Ethnic Parties, Collective Action and Resource Mobilization: Evidence from the Balkans and Central Europe

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Introduction

The 1989 collapse of the communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe unleashed three sets of transitions: from command and control economic systems to market-based ones; from authoritarian political regimes to democratic ones; and from multi-ethnic empires to states formed, or at the very least, affected by the politics of national self-determination. Although all three transitions have been examined within the field of political science, there have been few attempts to analyze how these processes have interacted. In this paper, by focusing on the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of ethnic parties in the Balkans (Bulgaria and Macedonia) and in East and Central Europe (Romania), I show that the political mobilization of ethnic minorities in these post-communist democracies is the result of a strategic interaction between ethnic political leaders and individual ethnic members subject to existing organizational constraints and the existence of tangible and material selective incentives.

In terms of the paper's structure, I proceed as follows: I define what I mean by ethnic groups, ethnic mobilization and ethnic parties. I then present existing theoretical arguments about how ethnic parties emerge, consodilate and persist in the post-communist period. Subsequently, I illustrate my own theoretical approach which seeks to generate a predictive analytical framework and then test it in the aforementioned cases. Finally, summarizing my argument and findings, I present avenues for further theoretical work and research projects.

Definitions

Following Weber, I define ethnic groups as "those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for

the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists."[1] Not only must this notion of a shared collective identity remain, but it must form the basis for ethnic group membership. As Horowitz argues, the conceptual implication of such a definition is that "ethnicity is based on a myth of collective ancestry…some notion of ascription, however diluted, and the affinity deriving from it are inseparable from the concept of ethnicity."[2] Accordingly, ethnic group members in their attempts for identity formation, must recognize other members of their ethnic group as such, i.e. as co-ethnics. In essence, ethnic group members can exist only insofar as they create and maintain boundaries between their own ethnic group and other ethnic groups.

Consequently ethnic mobilization becomes "the process by which groups organize around some feature of ethnic identity (for example skin color, language, customs) in pursuit of collective ends."[3] Since any form of political mobilization becomes a "process by which the group goes from being a passive collection of individuals to an active participant in public life," then ethnic mobilization must become the process by which ethnic group members utilize their ascriptive characteristics in order to enter the arena of political participation.[4] Even though the demands of the ethnic mobilization drive may be numerous (including enhanced ethnic group representation in the political decision-making process; the elimination of severe political, economic and social discrimination; the improvement of the ethnic group's living standards), the goal of ethnic mobilization is to translate individual ethnic group members into committed activists, capable of withstanding the rigors and costs of creating, accumulating and maximizing the political resources that are necessary for the achievement of the ethnic group's goals.

[1] See Weber (1978, 389).
[2] See Horowitz (1985, 52).
[3] See Olzak (1983, 355).
[4] See Tilly (1978, 69).

Following Chandra and Metz, I define an ethnic party as a "party that overtly represents itself to the voters as the champion of the interests of one ethnic group or a set of groups to the exclusion of another or others, and makes such a representation central to its mobilizing strategy."[5] As such, the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of the ethnic party reflect its ability to become the sole, or at least the most prominent, representative organization of the ethnic group within the context of the democratic regime. It has to only target its constituent ethnic group in terms of membership, participation, and mobilization, but it has to do it in a fashion that will generate increasing returns to scale, thus creating network effects, i.e. that will make each new additional member more valuable to the existing members while increasing the party's ability to procure resources. Put differently, it has to strive to become the only ethnic party for its ethnic group. i.e. it has to evolve, in the argument of Brass, into "that one political organization [which is] dominant in representing the demands of the ethnic group against its rivals."[6] Accordingly, in the context of multi-ethnic democratic regimes, whether new or old, consolidated or fragile, post-communist or post-colonial, the ethnic party becomes the most effective and efficient organizational weapon for the institutionalization and longevity of the ethnic mobilization drive.

The existing literature

In the post-communist experience two sets of arguments have sought to explain the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of ethnic parties: either they focus upon the historical manner in which ethnicity had been constructed and politicized during the communist

[5] See Chandra and Metz (2002, 5). By utilizing such a definition, it is important to note how the overtness, exclusion and centrality aspects of the ethnic party create a mobilizational weapon of a particular type. By being overt, the ethnic party makes an open and vocal appeal in its attempt to mobilize votes. By being exclusive, especially in its definition of its core constituency, the ethnic party implicitly or explicitly divides the political arena in terms of "insiders" and "outsiders," always promising to accommodate the needs of the "insiders" even at the expense of the "outsiders." By making the championing the interests of the ethnic group members as its central goal, it highlights the importance of the ethnic group as its core mobilizational issue.

[6] See Brass (1991, 49).

era, or they focus on the institutional structure of governance. Given the recent creation of most of the post-communist states, by focusing on the historical processes through which ethnicity has been created, the historical approach is inextricably linked to the communist experience. Communist regimes not only created boundaries and borders, but in many cases they created the actual ethnic groups under analysis. The manner of ethnic group creation, with its attendant aspects of inter-ethnic group competition, is assumed to play a pivotal role in the emergence of post-communist inter-ethnic rivalries. The greater the differences, among countries' experiences, in terms of communist-era policies, the greater the differences in terms of the demand level for ethnic mobilization in the post-communist era. Since not all communist regimes dealt with their ethnic minorities the same way, then why should we expect the past to have equal consequences in terms of ethnic parties? However, the greater the politicization of ethnicity under communist rule, the greater the chances that it will emerge as the most dominant electoral system cleavage in the post-communist era. Accordingly, if ethnicity had already been activated, it will return with a vengeance, thus creating a powerful demand function for ethnic parties. All that ethnic political entrepreneurs have to do is simply show up.

In contrast, the foundational moment approach stresses the institutional framework put in place in the immediate post-communist transition period. It privileges institutional design and engineering over historical legacies. Democratic institutions, such as electoral systems, types of electoral thresholds, level of decision-making decentralization, types of governance all matter because they affect the structuring of politics in multi-ethnic countries.[7] Accordingly, the greater the cross-national differences in the institutional structuring of the post-communist regimes, the

[7] Proportional representation systems matter allow for greater inclusiveness and representativeness than single-member-district majoritarian systems. Electoral thresholds matter because the affect the level of encapsulation, i.e. the percentage of ethnic group members who must vote for that party in order for it to achieve the threshold. Decentralization matters because it indicates the degree of autonomy, and as such resource allocation, that sub-national units have.

greater the differential rates of probability in terms of the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of ethnic parties.

Yet, if these two explanations represent the conventional wisdom, then were are faced with an empirical puzzle. Countries with radically different historical legacies as well as countries with very different institutional creations during their founding post-communist moments have experienced the same outcome: namely the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of ethnic parties.[8]

My argument

Analytically, I attempt to solve this puzzle by stressing the level of economic liberalization, in any post-communist country, as the catalytic event that results into the emergence, institutionalization and persistence of ethnic parties. I do so in a five-stage process: 1)activating ethnicity and making it relevant for individual ethnic group members, 2)politicizing ethnicity, 3)organizing ethnic groups, 4)institutionalizing ethnic groups into ethnic parties and finally, 5)counter-mobilization and persistence of ethnic parties . Accordingly, I analyze the dynamics between economic liberalization and the propensity for ethnic conflict as a collective action problem.[9] The implications of this analytical approach are threefold: (1) how do members of ethnic groups decide or not to participate in organized collective behavior, (2) how do these decisions translate into collective outcomes, and (3) how does economic liberalization affect

[8] For example, the repressiveness with which the Zhivkov regime dealt with its Turkish minority generated the same result as the benign neglect that the Yugoslav regime had imposed upon the ethnic Albanians of Macedonia. Similarly, the extensive institutionalization of minority protection within the post-communist Romanian constitution had the same result as the Bulgarian constitution's insistence upon the delegitimization of any type of ethnic party.
[9] To my knowledge, Michael Hechter was the first scholar to analyze nationalist mobilization as a collective action situation. However, my argument differs from his in terms of what drives individual ethnic groups members to engage in collective ethnic mobilization drives. See Hechter (2000).

these two aforementioned questions. In short, what is the relationship between micromotives and macrobehavior?[10]

Economic liberalization, as a set of economic policies with asymmetrically-distributed short-term effects, activates the individual's understanding of how ethnicity affects his material well-being. Political entrepreneurs attempt to utilize this process in order to politicize ethnicity and transform it into a reliable and efficient basis for ethnic group cohesion and collective behavior. Yet, they are faced with the "free rider" problem.[11] Medium-level economic liberalization provides political entrepreneurs not only with enough resources, often in the form of discrete state economic policies, to match their followers' demands for selective incentives, but to also make credible promises about the viability of such selective incentives.[12] Accordingly, a solution to the "free rider" problem arises. However, the need for organization forces political entrepreneurs to tap into existing social mobilization resources in order to accelerate the organization of their groups and minimize their costs. When they do not have any pre-existing organizational resources, they are forced to create them at their own expense and often under stringent time constraints. As such, organization precedes mobilization. Successful collective mobilization requires not only ethnic group coherence and organizational efficacy, but also a readiness to act and an increasing level of ethnic group discipline. It requires the creation of an ethnic party. As such, political entrepreneurs begin to increasingly rely upon a "critical mass" of ethnic group members. This "critical mass" sub-group is aware of the political entrepreneurs' needs and extracts ever increasing selective incentives from them. Selective incentives that are increasingly asymmetrically become concentrated upon these "critical mass"

[10] This approach closely mirrors Chong (1991, 1) and Schelling (1978).
[11] For the "free rider" problem see Olson (1971, 1-2).
[12] By medium levels of economic liberalization I mean the existence of a market-based economy, but with a significant and interventionist state, capable and committed to the selective allocation of the costs and benefits of any changes in economic policy-making.

members. However, the provision of these selective incentives has two effects: (i) it increases the chances that economic liberalization will remain at medium levels since it is at these medium levels that political entrepreneurs can credibly provide their followers with the selective incentives that they demand, and (ii) it institutionalizes this commitment to the appropriation of the selective incentives within the ethnic party, increasing the chances that it will persist. The successes of the original political entrepreneurs resonate in elite settings with a powerful demonstration effect. Counter-mobilization emerges from other intra-ethnic political entrepreneurs, who are vying for power, leading to a competitive intra-ethnic bidding war for more support from ethnic group members. Consequently, economic policy-making assumes an increasing level of zero-sum decisions, boundaries among ethnic groups become rigid and exclusionary and inter-ethnic bargaining assumes an increasingly indivisible aspect.

The Cases

Bulgaria: The Communist-era regime had suppressed ethnic Turkish identity and had engaged in their economic segmentation within well-defined territorial concentrations.[13] The 1984-85 Revival process, which included the banning of mosque attendance, the use of Bulgarized names for all Turks, thee ban on using Turkish in public, as well as other measures designed to minimize the expression of Turkish culture in public, had led to large number of Turks emigrating to Turkey in 1988-89.[14] Yet, the Bulgarian transition was swift politically and resembled the Romanian one in the sense that it showed the internal weaknesses of the

[13] In Bulgaria, the ethnic Turks are territorially concentrated into two, non-contiguous regions: in the southeastern part of the country, especially in the district of Kurdjhali (where they represent over seventy per cent of the local population), and in the northeastern part, in the area around Razgrad (where they make up approximately 51 per cent of the population). Additional significant levels of ethnic Turk populations can be found in the districts of Varna, Haskovo, and Bourgas.

[14] See Laber (1987).

Communist regime. But in terms of ethnic parties, it was successful, in the sense that the largest ethnic minority group, the Bulgarian Turks, were able to form their own party.

The Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), formed by ethnic Turkish political entrepreneurs in 1990, quickly became the most important ethnic party and dominated the political representation of the Bulgarian Turks. Yet, immediately after it was formed it had to demonstrate that it was able to withstand institutional pressures from the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the ex-communist successor party, in terms of its constitutionality.[15] It was part of the immediate post-transition governing coalitions, becoming the key veto player in its attempts to safeguard ethnic Turkish goals and maximize the resources that it could use to satisfy the needs of its core constituency. Finally, the MRF has been able to build a large-scale political organization, dominating the electoral process in the Turkish-majority administrative units, and minimize the chances for intra-ethnic group political competition.

In 1990, the MRF was key in pushing for legislation that reversed the Zhivkov-era Bulgarization campaign's name-changing process. By 1991, over 600,000 Turks, Roma and Pomak had restored their names.[16] In the 1991-92, as part of the governing coalition, the MRF pushed for the creation and implementation of two ministerial decrees that allocated an indemnity package, dealing with the property, housing needs, and employment of all those Bulgarian citizens that had been forced to emigrate to Turkey in 1989 and had subsequently returned to Bulgaria.[17] In 1991, the October Law on Public Education, which allowed the instruction of Turkish only outside of public schools, was later amended, and led to the teaching of Turkish on an extracurricular basis.

[15] Given that the post-communist Bulgarian constitution does not allow the formation of explicitly ethnic parties, the constitutionality of the MRF was challenged in court. In early 1992, the Constitutional Court, by a narrow majority, declared the party to be within the confines of the constitution, and as such to continue in its original form.
[16] See Bates 91994, 204-210), Ilchev and Duncan (1993, 36-37), Karpat (1995, 51-55).
[17] See Nedeva (1993, 132-134).

However, it was not able to maintain the same success when it came to reaping material resources to allocate to its members. The immediate post-communist transition in terms of economic policy-making was one of politicized privatization decisions, the drastic and selective reduction of social welfare and health services, the spiraling of inflation, lax macroeconomic management, imprudent fiscal policies and politically-determined resource allocation. The early UDF-MRF government implemented a series of policies that were putting Bulgaria on the path towards economic reform, but at a rather slow pace. These policies focused on four main pillars (price liberalization, sharply reducing agricultural subsidies, the restructuring of the state-owned enterprises and the restitution of industrial property and land nationalist by the Communist regime). The Turkish population was hurt through in a variety of ways: the shutdown of unprofitable local factories, especially the "white elephant" projects that had been created because of the soft budget constraints of the communist-era economic planners, had been built in the late 1960s in the Turkish-majority areas of Southern Bulgaria[18]; the reduction of the activity of the construction industry; but most importantly, the reduction of tobacco farming. The previous state monopoly firm, Bulgartabak, greatly reduced the levels of purchased tobacco and the prices paid for, while it delayed payment for years. The foreign markets dried up, especially in the region where EU country members heavily subsidized their own producers at the expense of more price-competitive Bulgarian tobacco farmers.[19] The sharp reduction of subsidies led to the greatly reduced family incomes. Additionally, the land restitution process was particularly detrimental and one-sided since the vast majority of land that was returned to the previous owners turned over Turkish-cultivated land to absentee ethnic Bulgarian owners.

[18] See Hopken (1997, 80).
[19] See Atanasova (2004, 403).

Faced with vehement complaints from its electoral base, the MRF withdrew its support from the UDF governing and sided with the BSP. In a strategic move the MRF was illustrating that it would not tolerate economic liberalization policies that would disproportionally impinge upon the living standards of its voters. It was willing to side with an ex-Communist party who had spent the previous year actively trying to outlaw it and engage it in a setting of ethnically-determined provocation rather than support policies that would not provide its leadership with tangible benefits for distribution. True to form the BSP slowed the process of economic liberalization and engaged in a form of politicized economic liberalization process.

However, after the 1994 elections that brought to power a BSP-led coalition, it became apparent that, even in this context of medium economic liberalization, the MRF was increasingly being left out of the allocation of resources. Once again, the ethnic Turks were being asked to shoulder the burdens of economic liberalization without receiving much of the benefits. Only in the realm of cultural autonomy, a field with significant patronage opportunities for ethnic political leaders, could the MRF leaders engage in resource allocation. By the mid-1990s mother tongue language instruction was being provided in municipal schools as an optional subject up to four hours per week and was being financed by the municipal budgets, with textbooks being provided to the students free of charge.[20] Religious practices have become more open and have accelerated in the post-1997 period with a majority of the 950 functioning mosques having been built in the post-1997 period and the authorization of the creation on four secondary religious Muslim schools and of one undergraduate Islamic institution in the country.[21]This emphasis on granting cultural autonomy continued in the 1990s as the MRF was able to strengthen its position as the representative of the ethnic Turkish minority.

[20] See Eminov (1997, 145-150), Roger (2002, 25).
[21] See Roger (2002, 24) and Hopken (1997, 54-61).

More importantly, the BSP-led coalition was not only reducing the speed and the scope of economic liberalization, but it was engaging in the creation of rather corrupt privatization practices with a heavy dose of crony capitalism. In this context, came the attack from rival ethnic Turkish political entrepreneurs who argued that the MRF leadership was not fulfilling its mission in promoting Turkish rights. In a strategic move, and in order to show its resolve, the MRF engaged its rival Turkish political entrepreneurs by joining in an opposition coalition with the UDF. This move led to a split within the MRF and created the PDS (Party for Democratic Change). The PDS trumpeted its decision rationale as being against the MRF joining in a coalition with the UDF.[22]

However, in the fall of 1995 a BSP-inspired anti-Turkish campaign, in which nationalist Bulgarian leaders within the governing coalition sought to ban the MRF as "an organization detrimental" to the integrity of the Bulgarian state, allowed the MRF to recoup its internal cohesion. The use of nationalism by the BSP in the 1995-1996 period coincided with a drastic downturn of the Bulgarian economy that cemented the MRF into an electoral and mobilizational alliance with the UDF.[23] The powerful and frequent demonstrations in the winter of 1996 shook the Videnov government and paved the way for the election of Stoyanov as the new President.[24]

But, true to its mobilization tactics and constituency needs, the MRF chose to campaign independently of the UDF for the April 1997 parliamentary elections. Despite the fact that participating in a common electoral campaign would have guaranteed access to the decision-making process of the government, the MRF leadership had learned the lessons from its previous participation in a UDF governing coalition. Much like the BSP, the UDF remained true to its

[22] See Ganev (1995, 49-50) and Roger (2002, 30).
[23] See Bell (1999, 259).
[24] For Drezov, Bulgaria in 1997 was closer to the "revolutions" that swept Central Europe and Poland in 1989 than it was to the actual Bulgarian regime transition that unfolded in 1989. See Drezov (2000, 196-197).

form and implemented a radical economic liberalization program that accelerated the economic reform process within Bulgaria. Almost overnight Bulgaria went from being a Balkan laggard in terms of economic liberalization to appearing like an early 1990s Baltic Republic. In this context, the state quickly lost a significant share of its ability to allocate resources.

Romania: The Romanian transition progressed very quickly politically, albeit on a disjoined path which often oscillated towards the imposition of quasi-authoritarian rule, while moving very gradually in the realm of economic reform and marketization. Yet, unlike Bulgaria, it quickly institutionalized the representation of ethnic minorities, as such, within the political process. Its biggest ethnic minority are the ethnic Hungarians who have consistently been able to be represented in Parliament and participated in the governing coalition during 1992-96.[25] In terms of its post-communist political trajectory, the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania (UDMR), has transitioned from the violent riots of 1990 to the demands for territorial and cultural autonomy of the 1991-1996 period to membership in the governing coalition of 1996-2000 and returning to a strong opposition in the post-2000 period.

The UDMR, whose membership exceeds 500,000 members has been organized into decentralized and autonomous country branches which mirror the administrative divisions of the country. In the middle part of the 1990s it experienced factionalism problems, with an important intra-party division along moderate and radical lines. The moderate wing wanted the continued participation, whenever possible, into governing coalitions, pushing for gradualist policies in terms of territorial autonomy, local and regional policy and administrative decentralization, and support for educational policies (especially in terms of university creation and accreditation and minority language instruction). The radical wing wanted an acceleration of these policies and

[25] In Romania, the ethnic Hungarians, live primarily in the region of Transylvania (where they account for 20% of the region's population), which is located along the border with Hungary, and form the majority of the population in the districts of Harghita and Covasna, where they make up 84.7 % and 75.2 % of the total local population.

was particularly adamant about the need for territorial autonomy. These tensions were brought to the fore in 1995 when the radical pushed for the creation of a Council of Mayors and Local Councilors in an ethnically-Hungarian-majority county, further increasing tensions with Romanian nationalist parties. Yet, by 1996, these tensions had subsided and the ethnic Hungarian party was back into the governing coalition.[26]

Within this coalition, the UDMR was offered the Ministerial posts of Tourism and Minority Affairs and it pushed for the codification of two much-needed legislative measures: the requirement for the provision of bilingual education in municipalities where ethnic minorities form more than 20% of the local population and the authorization of the use of Hungarian language instruction at the secondary and vocational level schools along with the continued teacher training for proficiency in Hungarian. When its Romanian coalition partners moved very slowly in the implementation of these measures, the UDMR escalated its claims requiring the creation of a Hungarian faculty within the existing University of Cluj. Throughout the 1990s the UDMR was riveted by strong internal factionalism. The gradual wing, led by Geza Domokos and based in Cluj, has consistently argued for gradual reform, pushing primarily for territorial autonomy for Transylvania. The radical wing, led by Laszlo Tokes and based in the Hargita and Covasna districts, have pushed for much greater autonomy and the granting of collective rights for the entire Hungarian minority, consistently arguing against the gradual approach. Between the first congress of the UDMR in April 1990 and the fifth congress of October 1997, these two factions competed ceaselessly and intensely for gaining control over the goals and the tactics of the Hungarian ethnic mobilization in Romania.[27]

[26] See Atanasova (2004, 386-387).
[27] See Roger (2002, 33-35).

The 1997 congress culminated in a platform that argued for the aggressive and accelerated implementation of marketization process based on private property, the reduction of the state's role in the allocation of resources both at the national and local levels, the further integration of that national economy in the international economy and the creation of a more competitive Romanian economy.[28] The free market approach was aimed at reducing the patronage opportunities that had been afforded to the previous government, while the reduction over local government structures was aimed at reducing the extractive capacity of the center over the regions. The lack of sub-national budgetary autonomy and localized revenue allocation points not only to the ability of the center to control regions, especially the ones controlled by the locally-elected ethnic minorities, but also the inability of ethnic political leaders to allocate resources to their supporters.

In Romania, the communist period witnessed the most aggressively-implemented, state-led process of rapid industrialization upon an overwhelmingly agrarian and backwards economy.[29] In terms of economic issues, three things stand out: the limited and slow, almost stuck at medium levels of economic liberalization of the Romanian state, with the only exceptions, the 1996-2000, period and the post-2002 era.[30] The continued use of the state for the selective and targeted allocation of resources, the continued strong state involvement in the banking and industrial sectors and the support for the small businesses and rural interests that formed the backbone of the electoral support behind the Iliescu-led ex-Communist catch-all party.[31] This combination of pragmatic nationalism with economic nationalism was particularly

[28] See the party platforms of the 1997 UDMR Congress and their discussion in Roger (2002, 35-36).
[29] See Chen (2003, 179)
[30] See Pigenko and Novac (2002, 167-170).
[31] During 1996-2000 the Constantinescu-led governing coalition issued twice as many laws on privatization, three times as many governmental ordinances, and more than five times as many governmental and parliamentary decisions. See Stan (2002, 100-101).

helpful to the ext-Communists because they could remain in control over their radical wing while at the same time increase the amount of patronage that they would allocate to their supporters while punishing their opponents, especially the ethnic Hungarians.[32]

However, this process of resource allocation changed in the 1996-2000 period. The UDMR, being part of the governing coalition, was able to utilize its position to get more benefits from the center. The 1996-2000 Constantinescu regime spent a much higher proportion of its annual budget targeting special interest groups than the Iliescu regime (on the average 19.3 % per annum, while the Iliescu regime spent 11.5%) reflecting the need to compensate the higher number of political parties required for the preservation of the governing coalition in power.[33]

Macedonia: In Macedonia, even though the political transition was nearly instantaneous, once it became apparent the former Yugoslav federation was on the brink of collapse, the economic transition was slow and arduous. The ethnic Albanians, unlike the ethnic Hungarians in Romania and the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria, have dealt with the emergence of multiple ethnic parties and with significant intra-ethnic factionalism and competitive bidding.[34] This intra-ethnic, elite-level competitive bidding has revolved around resource allocation, especially in the issue areas of administrative decentralization, educational resources and state employment.

Following independence form Yugoslavia, the Albanian ethnic party coalition formed between the Party for Democratic Prosperity and the Peoples' Democratic Party participated in the 1990 elections. Led by Skopje-based Communist-era political leaders they may have boycotted the independence referendum and may have demanded greater political autonomy, but

[32] See Gallagher (2000, 195) and Gallagher (1995)..
[33] See Stan (2002, 98).
[34] In Macedonia, the ethnic Albanians reside in several districts, which form a crescent-shaped region which begins in Kumanovo in the northeast, stretches through the major urban areas of Skopje and Tetovo in the northwest, and then continues south along the border with Albania to the towns of Debar, Gostivar, and Struga. In certain districts, principally around Tetovo and Gostivar, Albanians form the majority of the population. In Tetovo ethnic Albanians constitute 74.4 % of the local population, while in Gostivar they constitute 63.7 %. In Struga they make up 42.5 % of the local population, while in Debar they are 44.5 %. See Babuna (2000, 80).

they backed away from the issue of territorial autonomy, de-escalating their demands and focusing them on greater sources of decision-making autonomy without a territorial aspect attached to it.[35] They held moderate views that remained dominant within the political representation of the ethnic minority until 1993, when there was a split within the PDP. The formation of the PDP-A (- Albanians), led by the Tetovo-based Arben Xhaferi and Mendhun Thaci, was based on the counter-mobilization logic of escalatory demands. Indeed, by the mid-1990s, it had become the more successful ethnic Albanian party, winning the local elections in all towns with sizable Albanian populations, except for Skopje. In effect, the Xhaferi-led ethnic mobilization drive by attacking the then-dominant ethnic Albanian leadership on the issues of the Albanian-language university in Tetovo and on the issue of territorial autonomy was decreasing its flexibility vis-à-vis the Macedonian political elites.[36] The PDP continued serving in the government occupying ministerial positions, but of reduced importance and limited resource allocation capability.[37] The PDP-A has pushed for more radical positions, often demanding a more institutionalized form of autonomy in the form of Xhaferi's request for a formal consocational regime.[38] The Xhaferi-led split of the old PDP meant that by 1997 the PDP-A (DPD) had overcome the competitive pressures of its predecessor.[39] The continued presence of ethnic Albanian leaders within every Macedonian government and the increased radicalization of successive generations of ethnic Albanian leaders point towards to inability of weak forms of consocational rule to achieve long-term political stability.[40]

[35] See Ackerman (2000, 60-65).
[36] See Ackerman (2000, 65).
[37] See Atanasova (2004, 388-389), Pettifer (1999, 141-144).
[38] See Hislope (2003, 138).
[39] See Pettifer (2001, 13).
[40] See Sofos (2001, 150).

In 1994 the establishment of an Albanian-language university in Tetovo, as a result of the absence of Albanian-language instruction despite demands since 1991 and especially since the shutdown of the University of Pristina, was key for inter-ethnic relations. This was particularly important for the ethnic Albanians since the vast majority of students who attended the University of Pristina, especially from Macedonia, were ethnic Albanians. The attempt to create an Albanian-language university in Tetovo was strongly resisted by the Macedonian state which made things worse because that left the vast majority of Albanian youth who were seeking university education in their language without an option.[41] The Macedonian state shut it down amid demonstrations by ethnic Albanians that resulted in one death and multiple injured. Yet, over time, the Macedonian state has increased its offerings to the Albanian community in terms of educational opportunities. The January 1997 decision to create and enforce Albanian-language instruction within the pedagogical faculty in order to provide training for the Albanian teachers of the primary and secondary levels was complemented with access to higher education along ethnic lines. The Macedonian state increased the minorities quota to from 10% to 23% between 1996 and 1997.[42]

In terms of administrative decentralization, the ethnic Albanians have increasingly achieved autonomy but not as much in resource allocation. In the 1990 local elections, elected Albanian mayors in Gostivar and Tetovo were prevented by the Macedonian state to assume and their office and subsequently formed their own municipal authorities.[43] In October 1995, the Law of Local Government codified that each municipality would have its own locally elected mayor and councilors, who would deal with local issues, but with insufficient funding and other forms of jurisdictional autonomy. The argument that the Albanian language should be granted official

[41] See Szajkowski (2000, 254-55).
[42] See Atanasova (2004, 397).
[43] See Mickey and Albion (1993, 77)

language status within Macedonia.[44] In the implementation of this, there was an administrative redistricting of the country into 130 municipalities of which 20 were created with Albanian majorities. The 1997 local elections brought to power the DPA (PDP-A) with mayors in both Tetovo and Gostivar. After the elections, the mayor and the city council of Gostivar pushed for the use of the Turkish and Albanian flags alongside the Macedonian flag which led to the violent intervention of the Macedonian state leading to three dead and 400 wounded (July 1997). The mayor and other local politicians were tried and convicted even though the 1998-elected government proposed an amnesty act which the Parliament passed in January 1999 and which granted amnesty to the ethnic Albanian politicians.[45] By 2001, there were 26 out of the 123 municipalities in the country and all of the major Albanian towns such as Gostivar, Tetovo, Debar and Struga.[46] The DPA participation in the government led to the involvement of Xhaferi in the 1999 Trajkovski government provided again few tangible benefits and as such was quickly by the Ahmeti-led NLA as ineffective and requiring more direct action. Ahmeti being a well-known western Macedonia Albanian with hard-line views on the language issue.[47] The 2002 election cycle saw the creation of the Ahmeti-led party which was packed with ex-NLA leaders and was impressive in its geographical origins, illustrating how the ethnic Albanian leadership was moving from the Skopje-based ex-Yugoslav era nomenklatura and the Tetovo-based Xhaferi period to an all-Macedonia-encompassing unit.

In terms of the economic transition process, the Macedonian economy has withstood some significant shocks all while undergoing a very slow marketization and adjustment process. Privatization has been carried out in a very slow, politicized and inefficient fashion, especially

[44] See Engstrom (2002, 14).
[45] See Ortakovski (2001, 34-35).
[46] See Hislope (2003, 132) and Brunnbauer (2004, 580).
[47] See Pettifer (2001, 10-13).

until 1996, precluding the state from benefiting from it in terms of economic restructuring and revenue raising while increasing the incentives for the institutionalization of corruption throughout all the state structures.[48] Historically, the Macedonian economy had long [49]been the most underdeveloped region of the former Yugoslavia, having experienced limited industrialization and collectivization. And even these two forms of economic policy-making differed along ethnic lines: whereas 41 % of rural Macedonian households joined collective farms, only 5.1 % of their Albanian counterparts did the same. Similarly, whereas in the predominantly Albanian districts less than ten per of all arable land was collectivized, in the predominantly Macedonian regions, the percentage of collectivized land exceeded seventy per cent of all arable land.[50] Additionally, within state employment there was a strong institutional bias for the recruitment of Macedonians: higher literacy rates, better language skills since Macedonian had become the official regional language, and greater access to Skopje-based Communist Party leaders. The end result was that the majority of Albanians began to specialize in private-sector small-scale entrepreneurial activities, large-scale seasonal labor migration, both within Yugoslavia and in the near abroad, and last, but not least, the continued use of small-scale, non-collectivized, family farming.

The economic liberalization process was one that affected both Albanians and Macedonians in different ways. The reduction in state-owned enterprises and the resultant increases in sectoral unemployment has been affected by the fact that the vast majority of state employees have been Macedonians because of the very small numbers of Albanian participation in state employment in the communist period. The pattern of post-communist state employment has remained the same: the estimates for total state employment have increased since 1992 where

[48] See Perry (1997, 264).
[49] See Brunnbauer (2004, 582-583).
[50] See Brunnbauer (2004, 581-582).

they stood at 3 per cent, but even after the implementation of an ethnic minority affirmative action policy, they remained at 10 % and within the police they range from 1.8 % to 8.7 percent.[51] The Albanians who have specialized in small-scale trading and entrepreneurial activities and family-based farming (especially the ones in the rural areas of western Macedonia) have experienced significant downward income pressures because of the increased penetration of the Macedonian market by foreign firms and because of the reduction in agricultural subsidies under the gradual opening of the economy.[52] The Albanians who have specialized in maintaining linkages with the international economy, often serving as the intermediaries with the significant Albanian diaspora which routinely engages in remittances and those in the construction sector, as well as the Albanians who are specializing in non-tradeable occupational segments, such as medicine have witnessed their incomes appreciate. Thus creating a new Albanian middle class, especially in western Macedonia, which has acted as a brake on the further radicalization of the Albanians.[53] The marketization process, which has been conducted along a very slow and often very politicized manner, has left many previously-privileged members of the managerial and administrative sectors of the economy in poverty.[54]

This may have bred resentment among the Macedonians, but since it left the ethnic Albanians unaffected and on a path towards securing resources from the state through increased radicalization it was not problematic development. Hence, during the 1991-95 period the Macedonian state may have been going through a crisis but it was not significantly impinging upon the resource base of the Albanians. However, the increased trade liberalization of the post-1996 period, the increased penetration of the Macedonian market by foreign firms, the reduction

[51] See Hislope (2003, 132) and the cites therein.
[52] See Hislope (2003, 133).
[53] See Atanasova (2004, 406).
[54] See Pettifer (2001, 15).

in labor emigration of young Albanians combined with the increasingly corrupt privatization process of the Macedonian state and the limited domestic opportunities for state employment then the medium level of Macedonian economic liberalization.

Conclusion

This paper has focused on the dynamics that lead to the emergence of ethnic parties in post-communist democracies while testing competing hypotheses. Its policy relevance lies in its ability to generate a predictive analytical framework that shows how the interaction between the strategic interests of ethnic political entrepreneurs and the selective incentives that the ethnic group members demand affects the routinization of politics in post-communist multiethnic democracies. Yet, it is only the beginning because of the need to further understand three key intervening variables: territorial concentration, inter-generational intra-ethnic conflicts, and the role of expectations.

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