflicts that include non-state actors and they often escalate into civil wars. Macedonia came very close to such a war. Indeed, if the conflict had engulfed the ethnically mixed city of Skopje, the country may have well slid into such a cul-de-sac. In this regard, attempts to give a religious dimension to the conflict by some Macedonian groups did not help matters. These conflicts do not offer the "luxury" of one clear front line, thus making any military actions by an international force very difficult.

²⁹³ Lousie Andersen International Engagement in failed states Choice and trade-Offs (Denmark- Danish Institute for International Studies, working paper 20, 2005), p.1.

²⁹⁴ The Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi solved this dilemma by appearing on local TV accompanied with the chief of armed rebels Zani Caushi thus legitimizing non-state factors in the international arena..

²⁹⁵ See UN Charter, chapters 6 and 7.

Sometimes, the international community is forced to take sides in the conflict, as was the case of NATO in the Kosovo/o campaign. The UN experience shows that international military operations are usually successful only when they occur at the acquiescence of all warring sides

Another important factor that aids non-interference is the absence of strategic interests in intervening. During the Cold War, the superpowers had strong strategic interests in intervening in weak states in order to consolidate their spheres of influence. However, after the end of Cold War rivalries, Great power interest waned and therefore the willingness to intervene decreased as well. Thus, while the number of weak states is increasing²⁹⁶ the international community has become increasingly reluctant to intervene, especially when it has to do so militarily. Lawrence Freedman²⁹⁷ says:

“Still there are interests that can be described as “vital” relating to trade And raw materials, especially oil, but on a close examination even these can appear to less substantial than supposed. The west views the world with a general lack of pressing strategic interests combined with a confused moral interest. Systemic repression, ethnic cleansing, and images of violent internecine wars may affront – the West- without directly affecting them”

The vacillation of the international community on the Bosnian crises is one of the examples that prove this point. The absence of direct strategic and economic interests coupled with the fact that the Bosnian conflict was easily containable and thus had minimal negative effects on the security of the wider region, meant that the international community had little interest in stopping the conflict.

²⁹⁶There were only fifty member-states at the beginning of the United Nations. At present, the UN has around 200 member-states, a great many of which may be classified as 'weak.

²⁹⁷ Lawrence Freedman, *Weak States and the West* " Society, Vol32, (1994): p.20.

It would be wrong to say that the international community has no vital interests in the Balkans. However, it is true that these interests have decreased in importance over time. The capacity of some of the countries in the region to decrease ties with their unstable neighbors and slowly enter the European mainstream (Slovenia and to a lesser extent Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia) has left the rest of the Balkans as a rather isolated island without any well-defined economic interests although still capable to impact European security. Furthermore, since September 11 2001, there has been a shift in the security concerns of the international community, and especially the United States, from the Balkans to terrorism. Dana Allin²⁹⁸ observed the shift of priorities:

“On 11 September 2001, NATO officials in Brussels were discussing how to continue their third Balkans intervention (in Macedonia-A.R.). In an instant on that Tuesday, the terrorists mass murders in the New York and Washington transformed transatlantic priorities. What can be stated with reasonable confidence, however is that a line has been drawn under a decade in which the wars in Yugoslavia’s collapse dominated the transatlantic security relationship. While NATO as an organization May continue to devote much of its energies to maintaining Balkan Stability, the attention of Western leaders will be elsewhere”

7.2. HOW DO WEAK BALKAN STATES AFFECT EUROPEAN SECURITY?

Not all weak states are in danger of imploding in internal conflicts. Furthermore, not all internal conflicts present a security problem for other states, regions or international security. Similarly, despite the existence of violent, armed conflicts between some separatist movements and strong European states like Spain and Ireland, these

²⁹⁸ Dana Allin, “NATO’s Balkan Intervention”, *Adelphi Paper* 347 (London-The International Institute for Strategic Studies).p.8

conflicts do not present a security problem to other states or the region. Generally speaking, a number of developments has increased the weight of weak states vis-à-vis regional or even global security.

First of all the impact of negative spillover effects from weak states on the international arena has been increasing primarily due to the end of the Cold War. The spill-over effect of conflict in West Africa and the African Great Lakes regions is well-known. Instability and criminality have spread in the Balkans and South Caucasus,²⁹⁹ without mentioning today's Middle East crisis.

Weak states present a challenge to the international system of Global Governance since the international system has been designed to work based on the assumption of strong states.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, weak states poseserious threats to health worldwide. States that are not capable or not willing to sustain strong public health systems can become reservoirs of transmittable diseases- HIV/AIDS, polio and malaria.³⁰¹ And lastly but not last a functional global response to the serious threats that international terrorism poses to global security requires that special attention be paid to weak or failed states. The existence of a number of weak or failed states in different world regions often translates into loss of control on territory and borders. Thus, international terrorist organizations have the possibility to function and operate using these weak states as a base from where they can train, supply and grow.

²⁹⁹ Hilary Benn *A shared Challenge Promoting Development and Human Security in Weak states*, (Center for Global Development , Washington, 2004), p.13.

³⁰⁰ Ben, p.14.

³⁰¹ Ben, p.15.

The Balkans constitute a case in point as one of the regions where there is a clear and distinct connection between the existence of weak states, internal conflicts and the implications for regional and European/International security. The Macedonian crisis reinforces the existence of such negative dynamics. If the conflict had continued, there was a real possibility of the inclusion of other Balkan states like Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, but also of the two NATO member-states, Turkey and Greece. While the Bosnian conflict was geographically isolated (and, to a certain extent, so was the Kosovo conflict) the Macedonian conflict could have easily threatened European security.

Geographically, the Balkans is part of Europe and, therefore they influence European security through the spillover effect of Balkan instabilities. In the worst-case scenario, the conflict could spread into NATO member-states that could find themselves in opposing armed camps. However, even when Balkan conflicts may be isolated, the spillover of "all instabilities" cannot be stopped. The principal form that spillover has taken over the past decade is forced migration. As it has become evident - the recent example is France- there is a link between migration and the growth of the extreme right in Europe

The implications for regional and European security even when there is no internal armed conflict are evident in the case of Albania due to its geographic position vis-à-vis Europe. A permanent political conflict that takes place outside the institutions brings about the failure of the state. The loss of border and territory controls creates the

opportunity for human, weapons and drugs trafficking to flourish. These negative implications threaten directly the neighboring countries, while from the point of view of European security, the country exports insecurity throughout the continent.

Also, the mismanagement of the state-building process may have negative affects on the future of international institutions such as NATO and the EU. For example, although the Alliance was able to preserve its cohesiveness during the Kosovo/o intervention, it is doubtful that this cohesiveness would have been preserved in the case that ground forces should have been needed. Within the framework of transatlantic relations, the conflicts of the last decade had a negative effect on US-EU relations. As Dana Allin³⁰² points out:

While the wars in Croatia and Kosovo/o troubled transatlantic relations, It was the War in Bosnia that most gravely threatened the Alliance's fundamental consensus. Bosnia's agony challenged the Assumption of shared values and common transatlantic interests. It mocked Europe's ambitions for unity and greater presence on the global stage. And it raised a stark question about the continued Seriousness of US military engagement in Europe. The war in Bosnia was transformed in (NATO) alliance calculations from a peripheral concern into the transatlantic security problem, at least if measured in terms of the time and attention demanded from allied leaders.

Within the same framework, the Bosnian and Kosovo/o conflicts harmed US-Russia relations as well. Thus, in 1995 these relations were frayed to the point that a confrontational stance became a distinct possibility. Furthermore, all Balkan states except Serbia have signed the Partnership for Peace (PfP) agreement with NATO, and NATO membership is a policy priority. However, the failure of the state-building processes and

³⁰² Dana Allin, *op. cit.*, p.13.

the slide towards internal conflicts will postpone NATO membership, and it may force these countries to seek alliances outside the Euro-Atlantic security structures.³⁰³

Last but not least, the way in which the state-building process will develop in the Balkans will affect the European Union as an institution since EU engagement is considered to be a test of the capability of the EU to come up and implement a common foreign and security policy.

7.3. FROM MILITARY INTERVENTIONS TO STATE BUILDING PROCESS

The role of the international community in the Balkans vacillates between that of a leader and that of an assistant in the state-building processes that are occurring in the region. A veritable ensemble of international institutions such as the UN (and most of its agencies) NATO, the EU, OSCE, the Council of Europe, IMF, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and a number of lesser regional institutions and NGOs have come to play a vital role in the contemporary Balkan processes.

The end of the Cold War signaled the start of a new phase in the state-building process in the ex-Communist Bloc. In the Balkans, as everywhere else, the nation-state building process was frozen due to the nature of international relations in the Cold War era. Was it possible that the rekindling of this process would not be as problematic as its

³⁰³ Janusz Bugajski, "Kosovo at the Core of Balkan Security," in Albert Rakipi ed. *Albanians in the Balkans* (Tirana - Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2000), p.46.

beginnings? More concretely, was it possible for the Yugoslav federation to break up in a peaceful manner? At a time when the international community is investing into a "back to the future" type of model for the region by promoting regional integration, the critical question becomes: Will this model function well? Although applied differently in different countries, the nation state building process has led to some type of violence in almost all countries in the region. This commonality has forced the international community to intervene and assist these countries in a piecemeal fashion. Primarily, this assistance has taken the form of military interventions. Thus, the paradigm of international interventions has been the same in most Balkan countries. This paradigm consisted of military interventions that aimed at stopping a conflict – as was a case in Bosnia, Kosovo/o and Macedonia – followed by a peace agreement signed by all warring sides and a program of reconstruction in the name of "peace building".

The Albanian intervention was similar as well. Despite the fact that there were no warring sides in the conflict, the 1997 international intervention followed the same paradigm. At the government's request, an international force intervened to help impose internal order. The signature of an agreement followed this between the two sides in the political conflict. The Community of St. Edigio, a Rome-based catholic organization, mediated the political agreement between the main Albanian political parties that led to the parliamentary elections of June 29, 1997. These elections marked an end to the Albanian anarchy. Except the Albanian intervention, there is a continued international military presence in the other countries, although this presence has been much reduced from its initial stages. Thus, the presence of the international force in Bosnia managed to

freeze the Balkans' most severe conflict, and continues to maintain internal order. On the other hand, a civilian international presence continues to help the state building process by promoting political and economic reforms and implementing a number of development projects.

In Kosovo, an international force under NATO leadership maintains internal order and defines the rules of relating to Serbia. Finally, the presence of foreign troops in Macedonia, and especially the US contingent, has impacted the country's internal policies considerably. Former President Gligorov acknowledged this impact and his administration asked for the extension of the mandate of this force not only during the Kosovo/o conflict, but following the post conflict period as well. The 2001 armed conflict increased the military and civilian presence in Macedonia and its impact on domestic politics. At the present, this international presence mainly represented by NATO, EU, the Council of Europe and OSCE is assisting in the new phase of the state building process that Macedonia has embarked upon. In 1977 Albania invited an International Force to restore order and prevent anarchy. At the moment, the country continues to have an extended presence of OSCE and other International Organizations, which play a significant part in political and economic developments.

7.4. THE ROLE OF NATO AND EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Our analysis of the role of the international community in assisting weak states will focus mainly on the contribution of NATO and the European Union (EU).

Furthermore, despite the fact that these two organizations play a major role throughout the Balkans, we will focus on their impact on Albania and Macedonia. Presently, NATO and the EU carry a great deal of weight in Balkan developments. Both actors have been deeply involved in the area in the last decade. NATO's military interventions in almost all Balkan conflicts have been a necessary and sufficient condition for their resolution.

On the other hand, the role of the EU in the area has been growing over time. Currently, the EU has expressed its readiness to assume more responsibilities in the problematic region; due to the direct negative effect Balkan conflicts have on EU member-states. It is within this context that we must see its desire to send a EU contingent to Macedonia to take over security issues from NATO.

Before we analyze the policies and track records of these actors, there are two theoretical implications that we need to note. First, making the assumption that the EU is a global player means considering it as an operational unit very similar to a state, or as an international organization/institution. Keeping in mind the definitions of the terms "state" and "international organization", it becomes clear that the EU cannot be classified easily as either a state or an international organization. According to Brian White, the EU "is not like a conventional state even if it can act in limited state-like way."³⁰⁴ At the same time, the EU is more than merely another international organization.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, (London- Palgrave ,2001), p. 21.

³⁰⁵ White, p.22.

The problem of defining the EU is not simply a theoretical matter. It has practical implications on today's global politics and, more immediately, for our topic of interest: the role of the international community on weak states. The EU's "in between" position – between a "state" and an "international organization" – is one of the main causes of its controversial policies, weak foreign policy performance, the failure of its attempts to formulate an effective answer to the crises of the last decade and the uncertainties surrounding the EU's desire to take on more responsibility in the region in order to achieve a primary position in the region. Second, from a theoretical perspective, the question arises: what is the best theoretical model to explain the policy formulation and implementation processes of NATO and EU on the Balkans? Presently, NATO and the EU are assisting the transition process, which is a new phase of state building based on the principles of liberalism and democracy. What is the practical role of the international institutions within this context? According to John Pevehouse, most democratization studies present regime transitions as the outcome of a domestic political process that is not influenced by actors outside the nation – state. Even literature sympathetic to international factors relies on domestic processes to explain regime change.³⁰⁶

The main streams of International Relations theory - realism and liberalism – offer little insight in explaining the recent international interventions in the Balkans. Realism, the dominant theory of International Relations, fits very well with Great power interventions in the region by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Power politics was the driving force of Great power interventions in the Balkans in that time. Of course, Balkan conflicts – from Bosnia to Macedonia – may be interpreted

³⁰⁶ John C. Pevehouse, "Democracy from the Outside-In", *International Organizations* 56, 3, 92002): p.517.

within a realist framework. For example, the creation of Republic Srbska is enough to prove the relevance of the Realist approach in today's Balkans, if we consider the ex-Yugoslav Federation as an anarchical setting.³⁰⁷

Yet, the modern international interventions in the region cannot be explained within a realist framework. And of all these conflicts, the 1997 Albanian crisis and the subsequent international military intervention is the one that fits the least well with realist theory. On the other hand, it seems that the broader liberal perspective may serve well as a theoretical background for explaining the modern international interventions. However, the implementation of this theory has its problems as well. The main reason for this "lack of fit" is that all liberal theories (the democratic peace theory, neo-liberalism, institutionalism) offer insights in order to explain interstate relations. For example, according to neo-liberal institutionalism, international institutions play an important role in increasing cooperation and reducing conflict between states. While the main assumption of democratic peace theory is that democracies do not fight each other.

According to this school of thought, the expansion of the community of democratic states is an investment on peace. According to realists, conflict and war are inevitable because of the natural anarchic nature of the international system, while liberals (liberal institutionalists) believe that peace and order become possible by setting-up functioning international institutions that promote these concepts. However, it is the new nature of war – domestic conflicts – that makes the successful application of these liberal concepts incapable of explaining the dynamics of these conflicts. Moreover, the most well

³⁰⁷ Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict", *Survival*, vol. 35, no.1, (1993): pp. 27-47.

developed literature on International Institutions – liberal institutionalism – has largely ignored domestic politics. Most neoliberal institutionalist research has focused on international outcomes, so it is unclear whether the same causal mechanisms link these institutions with domestic political processes.³⁰⁸

However, we must look for a theoretical ground in order to observe the dynamics of the relationships between Balkan weak states and international institutions (NATO and EU) within the broad family of liberalism. According to this school of thought, international institutions promote cooperation among their members; facilitate communication; provide information; develop common principles, norms and rules; constrain aggressive behavior and provide a basis for joint actions, conflict prevention, management, and resolution.³⁰⁹

Karl Deutch's pluralistic community concept and the democratic peace theory offer further insights in understanding the dynamics of this relationship. According to Deutch, a pluralistic community is a group of people that has developed functioning common institutions and practices thus having integrated into a community. A security community is not simply the absence of war but also the absence of military options for solving disputes. A shared identity and compatible values for the members are the conditions of the security community.³¹⁰ Karl Deutch declares modern Europe as the ideal model of the pluralistic security community. Also, the EU serves as the best real-life

³⁰⁸ Pevehouse, p.518.

³⁰⁹ Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye and Stanley Hoffman, *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991*, (Cambridge, 1993), p. 234.

³¹⁰ See Karl Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton, (New York – Princeton, 1957) p.5.

model of the democratic peace theory. It seems difficult that the Balkans will achieve a similar pluralistic security community model as a subsystem of the larger EU community. Instead of creating its own subsystem, the Balkan countries have been invited to join the security community that Western Europe has already developed.

Undoubtedly, international forces impact a state's domestic processes by way of constraints and opportunities. This has brought about a voluminous body of research trying to investigate the causal mechanism that explains the impact that international institutions may have in preparing the Balkans for eventual membership in Europe's security community

Usually, in the case of ex-communist countries undergoing a transition process, the role of international institutions is to influence and assist the transitions from authoritarian to liberal regimes. In this sense, the promotion of the democratic system is increasingly becoming a foreign policy objective per se for countries such as the United States and EU member-states. Thus, international institutions such as the Council of Europe, the European Union, OSBE and NATO are being used as tools to achieve that objective. John Pevehouse explains the potential causal mechanism that can explain the influence of International Organizations in changing a state's domestic policies:

- First, diplomatic and economic pressures generated from these organizations can, in combination with internal forces, compel autocratic regimes to liberalize.

- Second, membership in International Organizations can lead to the acceptance of liberalization by certain elite groups as it can lower the risks that these groups face during the democratization process.³¹¹

During the last ten years, the international community has used both ways in order to impact domestic policy in Balkan countries. Diplomatic and economic pressures have been used as a matter of routine in the last decade. Usually, international economic aid has been tied to internal reforms aimed at strengthening the democratic polity. Thus, conditionally has served as an instrument for building peace.³¹² As the case of Serbia's policy towards Bosnia and Kosovo/o shows, these pressures sometimes have failed with tragic consequences.

As we have already mentioned, the second way through which the international community influences a state's domestic policies is by way of membership in international institutions. For example the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) approved Albania's membership application in 1991 not without the consent of the Democratic Party, which represented the opposition. On the other hand, membership in the Council of Europe was postponed pending reforms that consolidated the democratic regime in the country. On the other hand, membership in CSCE (1991) and the Council of Europe (1995) helped the political elite increase its legitimacy at a time when the state was performing weakly. It was largely unable to guarantee security and

³¹¹ Pevchouse, p517

³¹² For a better understanding of the conditionality process and its impact on the domestic policies of Balkan countries, see James Boyce, "Investing in Peace: Aid and Conditionality after Civil War", *Adelphi Paper* 351, (London- The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2004)

access to public goods, while the economic reforms endangered the elite's hold on power. International legitimacy gave the political elite a new lease on power.

Let us look specifically at the role of NATO and the EU in Macedonia and Albania. Both organizations have assisted these countries in a three-pronged approach:

- First, both NATO and EU have offered these countries a common future
- Second, both NATO and EU have taken an active role in the state building processes that these states are going through.
- Third, both NATO and EU have intervened militarily or set up (or, "aim to" as in the case of EU in Macedonia) a military presence in these countries.

Let us analyze in more detail these three elements of the two-organization policy on the Balkans. The EU and NATO have offered Macedonia and Albania (and the other countries in the region as well) a common future: the prospect of membership in the EU and NATO. Balkan developments would have been very different had this "carrot" not been dangled in front of regional states. The prospect of a common European future acts as a great incentive and constraint on the policies pursued by local elites.

At present, Albania and Macedonia maintain almost the same level of relations with the EU and NATO. Both countries have applied for membership in NATO and they are members of its Partnership for Peace (PfP) program³¹³. Popular support for

³¹³ Albania became a member of PfP on February 23, 1992, thus becoming one of the first Eastern Bloc countries to do so.

³¹³ Macedonia was the 27th country that signed in November 15, 1995 the Partnership for Peace Program with NATO.

membership is very high, especially in Albania where there is a large-scale consensus among all sections of the elite and population that the future of the country lies within Euro-Atlantic structures.³¹⁴ Both countries also maintain almost the same relationship level with the EU.³¹⁵ They are part of the stabilization and association process that the EU has initiated for Balkan countries that aim to become members.

The fact that both NATO and the EU have expressed their readiness to eventually accept these countries as full members – “but – however - not just yet”³¹⁶ - has impacted the domestic policies of both countries and their relations with their neighbors quite powerfully. The promised common future has proved to be a guiding light for the state building process in both countries. As a matter of fact, every step forward in the process of integration in NATO and EU has been earned through economic and political reforms that have fulfilled the conditions introduced by the EU and NATO.

Finally, Albania and Macedonia's membership in PfP and their relations with the EU have served as guarantors of their territorial integrity and security in a neighborhood where such a security has proved to be a luxury. Obviously, this has helped the state-making process by allowing the governments of these countries to focus on their domestic problems.

³¹⁴ According to a public survey organized by the Albanian Atlantic Association, more than 90 percent of Albanians support Albania's application for NATO membership.

³¹⁵ Macedonia signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) on April 2001.

³¹⁶ Nicholas White, *The EU and Macedonia*, CEPS Comentary, 6 April 2001, at <http://www.ceps.be>

NATO and the EU play vital roles in the daily progress of the state-making process. They supply economic and technical assistance, work out development programs, monitor elections and take an active part in institutional reforms and institution building.³¹⁷ Generally speaking, weak states provide few services to their citizens.

Looking at EU, and to a lesser extent NATO, involvement in Albania and Macedonia we observe that these actors are assisting these states to provide their citizens with basic public goods.³¹⁸ More concretely, the EU is running programs aimed at strengthening public administration and judiciary, police and public order, customs, education system and infrastructure development.

On the other hand, NATO's assistance does not remain within the narrow framework of helping the reforms in armed forces. Potential NATO membership consists of more than reforming a country's armed forces. NATO-run programs such as Partnership for Peace have advanced NATO's role into a supervisor and guarantor of civilian control over the armed forces and institutional openness. Both these areas are vital for the creation of a functional democracy. Moreover, NATO's Macedonian mission was not aimed at simply deterring any possible re-conflagrations of the conflict. The availability of weapons in the black market is one of the sources of instability for weak

³¹⁷ From 1991-2000 the EU provided 1021 million (EURO) in total to Albania, of which an important took the form of balance of payment support or specific budgetary assistance linked to reforms (agriculture, public administration) or to refugee related costs during the Kosovo crisis. In humanitarian assistance alone, the EU's Humanitarian Aid Office has provided a 140 million. Sectoral Program amount to 404 million. Source *Albania – The European Contribution*, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/sec/albania/

³¹⁸ The EU in Macedonia is assisting the Inter-ethnic dialogue, enterprises, the financial sector, justice and home affairs, transport, agriculture, environment, education, local government development, democracy and civil society. See for more details *FYROM – The European Contribution*, at http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/sec/FYROM/

states. The times when the state was their only supplier are gone. It was within NATO's mandate to gather and destroy the weapons possessed by the armed Albanian fighters. Furthermore, NATO's mandate authorized it to maintain law and order during the parliamentary elections that were supposed to get Macedonia out of the crisis.

The state building process in the Balkans has been accompanied by domestic conflicts. Thus, NATO and the EU's long-term policy goal is to create a situation in the Western Balkans (where Albania and most of the ex-Yugoslav republics are located) in which military conflicts become unthinkable. However, in order to get there, NATO has had to shore up problems by intervening militarily in the area in order to ensure peace as a first step in this long process. This quagmire remains the most problematic dimension of international assistance for the weak states in the Balkans. The problems of international military interventions and the perspectives for stability in the Balkans are closely interconnected with three main issues:

- First, the slow and late reaction of the international actors, including NATO, in Balkan crises;
- Second, the question that is most heard –“ NATO and the EU” or “NATO or EU”;
- Third, for how much longer will the region need an international military presence?

The international community's slow reaction to the Bosnian crisis was a great lesson for the international actors, and especially NATO. The new attitude was reflected in Kosovo/o and especially in Macedonia. NATO and the EU tried to prevent a new

conflict with a timely intervention in Macedonia. EU presence and participation in facilitating a solution to the crisis was vital, although this presence remained within the political realm. The EU played a stronger role in Macedonia than in any other Balkan conflicts. It had its own representative in the negotiations between the Albanians and Macedonians. Also EU's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana traveled to Macedonia himself. It seems that the EU was propelled into the limelight by its ambition to finally be part of the solution in at least one of the problems that were occurring in its own backyard. After all, these problems had a direct impact on regional stability and European security problems. Four years earlier, the Albanian Government request for a EU military presence remained unanswered by EU institutions, although the eventual UN military presence was comprised overwhelmingly of European countries, i.e. Austria, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Portugal etc. The EU member-states failed to come to an institutional consensus on the Albanian crisis, although as Balkan conflicts go, this one was one of the least risky. The European Union did not have the command structure to coordinate a multinational military effort in Albania. This left an ad hoc "coalition of the willing" under Italian leadership to mount its own form of UN-approved military deployment in Albania.³¹⁹

The EU decision to sign the Association-Stabilization Agreement in the spring of 2001 in order to neutralize the domestic conflict that had just started in the young country was a critical point in EU's attempts to get more involved in the region. However, despite the fact that the EU tried hard to become an indispensable part of the peace process, it was

³¹⁹ Gabriel Partos, *Albania Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management*, Working papers, www.ciaonct.org.

NATO's military intervention in the country that ensured peace.³²⁰ Once again, US support proved crucial for the success of international interventions in the region.

As we have already mentioned, the dynamics of the international intervention in Macedonia retained another dimension: the European desire for strengthening their common foreign and security policy. In the last decade, the Balkans have been the litmus test of EU's capability to formulate a foreign policy backed up by military capabilities in order to solve the problems in its own backyard. Since 1991, when Luxembourg's Foreign Minister declared, "It is the hour of Europe."³²¹ To solve the Balkan problems not the hour of the Americans"³²² the EU has not stopped trying to achieve a foreign policy by consensus and develop the military capabilities necessary to carry it out. Without these two conditions, the EU can never be the global player it aspires to become. Presently, the EU is requesting to take over NATO's mandate in Macedonia on December 15th 2002. However, despite its goodwill and its institutional advances towards a common foreign and security policy and increased military capabilities, the Balkans remains a difficult test for the EU. EU members remain deeply divided on a number of unsolved questions such as the final status of UN-administered Kosovo/o, the future of Macedonia and relations between Montenegro and Serbia.³²³

The strengthening of weak states in a conflict-ridden zone requires an international military presence. "The occupation" of West Germany by the United States and, more

³²⁰ The US had its own representative in the talks that led to the signing of the Ohrid Agreement.

³²¹ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Unfinished Peace: Report of the International Commission on the Balkans*, Albanian Edition, (Tirana: Shtëpia e Librit, 1996), p.27.

³²² Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p.108.

³²³ See Morton Abramowitz, "Can the EU Hack the Balkans", *Foreign Affairs*, (Sept/Oct 2002), pp.2-7.

generally, the US presence in Western Europe after World War II not only neutralized the security problems faced by these countries, but also played a vital role in the rebuilding and reorganization of these war-ravaged countries.³²⁴

The Balkan nations have not yet jettisoned completely their old identities. An international military presence would help them in their efforts to change these identities in favor of integration and inclusiveness.

7.5. STABILITY AND DEMOCRACY

If we consider the West European model as a good example of the “strong state” concept than a functioning democracy becomes a necessary but not sufficient condition for a state to be qualified as “strong”. The whole Western European community has been organized on the basis of one ideology: liberal democracy. It is not the case that a state can be strong only if it uses this organizing ideology. Western European states have arrived to this advanced stage after a relatively long period of economic and social incubation and development. However, their economic and political achievements are closely related to the development of democracy in these countries. In the West, stability and development are interwoven with the development of democracy as a way of organizing the state. The community of EU member-states is, first and foremost, a union of democratic and liberal values. From the beginning, NATO membership also guaranteed entrance into a community of democratic states. Both institutions have

³²⁴ See Josef Joffe, “The Axis of Envy”, *Foreign Policy*, (September/October 2002):pp.68-69.

promised that their. Thus, the West views the achievement of peace and stability as closely connected to democratic development. However, given the early stage in which the state building process is in the Balkans, will democracy bring about strong states in a relatively risk-free manner? Mansfield and Snyder have noted that the initial stage of democratization is extremely dangerous for a number of reasons.³²⁵

How are democracy and stability related in the Balkans? What are the views of NATO and the EU on this issue? The international community views the negative implications of state weakness in Albania beyond "insecurity exporting" and the creation of an ideal environment for the growth of organized crime and the grey economy.³²⁶ Albanian instability and insecurity are viewed as having a direct impact on the security of Macedonia and Kosovo/o. Keeping in mind this correlation and the dangers of a "Great Albania", has the international community supported the strengthening of an Albanian state? Will a strong Albanian state increase the possibility of a Greater Albania becoming a reality?

In the midst of the armed conflict, the Macedonian Academy of Science put forth the idea of exchange of people and territories as the only viable solution to the conflict. According to this proposal territories from western Macedonia that include Dibra, part of Gostivar, Tetova as well as some surrounding Albanian villages should be given to Albania proper who in exchange should give up its share of the Ohrid and Prespa lakes,

³²⁵ See Eduard Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War", *International Security*, (Vol. 20, No.1, Summer 1995): p.56

³²⁶ According to Italian PM Berlusconi during his visit in Tirana, there is a growing perception of Albania as part of a "transit route" from East to West.

Pogradec and its surroundings as well as small Prespa where there are some villages whose inhabitants, number in the hundreds, are thought to be Bulgarian as much as Macedonian.³²⁷ This territorial exchange would be followed by a voluntary exchange of the respective populations. Such a proposal seems to have had as one of its immediate objectives to substantiate the argument that the conflict was not internal and that the Albanians of Macedonia sought to destabilize the country in order to create Greater Albania.

The Macedonian government neither opposed nor supported the proposal of its academicians. The Albanian government on the other hand regarded such a proposal as very dangerous, emphasizing that the roots of the conflict should be sought within Macedonia, and that Albania was one of the first countries that had recognized Macedonian independence therefore supporting without reservations its territorial integrity. Furthermore, territorial division did not gain the support neither of the Macedonians nor of the Albanian population in Macedonia. Despite the fact that the two ethnic groups live almost segregated they do not see their future in a divided Macedonia. According to an opinion poll conducted by the State Department both ethnic groups support the idea of a united Macedonia. "While 69% of the Albanians are sympathetic of KLA, 87% say that it is important for them personally for Macedonia to remain united. It is no surprise that 99% of the Macedonians want their country intact".

³²⁷ "Vecer" Journal, Macedonian edition, Skopje, or "Korrieri" Newspaper, Albanian edition, Tirana.

According to Bary Buzan, sometimes Great Powers have chosen to keep states weak. This has been done because of their own interests, and because regional stability demanded that certain states remain weak.³²⁸

As we have already mentioned, the conspiracy theory interpretation for Albania's implosion in 1997 is based precisely on this premise. While this interpretation remains a highly improbable conspiracy theory, it is true that the 1997 implosion and a number of other crises have taken the Kosovo and Macedonian issues off the agenda of Albanian politics. This was obvious even in the last conflict in Macedonia, when Tirana stayed more or less aloof without trying to impact the outcome at all. The Macedonian conflict coincided with the electoral campaign for parliamentary elections in Albania, but the political parties hardly ever mentioned the problems of Albanians in Macedonia. Clearly, this does not mean that keeping Albania weak is in the West's perceived interest. However, it is true that the West is not encouraging a closer relationship between Albania and Kosovo/o. It remains very difficult for Albanians on both sides of the border to trade goods and capital because of high taxes and other administrative measures. A weak Albania may have a negative effect on the problems facing Albanians in Kosovo/o and Macedonia. For example, the fall of the Albanian State in 1997 encouraged the Miloshevic regime in Yugoslavia and the government of Macedonia to undertake radical policies against the Albanian population under their jurisdiction.³²⁹ A strong Albanian state does not constitute a threat to the security of its neighbors. "Greater Albania" is not part of the political program of Albanian political parties and therefore it is not in the

³²⁸ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear- An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p.167.

³²⁹ See Elez Biberaj, *Albania in Transition: The Rocky Road to Democracy*, (WestviewPress, 1998), p. 68

government agenda either. Indeed, there is a consensus among Albanians that a "Greater Albania" is not only an unrealistic concept, but its pursuit is harmful to Albanian interests. Despite this, the attention of the international community is focused precisely on the position of the Albanian State relative to its neighbors.

Thus Albania for example has been seen as a stabilizing factor in the region and its performance has been evaluated in terms of its foreign policy practices and its constructive stands on Kosovo and Macedonia. Therefore, quite often-domestic handicaps, such as distorted electoral processes or weak institutions have been ignored and have been subordinated to regional security considerations. In other words, the International Community has been supporting- I would call it- a negative stability in order to preserve the status quo driven by the fear that changes will undermine regional stability. Yet this handicap has been the source of instability. It has undermined institutional and state building process, which in turn has led to state failure, as it was the case of 1997. The crisis of 1997 showed that there could not be sustainable stability through the distortions of a democratic system and its principles.

The stability of Macedonia, regardless of the way the Macedonian State functions, has been the number one priority of the international community. Thus the international community shunned away from major problems in the Macedonian – Albanian relationship within the newly created state of Macedonia. The internal Macedonian problems pertaining to the consolidation of the common institutions were either postponed or ignored by the international community. The attempt to preserve regional stability at

the expense of domestic problems was the prevailing theme of the international community in the Balkans for a long time. There has been a tendency especially in the Balkans to make a compromise with the international standards with regard to free and fair elections, i.e. escaping from these standards, which starts with the elections of September 1996 in Bosnia Herzegovina. It was followed by elections of April 1997 in Eastern Slavonia, Croatia, and it reached its peak with the parliamentary elections in June 1997 in Albania³³⁰

Compared to the rest of the region, with the exception of Montenegro, Macedonia has been appraised as a multi ethnic success story.³³¹ When the Balkans plunged into warfare the preservation of the Macedonian territorial integrity was thought to be crucial. The international community in all its actions and initiatives in Macedonia supported without reservations the government, ignoring or postponing domestic matters that were systematically corroding, almost peacefully, internal stability. "Valid concerns on Macedonian security often have been used to justify the delay of difficult decisions about internal matters."³³²

The international community has contributed in creating an image of Macedonia that if not false, it is real. Thus, one of the issues Albanians and Macedonians continuously disagree on is the percentage of the Albanian population in Macedonia. According to official Macedonian sources Albanians are no more than 22% of the

³³⁰ See Albania's parliamentary election of 1997 prepared by the staff of the Commission on Security and cooperation in Europe. *Albania* newspaper, Albanian edition, August 1997.

³³¹ International Crisis Group, *Macedonia's Ethnic Albanians: Bridging the Gulf*, 2nd August 2000.

³³² Ibid.

population, whereas according to Albanian sources they constitute no less than 40% of the population. The real number of Albanians in Macedonia is certainly more than the official census. Yet the second census of the population in Macedonia was sponsored and monitored by the international community under the auspices of OSCE and European Union and the percentage of the Albanian population according to this census is 22.09%, a figure strongly contested by Albanians. The legal framework that provided the basis for this census included provisions that deprived over 150 thousand Albanians of Macedonian citizenship.³³³

7.6. THE BALKANS TOWARD A LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC ORDER

What is the political map of the Balkans today? At present, there are no armed conflicts in the region. Although the absence of armed conflict does not mean that peace has been established, it is safe to say that the Balkans is slowly moving towards peace. Albania has signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement³³⁴ with the European Union (EU), marking a new qualitative step in its relations with the European Union. The road to signing the SAA was long—it took three³³⁵ and a half arduous years. To date, Albania has the dubious recognition of being the country with the longest SA process in Western Balkans. The reason has little to do with the technical conduct of the negotiations. Instead, Albania needed to convince a skeptical audience in Brussels that

³³³ According to the citizen law of the Republic of Macedonia, whoever did not have 15 years of residency in Macedonian territory could not gain Macedonian citizenship. Given the fact that the Albanians of Macedonia have much larger emigration rates over the last decades, the Albanian community suffered the most from this law.

³³⁴ Albania signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement on June 12th, 2006. SAA remains by far the most important agreement the post communist country has signed so far.

³³⁵ The negotiation process started on January 2006

the political processes and institutions were functioning more or less properly for a country with a problematic transition whose end is not yet in sight.³³⁶ Macedonia after almost five years of implementing the SAA is applying for full EU membership while Croatia is expecting to get EU membership by 2008.

Serbia is in the midst of a political and economic transformation by demonstrating the lack of capacity or the lack of will to undertake the required reforms that will bring the country back to Europe³³⁷ And, as Stewart Patrick argues, state weakness is not just a question of capacity but also will.³³⁸ For the first time in its history, Kosovo has a legitimate government that has emerged from democratic elections. After a brief armed conflict, the Macedonians and the Albanians signed a peace agreement aiming for a self-sustainable peace. Although for the time being, the region's economies are oriented towards the EU countries a number of economic agreements signal that regional countries are trying to integrate their economies with each other.

How should we understand the developments that are taking place in the Balkans? Historically, relations within the Balkan region as well as between the Balkans and the international system were explained through the realist thinking of International Relations. Basic concepts of the realist theory such as 'Balance of Power', 'Great Power Security' or 'Security Dilemma' provided plausible explanations to the conflictual relations among the

³³⁶ Rakipi Albert, "The lack of Ownership and Europe's Dilemma" *Tirana Times* 15 June 2006, p7

³³⁷ The European Union decided to suspend SAA negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement with Serbia on May this year (2006). The decision in Brussels comes in response to the failure of the Serb government to hand over General Ratko Mladic to The Hague where he is accused for crimes during the horrific Bosnian war.

³³⁸ Stewart Patrick "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?" *The Washington Quarterly* 29:2 (2006): p. 30.

Balkans states and the Balkans vis-a-vis the European system. Moreover, the realist framework explained Great Power intervention in the region – aiming to preserve the status quo- since the Eastern Crisis. Finally, the alliances and security arrangements in the beginning of the twentieth century among the different Balkan states were interpreted through the realist approach.

However, developments in the last ten years have raised serious questions on the validity of the realist approach of International Relations. As in most other regions of the world, modern wars in the Balkans were fought within states, while realist theory focuses on war and peace problems between states.³³⁹ Also, from a theoretical perspective, the hesitation of the West to intervene in Bosnia may be justified by the prepositions of the so-called “foreign-policy” realism.³⁴⁰ However, in the case of Kosovo/o where the West did not have any vital national interests, these prepositions become invalid.

NATO intervention in Kosovo/o, the internal developments in Balkan states, inter-Balkan relations, and the relations of the region with the EU and other structures of the international system suggest that realist thinking has become obsolete. If the recent developments are not driven by realpolitik is the region moving towards a liberal-democratic order?

³³⁹ A few realists tried to interpret the developments in the Balkans through the realist approach. According to Bary Posen, "with the collapse of the authority of the federation, the former republics and other constituents of the Yugoslav federation felt threatened in their very existence faced with security dilemma" See Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict" *Survival*, (No.1, Spring 1993): p.78.

³⁴⁰ See Sabrina Ramet, "Kosovo: a liberal approach", *Society*, (Sep/Oct 99, Vol. 36, Issue 6.): p.68.

Theoretically, the mainstream theory of neorealism and the broad range of liberalism (institutional liberalism, democratic peace theory pluralistic security Community etc) are both appropriate and at the same time have problems interpreting and understanding today's Balkans. Some of these problems are NATO's reluctance to intervene in Bosnia, its speedy intervention in Kosovo/o, and internal armed conflicts such as the one in Macedonia. On the other hand, a number of embryonic initiatives from within the region signal an authority transfer from states to regional institutions. Furthermore, the balance of power concept cannot explain the latest moves towards peace, although other phenomena such as the existence of Republic Srpska (an entity created by force) are easily explainable by realist thinking. Also, the resistance of Macedonian authorities to change the nature of the state was broken by force. The future of postwar Kosovo/o also depends on the conciliation of these two frameworks. According to International Commission on the Balkans if the EU does not devise a new strategy then it will become mired instead a neocolonial power in place like Kosovo, Bosnia and Macedonia³⁴¹

Practically speaking, these two perspectives include and exclude each other at the same time – the liberal perspective based on the universal values of the freedom of the individual, and peoples' right to self-determination, and the neorealist perspective that does not attach any importance to these principles. A liberal democratic order in the Balkans has not become a reality as yet, but there are clear moves towards that reality. However, it takes meaningful changes within the states of the region and in their relations

³⁴¹ International Commission on the Balkans, *The Balkans in Europe's Future*, (Sofia: Center for Liberal Strategies, 2005), p.11

with each other in order to establish such a reality including a new approach by the International Community.

7.7. A CONTROVERSIAL APPROACH: THE NEED FOR CHANGES IN LOCAL/ INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

For a region like the Balkans conflicts, wars, anarchy have swept that and instability during the last hundred years as well as during the first decade of the Post Cold War period, creating a stable security order remains a daunting challenge. Nevertheless if one is to take into consideration the recent intra and inter state developments and the rapprochement of the region with the International Community it can be concluded that the Balkans are moving towards a liberal democratic order. Such an order implies upholding and respecting the principles of liberal democracy i.e. the respect for liberties and rights for both individuals and peoples. Thus, the strengthening of the weak states in the region should be founded upon a democratic system that encourages citizen participation. Furthermore, a liberal democratic order means that the ongoing state building processes should focus on citizenship rather than ethnicity, especially on those states that encompass different ethnicities. A liberal Democratic order necessitates – in the world of Karl Deutsche – a Pluralistic Security Community in the Balkans, a two fold process that implies regional integration after the European model as well as the eventual union of the region with Europe which in itself is another integrating process. The creation of a stable security order through the spread of liberal democracy is also indicated by the involvement of the International Community, NATO and EU in the region. Such an involvement does not emulate the traditional Great Powers, when the region became an

arena of Great Power rivalry that aimed to preserve the status quo. The long term and sustainable stability of Europe itself is founded on a liberal democratic order.

Despite the fact that the need for a liberal democratic order is very obvious as the only viable alternative for a long-term sustainable security, traditional tendencies by local and international actors seem to linger on. There seems to be a very real tension between the need for change if a liberal democratic order is to prevail and the need for stability that quite often is understood in terms of preserving the status quo. However, it seems that local and international initiatives in the region have been driven by realist foreign policy i.e. the preservation of the status quo. The dynamics of such tension is different in different countries of the region, reflecting the specific conditions of each country. For example, in Albania the events of the last ten years showed that the unconditional support for the country's stability in the name of regional stability, at the expense of democracy, does not ensure long-term sustainable stability. Yet, we still see the old approach in many of the statements and policies coming out of Brussels (NATO and EU). In every official statement, these institutions affirm the stabilizing role that Albania continues to play in the Balkans

The relations of the EU with Serbia and Montenegro constitute another example that supports our argument. According to Abramowitz and Ghelather, Brussels' insistence on preserving a single Yugoslav state has also hindered Montenegro's postwar transition. Instead of fostering reform and rapprochement with Serbia through a democratic process, EU negotiators bludgeoned Montenegro into joining a new entity to replace the Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia This new entity has two economic systems, two currencies, and two speeds of reform³⁴². Macedonia offers the best example of the controversial approach of the international community on the region. Macedonia declared its independence at a time when the Balkans was immersed in conflict. Thus, understandably the international community labored for stability without any preconditions. However, this policy continued unnecessarily for the rest of the decade. The successful implementation of the Ohrid Agreement signed between the Albanians and the Macedonian government requires a new stance by the international community. Short-term solutions accumulate instability, as was shown by the conflict that finally exploded in the spring of 2001.

Kosovo's case is the most problematic. Despite the uncertainty of its future political status, the state-building process is ongoing. Although not quite in classical terms, in its roots this process is a transition from colonial status to statehood. The international decision on the future of Kosovo has been postponed. The consequences of this waiting game remain to be seen, but the current undefined status of Kosovo is having a negative impact on the process of state formation.³⁴³

As long as the status of Kosovo has not been decided, the Albanians will perceive the return of Serb refugees as a menace, and the process of state-formation will not be based on citizenship but on nationality. Furthermore, the legitimacy of local and international actors in the Balkan scene remains in question. Considering the fact that the

³⁴² Morton Abramowitz and Heather Hurlburt, "Can the EU Hack the Balkans?", *Foreign Affairs*, (Sept-Oct 2002): pp.2-7.

³⁴³ Susan Woodward, "Kosovo and the Region: Consequences of the Waiting Game", in *The International Spectator*, (Volume XXXV, No.1, January -March 2000,) pp.35-48.

state formation process is still incomplete, resistance towards the changes required by liberal principles can be dangerously effective. The international community, and particularly the European Union, has to deal with the problem of Kosovo's final status quickly, as the international community will not govern Kosovo forever. Will Kosovo gain its independence, or will it return to Serbian rule with some kind of autonomy? Which solution is more realistic? Which solution will provide long-term stability? Marina Ottaway writes:

The goal of nation building should not be to impose common identities on deeply divided peoples but to organize states that can administer their territories and allow people to live together despite differences. And if organizing such state within old internationally recognized borders does not seem possible, the international Community should admit that nation building may require the disintegration of old states and the formation of new ones.

7.8.THE ECONOMICS OF NATION-STATE BUILDING

Undoubtedly, the Marshall Plan has been the success story of the history of the interventions of the international community to assist other states. Through this plan "the United States undertook not only to restore the economies of its defeated enemies, but to organize the Italian, Japanese and West German political systems along democratic lines. The result was the restoration of states that have been proven to be economically productive, politically stable, and strongly supportive of a powerful international system."³⁴⁴

³⁴⁴ Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner, "Saving Failed States", *Foreign Policy*, (Winter 1992-1993.): p.56

When Germany came up with the idea of a Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in 1999, many analysts called for an approach that was similar to the Marshall Plan.³⁴⁵ The Balkan Wars of the last decade were similar to World War II in terms of the violence, destruction of property and loss of life. These similarities, coupled with the success of the Marshall Plan made Balkan countries more hopeful of the Stability Pact. The Pact included NATO, the EU and the United States. However, despite the similarities of the two conflicts and the extreme needs of the recipient countries, the Stability Pact could not and did not prove to be a second Marshall Plan.³⁴⁶ The historical circumstances in which the Stability Pact was conceived are very different from those of the Marshall Plan. The international system is very different from what it was half a century ago. Furthermore, Western geo-strategic interests on South Eastern Europe, and especially the Western Balkans, were much weaker than US interests on the reconstruction of Western Europe. However, even if the international community had the will necessary to offer such large-scale assistance to South Eastern Europe, it is very doubtful that a second Marshall Plan would have been as successful as the first one was.

There is a radical difference between Western European countries and Japan on one side and the Southeastern European nations on the other. As Marina Ottaway³⁴⁷ says: Although defeated and destroyed, these countries (West Germany and Japan – AR) had strong state traditions and competent government personnel. West Germany and Japan

³⁴⁵ The Stability Pact was initiated on 10 June 1999. For more details see "Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe" at: www.secrecon.org/KeyDocuments/KD1999062401.htm

³⁴⁶ See Albert Rakipi, "Stability Pact and the Marshall Plan: A Comparative Approach", in *Stability Pact Just around the Corner*, (Tirana- Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2000), p.97

³⁴⁷ Marina Ottaway, "Nation Building", *Foreign Policy*, (September-October 2002): p.17.

were nation-states in the literal sense of the term- they were ethnic and cultural communities as well as political states.

The fact that statehood is a relatively recent phenomenon in the Balkans suggests a new approach by the international community is necessary. However, this does not mean that less energy, attention and funds are needed to achieve the required results. The success of such an enterprise will depend on the international will to find stable, long-term solutions and to cooperate with local actors in order to implement them successfully. Building or reconstructing a nation state in today's Balkans is very costly. In order to put things in perspective, let us remember that Marshall Plan provided more than US\$416 million, about US\$114 billion in 1992 dollars, in bilateral economic assistance to the countries of Western Europe which were so ravaged by war as to constitute failing states.³⁴⁸

The theory that explains state weakness in the Balkans in terms of the conflicting stance of the ethnic groups that make up these states (Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia and, to a certain point, Kosovo) is only one side of the coin. On the other side of the coin, we have the structurally backward economies of these states. The reasons for the isolation and backward communication and integration between different Balkan countries are found not only in the conflicts generated by "unsolved national questions", but also by the poor and unpromising economic geography of the Peninsula. This backward economic situation has been, and may continue to be, one of the main sources of instability and conflict in the region. For example, in the case of Macedonia the absence of equal

³⁴⁸ Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner, "Saving Failed States", *Foreign Policy*, (Winter 1992-1993): p.18.

economic development and the general backward state of economic development were partly responsible for the gap between the two ethnic groups. According to the report prepared by the European Stability Initiative:³⁴⁹

“(The) parallel crises of development have turned Macedonia's political economy into a zero-sum game, as the two ethnic communities compete for a diminishing share of public resources. Against this background, Albanian demands for equal participation in the state and state-sponsored development are seen as a direct threat to the ethnic Macedonian community. At the same time, growing economic insecurity on both sides’ form the background to a breakdown in the inter-ethnic elite co-operation, which characterized public life in the first decade after independence. This creates opportunities for new actors willing to pursue their interests outside of the political process.”

While domestic conflicts in Macedonia have been more severe because of society's division in two ethnic groups, domestic conflicts and instability have been quite serious in Albania despite the monoethnic make-up of society. This suggests the need for further research on sources of conflict that go beyond the classic interpretation of the linkages between conflict and overlapping national aspirations.

Despite the potential security problems deriving from economic problems in the Balkans, analysts have noticed a great deal of reluctance by international actors such as the US and the EU to provide economic help. For example, not only is the US reducing its military presence in the area but it is also reducing economic aid and assistance programs. In monetary terms, these types of assistance declined by 10 percent this year and they are slated to fall another 20 percent next year, from \$621 million to \$495 million.³⁵⁰ This trend is discernible in terms of EU aid as well. While the EU remains the largest donor in the Balkans, EU aid is decreasing in nominal and real terms as well. In Kosovo/o, for

³⁴⁹ See *The Other Macedonian Conflict*, ESI discussion Paper, February 2002, at www.esiweb.org.

³⁵⁰ Miron Abramowitz and Heather Hurlburt, “Can the EU Hack the Balkans?”, *Foreign Affairs*, (Sept-Oct 2002), pp.2-7.

example, the European Commission's CARDS program (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Democratization, and Stabilization) will cut aid by 70 percent next year, from 180 million Euros to 50 million Euros.³⁵¹ According to an ESI study on EU relations with the Balkans: "The rhetoric of "Europeanisation" underlies many European programs in the region, from post-conflict state building in Bosnia and Kosovo/o to inter-ethnic mediation in Macedonia to development and economic transition in Serbia and Albania. However, as it stands, the promise offered by Europe to the region is curiously insubstantial. The states of the Western Balkans have no early prospect of opening formal negotiations with the European Union on membership. They face sharply declining aid, whatever their formal status within the Stabilization and Association Process. Most importantly of all, they are excluded from the larger European project of strengthening economic and social cohesion across the continent."³⁵²

Even without the exogenous variables of "ethnic hatred" and "national questions" that have remained unsolved or whose solution is postponed indefinitely, the hesitation to tackle adequately the region's economic problems may fuel further destabilization in the future. The Ohrid Agreement that marked the end of the "hot" Macedonian conflict, will not necessarily translate into peace and ethnic harmony. Other than the will of the local elites to abide by it, the Agreement comes with a hefty economic price tag. On the other hand, the Albanian crises came to the surface due to the unwillingness of the political elite to abide by the democratic rules of the game. However, their degree of severity would have been much lower had the country not been in the midst of an economic stagnation.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² See, *Western Balkans 2004: Assistance, Cohesion and the New Boundaries of Europe*, ESI, November 3, 2002, at www.esiweb.org.

7.9.THE WEAK STATE AND DEVELOPMENT

From the post-communist perspective: almost all Balkan states are weak in view of capacities to formulate and implement policies, to provide public goods for their citizens. There is a hierarchy of public goods that a modern state is supposed to provide for its citizens. Starting with security, and not necessarily (and only) security with respect to threats coming from abroad. According to an AIIS survey only 0,1 percent of Albanians feel insecure from threats coming from abroad. State institutions are weak and not capable of controlling part of territory or borders. If poverty is one of the main threats in view of security, causes are to be found in the weak performance of states and their institutions. Reasons why Organized Crime and Corruption constitute threats for domestic stability and serious obstacles to the development of these countries lay with the weakness of institutions. Here the question is: How to overcome state weakness

The model of a strong state, which is actually represented by EU member countries, is a historical product of the development and tradition of bureaucracy, of the development and modernisation of the society. Nevertheless, this strong state is also based on and is a product of the economic development. The question is: Can the model of strong states- in the perspective of capacities and efficiency to provide public goods- be successful in poor countries? The project of strong states otherwise is a product of strong,

functioning democracies.³⁵³ But, while liberal democracy is the sole organizing ideology for transformation, and for the new stage of state building, our question is: In the state of backward economies, and of lack of economic development, can the project of liberal democracy be successful? Given that as regards the question of organizing ideology the societies and elites of Balkan states do not have a choice, the question is how to accelerate economic development, as a strong basis for the development of democracies and consolidation of states? We seem to have developed to equations towards a formula that may explain the consolidation of strong states in the development perspective: Is a strong state that brings about economic development, or is economic development that brings about the development and consolidation of democracy, thus of the state? Which equation should we choose to access the magic formula of a strong state?

Considering the size of informal economy,³⁵⁴ which seems dominant at times, and considering the high level of corruption³⁵⁵, it is clear that the consolidation of the rule of law in Albania and other Balkan countries could bring real impacts for the economic development of the country. This means that in our pursuit for the state consolidation formula, the first equation acquires importance: economic development through the consolidation of state and the functioning of laws. Meanwhile, it makes sense to ask whether corruption and informal economy, including organized crime, are the sole and

³⁵³ See Albert Rakipi, *Understanding the Balkan Democratisation Process- a Liberal Approach*, SUDOSTEUROPA Mitteilungen 04/2004): pp.79 -93

³⁵⁴ The tax evasion causes damages of about 900 million USD to the state budget, or around 70 per cent of it. It is clear that this missed state budget revenue may not be used to provide public goods or improve services. See Sabina Ymeri *Human Security in Albania*, (Tirana – Albanian Institute for International Studies ,2004).

³⁵⁵ For corruption in Albania see Sabina Ymeri and Albert Rakipi *Human Security in Albania*, (Tirana – Albanian Institute for International Studies 2004), Se also Aldo Bumci *Debating National Security Issues*, (Tirana- Albanian Institute for International Studies , 2004),pp.88-93

definite answer to the state of poverty and lack of economic development? The right answer to this question exposes a series of economic development problems, of limited employment opportunities,³⁵⁶ of the often primitive structure of economy, and scarce financial resources for economic development, the solution of which is not confined to the addressing of issues of corruption and organized crime.³⁵⁷ From this perspective, it becomes evident that the second equation is valid for the pursuit to the consolidation of weak states. In other words, economic development brings about the consolidation of state. The consideration of a combined perspective in the efforts of international actors to assist in the building of state is important, if we acknowledge that frequently issues as organized crime and corruption have been over evaluated.³⁵⁸ It is comprehensible that organized crime and corruption in the Balkans may have a series of security related impacts on EU member countries. Thus, organized crime and corruption topping the hierarchy list of threats presented by the international community, it seems that their priorities differ from those of the Albanian administration, and especially of the Albanian society. Thus, for instance, it seems that the priority of the international community and European Union in particular remains higher security of international borders to the ends of reduction of illegal migration, monitoring and relocation of emigrants, by completely ignoring the needs of the neighbouring, origin countries.³⁵⁹ Financial support has also been channeled according to this priority. Accordingly, in the case of Albania, from 2002 to 2004 the EU has agreed to spend 49 million pounds on issues relating to border

³⁵⁶ If in Kosovo unemployment reaches 70 percent, or in Albania 30 percent, while 50 percent of the Albanian labor force is currently situated in Greece and Italy, this does not happen because of corruption or informal economy. See Sabina Ymeri *Human Security*, p. 64

³⁵⁷ Bumci, p.35.

³⁵⁸ Ymeri, 18.

³⁵⁹ Russel King, Nicola Mai; Mirela Dalipi *Shembja e Miteve te Migrimit Analiza dhe Rekomandime për Bashkimin Europian, Britaninë e Madhe dhe Shqipërinë*; (Tirana - Fabian Society and Oxfam GB 2003), p. 107.

management, police and judiciary reform, but only 29 million on the economic and social development.³⁶⁰

Within the need for development, another issue that acquires importance in the EU efforts to prepare Western Balkan countries for EU membership, which practically means the consolidation of states in the viewpoint of capacities, is related to the harmonization and approximation of legislation, and the economic reforms to be implemented. It seems that structural changes in the economy of weak states have priority over the approximation of legislation. With an agriculture system that looks much more African than European are harmonization of legislation and integration with Europe the posing priorities compared to more fundamental developments efforts?³⁶¹

7.10. EU MEMBERSHIP – A DRIVING FORCE TO STATE –BUILDING PROCESS

For a relatively long time the presence of an enemy mobilized elites and peoples alike in the Balkans and beyond. Rather than soliciting a need for markets and development, the way in which Balkan peoples tried to communicate with each other and come out of isolation was the war and the presence of an enemy. Also on a theoretical level, it has been claimed that the existence of an enemy provides a crucial key in understanding the nature and the essence of political activity.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 108.

³⁶¹ Evaluation EC Country Strategy: Albania 1996-2001 September 2001 (Roma – Strategies, 2004),p.34

³⁶² Aristotle Tziampiris, The Weak State and Organized Crime , corruption and The Euro-Atlantic Future of Western Balkan in Albert Rakipi,,ed. Debating Integration, (Tirana- Albanian Institute for International Studies,2004), p.187

Transition in the Balkans has been associated with the intervention of the international community, firstly aiming at putting an end to conflicts, which later evolved into the Stability Pact and the Stabilization and Association Process, and after 1999 to the present the new initiative named the Stabilization Association process in order to assist the organization of the states on the basis of liberal democracy. The question, however, is to what extent a common future, European integration, may turn into the key for solving current problems in the Balkans; whether a common future is going to be the key for mobilizing the societies, elites and governments of these countries for building a functioning democracy.

The state building process is the most important issue of the world community³⁶³ because as it was argued they present the modern threat to national, regional and international security. The state building process actually is the core of the International Institutions / Organizations including EU. During the last decade and especially after the end of Kosovo war the prospect for EU membership of the weak Balkan countries has been a real driving force of state building process. Compared to other major hotspots in the world map, the Balkans is one of the regions where state building has a realistic chance to succeed in the short-term through a unique combination of internal and external factors. Primary among these is the presence of the European Union offering perspectives, guarantees and aid that virtuously feeds into the state-building cycle.

³⁶³ See Francis Fukuyama *State Building Governance and Order in the Twenty-First Century* (London – profile books, 2005), p.19.

When the Balkans burst in flames in the 1990s, they presented the EU with the first immediate challenge to its common foreign and security policy testing its capacities to become a global player through deepening EU integration. Unfortunately, the EU failed this test. The famous statement of the Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Po- -this is the hour of Europe³⁶⁴ - almost 15 years ago, predicting a new role of European Union in the Balkan crisis was received with much optimism and skepticisms at the same time. However analyzing the dynamic of EU intervention in the Balkans after the first crisis of 1991 one would accept the increasing role of EU actually concentrated to the core of the security problem in today's Balkan: the weak state. In order to overcome state weakness the European Union – and other players too – are involved in day to day state-building process in countries like Albania³⁶⁵ Macedonia and other Balkan countries³⁶⁶ by promising them a EU membership. The local elites are under the pressures to undertake the required reforms in order to meet EU criteria. Further the EU conditionality serves as a basis for domestic legitimacy of the government in Balkan states. Failing to meet EU conditions means otherwise losing government legitimacy which is a essential features of weak states. From another perspective keeping alive the EU membership for Balkan countries is a strategic test for the future of European Union itself³⁶⁷. Progress in EU widening—which, historically has in no way impeded EU deepening—will remain the litmus test for a united Europe. Almost all previous waves of enlargement in 1981, 1986, or 1995 cannot be considered real tests of progress because all the new member states were members of what Karl Deutsch calls “a pluralistic security community”. The first

³⁶⁴ Valeriana Calab *Unfinished Peace* (Berlin – Aspen Institute, 1996), p. 56

³⁶⁵ See Judith Hoffman, “Integrating Albania: The Role of European Union in the Democratization Process” *Albanian Journal of Politics* 1,(2005): pp.55-74

³⁶⁶ Albert Rakipi *Debating Integration* (Tirana – Albanian Institute for International Studies 2003), p.89

³⁶⁷ Balkans in Europe's Future, a report of International Commission on the Balkans (Sofia- Center for liberal strategies ,2005),p.18

powerful test that the EU managed to pass with flying colors was the “big bang” enlargement in 2004 with 10 new members mainly from the Eastern Bloc. With hindsight, the experience of enlarged Europe proved all the enlargement doomsayers wrong—the new members provided the EU with economic vigor and did not encumber the decision-making processes or burden EU budgets. In a way, they too were members of the pluralistic security community having industrialized a long time ago following the European pattern of strong states. The real test of EU widening, which is at the same time the real test for the future of EU itself, will be the Balkan states.

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