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Kinstate Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts: Albania and Turkey Compared

Abstract

Albania and Turkey did not act in overtly irredentist ways towards their ethnic brethren in neighboring states after the end of communism. Why nonetheless Albania facilitated the increase of ethnic conflict in Kosovo and Macedonia, while Turkey did not with respect to the Turks of Bulgaria? I argue that kin-states undergoing transition are more prone to intervene in external conflicts than states that do not do so, regardless of the salience of minority demands in the host-state. The transition weakens the institutions of the kin-state. Experiencing limited institutional constraints, self-seeking state officials create alliances with secessionist and autonomist movements across borders alongside their own ideological, clan-based and particularistic interests. Such alliances are often utilized to advance radical domestic agendas. Unlike in Albania's transition environment, in Turkey there were no emerging elites that could potentially form alliances and use external movements to legitimize their own domestic existence or claims.

Keywords: kin-states, irredentism, transition, state weakness, Albanians, Turks, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Kosovo

Introduction

Research on ethno-national violence in countries emerging from communism has largely focused on elite or group-based dynamics or on the role of the international community. The impact of kin-states has been discussed either in the context of the large-scale violence that

ensued after the break-up of former Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, or with respect to non-violent minority-majority interactions in Eastern Europe. Almost no theoretical accounts exist about the gray zone: when kin-states do not clearly make irredentist claims, but still facilitate the escalation of ethno-national conflict in host-states. Particularly puzzling is why some kin-states which historically made strong irredentist claims ceased to do so after 1989. This article aims to address these gaps.

An empirical puzzle observed in the Balkans after the end of communism will assist in deriving theoretical insights: As a kin-state of the Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia, Albania proper was not outwardly irredentist, neither was Turkey as a kin-state to the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria. However, Albania significantly contributed to the increase of the ethnic conflict in Kosovo during the 1990s, less so in Macedonia, while Turkey did not in the Bulgarian case. One could be tempted to voice the most obvious explanation: Albania intervened in Kosovo due to humanitarian reasons – the Kosovars endured severe human rights violations from the Serbian regime and needed backing from abroad. By contrast, the Albanians of Macedonia and the Turks of Bulgaria had much more peaceful interactions with their majorities, the Macedonians and the Bulgarians respectively. While this explanation certainly makes sense, it is limited to the issue of need for intervention and does not address the actual mechanisms involved. Over the past decades – with humanitarian crises in Rwanda, Somalia and the Congo – we have seen that the need for intervention rarely translates into action. Concerning our puzzle, if Albania acted primarily on humanitarian grounds, it could have taken a much bolder stance. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the Turks of Bulgaria were subjected to a severe cultural assimilation and expulsion, Turkey reacted much more boldly on the diplomatic front than Albania did in the 1990s *vis-à-vis* Kosovo.

This article argues that kin-states undergoing transition from totalitarian rule are much more likely to facilitate the rise of ethno-national conflict in host-states than kin-states experiencing no transition, regardless of the salience of the minority demands in the host state. Albania, which underwent transition, did not intervene in the internal conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia because of a clearly expressed irredentist agenda, but in line with the following logic: As a state undergoing transition, Albania was much more prone to support the principle of national self-determination externally as the latter affected other countries from the communist bloc. In addition, it was exposed to dual pressures stemming from the international community, on the one side, and its own need for domestic reform on the other, both weakening its state institutions over a short period of time. Experiencing limited institutional constraints, self-seeking state officials created alliances with secessionist and autonomist movements across borders alongside their own ideological, clan-based and particularistic interests. As a result, Albania exhibited a Janus-faced foreign policy. Officially, it gave in to the pressures exerted by the international community to maintain a non-interventionist stance. Unofficially, it pursued an interventionist agenda to various degrees. By contrast, a kin-state that did not undergo transition, such as Turkey, was less likely to intervene in the conflicts in the host-state. It was cautious about supporting self-determination abroad. Also, since there was no need for rapid domestic reforms, Turkey did not become vulnerable to strong international pressures, and could maintain a level of institutional strength that would allow it to formulate and implement a coherent foreign policy on the national question. Unlike in Albania's transition environment, there were no emerging elites in Turkey that could potentially utilize external secessionist and autonomist movements to legitimize their own domestic agendas.

This article considers a temporal cut-off point 1999 for Kosovo and 2001 for Macedonia and Bulgaria. The minority-majority dynamics in Kosovo changed drastically after NATO's 1999 military intervention with Albanians becoming a majority and Serbs a minority in Kosovo. In 2001 there was an internal warfare in Macedonia which finished with a peace agreement increasing significantly the rights of the Albanians. For temporal compatibility purposes my research on Bulgaria finishes in 2001 as well.

The paper is structured as follows. First, I discuss the degree to which existing theories explain the empirical puzzle. Second, I explore the process by which Albania's dualistic attitude increased the level of internal conflict in Kosovo and Macedonia. Third, I look at how Turkey intervened in the majority-minority relations in Bulgaria without increasing the level of internal conflict. I conclude by discussing future avenues for research.

Theoretical Accounts and the Empirical Puzzle

In the three cases examined only the actions of the Kosovo Albanians can clearly be classified as 'secessionist'. After Kosovo's autonomy was forcefully abolished by Milosevic in 1989 Albanian deputies secretly adopted the "Kaçanik" Constitution, and declared Kosovo a republic within Yugoslavia. When Yugoslavia started collapsing in 1991 and there was no longer a state in which Kosovo could become a federal republic, a Kosovo-wide clandestine referendum legitimized its independence. In contrast, the Albanians of Macedonia actively sought territorial autonomy. They boycotted the adoption of the new Macedonian constitution in 1991, and organized a clandestine referendum on autonomy of Western Macedonia in 1992. During the most intense fighting in 2001 both Albanians and Macedonians raised claims about the territorial

division of Macedonia, yet their demands subsided after the end of the violence. On their part, the Turks of Bulgaria sought primarily non-territorial solutions. While during the assimilation campaign of the 1980s they raised claims for autonomy, during the 1990s such voices existed, but were rare and marginal.

How would theories on irredentism interpret the positions of Albania and Turkey? Weiner's classical model, derived from the interwar period and highlighting the formation of inter-state alliances across borders and the popular-based incentives for the redemption of ethnic brethren, is weak in addressing the puzzle related to the 1990s (1971: 670-682). After the end of the Cold War neither Albania nor Turkey started forming inter-state alliances to redeem ethnic brethren abroad, although the international system changed from bi-polar to multi-polar and provided grounds for increased regional instability. Neither were there popular incentives to aid the struggle abroad. During communism Albania was highly isolated from the entire eastern bloc, thus the connections between Albanians in Albania proper and those in former Yugoslavia faded away over the decades (CEDIME-SE, 2002). Similar dynamics were observed between the Turks in Turkey proper and those in Bulgaria, divided by a thick Iron Curtain: Bulgaria was a staunch supporter of the Soviet Union and Turkey was a NATO member.

Theories about the international system allow us to better understand Turkey's and Albania's behavior in the 1990s. As Ambrosio argues, the nature of irredentism has changed from the era of nation-state formation (late 19th - early 20thc.), when pressures for boundary changes came from 'within' the irredentist states. In the second half of the 20thc they came from external secessionist movements (2001: 20-21). The lack of overt irredentism could possibly be explained by Horowitz' dictum that 'foreign policy goals [of an irredentist state] can be achieved better by encouraging secessionist movements…than by encouraging irredentism' (1991:10-11).

Also, the kin-states experienced constraints by a post World War Two international legal principle of respect for territorial sovereignty, and by the actual resistance of the international powers to legitimize secessionist movements in defense of this principle. While these explanations account for existing domestic and international constraints, they still do not explain why Turkey acted with more constraint than Albania.

Other theories highlight domestic motivations. Defeated in wars in the early 20th century, the two kin-states could have learned that irredentism is too costly. They could act in line with common affective, instrumental, and structural factors facilitating external intervention.[1] Albania clearly supported the Kosovars and Albanians of Macedonia because of national affinity, but also because it was relatively easy to do so as the ethnic brethren was located in compact areas right across the Albanian border, which is also highly porous. By contrast, the Turks of Bulgaria were concentrated in two areas, not in one, and the borders were highly guarded. Also, as kin-states that are ethnically diverse, they may feel vulnerable that secessionism can spring from within their own diverse population should they aid secessionism abroad (Carment and James, 1997: 194-231). Turkey – highly attacked because of its mistreatment of the Kurds - could have felt vulnerable to intervene in Bulgaria. Yet it did intervene in the Caucasus, as did Albania in Kosovo despite claims from its Greek and Macedonian minorities. This renders a 'vulnerability argument' vulnerable to criticism itself.

My own explanation builds on two accounts that seem unrelated at first glance. On the one hand, Ganguli argues that a kin-state may pursue a strategy of 'inaction' towards its ethnic brethren because of its own lack of capabilities, funds, and cost-benefit calculations (1998:11-31). On the other hand, Carment and James argue that an autonomous state – where state institutions are strong - is more likely to formulate a clear-cut foreign policy. Yet in the absence

of such institutionalization, domestic elites experience little constraints and are highly likely to formulate an aggressive foreign policy using international opportunities to promote their own domestic agendas (2000: 173-177). Both accounts put their finger on the state strength as a variable important for ethnic conflicts abroad. Yet both remain reluctant to engage it in dynamic exploration of relationships over time.

Two models have looked more thoroughly into dynamic relationships. Brubaker (1996) argued that minorities, 'nationalizing states' and kin-states are bound in a triadic nexus, where each actor closely monitors the change of stances of the other two and reacts accordingly. Jenne built on his ideas by delineating sequences in which the triadic relationship evolves. Once a minority receives some signals that its lobby state might be supportive, it radicalizes to obtain concessions from its host state even if the majority guarantees protection to the minority (2004: 729-756). These two approaches primarily focus on the empowerment of minorities by external actors and consider the kin-state as a coherent unit, although Jenne (2007) is more sensitive to the various projections of kin-state stances in time. My approach shifts attention to processes taking place within the kin-state that become relevant for the conflict in the host-state.

Traveling through a number of theoretical arguments this article identified three major gaps. First, the literature on irredentism and secessionism has remained insensitive about kin-states undergoing transition from totalitarian rule and exhibiting weakness or strength of state institutions. Second, a focus on processes is still rare. A third gap is related to the empirical data: while Albania's intervention in Kosovo has been more discussed in the press, less attention has been paid to Albania's relationship to Macedonia, and even less to Turkey's relationship towards the Turks of Bulgaria in the 1990s. This article aims to fill these gaps.

Albania: A Janus-faced Intervention in Kosovo and Macedonia

Despite its ambiguous stance towards intervention, Albania as a kin-state in transition was much more prone to intervene in the ethno-national conflicts in host states than Turkey which did not undergo any regime change.[2] A complex causal chain took place to explain Albania's intervention in the conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia. The chain was originally triggered by the transition from authoritarian rule and was sustained by it throughout the research period.

The right to national self-determination resurfaced as a political principle with the regime changes at the end of the Cold War (Heraclides 1990, 1991, Moore et al. 1998, Bianchini and Schöpflin, 1998, Bunce 2005). At the time when Albania – a laggard in its transition process as of 1991 – was pressured by events in former Yugoslavia to take a stance on Kosovo's self-determination, countries in the post-communist world had already exercised this right. Germany had unified in 1990, and former Yugoslav republics and successors of the Soviet Union had declared independence in 1991. Prompted by an international demonstration effect rather than by the resurgence of internally driven territorial revisionism, Albania followed suit. It was only a day before the ratification of Kosovo's bid for independence in September 1991 that Albanian Foreign Minister Muhammed Kapllani used the words "Republic of Kosova" for the first time addressing the UN General Assembly (Kola, 2003:222). Moreover, it was an act of Albania's parliament, and not of the government, that issued a declaration in support of Kosovo's independence. A pro-independence stance gathered momentum in 1992 during the presidential campaign of Democratic Party candidate Sali Berisha, when he promised to unify Kosovo and Albania. Shortly after he won office, he also spoke of Kosovo's right to self-determination (Jenne, 2007:171). He argued that the Kosovo Albanians should be entitled to holding free

democratic elections as did other break-away regions of former Yugoslavia (Kola, 2003: 206-207, 222, 282). Engaging Kosovo's self-determination in an election campaign was surely a symptom of Berisha's searching to utilize a foreign cause for his particularistic purposes. Such a stance is also typical for a transition process, where the changing rules of the game in an uncertain environment create a window of opportunity for such action.

Why Albania did not advance irredentist claims? Apart from the fact that it followed events in Eastern Europe in terms of timing, there are other reasons. The above-mentioned geopolitical separation among Albanians during communism accounted for the lack of an emotional salience of the pan-Albanian appeal. Thus, the national question - although ranking high on Albania's foreign policy agenda – did not supersede another goal, obtaining external support for Albania's own democratization (Kola, 2003). Clearly, instrumental reasons trumped affinitive ones. Geopolitically, Albania wanted to change spheres of influence and become a future member of Western institutions, the European Community and NATO. Economically, its problems deepened as of 1990, and necessitated foreign aid. Its own weakness increased its susceptibility to strong international pressures in order to achieve its priority foreign policy goal.

The international pressure intensified once a local counterpart – Berisha's government elected in 1992 – was available to engage with. Since this government maintained a pro-Western orientation, a dialogue on policy change was easier than with the previously ruling unreformed communists. In order to get through serious internal political and economic reforms, Albania became a subject of stringent international control and conditionality. Politically relevant actors, such as the United States and the EU and international financial institutions linked economic aid and promises for political benefits and membership with requirements for democratization and market economy, respect for minority rights, and maintenance of peace and security in the

region. Thus, pressures on Albania to reconsider its initial enthusiasm for the Albanian self-determination intensified. Already in 1992 German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher promised to enlist assistance to Albania while urging Tirana to act in consensus with the principles of inviolability of borders (Kola, 2003: 231). Also, during negotiations at international conferences Tirana was urged to accept a 'minority rights approach' towards the political demands of the Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia. Such approach clashed particularly with the Kosovars as they consider themselves 'people' with a right to territorial self-determination. Signs that the pressure worked stem from 1993 when Berisha abandoned overt calls for Kosovo's independence and came up with the idea of 'democratic space in the Balkans' to facilitate regional integration into Europe regardless of international borders (ibid, 309).

While the transition process allowed international actors to impose on Albania an official non-revisionist stance, the same transition unleashed further dynamics that weakened the state institutions and often worked in the opposite direction – a *de facto* support of self-determination movements albeit unofficially.[3] In a political environment of changing economic and political structures, weak legal rules, rising corruption and economic decline, elites in power enjoyed large leeway to interpret policy issues as suited them, including the national question. With the absence of a clear-cut national doctrine and constitution to define the boundaries of the national question until 1998**,** Albanian official foreign policy fluctuated heavily depending on the ideological orientations of governing elites, their regional/clan affiliations, and particularistic interests.

Although Kosovo's secessionism remained constant as a national issue, the reaction of ruling democratic and socialist elites was different. Berisha viewed the non-violent Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) led by Ibrahim Rugova as embodying a new democratic doctrine.

Forging an alliance across borders, Berisha consulted Kosovo leaders on political strategy, supported their appeals on international forums, concluded economic agreements, and repeatedly warned that Albania would not idly stand by in the event of war in Kosovo (Biberaj, 2000: 246, Zanga, 1992). During Berisha's tenure the democratic cleavage was reinforced by a regional/tribal one, as he derived his support primarily from a Gheg constituency living in the North and belonging to the same cultural/regional subgroup as the Albanians of former Yugoslavia. In contrast, the Albanian Socialists who succeeded Berisha in government drew their constituency from the South where the people are predominantly Tosk (Blumi, 1998: 527-569).

The Socialists in government were not so excited about Kosovo and developed mixed policy stances. In 1991 the post-communist government of Ramiz Alia fluctuated between restricting itself to polemics against the curtailment of Kosovo's autonomy and the actual support for Kosovo's independence (Zanga, 1992: 23). Another Socialist government, headed by Fatos Nano, who succeeded Berisha in 1997, became less pro-Kosovar. During a 1997 conference in the Greek island of Crete, Nano met Milosevic for the first time. Nano spoke broadly about non-controversial topics such as Balkan integration and economic contacts, while repeating that the dispute over Kosovo should be resolved by Belgrade and Prishtina (Schmidt, 1997-98). This meeting not only failed to improve Albanian-Kosovo relations, but for a long time thereafter the Albanian government solicited information about ideas on Rugova's mindset from foreign diplomats and the media rather than through direct contacts (Lani, 1998). Even after a reshuffling of the socialist government in 1999 and Prime Minister Pandeli Majko's brief rhetorical abandon of the 'minority rights approach' in favor of a secessionist one, Albania's connections with LDK's leadership remained weak. An instrumental – rather than affinity –

reasoning is highly transparent here. Majko made a statement in favor of secessionism only after the 1998 warfare in Kosovo intensified and threatened to spill over into Albania. He nevertheless succumbed to international pressure soon again, weighing the costs of diverting from a non-interventionist path. The pressure reached such a blazing degree that Majko's government was asked to serve as mediator to the 1999 Rambouillet negotiations and unify highly atomized Kosovo Albanian factions, while being prohibited to even mention the word 'independence' as a 'carrot' to the Kosovo counterparts (ICG, 1999a). Albania stood firmly behind NATO's military intervention in Kosovo.

The ideological alliances across borders were not the only result of weakened state institutions. One of the major indicators of a weak state - the widespread corruption – allowed that corrupted officials conclude deals with Kosovo rebels regardless of the ideological orientations or the official foreign policy line. As Judah notes, as early as 1990 several Kosovo Albanians left for Albania to begin military training, conducted by Albanian army officers, who officially claimed to be "volunteers" (2000: 111). Colonel Dilaver Goxhaj, the deputy chief of staff of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) – which pursued secessionism by way of violence – claimed that senior KLA commanders were trained in Albania as of 1991 (Cota, 2000). Former KLA commander Ramush Haradinaj gave more detail about these operations. As of 1991 he started buying hand grenades, small bombs, and pistols all intended for use in Kosovo, then studied closely the army, police and 'other services', and established connections with people who could help 'at the appropriate time.' In 1996 he 'employed former and serving officers of the Albanian Army in order to train soldiers and help find routes for moving military equipment' (Hamzaj, 1999: 14-15). According to Serbian accounts, the primary training camps were in a village near Tirana and in three settlements close to the Yugoslav-Albanian border (Pike, 1999).

As the rebel-police collisions intensified in 1996, support for the KLA became more obvious in Albania: large numbers of guerillas were seen training in the most northern Albanian highlands, and rejuvenating in clubs in Tirana (Vickers, 1995: 32).

Porous borders are another major indicator of a weak state, if we follow the lead of Max Weber's emphasis on statehood deriving from the legitimate use of violence over a given territory. Activities across porous borders facilitated the growth of Kosovo's secessionism. Against the backdrop of increasing unemployment the borders opened opportunities for the uninhibited flourishing of smuggling businesses. A 'hot spot,' the border point *Qafa I Prusht* between Kosovo and Albania became well known for the trafficking of women for prostitution (Wennmann, 2005: 479-494, 485, Corrin, 2004: 177-192, 180-182). In addition, the mountainous terrain impeded the proper working of regular patrolling. Yet evidence suggests that Albania was not interested in imposing strict controls on this border. As early as 1992 when the EC wanted to dispatch CSCE monitors on the Albanian-Yugoslav border, Albanian foreign minister Marku fiercely resisted. Dispatching observers would have meant the creation of a *de facto* buffer zone formalizing a division of the Albanian nation (Kola, 2003: 261). Moreover, until the end of January 1998 military hardware necessary for defense purposes was negligible alongside this border (Vickers, 1995: 32).

The final point of weakening of state institutions came in 1997 when sham financial schemes, flourishing with the knowledge of the Berisha government, consumed the life-time savings of more than half of Albania's population and caused in return demonstrations, looting, anarchy and the breakdown of the state (Nickolson, 1999: 553-555). During the anarchy, mobs stole around 650,000 weapons and other military items from the local armories (Hedges, 1998). Many of them were directly smuggled into Kosovo, while others were purchased by militants

later. In mid-1997 a single Kalashnikov was sold for five US dollars (Judah, 2000: 116, 127). The collapse of the state managed clearly to shift the military balance in Kosovo. In addition, Berisha – feeling vulnerable due to the collapse of his regime together with the state - resumed a nationalist rhetoric. He joined a bandwagon of critics of the non-violent movement in Kosovo, and accused Rugova of passivity (Jenne, 2003: 173).

To sum up, a complex causal chain was triggered by the transition process in terms of changing attitudes towards self-determination, making Albania's foreign policy highly susceptible to international pressures and weakening of state institutions that eventually led to alliances between corrupted officials and rebels across borders and the ultimate shifting of a military balance in Kosovo with the collapse of the state. But how did these developments affect Albania's interactions with Macedonia? I argue that the magnitude of Albania's intervention in this case is lower, as the demands of the Albanians of Macedonia are not secessionist but in favor of autonomy. Nevertheless, a similar underlying dynamic can be discerned here as well. This suggests that the existence of territorial claims in the homeland is only one factor facilitating a kin-state intervention. The dynamics within the kin-state undergoing transition itself can account for increasing conflict in the host state.

Emerging out of communism as a new state in 1991, Macedonia was highly vulnerable territorially, since parts of its territory had been traditionally clamed by its neighbors, Albania included. Becoming an independent state meant a struggle with unrecognized statehood. If Albania were overtly irredentist or interested in fomenting ethnic problems in Macedonia, it could have used this window of opportunity to take an irredentist or a pro-secessionist stance. Instead, Albania was one of the first states to recognize Macedonia without reservations regarding its constitutionally proclaimed name, Republic of Macedonia (Perry, 1992: 39).

Moreover, Albania recognized Macedonia quickly, realizing that any scenario entailing territorial divisions would have immediate repercussions on Albania and on the Albanian minority living there (Reuter, 1995: 95). A swift reaction at a point of time when Albania was not experiencing strong international pressures on the national question, unlike later, demonstrates that it did not have any irredentist ambitions.

Albania's official foreign policy towards Macedonia was again close to the agenda of the international community. Shortly after becoming a president in 1992, Sali Berisha met his Macedonian counterpart Kiro Gligorov and signed a declaration of intent to create a 'model' relationship between the two countries (Perry, 1992: 39). Unlike his attitude towards Kosovo, Berisha considered the inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia a subject of consideration of the Macedonian state and gave no serious encouragement of the national aspirations of the Albanians (Gowan, 1999). Albania's support for a clandestine referendum on a territorial autonomy in Macedonia in 1992 was also lukewarm. In line with the 'minority rights approach' Berisha backed statements of the Albanian party in power (the Party for Democratic Prosperity, PDP) about misrepresentation of population numbers and insufficient respect for human rights. He also stated that in the case of war, Albania would come to assist its ethnic brethren (Thayer, 1999: 131-219, 134).

An argument for clear-cut ideological ties across borders and despite an official foreign policy line cannot be made with the same salience here as in the Kosovo case. Yet similarities exist. From 1994 onwards Berisha became increasingly supportive of some radical elements within the ruling PDP, who were discontent with the lack of progress of inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia and *de facto* participated in 'ethnic outbidding' (Horowitz, 1985). In ideological terms these factions were nationalist, but in terms of how they related to the old post-communist

order, they were challengers. These factions of the PDP were trying to outbid the core of a party whose many cadres had been ruling in various capacities in communist Yugoslavia. In this vein one can see why Berisha would be interested to support challengers, who opened a parallel Tetovo University in 1995, intending to provide Albanians with higher education despite the resistance of the Macedonian state. Berisha praised the self-proclaimed rector Fadil Sulejmani, a move that temporarily strained his relations with the government in Skopje.

In contrast, the response of the socialist Fatos Nano towards the 1997 crisis in the Albanian-inhabited towns in Western Macedonia was much more muted. During the crisis the police violently crushed an initially peaceful demonstration in support of raising Albanian flags over the municipalities of Gostivar and Tetovo. Albania's newly elected government of Nano, despite the 1997 chaos in his country, lodged a formal protest with the Macedonian ambassador in Tirana against the use of excessive force (ICG, 1997). Yet he did not go much further. Nano embarked on a path of regional cooperation, visited Macedonia twice in 1998, and signed eight bilateral cooperation agreements with the new coalition government in Skopje. Moreover, in a meeting in Tetovo he openly discouraged separatism and stressed that Albanians should view their future in light of regional and European integration (ICG, 1999).

Albania's corruption problems were linked to Macedonia as well. As Thayer argues, the paramilitary conspiracy in the Macedonian army, discovered in 1993, was allegedly connected to corrupted officials in Albania (1999:134). Furthermore, although the Macedonian-Albanian border was patrolled by UNPREDEP troops and OSCE civilian monitors, illegal crossings over the mountainous terrain still took place. This trend intensified after the collapse of the social order in Albania in 1997, when guns were smuggled into Macedonia as well (ICG, 1997). The

border became even more porous during the refugee crisis of 1999, which ensued after NATO's bombing on Serbia and the flight of 400,000 Kosovo Albanians towards the South.

Finally, Albania officially maintained a distance from the Albanian guerilla insurgency in Macedonia in 2001, but clandestine currents still exerted an impact. The radical Albanian National Liberation Army in Macedonia claimed local roots and no connection to Albania or Kosovo. Later it turned out that it enjoyed strong support from splinters of the former KLA and corrupted officials across borders. While media in Albania proper and Kosovo intellectuals accused Albania of having a 'mute policy' towards the Macedonian crisis (Leka, 2001), US Secretary of State Colin Powell praised Albania's Prime Minister Ilir Meta for his public condemnation for ethnic Albanian extremists (DPA, 2001). Albania was among the first states to welcome the signing of the Ohrid Peace Agreement in August of 2001.

Turkey: Calculated Support for the Turkish Minority in Bulgaria

The end of the Cold War exposed both Albania and Turkey to external pressures for change, as the international system was no more bi-polar and the two states needed to find their place in a new international order. In addition to that, Albania had to undergo various changes related to its transition: from isolation to Western orientation, from totalitarianism to political pluralism, and from command economy to market pluralism. It was exposed to a 'triple transition' which Offe called the reconfiguration of relationship to statehood, political pluralism, and towards a market economy (1991:865-881)**.** In contrast, Turkey needed a strategic reconfiguration of its foreign policies in a multi-polar world order, but did not undergo drastic domestic changes associated with a transition process. Turkey had developed a strong sense of statehood with the formation of the First Turkish Republic in 1923 under the secular leadership

of Kemal Attatürk. Its transition towards political pluralism started in the mid-1950s and has been ongoing since (Sunar, 1996: 141-153). Turkey has never had a command economy as the communist countries did, despite strong state interventionism existent almost until Turkey's economic breakdown in 2001. Indeed, as of the late 1980s Turkey took various steps to increase its political pluralism and civic rights, and introduce changes in the direction of economic liberalism (Dodd, 1996: 135, Fuller, 1993: 39). Yet none of these changes took place in a drastic way, but more as a result of gradual processes. As a result, the state institutions, functioning despite occasional strong disagreements with the highly autonomous military (Özcan, 2001: 14, Sunar, 1996: 145), were not weakened to the point of allowing government officials or non-state actors to highjack Turkish foreign policy. Particularly the Balkans constituted an area of Turkish foreign policy, where the government, military and public opinion stood together (Uzgel, 2001: 51). Neither did a political transition occur that allowed for the proliferation of new actors that would resort to nationalist appeals when facing the need to establish themselves (as Berisha did in his first presidential campaign) or when they feel vulnerable in office (as Berisha did shortly before, during and after the breakdown of the Albanian state). Thus, the changes that Turkey introduced to reclaim its international position were consistent, and there was no big gap between an official foreign policy line and the functioning of various non-state actors with external agendas.

Despite the fact that there was no secessionism in the Bulgarian case, it would be helpful to see how the case of the Turks of Bulgaria contrasts Turkey's treatment of other Turkic and Muslim minorities in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey took a conservative stance towards the recognition of self-determination movements in general. It was among the states that did not favor the collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, and only followed suit

after major international powers recognized the successor republics**.** It was even more cautious not to recognize second-tier secessionist movements, such as the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Chechnya. Even when warfare broke out in Yugoslavia, Turkey was very cautious not to unilaterally aid the Bosnian Muslims, but to stay close to the political line of the United States (Kramer, 2000: 151). The only case in which there was a partial gap between an official foreign policy line and support of non-state actors was the case of Chechnya. Here diasporic communities of Chechen descent mobilized in support for Chechnya. Yet even here, both Turkey and various activists were cautious not to push Russia too much. The hijacking of a ferryboat in 1996 was condemned by both Turkey and Russia as a "terrorist act" (Olson, 2001:181). Also, despite multiple visits of Chechen leaders during the second Chechen war in 1999, Turkey's interest in Russia's gas and oil was an important reason why these visits did not translate into major policy outcomes. In this instance one can make a vulnerability argument, as Turkey was interlocked with Russia on its own Kurdish issue: should it render too much support for Chechnya, Russia could respond by aiding Turkey's secessionist Kurdish movement, as it did during communism (ibid, 191)**.** Thus, on the whole we see much less support of Turkey towards Chechnya compared to Albania's support for Kosovo.

Turkey's relations with Bulgaria were especially strained during the last years of the Cold War due to the assimilation campaign launched by the Bulgarian communist regime against the Turks in the mid-1980s, and the subsequent expulsion of more than 400,000 Turks in 1989. Yet the political changes as of 1990 and the early incorporation of the moderate ethnic Turkish MRF as a parliamentary power in Bulgaria paved the way for an improved relationship.

Throughout the 1990s Turkey maintained a coherent foreign policy line dominated by the need to establish and maintain good bilateral relations with Bulgaria while preserving the

political and cultural integrity of the Turkish minority. Primarily conservative governments in power maintained this line regardless of whether the forceful figure of Turgut Özal (until 1993), or the moderate prime minister later-turned President Süleyman Demirel (1993-2000) were at the helm of external relations. Even during the short-lived rule of the Islamic True Party (1996-1997) which projected a strong pro-Islamic stance towards the Turkish minorities in Central Asia, the secular Kemalist military exercised a strong internal counter-balance.

The integration of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria was taken seriously for two primarily realist reasons. First, Turkey needed to curb immigration. It was overwhelmed by the need to permanently accommodate more than 250,000 Turkish refugees who refused to return to Bulgaria after the regime change. Second, Turkey sought to minimize its external flashpoints due to security concerns over its borders in the East (conflicts in Armenia and Azerbaijan), the Southeast (the Kurdish problem) and the formation of a Kurdish-controlled zone in northern Iraq after the Gulf War (Perry, 1992: 33, Nahmani, 2003: 41-43). Thus, rapprochement with Bulgaria was desired. Turkey backed the integrationist Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) and refrained from developing close ties with a radical Turkish formation which advocated autonomy and constitutional changes.[4] The point here is that there were no political circles in Turkey that would identify the autonomy question as a frame for local mobilization, and would not support a possible ethnic outbidding, as we saw happening with Albania in both Kosovo in 1996-1997 and Macedonia in 1994-1995.

A non-interventionist stance was enhanced by Turkey's preference for focusing relations directly with the mainstream Bulgarian politicians rather than via the leadership of the Turkish minority. This was not the case of Albania neither with Kosovo, nor with Macedonia, despite its respect for the territorial integrity of the Macedonian state. Central to this dynamic was a

leadership issue. Bulgarian media often alleged that MRF's leader Ahmed Dogan had collaborated with the communist regime. Thus, it took a special effort to convince Turkish diplomats that he could be trusted in the post-communist environment (Minchev, 2002). In addition, there was a lack of general interest. Turkey did not respond positively to MRF's numerous efforts to broker loans or to attract Turkish investment in the impoverished minority-inhabited areas (BTA, 04/03/1993, Duma 28/04/1995). Instead, on several occasions it openly recommended that the Bulgarian state itself take care of its poverty in order to avert creeping emigration.

However, Turkey's reluctant intervention had its limits only on occasions when the *political integration* of the Turkish minority was endangered, particularly in the first half of the 1990s. In 1991 Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz wrote a letter to his Bulgarian counterpart Liuben Berov, recommending that the MRF be allowed to take part in the parliamentary elections (Troud, 21/08/1991). Shortly thereafter, Yilmaz made an official statement that 'the behavior of the Bulgarian government towards the Turkish minority would be a guarantee for the Turkish-Bulgarian relations' (Democratsia 05/09/1991). After the MRF registered and entered the Bulgarian parliament the tone changed, but Turkey still kept alarming about the minority's situation internationally. As Stoyanov notes, in 1994 a Turkish report presented to the UN and NATO made known that the article in the Bulgarian constitution prohibiting the formation of parties along ethnic and religious lines was used to exert pressure. During election periods, Turkish diplomats visited Turks-inhabited areas directly or indirectly affecting electoral support for the MRF (1997: 234, 243-244). Turkish diplomats also denounced the results of the 1995 controversial local elections in the southern town of Karzhali.

Turkey intervened actively in the cultural sphere, particularly in educational and religious affairs, again in line with arrangements brokered with the Bulgarian government. In the sphere of education, Turkey donated a large amount of textbooks for the start of mother-tongue classes in 1991-1992, which were not offered earlier in Bulgarian classrooms (24 Chasa, 26/12/1991). Moreover, as of 1992 the MRF became the official distributor of annual stipends for ethnic Turks to study in Turkish universities. Beyond aiding education, this arrangement also helped to indirectly decrease the probability of rising demands towards the Bulgarian state to open universities with Turkish-language instruction, as was the case with the Albanians of Macedonia. Most notable was Turkey's intervention in the religious sphere. Since both Bulgaria and Turkey have been interested in preserving the traditional *Haneffiya Sunni* Islam professed by the ethnic Turks of Bulgaria and the majority of Turks in Turkey, the Bulgarian state was not opposed to Turkey sending religious emissaries as of the early 1990s. With the increase of emissaries of non-Sunnite Islamic origin, Bulgaria had begun to fear uncontrolled Islamic influences. Thus, it was eager to sign an official agreement with Turkey in 1998 arranging for Muslim religious functionaries to be officially approved by Turkey's Directorate for Religious Affairs.

Although Turkey's non-interventionist stance secured stability and good neighborly relations, a slightly revived nationalist understanding of Turkey's relationship with Bulgaria was still present. Creating the terms of its new influence particularly in the cultural sphere was crucial for Turkey. It used internal insecurities of the Bulgarian state in the political, educational and particularly the religious spheres to assert its own versions of the subjects in question. Turkey had a similar attitude towards states in Central Asia, which were even weaker politically and institutionally during the transition process. Yet Turkey's foreign policy and non-state actors did not clash in the case of Bulgaria, but mutually fed on each other. The influence of some Pan-

Turkic and Islamic groups should not be overstated (Winrow, 2001: 181). For example, the highly controversial Islamic movement "Gülen" maintained a low profile in Bulgaria, despite its much stronger support for Turkic minorities in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Even in Central Asia, the movement's ethnic sensitivities and national loyalties superseded Islamic frames for mobilization (Turam, 2004: 354). This suggests that although Turkey's pluralistic society may grapple with various interpretations of Turkey's place in the world after the Cold War, the relative strength of its secular state institutions managed to constrain the development of a big gap between the behavior of state and non-state actors in the realm of relations with ethnic brethren.

Conclusions

This article posed the question of why despite the fact that neither Albania nor Turkey acted in an overtly irredentist manner towards ethnic kin in the neighborhood Albania nonetheless facilitated the increase of ethnic conflict in Kosovo and to a certain extent in Macedonia, while Turkey did not in the Bulgarian case. Humanitarian and affinitive interventionist logic was not sufficient to explain this puzzle. Both Albania and Turkey were constrained by a changed nature of irredentism in the second half of the 20th century, by the existence of an international principle of non-intervention in state sovereignty, and by the reluctance of major powers to breach this principle. Yet despite these constraints, Albania and Turkey exerted different impacts on the ethnic brethren in host-states. While the previous pages asserted Albania and Turkey acted more for instrumental than for affinity reasons, we have seen that scholarship – apart from some recent accounts – has not been sensitive towards the processes translating these motivations into action.

I argued that Albania – which underwent transition from communist rule – was more likely to increase the level of ethno-national conflict in host-states than Turkey which did not undergo such transition. At the end of the Cold War the principle of self-determination was legitimized internationally, yet a state which started undergoing transition domestically was more prone to extrapolate this principle in the realm of its external relations than a state that did not. In addition, the transition process subjected Albania to further pressures for change: from international isolation to Western orientation, from totalitarianism to political pluralism, from a command to a market economy. Turkey did not experience such pressures. As a result, Albania's susceptibility to international conditionality increased, which on its part suppressed expansionist attitudes on the Albanian national question. On the other hand, the transition weakened the state institutions and increased the proliferation of corrupted officials who formed alliances with rebels across borders based on particularistic interests, ideological and clan affiliations. The ultimate breakdown of the Albanian state in 1997 led to the leaking of weapons from the military barracks that found their way into Kosovo. By contrast, Turkey, which did not undergo a transition domestically, reacted to the self-determination movements after 1989 with much more caution. Its priority was to reconfigure its own position as a regional power in a multi-polar world order. Keeping peace with troubled neighborhoods, including Bulgaria and its Turkish minority, was important particularly against the backdrop of serious security concerns on its southern and eastern borders. Turkey intervened in minority-majority relations in Bulgaria only when the political integration of the Turkish minority was endangered, and when it promoted its own cultural and religious views related to Turkish language education and the Sunnite version of Islam. The relative strength of Turkish institutions allowed for the formulation of a coherent foreign policy regardless of which party was in power throughout the 1990s, and regardless of

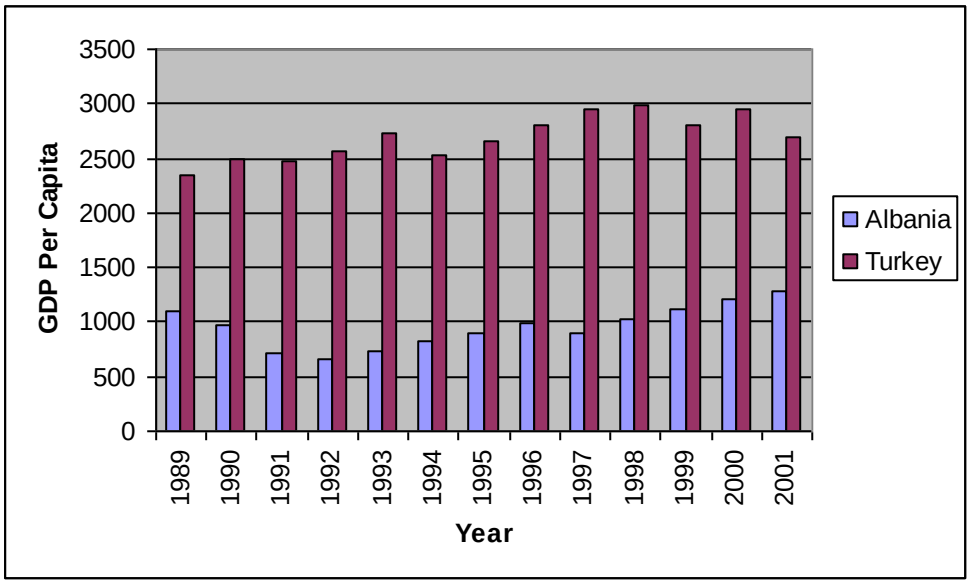
the fact that a radical political formation among the Turks in Bulgaria advocated an autonomy solution. Turkey had one major goal: to preserve the Turkish minority outside its borders, while arranging its relations directly with the central authorities in Sofia.

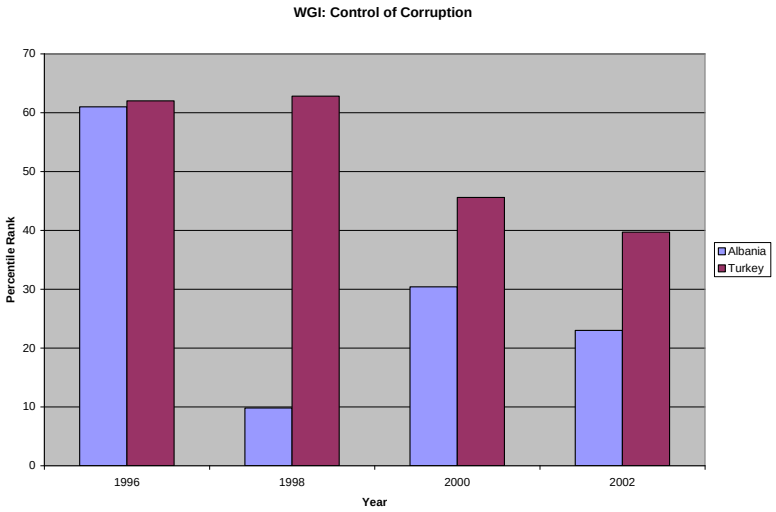
These findings have implications on future research. First, it would be useful to consider expanding the universe of cases of kin-states in the 'gray zone' – when they are constrained by international conditionality, but nevertheless act in support of secessionist and autonomist movements. States that do not have a chance to become an EU member and to be subjected to a rigorous scrutiny of how they handle national and minority questions during an accession process (unlike Hungary, Slovakia or Bulgaria) could be cases in point. Russia reluctantly intervened to support the Russian minorities in the Baltics, but was more assertive in Moldova. South Africa – despite a non-interventionist foreign policy after the end of apartheid – has been supportive of the white minority protests in Zimbabwe. My findings imply that international pressures imposed on a country during a transition – which pervades as a political process in the world today – does not necessarily prevent it from taking a pro-secessionist and pro-autonomist stance. Further studies could explore how this intervention interacts with the weakening or strengthening of the domestic institutions, which are critical for the further deterioration of conflict. It may well be the case that international pressures during transition periods weaken state institutions as drastic changes take place during a limited period of time. Like Albania, Turkey was experiencing international constraints by NATO or its own aspirations to become an EU member. Yet these constraints had been exerted gradually: for four decades politically, and since the mid-1980s economically and in terms of aspirations towards joining the EU. Gradualism favored incremental changes that did not additionally weaken the state institutions.

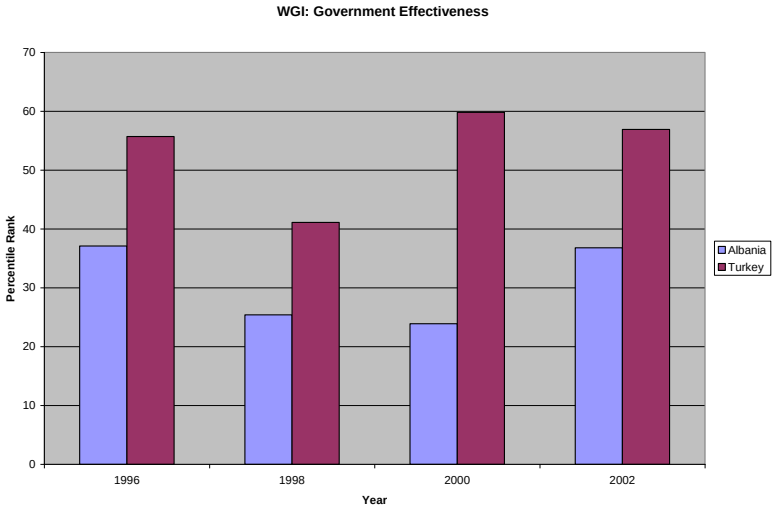
Another avenue for research could be exploration of how weakening of state institutions matters for conflict dynamics in host-states. My process-oriented account demonstrated a causal chain of elements that culminated in the breakdown of the Albanian state, which eventually served as a tipping point for the spillover of weapons into Kosovo. However, I doubt that such a breakdown is always necessary for the increase of an external conflict dynamic. An in-depth investigation of several weak kin-states and their engagement and non-engagement with conflicts in host-states could assist in creating broader generalizations. Even if one continues using Rotberg's earlier featured operationalization of a weak state in terms of governance criteria, it would be helpful to both the scholarly community and policy makers to find out at what particular point mismanaged governance of a kin-state turns out to be facilitating the secessionist and autonomist movements abroad.

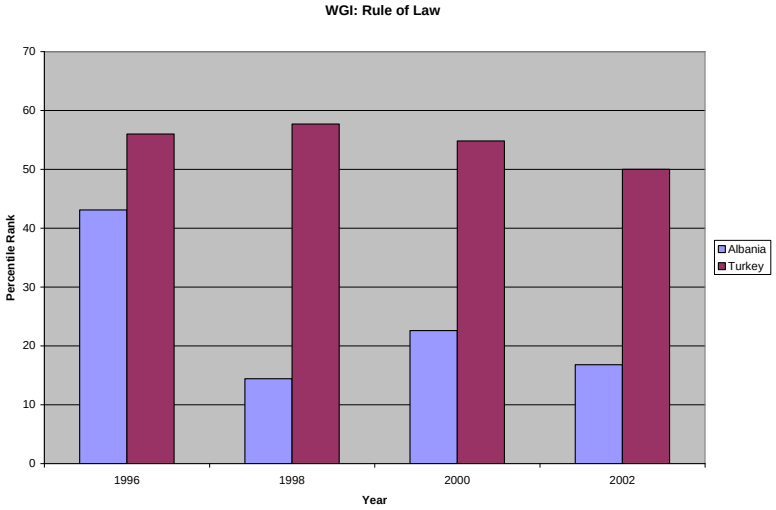
Major Indicators of Governance as Indicators or Weak and Strong States
Rotberg 2003.

GDP per capita


3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
GDP Per Capita
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
Year
Albania
Turkey


WGI: Control of Corruption
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Percentile Rank
1996
1998
2000
2002
Year
Albania
Turkey


WGI: Government Effectiveness
Percentile Rank
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1996
1998
2000
2002
Year
Albania
Turkey


WGI: Rule of Law
Percentile Rank
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1996
1998
2000
2002
Year
Albania
Turkey

[1] Common instrumentalist explanations include: superpower interests and neo-colonialism, political and economic gains, internal politics, and military reasoning (Heraclides, 1990: 341-378, 1991: 52). Saideman's 'ethnic ties' account maintains that states support those actors in the host state with whom their own constituency shares ethnic ties and oppose those with whom their own constituency shares ethnic enmities (1997: 721-753, 2001: 1-11). Affective perspectives include: historic injustice, common identity, religion, a shared sense of injustice or principle, a degree of inchoate racial-cultural affinity and humanitarian considerations. (ibid 371, Carment, 1993: 139). Structural considerations include: relative power of competing states, existence of common institutions among divided societies; size, concentration and dispersal of people involved, porousness of borders (Chazan, 1991: 4).

[2] The literature on transitions of post-communist countries is large, yet on aspects related to challenges of various democratization pressures on the state – 'triple' or 'quadruple' – consult: Offe 1991, Schmitter and Karl 1994, Bunce 1995, Linz and Stepan 1996, Kuzio 2001.

[3] I use Rotberg's operationalization of strong and weak states, based on governance criteria. Strong states control their territories, deliver political goods and civil liberties to their citizens and perform well on indicators related to good governance. In contrast, weak states usually face management flaws, harbor conflicts, and their governments' adequacy to deliver political goods is diminished. Laws are breached and corruption levels are high. (2004: 4-5). The appendix to this article offers a comparative statistical data on the performance of Albania and Turkey throughout the research period on: GDP per capita, control of corruption, government effectiveness, and the rule of law.

[4] The Turkish Democratic Party (TDP), not officially registered in Bulgaria, raised occasionally demands for autonomy. It insisted that a Grand National Assembly be called to adopt a new constitution that would 'fit the international requirements for multi-national states' (Program Declaration, 1992).

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