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**Challenging path dependence? Ideational mapping of nationalism and the EU's transformative power: The case of infrastructural politics in SEE**

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**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**  
**Department of Politics**

**Challenging Path Dependence? Ideational Mapping of  
Nationalism and the EU's transformative power:  
The Case of Infrastructural Politics in SEE**

**Blagoy D. Klimov**

**Thesis submitted  
for the degree  
of PhD**

**Sheffield  
August 2010**

*Dedicated to all those, who dream of a future world, where nations would never again go to the field of war, but only compete in the field of culture, science and knowledge. To my grandfather Alexander Klimov, who was one of those dreamers...*

**Abstract:**

*The research employs historical institutionalism, amplified by ideas to explain path dependent political behaviour. The theoretical framework is applied to explain political behaviour in the Balkans, where Greece and Bulgaria, despite many similarities have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during most of the XX c. The main hypothesis is that such behaviour could be properly understood neither by leverage of Great Powers, nor by ancient hatreds, but by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. Only when ideas change- policy change does happen. The main task of this research is to outline historical ideational impediments to Balkan regional cooperation and explore if regional cooperation is attainable. The second hypothesis argues that after the 1990s EU was such a powerful idea, that for the first time since the Independence revolutions, started to successfully challenge old institutional settings in the region, that have persisted for decades, even centuries. Political elites in the region encountered a new complicated situation, having to balance between the traditional nationalist ideational contexts and the 'integration and cooperation' ideational impetus, coming from outside. The implications of this tension between continuity and change are explored in the case studies on cooperation over common infrastructure projects between Bulgaria and Greece in the period 1990-2010. So, we are considering the long-term historical force of path dependence and the possibility it can be rooted out, or at least significantly modified. The research is not only an endeavour to study the EU's role in the Balkans, but to contribute to the growing debate in the field about the role of ideas in political life and to use such theoretical discussions, and the comparative method, to enhance our understanding of the evolution of modern EU states.*

**Key words:** *historical institutionalism, ideas, constructivist institutionalism, ideational theory, political decision making, path dependence, multi-level governance, democratization, Europeanization, nationalism, national doctrines, Megale Idea, San Stefano, regional cooperation, transport infrastructure, Balkans, Balkan cooperation, Greece, Bulgaria.*

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## ***List of Terms and Abbreviations:***

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BSP	Bulgarian Socialist Party
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization
CBC	Cross Border Cooperation programme
CEECs	Central and East European Countries
CEI	Central European Initiative
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CPR	Common Pool Resource problem
DPS	Party of the Turkish Minority in Bulgaria
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EIB	European Investment Bank
ELAS	Greek People's Liberation Army
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GERB	Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria-ruling party
HI	Historical Institutionalism
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IMRO	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization Party, Bulgaria
IRIS	Institute for Regional and International Studies
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
KKE	Communist Party of Greece
LP	Bulgarian Liberal Party
NDSV	National Movement for Stability and Prosperity Party, Bulgaria
PASOK	The Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement, Greece
PLP	Bulgarian Progressive Liberal Party
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SAP	Swedish Social Democrats
SAP	Stabilisation and Association process
SBDI	South Balkan Development Initiative
SECI	Southeast European Cooperative Initiative
SEE	South-Eastern Europe
SEECF	South East European Co-operation Process
SEECs	South-East European Countries
SPD	German Social Democrat Party
SPSEE	Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe
TACIS	Technical Assistance for the newly-Independent States
TEN	Trans European Networks
TINA	Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment
TRACECA	Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia
UDF	Bulgarian Union of Democratic Forces Rightist Party
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
VINOZHITO	Party of the Slav (Bulgarian-Macedonian) Minority in Greece

# Chapter 1. Introduction

*Nothing is simple in the Balkans*  
-Lord David Owen

The UK's existence is at risk due to danger of 'Balkanization of Britain', Gordon Brown stated in January 2007, regarding a rise in support for Scottish independence.<sup>1</sup> How did the Balkan region generate such a powerful metaphor that 'travelled' with ease across time, space and disciplines? What happened that it was applied to Britain, where civic rights, equality, liberty, rather than ethnicity are the fundamentals of nationhood? Goldsworthy writes that 'one Internet search engine offered nearly eight thousand results [...] of the term's usage: from the Balkanization of the world wide web, to the Chinese legal system, the territories of Nigeria and Columbia, to the U.S. electricity grid, the transit system in San Francisco, and, particularly in the eyes of right-wing politicians, even the United States itself (Pat Buchanan blames heavy immigration for the Balkanization of America, and a book about "an America without Americans" by Brent A. Nelson is titled, threateningly, *America Balkanized*).'<sup>2</sup> Everything and everywhere seems to be in danger of becoming 'Balkanized', with only a tiny proportion of these cases taking place in the Balkans themselves.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the Balkans are not particularly associated with the idea of regional cooperation. Just the opposite, 'the mountainous peninsula has always been an epitome of fragmentation, division, and confrontation; singled out as Europe's powder keg...A nightmarish series of wars, clashes, displacements of population (voluntary and forcible), petty rivalries and strong hostilities have characterized the two-century history of the modern Balkans.'<sup>4</sup> Such prejudice was reconfirmed during the 1990s when the region was the terrain of the devastating Yugoslav wars with consequences not only for its direct participants but also their neighbours.

This study was inspired by a simple question, born of observation by a person, raised on the Balkans, trying to find out what makes this region so distinct in European cooperation context. Namely, *why are the Balkans so persistent in their irrationality vis-à-vis Europe and why are they so irrationally persistent?* 'Irrational', meaning here, that as though states, governments, parties from the region followed their own algorithm of history and logic, not much bothered by the 'rational' standards for political behaviour and cooperation, expected by their West European neighbours, while persistence refers to a remarkable path dependence of such policies, ideas, practices, regardless of changing external environments.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Balkanization is a geopolitical term originally used to describe the process of fragmentation or division of a region or state into smaller regions or states that are often hostile or non-cooperative with each other.

Source: 'UK's Existence is at Risk'-Brown-BBC News, Politics, 13 January 2007, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/6258089.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6258089.stm), accessed October 2008.

2 Brent A. Nelson, *An America without Americans*, (American Immigration Control Foundation: Monterey, Va., 1994).

3 Vesna Goldsworthy, 'Invention and in(ter)vention: The rhetoric of Balkanization', *Belgrade Circle Journal*, 1-4, 2006, p. 1.

4 Ekaterina Nikova, 'Roads Connecting, Roads Dividing: on Infrastructure in South East Europe', Institute of Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Etudes Balkaniques*, 2007, N1, p. 5.

5 The terms rational/irrational used here and throughout the research to describe Balkan political behaviour are not concerned with rational choice explanations and instrumental rationality, but rather to denote the inexplicability of the persistent lack of cooperation in the Balkans and the difficulty to predict political behaviour in the region.

Such questions arose from very concrete examples of irrational (according to western perception) political behaviour in the Balkans. For instance, no one in the West believed that two NATO members could ever go to war. However, it happened in the Balkans. NATO was taken aback when, alleged ideological allies, Greece and Turkey went to war in the Cyprus conflict of 1974.

Second example of such irrational political behaviour was when Greece, proudly naming herself -‘the cradle of western civilization’, broke ranks with its Western allies by refusing to support any NATO military operations against the Serbs during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s, and was the only EU and NATO-member state, that supported Milosevic’s Serbia. Greece also refused to condemn Serb atrocities in the Yugoslav Wars and frustrated the efforts of her partners to impose sanctions against Serbia. Even more surprising was that such support was very vocal and supported by Greek politicians from all parties, as well as the Greek Orthodox Church, the Greek media, and ultimately the Greek people themselves. One explanation for such Greek ‘irrationality’ might originate in a religious identification with their ‘Orthodox brother Serbs’ but this generates striking new ‘irrationalities’. The Greeks never harboured similar warm feelings for their other Orthodox brethren in Macedonia, or in Bulgaria. Western partners could not comprehend such Greek position and why the Greek state was supportive of Milosevic authoritarian regime, rather than its NATO and EU allies.

A third example of irrational behaviour (especially from the point of view of proponents of the rational choice paradigm or liberal thinkers) refers to the large energy, transport and communication infrastructure projects, devised by the EU to facilitate regional cooperation after the end of the Cold War. In spite of firmly secured EU funding, proven economic benefits, (if completed) and clear technical specifications, the projects were in a state of impasse for a decade, and the EU could neither facilitate the commissioning of any of those projects, nor could it instill a culture of cooperation in the region during the 1990s.

The lack of cooperation in the Balkans, despite external cooperation impetus similar to the examples above is relatively well documented. What is much less known to outside observers is that the region was also characterized by persistent patterns of irrational cooperation.<sup>6</sup> Irrational in this context again implies to remarkable persistence, regardless of so many changing external factors. For example, Serbia and Greece have persistently cooperated through the whole span of their modern history. They have sided in the two Balkan Wars, the two World Wars and kept very warm relations even during the Cold War, despite belonging to different ideological camps. Furthermore, Greece in opposition to its Euro-Atlantic allies was the only member state to openly support Serbia in her ethnic cleansing campaign during the Yugoslav Wars and hundreds of thousands of people were shouting pro-Serbian and Anti-American slogans in the streets of Athens. One more time, outside logic was not applicable to the Balkans. It seemed the Balkans had their own algorithm of history, outside of time and space. How do different approaches explain such irrational political behaviour on the Balkans and its incredible persistence, regardless of changing external factors?

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<sup>6</sup> See 5.

## **Literature review**

One popular, but less than astute school of thought tries to explain Balkan behaviour via genetic predispositions, ancient hatreds, eternal bloodshed and perpetual war. Edith Durham wrote back in 1905, 'because of their ancient hatreds, the Balkan peoples, irreconcilably divided by different religious and cultural affiliations, are forever fated to be at each other's throats like cats and dogs.'<sup>7</sup> Writing about fault lines and ancient hatreds, the British journalist Simon Winchester asks:

But once again there arose the question that seemed so eternally asked and so perpetually appropriate here. Just why? Just why is there this dire inevitability about the Balkans being so fractious and unsettled a corner of the world, an inevitability that always seemed to exist? Just what was it that had marked out this particular peninsula, this particular gyre of mountains and plains, caves and streams, and made it a byword, quite literally, for hostility and hate?<sup>8</sup>

What forces were really at work here? I didn't mean by that the obvious ones [...]. I meant - or thought I meant - what basal forces, what innate characteristics, what elements of competing Balkan histories and cultures and ethnicities could ever have led to such a situation as this? For there was nothing new here [...]. What was actually happening here at Blace's swampcamp, and all the tales we were hearing from the refugees of what had been happening up in Kosovo, was merely as if the word *merely* could really be used in so awful a context - a manifestation of what had been going on in the Balkans for a thousand years or more.<sup>9</sup>

Winchester goes as far as resorting to 'geological parallels between the land and the people who inhabit it: "The two chains [i.e., the Balkan Mountains and the Dinaric Alps] smashed into one another to create a geological fracture zone that became a template for the fractured behaviour of those who would later live upon it." Just as the peninsula "these strange and feral Balkans"- is outlandish and unlike the rest of Europe, its inhabitants, "the wild and refractory peoples of the Balkans," are seen almost as a different species: "One might say that anyone who inhabited such a place for a long period would probably evolve into something that varied substantially, for good or for ill, from whatever is the human norm."<sup>10</sup>

Such argumentation bordering on racial arguments is largely discredited in academic discourse. Most notorious of all proponents of the ancient hatreds theory, Robert Kaplan, for example argued in his best-selling book, *Balkan Ghosts* 'the nations of South-eastern Europe have always engaged in fratricidal, tribalistic wars, and no matter what the presumably enlightened West tries to do to stop bloodshed in the Balkans, the risk for new waves of angry battles and appalling massacres will always be very high.'<sup>11</sup> Initially images such as fault lines, ancient hatreds, and powder kegs offered the advantage of beguiling simplicity to those confronted with Balkan history, which is, as Richard Holbrooke pointed out, 'too complicated (or trivial) for outsiders to master.'<sup>12</sup> In other words such terms were shorthand for 'those commentators who were unsure

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7 Edith Durham, *The burden of the Balkans*, (London: Thomas Nelson, 1905), p. 20.

8 Simon Winchester, *The Fracture Zone: A Return to the Balkans*, (London: Viking, 1999), p. 26.

9 Winchester, *The Fracture Zone*, p. 29.

10 Winchester, *The Fracture Zone*, pp. 3, 21-31, 60-61, quoted in Vesna Goldsworthy, 'Invention and in(ter)vention: The rhetoric of Balkanization', <http://www.eurozine.com/article/2003-05-08-goldsworthy-en.html>; accessed May, 2008.

11 Robert Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993).

12 Richard Holbrooke, 'To End a War' (New York: Random House, 1998), p. 22 quoted in Vesna Goldsworthy, 'Invention and in(ter)vention: The rhetoric of Balkanization', p. 1.

who exactly hates whom [therefore they] could always improvise'. Stereotypes not only simplified reality, but have led to a situation in which 'many of the outsiders dealing with the region have... shown an unwillingness to think beyond a symbolic, formulaic representation, to the point where ... the Balkans have become nothing but a metaphor for conflict, incivility, and violence.'<sup>13</sup>

This research was inspired by the need to counter frame such constant negative 'imagining' of the Balkans and the idea that scholars should be debunking myths, rather than replicating them. Negative metaphors not only reconfirm the prejudices both in Balkan and outside actors, but also have real policy implications as where 'first-term President Clinton's initial espousal of Kaplan's theses [justified] non-intervention in Bosnia, which might have stopped the murderous actions of Serbian military and paramilitary forces.'<sup>14</sup> They also influenced the rhetoric of British Prime Minister John Major and EU mediator David Lord Owen, and many 'ordinary citizens who read the book and concluded from it that, for reasons not made clear, Kaplan considered the peoples of the Balkans unusually wild and predisposed to violence.'<sup>15</sup> Reflecting on the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s, Kaplan states that the Cold War temporarily suppressed but failed to resolve ancient ethnic and other conflicts and that there was little hope that the 'powder keg' of Europe would be able to escape the legacy of its bloody history after the end of communism. However, such theses were refuted by reality. Historically, 'instability and violence in one country almost always spread across much of the peninsula. Despite the numerous security, social, economic and other difficulties it caused in neighbouring countries, the recent and ongoing crisis in Yugoslavia was largely contained within its own borders.'<sup>16</sup>

Kaplan is right that communist rule and Cold War divisions froze but did not solve the age-old nationality problem in the peninsula. The entire Balkan peninsula could easily have fallen prey to the same destructive forces. For example, using as a pretext the sizable Greek minority in southern Albania or northern Epirus - a piece of territory with historic ties to Greece - Athens could have seized the moment to settle old scores, but did not. Similar temptations could have enticed Bulgaria to annex the fledgling FYROM state, or Romania-Moldova. But they did not. Despite the 'untold destruction of property and human misery the Yugoslav crisis, and the numerous and severe economic, ethnic, social and other problems ravaging the area in the last decade, the apocalypse Kaplan and many other analysts predicted did not materialize.'<sup>17</sup> In the nineties, the Balkan countries were gradually embedded in a network of organizations and initiatives, promoting multilateral cooperation and translating Euro-Atlantic normative agenda to the area. This coupled with economic weakness and evidence of the devastating effects of the Yugoslav Wars played a restraining role. Even though the many multilateral cooperation measures are badly funded, lack in depth, and have yet to address core problems, they represent a significant step forward and the new cooperation idea constitutes an important break with past behaviour. Even if we assume the thesis of

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13 Goldsworthy, 'Invention and in(ter)vention: The rhetoric of Balkanization', p. 1.

14 Vladimir Tismaneanu, 'Understanding the Balkans', book review of Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*, (Viking, 2000.),

<http://www.tikkun.org/magazine/index.cfm/action/tikkun/issue/tik0103/article/010351.html>; accessed May, 2010, p. 1.

15 Sabrina Ramet, *Thinking about Yugoslavia, Scholarly Debates about the Yugoslav Breakup and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

16 Constantine Danopoulos, *Toward Cooperation in Post-Cold Southeastern Europe*,

<http://www.uottawa.ca/associations/balkanpeace/texts/danopoulos-cooperation.pdf>, accessed October 2009.

17 Danopoulos, *Toward Cooperation*, pp. 5-8.

ancient hatreds could explain the persistent patterns of obstruction in the Balkans they fail to explain persistent patterns of cooperation, regardless of external change, like the Greek-Serbian cooperation during nineteenth and early twenty century.

In reaction to hatreds-stereotyping, the works of scholars like Todorova, Glenny and Goldsworthy have sought a more nuanced approach to the Balkans. Glenny 'wants to make Balkan history accessible to rational people' looking for alternative explanations to Balkan political and historical reality rather than 'genetic luggage' and 'blood feuds'.<sup>18</sup> Glenny believes that 'most of the ethnic and political conflict in the Balkans has its roots not in atavistic instincts and tribal sentiments of intolerance for otherness, but rather in games played by cynical great powers.'<sup>19</sup> While he believes that national sentiments and ideologies in the region developed endogenously, 'the application and exacerbation of these local passions lay with foreign interests and agendas.'<sup>20</sup> Neal Ascherson writes that:

Small Balkan nations were used as the proxies of bigger nations and then abandoned to the consequences. Serbia was egged on to attack Bulgaria in 1885 and then left to dangle in the wind. Romania was inveigled into the First World War by the Entente, and then betrayed. Greece...was lured into its crazy invasion of Turkey by Lloyd George, only to be defeated and face the first act of full-scale ethnic cleansing to defile the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup>

Glenny goes even further stating that 'ancient hatreds' is mostly nonsense. 'Orthodox Serbs here went to battle in company with Turkish landlords. They did it again in 1878, during the Hadji Lojo insurrection in Bosnia, when Serbs and Muslims together fought the Austrian armies. In June 1913, during the Second Balkan War, Greek and Serbian troops were helped by Muslim villagers as they massacred helpless Bulgarian families in Macedonia. As Glenny puts it: 'Nationalist violence knows no eternal enemy. The current enemy is always eternal.'<sup>22</sup> Relating to the Balkans, Greece has always sided with Orthodox Serbia, but never harboured similar feelings to Orthodox Macedonia or Bulgaria. Glenny's point is simple. 'For 120 years, the Great Powers have shown the Balkans only miscalculation and indifference. Huge, destructive interventions by those powers created the Balkans of our nightmares, seen as culprits for their own misfortunes.'<sup>23</sup>

Glenny dismisses the concept of the Balkans 'as a region of lunatic, bloody feuds, murders, and even genocide; he rejects the vision of an isolated and immutable Balkan politics...[instead] he proposes a comprehensively dynamic perspective that connects the region to European history. After all Balkan reality might prove not so distinct, not so specific and definitely not as gloomy as often portrayed.'<sup>24</sup> Such theses definitely merit attention and explain part of the puzzle, since Great Power's interference in the region was one of the key factors for the regional discord in the past. However, the World War II effectively ended the age-old rivalry among Europe's great powers, and eventually gave rise to the idea of the European Union (EU). In integrated and economically prosperous West, none of the former 'Great Powers' had apparent reason

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18 Tismaneanu, 'Understanding the Balkans', p. 2.

19 Misha Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999. Nationalism, War and the Great Powers*, (Penguin Books, 1999), p. 15.

20 Tismaneanu, 'Understanding the Balkans', p. 3.

21 Neal Ascherson, 'On Inside the Balkan nightmare', *The Observer*, 21 November 1999, p. 15.

22 Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999*, p. 17.

23 Ascherson, 'On Inside', p. 15.

24 Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, (Oxford University Press, 1997).

to unilaterally engage in some kind of egoistic leverage in the Balkans. Therefore, the Great Powers leverage could be an useful tool for understanding past policies, but could not explain current policies of impasse on pan-European transport and energy projects in the Balkans, in spite of Western leverage and pressure for their completion. We need a more holistic approach to understanding Balkan political behaviour.

While Glenny et al's analysis provides new approach, refuting old deterministic theories that blamed all regional misfortunes to local genetic, racial, cultural specifics, his analysis tends to somehow let domestic elites free of responsibility by linking all regional conflicts to outside interference. While it is true that external leverage has been overlooked in the research on Balkan conflicts while it has definitely shaped the region's history, the role of local elites in mobilising nationalist/ethnic sentiment should not be underestimated.

Authors like Hagan, point directly at the role of populist national elites in the post-Ottoman Balkans, abusing their status of power by playing the nationalist card for self legitimation purposes or control of power. According to such school of thought, local elites took advantage of the fact, that the Ottoman rule had stripped local states of their medieval dynasties and nobilities and the Ottoman collapse brought down those few groups that had prospered through collaboration with the Turks. Kagan further argues 'the newly liberated Balkan lands were peasant societies with only very modest commercial and manufacturing elites and nationalist intelligentsias. The intellectuals devoted themselves to state- building, advancing themselves as best they could within what might, with apologies to Marx, be called the nationalist mode of production -- that is, getting richer and accumulating status by serving the burgeoning national state. Capitalist individualism possessed little prestige or legitimacy; state-building in order to field armies capable of wresting away the unredeemed lands of the nation from their enemy possessors was the highest public value.'<sup>25</sup> However such school of thought fails short of explaining when it come to why exactly specific neighbours are framed as 'enemies' and others like 'friends', nor it explains how other societies stripped of their intelligentsia like the Slovaks, or the Baltic states could build national states without falling prey to elite-instigated nationalist campaigns or serious conflicts with neighbours.

Authors like Todorova, Goldsworthy and Bakic-Hayden, argue the negative image of the Balkans is Western scholarly construction, created at the beginning of the twentieth century, and which was endlessly replicated. This tradition, 'largely enforced by academics, stigmatizing the Balkans' had the unfortunate result that 'the region has suffered from the neglect, abuse, and scant regard of both Western Europe and the world.' Moreover, 'by being geographically inextricable from Europe, yet culturally constructed as 'the other', the Balkan has served as a repository of negative characteristics against which a positive and self-congratulatory image of the 'European' has been constructed.'<sup>26</sup> Todorova argues this is not a 'case of racial or religious prejudice', because 'unlike those differences which follow usually racial or religious lines - you think of the Moslem as a threat from without; you think of the Jew as a threat to Christianity or the Blacks as a racial threat - here you don't have these lines: the Balkans are "white;" they are part of Europe; they are mostly Christian'.

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25 William Kagan, 'The Balkans' Lethal Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs*, July 1999, vol. 78, n. 4.

26 Review on Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), <http://www.oup.com/ca/isbn/0-19-508750-X>, accessed March, 2008.

Such ‘externalisation from within’, positions firmly the Balkans as part both of the European and Western worlds ‘but somehow [...] considered to be the "bad" side of oneself’.<sup>27</sup> Goldsworthy writes that such negative Western imaging has contributed to the internalization of western prejudices by Balkan peoples themselves as being some kind of anti-Europe, that is always not yet European or that which Europe has been long ago.<sup>28</sup> This is also supported by the works of Alexander Kiossev and Milica Bakic-Hayden.<sup>29</sup> Goldsworthy observed that ‘with a new generation of Western historians [...] and Balkan scholars pulling the rug from beneath some complacent Western certainties about the Balkans, there is now, for the first time since the Second World War, an ongoing dialogue and an unprecedented exchange of ideas.’<sup>30</sup> Negative imaging of the Balkans has been subdued with the advancing of the region towards full Euro-Atlantic integration. Another school of thought claims that the lack of cooperation and lunatic behaviour in the Balkans could be explained by the region’s late modernisation. O’Leary writes that nationalism came to the Balkans not because of industrialization but under conditions of underdevelopment or uneven modernization.<sup>31</sup> Kokosolakis even connects late industrialization to Orthodox religion, trying to explain Balkan discord, claiming that Industrialization also, to the extent that it did, came to Orthodox countries (Russia, Georgia, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece) rather late in the 19th century and capitalism as a dominant economic force never developed in these countries in the way it did in the West. Moreover, ‘for all these and other historical reasons Orthodoxy was and remains culturally and theologically different from both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. For the same reasons the relationship of Orthodoxy to modernity and to secularization is specific and ambivalent. Orthodoxy is premodern not only in a historical sense but also in the sense that it transcends Western rationalism and rationalization’.<sup>32</sup>

### ***Introducing the research. Alternative approach***

The main task of this research is to outline the historical impediments to Balkan regional cooperation, explain why it has persisted so far and explore if cooperation might be attainable by providing a new approach for understanding Balkan policies of obstruction. As explored large body of literature is devoted to demystifying the Balkan political ‘irrationality’ puzzle and the persistence of such irrationality. Some authors tend to explain the failure to cooperate through genetic predispositions, ancient hatreds, eternal bloodshed and propensity for perpetual war. Others largely blame the region’s

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27 ‘How Balkans Got Their Reputation’, Interview *with Maria Todorova*,

<http://clasnews.clas.ufl.edu/news/clasnotes/9610/Todorova.html>, accessed March, 2008.

28 Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (Yale University Press, 1998), pp 202-210.

29 Alexander Kiossev and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Nationalism and the Imagination*, (Seagull, 2008) and Milica Bakic-Hayden, ‘Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia’, *Slavic Review*, 54.4 (Winter, 1995), pp. 917-931.

30 Goldsworthy, ‘Invention and in(ter)vention: The rhetoric of Balkanization’, *Belgrade Circle Journal*, 1-4, 2006, p. 1.

31 Brendan O’ Leary ‘A Critical Overview’ in John A. Hall ed., *The State of the Nation (Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism)*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 73.

32 Nikos Kokosolakis, ‘The Historical Continuity and Cultural Specificity of Eastern Orthodox Christianity’ in Cipriani, Roberto (ed.) *Religions Sans Frontières? Present and Future Trends of Migration, Culture and Communication*. (Roma: Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 1994), p. 127.



problems to the direct and hidden leverage of the Great Powers. Third camp attributes the regional constant discord to a lack of royal dynasties and peasant national elites, exploiting the nationalist mode of production and accumulating status by serving the burgeoning national state for their own legitimacy. Another school of thought points at the West negative stereotypes internalized by local people, while fifth approach blames the unattainable, late and uneven modernization of the Balkans. Most of the above perspectives taken on their own facilitate greatly our understanding of the Balkans, but many questions still remain unanswered and the region still remains as unpredictable and as lunatic as before we approached it.

To answer such question, we need more than ancient hatreds, Great power meddling in regional affairs, peasant elites, internalised stereotypes and late modernisation explanations. Although most of them offer good explanations, a more holistic approach is needed. We need a tool through which we can decipher the Balkan political algorithm, open the 'black box' of political decision making in the region and make what seems as irrational policies -comprehensible. If we find such a tool, we would be able to answer why in the region nationalist attitudes proved stronger than other political ideologies, why certain countries in the region have persistently cooperated with one another, regardless of the various changes in external conditions (even when belonging to opposite ideological camps) and vice versa, other countries in the region could not establish fruitful cooperation among themselves, regardless of the fact they belonged to the same ideology and the outside pressure for cooperation. Last we would be able to see what motivates such selectivity and if regional cooperation could take place after all and how.

This research explores one possible holistic approach for reading Balkan path dependent political decision making that could explain persistent lack of cooperation towards the neighbour and provide an answer to all of the above mentioned questions. To create such approach we need to address problems of ontology. The leverage of Great Powers, ancient hatreds and unattained modernization approaches all pointed at structural or agency-related impediments to regional cooperation. We need to adapt an ontological assumption positioning ideas and culture as factors in their own right alongside structure and agency.

The research explores the role played by ideas as a method for understanding political behaviour. Ideas could provide the answer as to *why, despite changing political regimes and actors, shifting ideologies, variety of alliances that states in the region have joined throughout history –plans, federations, leagues, pacts, in spite of external political pressure and good intentions, – all attempts of regional cooperation between certain states during the last two centuries failed (like Greece and Bulgaria, for example).* Others have persistently cooperated through the whole span of their modern history (Greece and Serbia). Based on such assumptions we could form the hypothesis that *Balkan policies of constant obstruction, regardless of changing external factors, could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas in shaping policy outcomes. Only when ideas change-does policy change happen.*

The study employs two specific approaches: historical institutionalism and ideational theory. The use of combined perspectives provides a theoretically innovative approach to the study of both lack-of-cooperation and Europeanization processes. The study is

largely inspired by the ideational theoretical approach of Blyth, Archer and Berman.<sup>33</sup> A combination of new institutionalism and ideational theory creates a coherent framework. A historical institutionalist framework, amplified by ideas as independent variable accounting for change, overcomes the change-explanatory limitations of historical institutionalist framework per se. Complementing historical institutionalism with ideas moves the latter approach further. Positioning ideas and culture as major explanatory factors alongside structure and agency ‘cuts against the grain of most current theorizing [of structure/agency debate] in political science by explicitly discussing when and how ideas influence political behaviour.’<sup>34</sup> Furthermore such a combination of theories undermines ‘the eternal genetic doom’ of some Balkan theorists. When powerful ideas change and become institutionalized, then policies can also change. To employ a coherent theoretical framework, using ideas as an independent variable, we need a proper definition of terms, what we refer to when talking about *ideas*. The study employs Berman’s concept of ideas ‘lying between [the too broad to be useful] ideologies and [the too narrow to be interesting] policy positions -the middle range of ideas’ she calls ‘programmatically beliefs’.<sup>35</sup> They supply ‘the ideational framework within which programs of action are formulated. When political actors seek to formulate responses to particular challenges, it is, therefore, to their programmatic beliefs that they should look. The defining feature of programmatic beliefs is that they provide a relatively clear and distinctive connection between theory and praxis.’<sup>36</sup>

As Berman noted ‘once we have accepted that ideas *can* matter, we are still left with the task of explaining *how* and *why* they matter and showing that they *did*, in fact matter.’ This requires setting out a theory about the connection between ideas and political behaviour and testing hypotheses derived from it.<sup>37</sup>

### ***Theoretical approach***

Berman’s ideational theory is concerned with two things: ‘showing that particular idea can be considered independent variable, and, second, describing the mechanisms through which it influences the dependent variable’.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, first we need to examine how certain ideas are able to become and remain a powerful force in politics by looking at how different conditions enable certain ideas to attain political salience and start to influence political behaviour over an extended period. Berman states that two factors in particular stand out: carriers and institutionalization. Ideas ‘achieve political salience through carriers...persons or groups that are able to make others listen or render them receptive’ and carriers ‘act as intellectual entrepreneurs, bringing different ideas into the political system.’ Prominent carriers ‘are better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene.’

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33 Sheri Berman, *The Social Democratic Moment: Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe*, (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 1998), Mark Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’ in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker(2nd edition) , *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (eds), (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), Margaret Archer, *Realistic Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, (Cambridge university press, 1995), McAnulla, Stuart, ‘Structure and Agency Theory and Methods’ in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker(2nd edition), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (eds), (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

34 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 20.

35 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 21.

36 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 21.

37 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 22.

38 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 24.

However recognizing the power of agency in originating a certain idea, should be regarded in the broad context that ‘while carriers can play a key role in inserting ideas into political debate and helping them gain salience, the most important factor determining whether ideas are able to influence politics over the long term is ‘institutionalisation’, or ‘whether or not an idea becomes embedded in an institution or organization.’ When ideas are institutionalised they ‘take a life of their own, changing the motivation and perception of political actors, affecting their decision making over the long term’, often regardless of changing external factors. These ideas influence those operating within such institutions and the individuals’ preferences correspond to the crystallized ideas in these institutions.

If investigating what factors enable certain ideas to become and remain a powerful force is one part of the study of the connection between ideas and politics, ‘another is examining how ideas exert an independent influence over political behaviour’, or in other words: What are the mechanisms by which ideas shape the choices of political actors?<sup>39</sup> What do actors want: Ideational theory argues that ‘preferences are endogenous: political actors strive to ensure that their behaviour coincides to as great a degree as possible with their own particular ideas about the way the world works... [and] action is often based more on identifying the normatively appropriate behaviour than on calculating the return expected from alternative choices... [Also the behaviour of political actors] will often be motivated by an attempt to achieve the particular ends posited as paramount by ideas they hold: the policy preferences of political actors will, in other words, be shaped primarily by the normative guidelines and criteria provided by their ideas.’<sup>40</sup> Why do actors want that: Ideational theory argues ‘ideas play a crucial role in shaping how political actors perceive the world around them’ and ‘ideas play a crucial role in structuring actors’ views of the world by providing a filter or channel through which information about the external environment must pass’, therefore political behaviour will often be based by distorted or incomplete information flows.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, based on Berman’s ideational theory we derive certain hypotheses and test them through the case studies.

## **Hypotheses**

Ideational explanations predict political actors will evaluate their options based on their expected ‘psychological comfort’ returns-on the extent they fit in with the actor’s ideas, rather than what is most likely to provide the greatest reward (given a particular economic situation, for example, as political economy explanations would predict).<sup>42</sup> Therefore, appropriateness would then be the most important factor, contributing to the choice of policy alternatives and since ‘definition of what is appropriate will remain reasonably constant *within a given set of ideas, ideational explanations predict that a particular actor will make similar choices over time, even as the environment changes.*’<sup>43</sup> At the same time since ‘decision making should often be influenced by incomplete or distorted information flows, [actors] with different ideas should

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39 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 29.

40 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 29.

41 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 30

42 Peter Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning and the State: The Case of Economic Policy Making in Britain’, *Comparative Politics*, 25, April 1993; ‘The Movement from Keynesianism to Monetarism: Institutional Analysis and British Economic Policy in the 1970s’ in K.Thelen and S. Steinmo, et al., Eds., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

43 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 32. (emphasis in the original)

consequently evaluate similar situations in different ways and judge the value of different alternative courses of action accordingly. *Ideational explanations predict, therefore, that actors with different ideas will make different decisions, even when placed in similar environments.*<sup>44</sup> Also change is possible, when new ideas are powerful enough to challenge or supplant political elites' own particular ideas about the way the world works. If ideational theory is correct, political actors will be much less sensitive to changes in the external environment and less concerned with strategic calculation, rather with logic of appropriateness. Indeed 'if an ideational explanation is correct, we should find that decision making is a path-dependent rather than an efficiency driven process, in which previous decisions and cognitive criteria constrain and facilitate the evolution of political choice.'<sup>45</sup>

These predictions are borne out by the investigation of the Greek and Bulgarian failure to achieve cooperation over extended period of time, regardless of changing external contexts. This case will be used to test ideational theory and its predictions. Since path dependency means that history matters, as Douglass North has noted, 'we cannot understand today's choices...without tracing their evolution through time' and 'in order to uncover (if and) how ideas shape political outcomes, the analyst of ideas will... have to investigate decision making over an extended period'<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, the case study explores decision-making in Greece and Bulgaria, related to policies of obstruction to each other in key periods from their modern nation state formation to present time.<sup>47</sup> The rationale behind such a choice is that since the research explores long-held ideas and political decision making over extended periods of time, we would need actors that have been on the political stage of Europe for quite some time. In addition those two countries could be geographically regarded as 'pure' Balkan countries. They share similar population, territory and historical development. Finally, for centuries they were all part of the Ottoman Empire and have experienced their independence revolutions at nearly the same time, the middle of the XIX century. Based on Berman's ideational theory, explained above, and operationalized with respect to that case, the study looks at two major research questions and advances two hypotheses, namely:

- *Research question 1: Why and how nineteenth century emerging modern Bulgarian and Greek states, in spite of being relatively similar in size and population, sharing the same religion, revolutionary ideas, and historical development, having similar political and social conditions, have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other, that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s?*
- *Hypothesis 1: Bulgarian and Greek modern state' mutual obstruction, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. From the very formation of their modern states, Bulgaria and Greece had clashing*

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44 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 33. (emphasis in the original)

45 John Cambell, 'Recent Trends in Institutional Analysis: Bringing Culture Back into Political Economy' paper presented to the *Seminar on the State and Capitalism since 1800*, Harvard University, 1995, p. 1.

46 Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 100.

47 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 34.

*ideas for development of their states and such institutionalized ideas later informed political elites that cooperation with the other was highly inappropriate.*

- *And also: Specific nationalist attitudes of Bulgarian and Greek political elites would most likely be path-dependent regardless of the different changes of external environments, if such changes do not produce an idea powerful enough to supplant old ideas and beliefs of what is deemed appropriate.*

Greek programmatic beliefs, powered by the *Megale Idea* envisioned the dream of restoring the territories of Byzantium as a modern Greek state, relying on the arguments of historical geography, while Bulgarian programmatic beliefs, powered by the *San Stefano Idea*, envisioned incorporating all Bulgarian-populated lands into one modern state and thus relying on human geography to back ideology.<sup>48</sup> Therefore from the very formation, Greek and Bulgarian modern states were founded with two mutually incompatible programmatic beliefs, embedded in their institutions. The achievement of one's idea for state development would inevitably at odds with the idea of the other and vice versa, since they were both claiming same territories with different arguments.

Greek Megale Idea, however, disregarded the demographical and cultural realities of the region because the territories of the former Byzantine Empire were now populated by Slavic, Albanian, Turkish, Vlach populations after hundreds of years of Ottoman rule. In early years of Greek Independence, elites looking through contemporary institutional and ideational contexts applied the geography of classical Greece to modern times. The problem was that ancient history clashed with human and political geography and presaged major conflicts with Albanians over Epirus, with Bulgarians over Macedonia and with Ottomans over Istanbul (Constantinople), the western coast of Anatolia, and islands from the Aegean to Cyprus. The particular historical and ideational context, in which Megale Idea crystallized, clashed with the crystallizing national programmes of Bulgarians and Albanians as well with the Ottomans trying to hold the Empire together. The period of national liberation revolutions in the Balkans (1830-1878) is the precise historical moment, when Bulgarians, Albanians and the Ottomans started to be regarded as 'ideationally deprived' by Greek political elites and society at large, since their national programmes and territorial aspirations clashed with the Megale Idea. As the Serbian national programme *Nachertanie* (Strategy) stood opposed to Bulgarian and Albanian national ideas and because of the Serbian animosity to Turkey, it is no surprise Serbia was perceived as the closest natural ally of Greece. In addition, *Nachertanie* and Megale complement each other territorially and programmatically as both Greece and Serbia were seeking expansion in Albanian and Bulgarian-populated territories and both shared interest in demolishing the Ottoman Empire.

This is how the idea of 'Serbia is the most trustworthy Greek ally' was born. Serbia was perceived as ideationally enlightened agent, since it could facilitate the Greeks by helping Greece in its territorial quest against Bulgarians, Albanians and Ottomans. The period when Megale Idea (1830-1832) and *Nachertanie* (1843) crystallized is the critical juncture when the idea of Greek-Serbian 'eternal' alliance emerged as a result of overlapping interests. The idea that Bulgarians, Albanians and Turks have contradictory interests to the Greeks and are 'the enemy' was institutionalized as well. Since 1830-1843 these ideas became institutionalized and ideationally informed elite

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48 Megale Idea and San Stefano Ideas will be discussed in the Greek and Bulgarian Ideational Mapping Chapter, respectively.

attitudes and behaviour. Such an ideational configuration contributes to explaining subsequent events in Greek historical and political life. Greece and Bulgaria kept very antagonistic position towards each other with remarkable persistence, regardless of changing external factors and were always on opposite sides during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s. On the other side-Greece and Serbia (later Yugoslavia) sided not only in both Balkan Wars 1912-1913, but also in the two World Wars and maintained warm relations, in spite of the ideological differences during the Cold War. In the 1990s, Greece supported the Milosevic regime, being the only EU nation to back the Serbian position that Serbian forces had entered Bosnian territory in response to Bosnian provocations. Greece was also the only NATO member voting against NATO air strikes on Serbian positions, which seemed completely irrational to its allies. However, according to Greece's ideational context this was a completely 'rational' policy.<sup>49</sup>

Viewed from such theoretical perspective influential ideas about neighbours became institutionalized in Balkan polities during the time of their modern state formation, and later taking a life on their own, started to influence subsequent policies towards that neighbour, often regardless of changing external environments. In this sense, the above-explained Balkan 'irrationalities' of cooperation/obstruction to certain neighbours are in fact very 'rational' according to the long-held ideas dominating society and political elites about that neighbour. In order to comprehend how dominant ideas exert their influence over time, we must open the 'black box' of the decision-making process, examining in particular the role played by each country's institutionalized ideas for the neighbour in shaping its policy choices to that neighbour. Identifying path-dependent institutionalised ideas (programmatic beliefs) debunks the myth of Balkan irrationalities, as political elites act very 'rational' according to their own institutional and ideational logic of appropriateness.

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49 Similarly the current debate with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia seems incomprehensible to outside observers. However, through ideational map reading the issue becomes much clearer. As a socialist republic within Yugoslavia (1944-1991), Macedonia was perceived by Greeks as a friend, since it closely followed the policies of Belgrade and for both nations (Greeks, Serbians): Bulgarians, Turks and Albanians were the common enemies. However, after their independence Macedonians appropriated heroes and events from both ancient Greek and Medieval Bulgarian history to create historical linearity and justify their distinct existence. Since that moment Macedonia was perceived by Greeks -as an enemy 'appropriating Greek history' and that idea was quickly institutionalised and displaced previous perceptions of Macedonia as a friend within Yugoslavia.

Bulgaria was the first country in the world to recognise the Macedonian independence under its constitutional name in 1991, but did not recognise a separate Macedonian people and language existed before 1944. Until that time the term 'Macedonian' was not used as anything other, than a geographic definition. In the 'interwar period however, the term began to be put to use for the first time as an ethnic description serving as a fabrication to promote [Yugoslavia's] aspirations to increased regional influence. The crucial step was taken in 1944 by the Yugoslav leader Tito, when he implemented the decision to create a new federal state consisting of six republics. He gave to the southernmost province, previously known as Vardarska Banovina (i.e. District of [the river] Vardar), the new name of People's Republic of Macedonia.

This republic was made a constitutive of federal Yugoslavia and its Slavic inhabitants, known until then as ethnic Bulgarians ..., were recognized as its 'titular nation' under the name Makedontsi (Macedonians). Their language, which was until then held to be a western Bulgarian dialect, was christened "Macedonian" and became one of Yugoslavia's official languages'. Demetrius Andreas Floudas, 'FYROM's Dispute with Greece Revisited' in: Kourvetaris et al (eds.), *The New Balkans, East European Monographs*, (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 85.

- Research question 2: The other related issue looks *if nationalist attitudes and decades-long path dependent mutual obstruction between Bulgaria and Greece could be successfully challenged by new EU agenda and the idea of European integration?*

- *Hypothesis 2:*

*Only when ideas change-does policy changes happen. EU with its conditionality policies, normative agenda in addition to the processes of marketization and liberal democracy could be such a powerful idea- to effectively challenge, for the first time, traditional national-interest mentalities in Bulgaria and Greece and lead to change in policies and make cooperation possible.*

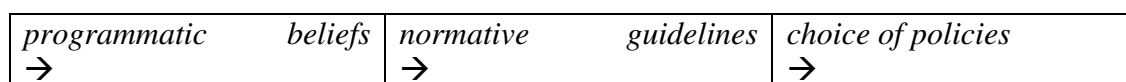
The argument goes that Greece and Bulgaria have formulated persistent policies of obstruction during most of the XX c. due to institutionalized ideas of the other as an enemy and normative prescriptions that prevented cooperation. Ideational mapping chapters on both countries explain how and why this happened. After the 1990s, they were forced to “cooperate” within the EU normative framework. To what extent, if any, are ideational frameworks altered by new ideational constructs and cooperating within a supra-national framework. This is the purpose of the empirical case studies chapters on transport to explore the dynamic of these contradictory pressures. Therefore, we are considering the long-term historical force of path dependence and whether it can be changed. The core of the analysis of Greece and Bulgaria is that at successive historical junctures, the dominant ideational framework has been challenged, but it is only with the process of marketisation and liberal democracy that these national-interest mentalities were effectively challenged by the EU. The EU represents the creation of a new ideational framework of transformative normative power. External bodies, notably the EU, are pursuing policies of conditionality that are designed to create a particular form of state-the market liberal democracy-that is capable of taking the burdens of EU membership. There is a distinction between path dependence and the possibility that this path dependence can be rooted out, or at least significantly modified. This is the crucial role of the EU and that is why we need to explore the implications of this tension between continuity and change using the case studies on large infrastructure projects in the period 1990-2010.

### ***Methodology***

From methodological point of view the project is a qualitative research, and a comparative case study. It explores how despite many similarities, Greece and Bulgaria, during the XX c., have developed policies of remarkably persistent obstruction towards each other, regardless of constantly changing external factors. It also explores if after 1990, we could observe policy change.<sup>50</sup>

The main hypothesis to be tested is that institutionalized ideas largely account for such choice of policies (obstruction until 1990s, and emerging cooperation after 1990s). Thus the independent variable in our case is the set of ideas (programmatic beliefs), institutionalized in Greek and Bulgarian government institutions about the neighbour, which largely determine if cooperation with the neighbour is normatively appropriate

(possible). The dependent variable is the choice of policy towards that neighbour in key historical periods during the XXc. investigated in this study (see Fig. 1).



*Fig. 1 Causal relationship between independent, intervening and dependent variables*

The thesis argues that modern Bulgarian and Greek state were constituted with very different mutually –incompatible ideas about their states’ further development. Ideational theory states that policy preferences of political actors will be shaped primarily by the normative guidelines and criteria provided by their ideas. Thus, operationalized with our case, Greek and Bulgarian political elites, coming to government institutions were influenced by the institutionalized programmatic beliefs that the other was an enemy and that shaped normative guidelines that cooperation with the other was highly inappropriate, which in turn led to policies of obstruction, regardless of external change.

For Greek context, we have to explore how the idea *Bulgaria and Bulgarians are an enemy influenced a normative guideline that cooperation with them is not appropriate (possible)*, that in turn influenced the obstruction policy decisions taken in Greece vis-à-vis Bulgaria during most of the XX c. For Bulgaria, we have to explore how the idea *Greece and Greeks are an enemy shaped normative criteria that cooperation with them is not appropriate (possible)*, that in turn influenced the obstruction policy decisions taken in Bulgaria vis-à-vis Greece during most of the XX c.

To further precise the analysis we would operationalize obstruction policies with more concrete *policies of denationalization of the minority of the other and negative propaganda campaign* in the domestic policies (existing/non existing) and *policy of political, social and economic obstruction* (existing/non existing) in the foreign policy during the different periods explored. The justifications is that if certain neighbour is considered an enemy and normative guidelines dictate that cooperation with him is not appropriate, the above policies of assimilation, negative imaging, propaganda, choosing different war sides, lack of territorial cooperation and lack of social and cultural contacts would be some of the most logical manifestations of the general obstruction attitude.

To acquire data about the programmatic beliefs about the neighbour in Greece and Bulgaria, the study relies on documentary research, using published and unpublished government publications, laws, published national doctrines, strategies and programmes, historical documents, letters, reports, newspaper articles, memoirs, biographies, etc. The data is analyzed through the method of *ideational mapping*. This, in other words, means identifying what the programmatic beliefs about the neighbour are, how such ideas crystallized, who were the carriers of such ideas and how they became institutionalized. (see Fig. 2).

To collect data about the normative guidelines and policies towards the neighbour during the XX c., the complete spectrum of the case-study’s typical data-collection techniques will be employed - both primary (participant observation, elite interviews) and secondary (documentary research). The data is analysed through *process tracing*



and focus on *decision-making-during-crisis* methods (see Fig. 2).<sup>51</sup> In process tracing, the researcher examines histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case.<sup>52</sup> In other words, the aim of process tracing is to uncover the causal mechanisms that link independent and dependent variables to one another in a particular context. In more detail, process tracing is looking at how particular programmatic beliefs shaped the perception of the normative guidelines and criteria that in turn, shaped policy preferences of political actors. In our context process tracing helps us uncover how the programmatic beliefs that Bulgarian/Greeks are enemies (independent variable), influence normative contexts *cooperation with Bulgarians/Greeks is not appropriate* (intervening variable) that contributed to the policies of obstruction between Greece and Bulgaria during most of the XX c (dependent variable), regardless of changing external contexts.

	<i>Independent variable (programmatic beliefs)</i>	<i>Intervening variable (normative guidelines)</i>	<i>Dependent variable (choice of policies)</i>
<i>Data collection technique</i>	documentary	documentary, elite interviews, observation	documentary, elite interviews, observation
<i>Method of analysis of the data</i>	ideational mapping	process tracing, decision making during crisis	process tracing, decision making during crisis

*Fig. 2 Data collection techniques and methods for analyzing the data*

Ideational explanations predict that within a given set of ideas a particular actor will make similar choices over time, even as the environment changes. Thus the aim of

51 Process Tracing: The general method of process tracing is to generate and analyze data on the causal mechanisms, or processes, events, actions, expectations, and other intervening variables, that link putative causes to observed effects. In other words, of the two kinds of evidence on the theoretical causal notions of causal effect and causal mechanisms, tests of covariation attempt to address the former, and process tracing assesses the latter. Source: Andrew Bennett, Alexander George, *Process Tracing in Case Study Research*, McArthur Foundation on Case Study Methods, 17-19 October, 1997.

Crisis Decision Making: Historical new institutionalism is advanced as the theoretical framework of the research. A key concept is path dependency: The historical track of a given institution or polity will result in almost inevitable occurrences. In some institutions, this may be a self-perpetuating cycle: actions of one type beget further actions of this type. This theory does not hold that institutional paths will forever be inevitable. Critical junctures may allow rapid change at a time of great crisis. The theory advances that change of institutionalized ideas in critical junctures (or times of crisis) lead to change in policy. Therefore, decision making in times of crisis and ideas available in times of crisis are the centre of primary interest here. See more: Taylor C. Boas, 'Conceptualizing Continuity and Change: The Composite-Standard Model of Path Dependence', *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 19 (1), pp. 33-54. and Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier. (1991), *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, chapter 1.

52 Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, (MIT Press, 2005), p.6.

*decision-making-during-crisis* method is to explore if in critical periods, like the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War, the Fall of Communism, etc. (when ideas are most likely to change), we observe a significant change of the *given set of ideas* in Bulgaria and Greece about the other. Then we correlate it with the policies between Greece and Bulgaria in that historical moment. In general, if the given set of ideas did not largely change, we could expect no significant change in the existing policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*). However, if we find policy change (no denationalization, negative propaganda and existing political, social and economic cooperation) that would most likely mean that there is change in the given set of ideas.

This first hypothesis that, in Greece and Bulgaria, path-dependent programmatic beliefs influence policy preferences towards the other will be tested in the ideational mapping chapters of Greece and Bulgaria. Each of the two chapters will start with a discussion how the idea for the other as an enemy emerged, who was the intellectual carrier of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up of the modern Greek and Bulgarian state respectively. Then each chapter will explore how such programmatic beliefs played a crucial role in structuring actors' views that cooperation with the neighbour is not appropriate and will reconstruct the process through which the Greek and Bulgarian political elites decided on the policies of obstruction towards the other, exploring the filter or channel (provided by the normative guidelines and criteria) through which information about the external environment passed. This, in conjunction with a comparative study of the distinctive historical and structural contexts of Greece and Bulgaria should help uncover the most important factors influencing the development and decision making of respective political elites during these years.

Finally, the two chapters will explore if in key historical periods during the XX c. (Balkan Wars, WWI, WWII, the Cold War, etc.), the programmatic beliefs that the other is an 'enemy' and the normative guidelines that 'cooperation with him is not appropriate', were challenged by new ideas. The research explores if they were powerful enough to replace the established path dependent programmatic beliefs. This observation will be correlated with the observation if the path dependent policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*) still occurred in that same historical period.

The second hypothesis that the EU idea is the first idea, powerful enough, to successfully challenge obstruction ideas and lead to policy change is tried in the two empirical chapters on transport infrastructure in SEE in 1990-2000 and in 2000-2010, respectively. The justification for such selectivity is backed by the observation that a significant difference between the two periods in terms of political, social and economic cooperation between the two states could be observed. In that period, Bulgaria was aiming for EU/NATO membership and was subject to EU conditionality. Greek elites were not subjected to such direct conditionality, but they were indirectly taught to cooperate, since continued lack of cooperation in the new condition started to produce undesired results and was making traditional policies of discord ever more inadequate.

The justification for choosing to explore large EU infrastructure projects to test if EU-idea can lead to change of policies of obstruction in the Balkans is that this case presents us with a unique opportunity to test such hypothesis. First, such projects were devised as the most potent EU-policy tool towards the region, aiming to enforce good neighbourly relations and cooperation. The financing of the projects and their

commissioning depends on the national governments' fulfilment of a certain set of criteria. Therefore, in that period (1990s) the most powerful EU ideational challenge, confronting old programmatic beliefs in the region through the EU conditionality, is represented by the policies to commission the large infrastructure projects, such as Corridor IV, VIII, X, etc. Second, the successful commissioning of such pan-European projects requires high level of political, social and economic cooperation among neighbours. They also could hardly materialize between states that enforce assimilation or negative imaging domestic policies. In that sense looking at large infrastructure projects between Bulgaria and Greece in 1990s-2010s is a logical continuation of the narrative of previous chapters looking at normative guidelines shaping policy preferences towards the neighbour. Therefore, the case allows us to explore not only the pressure of new EU ideas and ideational change, but to also explore policy change.

This is a period of contradicting pressures between old programmatic beliefs and the pressure of new EU integration ideas. Local political elites were exposed to an enormous ideational pressure from the different levels at which they operate in. They had to reconcile between two powerful forces: the ideational contexts of the path-dependant, nationalist, parochial, over-historic institutions back home and the EU normative framework, at the international level forcing cooperation. During the first period (1990-2000) political, social and economic cooperation between the two states was still rather wary and reluctant, as justified by the common EU large infrastructure projects that were in a state of impasse for a decade, in spite of firmly-secured EU funding, proven economic benefits and clear technical specifications. As hinted by the preliminary primary research, decision makers in Bulgaria and Greece still tended to identify and interpret the challenges they faced within the old normative guidelines and criteria and matched problems with solutions they had applied in the past, rather than searching for politically or economically 'optimal' solutions.<sup>53</sup> In other words during that first period traditional programmatic beliefs could not be displaced by EU-ideas, as happened many times before.

However, during the second period (2000-2010), a historical breakthrough in obstruction policies occurred. Cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece started to emerge in the economic, political and social sphere and gradually increased with each year. That was also manifested by starting work on the long-delayed infrastructure projects and even commissioning some of them towards the end of the period. The task of that chapter is not only to explore if policy change occurred, but to link such historic policy change to ideational change and explore why precisely, this time, it happened. What made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous 'weaker' ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs? To achieve that, in the two empirical chapters on transport infrastructure, I complement the documentary research with primary research data of elite interviews and direct observation. Elite interviewing was undertaken after careful non-probability purposive and chain referral sampling of relevant top-policy makers in Bulgaria and Greece, operating on regional, national and European level. 25 Bulgarian and 25 Greek Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interviews mostly during 2006-2009. They were asked question, exploring their ideas, opinions/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory and background to the past and present attitudes towards the neighbor, did such attitudes influence policies, how do they evaluate the lack and existence of political,

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53 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 33.

social and economic cooperation with that neighbour in the past and in the present and what are their predictions for the future;

Process tracing requires the collection of data concerning key political decision-making and activity, often at the highest political level, and elite interviews will frequently be a critical strategy for obtaining this required information. In our case the elite interview subjects were selected using a combination of reputational and positional criteria— that is, interview respondents were chosen not just by virtue of their political positions and their known involvement in the process of interest, but also by virtue of their reputation among their peers. The goal of collecting data from elite interviewing was to confirm information collected from documentary sources. Documents, memoirs and other secondary sources provide an initial overview of the events or issues under examination, interviews with key players were used to corroborate the early findings. In this way, interviews contributed towards the research goal of triangulation, where collected data is cross-checked through multiple sources to increase the robustness of the findings.<sup>54</sup>

Elite interviewing was undertaken after careful non-probability purposive sampling of relevant top-policy makers in Bulgaria and Greece, operating on regional, national and European level. Why non-probability sampling was selected? When the goal of a study is ‘to generalise from a sample to the wider group the sample is drawn from, then some form of probability sampling is essential for the robustness of such generalisations. Without the randomness that probability sampling entails, it would be impossible to be certain that the sample was not selected in a biased manner, and that the selection rule is not in some way related to the variables being used in the study.’<sup>55</sup> However, when such interviews are employed not to make generalisations about the characteristics, beliefs or actions of the full population of relevant actors, but rather to use the testimony of those who were most closely involved to construct a theoretically-informed narrative of the process of interest then the subjective judgements in the selection of the sample is a plus. While the sample should be representative of the wider population to the extent that it does not systematically exclude a set of actors who played an important role, it does not need to be drawn from the population through random selection as the purpose is not to generalise findings from the sample to the population. When ‘using process tracing, the most important issues to consider when drawing the sample are that the most important and influential actors are included in the sample, and that testimony concerning the key process is collected from the central players involved. In such circumstances, random sampling will be a hindrance rather than a help, as the most important actors of interest may be excluded by chance. Instead, the goal with process tracing is to reduce randomness as much as possible, and work to ensure that the identities of the most important actors are established, and that they are approached directly for interview.’<sup>56</sup> In our case, probability sampling enables us to interview key actors in Bulgaria and Greece that shaped decision making vis-à-vis the other in regards to political, social and economic cooperation in the period 1990-2010. Through elite interviews based on non-probability sampling, policy change could be linked to possible change of ideas of actors directly, involved in the decision-making of the explored

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54 Philip H. J. Davies, ‘Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services’ in *Politics*, Vol.21, No.1, 2001 in Oisín Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling*, Nuffield College, University of Oxford.

55 Oisín Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling*, Nuffield College, University of Oxford. P. 10.

56 Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing*, p. 11.

process. This is used to corroborate the documentary findings. Among the types of non-probability sampling, each has varying rules for selecting the final sample.

#### *How actors were selected in the sample?*

25 Bulgarian and 25 Greek Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interviews mostly during 2006-2009. They were selected through purposive and chain-referral sampling. Purposive sampling is a selection method where the purpose of the study and the researcher's knowledge of the population guide the process. As Kidder et al suggest, the basic assumption of purposive sampling is that with good judgement and an appropriate strategy, researchers can select the cases to be included and thus develop samples that suit the needs of the study.<sup>57</sup>

The chain-referral, sampling method 'involves identifying an initial set of relevant respondents, and then requesting that they suggest other potential subjects who share similar characteristics or who have relevance in some way to the object of study. This second set of subjects is then interviewed, and also requested to supply names of other potential interview subjects. The process continues until the researcher feels the sample is large enough for the purposes of the study, or until respondents begin repeat names to the extent that further rounds of nominations are unlikely to yield significant new information.'<sup>58</sup> One of the 'dangers with snowball sampling is that respondents often suggest others who share similar characteristics, or the same outlook, and it is thus also incumbent on the researcher to ensure that the initial set of respondents is sufficiently diverse so that the sample is not skewed excessively in any one particular direction.'<sup>59</sup> In our case 10 Bulgarian and 10 Greek key policy makers were selected through purposive sampling based on their position and the other 15 in each case respectively were recommended through chain-referral sampling of their peers, based on their relevance for the case explored.

As Tansey said 'initiating a chain referral sample with known participants can ... identify not only the occupants of key positions that have been identified in advance, but can also shine light on the role of important actors who may have played a role from an unlikely or unpredictable position. The sampling method can thus contribute to the process tracing method, as information is collected from a complete set of relevant players, and no significant actors are omitted from the study as a result of the selection rules.'<sup>60</sup>

The 50 Bulgarian and Greek key decision makers were asked probing, theoretically-driven questions, exploring their ideas, opinions/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory and background to the past and present attitudes towards the neighbor, appropriateness of cooperation with that neighbour, how they felt about the infrastructure projects (our three sub-cases) between the two countries, if the EU had to do with the change of perception towards the neighbour (if there was such) and why it was able to do that. After the data was processed and analyzed, it confirmed the findings based on primary

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57 Louise H. Kidder, Charles Judd and Eliot Smith, *Research Methods in Social Relations*, 6th ed., (Fort Worth, TX: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1991).

58 Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing*, p. 12

59 Anthony Seldon and Joanna Pappworth, *By Word of Mouth: Elite Oral History* (Methuen, 1983).

in Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing*, p. 12

60 Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing*, p. 13.

and secondary documentation analysis and proved the link between ideational change and policy change.

### ***Structure of thesis and conclusions***

The research's originality lies in exploration of how some ideas can become and remain a powerful political force, and about the mechanisms through which they can influence political behaviour. It contributes to the growing debate of the role of ideas in political life and political decision making by comparative research on two European countries to enhance our understanding of political development and evolution of European modern states. Balkan phenomena of path dependent persistent mutual obstruction between certain states, regardless of changing external factors is explained through the power of institutionalized ideas, influencing policy outcomes, while previous explanations pointed at ancient hatreds, late industrialization, or external power leverage factors. We are also exploring the critical role of the EU and the implications of this tension between continuity and change in the case studies. So, we are considering the long-term historical force of path dependence and the possibility that this path dependence can be rooted out, or at least significantly modified. The research is not only an endeavour to study the EU's role in the Balkans, but to contribute to the understanding of evolution of modern EU states.

The outline of the rest of the study is as follows: *Chapter 2* examines the connection between institutions, ideas and political behaviour. First, I discuss the problem inherent in previous analyses of ideas and institutions with a special focus on new institutionalism and ideas. Then I discuss Berman's ideational theoretical framework as the most appropriate theory that helps us analyze the impact of ideas on political behaviour. Finally, I sketch out how this theory could be applied to the cases of Greek and Bulgarian obstruction policies of the XX century.

*Chapter 3* deals with the ideational mapping of Greece and starts with a discussion how the idea 'Bulgarians are an enemy' emerged, who was the intellectual carrier of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up of the modern Greek state in the late XIX c. Then the chapter explores how such programmatic beliefs influenced actors, coming in different periods to those institutions, to form the same normative guidelines that cooperation with Bulgarians is not appropriate. Then I will reconstruct how such normative guidelines shaped the process through which Greek political elites decided on policies of obstruction towards Bulgarians with remarkable persistence during most of the XX c. (Balkan Wars, WWI, WWII, the Cold War), regardless of changing external factors.

*Chapter 4* repeats this procedure for Bulgaria and the idea –'Greeks are an enemy', shaping Bulgarian obstruction policy vis-à-vis Greece during the same period.

*Chapter 5* describes political, economic and social cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece, in the period 1990-2000, operationalized with the case of the large regional infrastructure projects enforced by the EU, as the main policy tool towards the region. Bulgarian and Greek political elites were pressured between traditional programmatic beliefs that prevented cooperation with the other and the new EU's normative agenda that strictly prescribed cooperation between them. The period is characterized by the typical policies of obstruction, despite the clear benefits of cooperation, implying that in this period traditional programmatic beliefs still took precedence over new EU-ideas.

*Chapter 6* looks at the historic breakthrough in the obstruction policies between Bulgaria and Greece, in the period 2000-2010, manifested by the started work on the long-delayed infrastructure projects and even commissioning some of them towards the end of the period. Such policy change is linked to the ideational change as a result of EU's leverage.

*Chapter 7*, the conclusions, elaborates this study's findings about the connection between ideas and politics, while showing (in the light of previous discussions why the standard non-ideational explanations in the existing literature cannot adequately account for explaining Bulgarian and Greek policies of obstruction during most of the XX c., regardless of changing external contexts.

## Chapter 2. New Institutionalism and Ideas

*...it is a paradox that scholars, whose entire existence is centred on the production and understanding of ideas, ...grant ideas so little significance for explaining political life<sup>1</sup>*

### **Introduction**

The research employs historical institutionalism, amplified by ideas to explain path dependent political behaviour.<sup>2</sup> The theoretical framework is applied to explain political behaviour in the Balkans, where Greece and Bulgaria, despite many similarities have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during most of the XX c. The main hypothesis is that such behaviour could be properly understood neither by leverage of Great Powers, nor by ancient hatreds or late modernization, but by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. Only when ideas change- policy change does happen. The purpose of this chapter is to justify why new institutionalism, amplified by ideas is selected as a best fit to the case study, present the theory selected and its application to that case.

The chapter first explores the rise of new institutionalist paradigm in current political science as a reaction to the inherent problem rational choice and state theorists' analysis encountered when they had to account for persistence and change respectively. The different strains of new institutionalism, and namely- historical, rational and sociological are explored. Similar to earlier turn to institutions, more recently ideas were introduced as a 'fix' by normative and rationalist institutionalist frameworks to better explain why institutions changed or persisted, respectively. This thesis is essentially concerned with historical institutionalism, since it is identified as an approach that incorporates ideas more successfully within its paradigm, without violating its ontological or epistemological basis.

Then the chapter looks at the ideational turn in political science to give more detail on the debate of ideas, presenting how ideational, material and constructivist approaches incorporated ideas in their analysis. By elaborating on similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses of each approach historical institutionalism plus ideas is identified as the best fit for the case studies.

Third, the chapter explores Berman's ideational theory. This theory is selected as it is one of the exemplary 'new institutionalism plus ideas' studies, creating a convincing model of change within historical institutionalist framework, without making the theory incoherent. End of the chapter elaborates on applying Berman's ideational theory to the selected case of path-dependent Balkan political behaviour and the methods to do that.

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1 Kathryn Sikkink, *Ideas and Institutions: Developmentalism in Argentina and Brazil* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1991), p. 3.

2 The research could also be framed under the very recently-emerging 'ideational/constructivist institutionalism', which is still a paradigm in the making, largely influenced by Colin Hay, 'Constructivist institutionalism' in R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder and Bert A. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press., 2006), pp. 56–74 and Vivien A. Schmidt, 'Discursive institutionalism: The explanatory power of discourse', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11, 2008.



## ***The Rise of Institutionalism***

New institutionalism has recently become one of the most influential paradigms in political science. Aspinwall and Schneider contend that the work of March and Olsen 'heralding the institutionalist turn in political science', led academic discourse on regional collaboration to a situation where 'almost any Europeanist with a minimal level of self-respect flags herself as an "institutionalist" at the moment.'<sup>3</sup> New institutionalism's appeal lies in 'the special significance...to defuse the unconstructive stand-off between structuralists and behaviouralists that has bedevilled political science.'<sup>4</sup> Furthermore the emergence of new institutionalism is considered 'the single most significant contribution' to 'the period of rapprochement' which characterises political science at the present time.<sup>5</sup>

After the initial demise of behaviouralism and 'bringing back the state', proponents of the contending approaches within new institutionalism discovered that there was, more or less, only one non-contestable premise common to all strains of institutionalism: institutions are instrumental to understanding political life. While both normativists and rationalists agree that institutions affect the political strategies adopted by individuals, groups and governments, so affecting outcomes and behaviour, they disagree on the mechanism how institutions actually affect behaviour. In Hall and Taylor's terms, historical institutionalists tend to give two different answers to this question, grouping either around the 'calculus' or the 'cultural' approach. Each provides different answers to questions such as 'how do actors behave, what do institutions do, and why do institutions persist over time?'<sup>6</sup>

Hay and Wincott notice that such divide within the historical institutionalist canon actually coincides with the divide between the rational and the normative versions of institutionalism.<sup>7</sup> Following the rational-normative divide within new institutionalism, theorists such as Shepsle, Bulmer, Norgaard, Thelen and Steinmo distinguish between rational and historical institutionalism.<sup>8</sup> Others go as far as to distinguish seven strains

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3 Mark Aspinwall and Gerald Schneider, 'Same Menu, Separate Tables: The Institutional Turn in Political Science and the Study of European Integration', *European Journal of Political Research*, 38, 2000, p. 2 and James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Sep., 1984), pp. 734-749.

4 Robert E. Goodin, Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds.), 'Ch.1.Political Science: The Discipline' in *A New Handbook of Political Science*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), pp.10-11.

5 Goodin and Klingemann, *A New Handbook* quoted in Vivian Lowndes, 'Institutionalism', p. 107.

6 Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms', *Political Studies*, 44, 4, 939 (1996).

7 Colin Hay and Daniel Wincott, 'Structure, Agency and Historical Institutionalism', *Political Studies*, XLVI, 951-957(1998).

8 Kenneth Shepsle, 'Studying Institutions: Some Lessons from the Rational Choice Approach', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 1, 1989, pp. 131-147, Simon Bulmer, 'The new governance of the European Union: A new institutionalist approach', *Journal of Public Policy* 13, 1994, pp. 351-380, A. Norgaard, 'Rediscovering reasonable rationality in institutional analysis', *European Journal of political research*, 29, 1996, pp. 31-57, K. Thelen and S. Steinmo, 'Historical institutionalism in comparative politics' in S.Steinmo, K. Thelen & F. Longstreth (eds.), *Structuring politics. Historical institutionalism in comparative analysis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

within the neo-institutionalist paradigm.<sup>9</sup> Most recently, Hay argued that ‘none of these authors made any reference to constructivism, far less to a distinctive constructivist variant of institutionalism in its own right. Indeed, until recently, there has been little if any reference to what is now variously described as an ideational, discursive or, as here, constructivist institutionalism. This is for three good reasons – constructivist institutionalism is by far the most recent addition to the family of institutionalisms, it arises out of an engagement with the limitations of the others, and, as a consequence and in contrast the others, it is still very much in its inception. It is, nonetheless already highly distinctive (ontologically, analytically and methodologically), and it poses a series of challenges to extant institutionalisms.’<sup>10</sup> The newest ‘new institutionalism’, ‘lends insight into the role of ideas and discourse in politics while providing a more dynamic approach to institutional change than the older three new institutionalisms.’<sup>11</sup> The research reflects on the Hall and Taylor’s distinction, who emphasise three institutionalisms- rational, historical, sociological, while appreciating Hay and Schmidt’s observation that ideas should be given due weight in institutional analysis.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Rational institutionalism***

In rational choice theories humans are regarded as utility-maximizers ‘who are able to rank their priorities in accordance with fixed, exogenous preference scales’.<sup>13</sup> Their behaviour is strategic, instrumental, seeking maximum gain through selection of the most ‘rational’ strategy. (i.e. the strategy that brings the most gains for the fewest resources expended). Politics is a series of collective action dilemmas, where individuals ‘acting to maximize the attainment of their own preferences are likely to produce an outcome that is collectively suboptimal’ and the ‘absence of institutional arrangements that would guarantee complementary behaviour by others’ is seen as the major obstacle to reaching a ‘collectively-superior’ outcome.<sup>14</sup> However, classical rational choice theory unfortunately to its theorists, painted a picture of a ‘world..., all in all, a little too dynamic. By predicting ‘a world, populated by self-interested agents who have no loyalties, suffer no informational or ideological illusions and are generally unable to make binding agreements with each other’ rational choice theories largely failed to explore how the world ‘holds together’.<sup>15</sup> Indeed the world ‘was a little [in fact much] more orderly than their theories would predict.’<sup>16</sup> As Blyth notes, this is the moment when institutions were evoked by rational choice theorists to answer the troubling question how was such order possible. While still positioning human action as the central element in social scientific explanation, institutions were ‘brought in’ by rational choice theorists to help explain stability better because the world ‘in flux,

9 Guy Peters, *Institutional theory in political science*, quoted in Lowndes, ‘Institutionalism’, p. 96.

10 Colin Hay, ‘Constructivist Institutionalism: Or, Why Interests into Ideas Don’t Go’, Paper presented at the *Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Marriott, Loews Philadelphia, and the Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA, Aug 31, 2006 <Not Available>. 2010-06-15

[http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p152815\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p152815_index.html) and Andreas Gofas and Colin Hay (eds.), *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis: A Portrait of Contemporary Debates*, (Taylor&Francis, 2009)

11 Vivien A. Schmidt, ‘Discursive institutionalism: The explanatory power of discourse’, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11, 2008, pp. 303–326.

12 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, pp. 936-957.

13 Aspinwall and Schneider, ‘Same Menu, Separate Tables’, p. 10.

14 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 945.

15 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 299.

16 O. Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism: Firms, Markets, Relational Contracting*, (New York: The Free Press, 1985) and D.C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History*, (New York: Norton, 1981).

replete with cycling, multiple equilibria and the like, where institutions are both formed and changed according to rapidly shifting contract curves and cost-benefit trade-offs' predicted by them poorly represented reality. Rationalists adopted institutions which are 'consciously designed structures *chosen* by individuals to produce stability' to improve some theoretical limitations.<sup>17</sup> Blyth believes that placing institutions within rationalist analysis created even 'further theoretical anomalies rather than solving current ones...[Also] according to rationalists, institutions are 'intentional products that are designed to help individuals maximise their utilities' and they also persist as long as the cost of their existence is smaller than the benefits they yield.<sup>18</sup> However, 'societies are replete with institutions that continue after their ostensible purpose has ended' which inevitably poses a quite disturbing question for rational theorists: 'if institutions are merely instrumental products, how can they go about broadening their own agendas?'<sup>19</sup> Positioning the individual as the ultimate 'sovereign' of analysis, and later invoking institutions to overcome theory limitations, undermined the ontology of rationalist paradigm, when institutions acted as agents on their own still 'existing' after they have achieved their purpose, 'broadening their agendas' and surprisingly to rationalists yielding 'irrational cooperation'.<sup>20</sup>

For Blyth rational institutionalists regard institutions as consciously designed structures *chosen* by individuals to produce stability and they are also purposeful human constructions designed to solve collective action problems and institutions originate through voluntary agreement by the relevant actors: and if the institution is a subject to a process of competitive selection, it survives primarily because it provides more benefits to the relevant actors than alternate institutional forms. Rational institutionalists disagree that remote historical trajectories determine the actor's behaviour. It is strategic calculation which drives actors and their calculation will be deeply affected by the actor's expectations about how others are likely to behave as well and through increasing information, flows and transparency over what all agents are doing the designed institutions cause all agents to adhere to the dictates of the institution and over time this adherence becomes the norm that is obeyed almost automatically. By reducing uncertainty in other's behaviour, institutions tend to facilitate cooperation through allowing 'gains from exchange' therefore institutions resolve the 'common-pool resource' problem (CPR).<sup>21</sup> This framework is challenged by this research, which focuses on a situation where agents, participating in the construction of an institution making the behaviour of other actors completely transparent and predictable, which provided 'collectively-superior' outcomes from cooperation, cannot cooperate.

Despite the fact that most of the region's countries are already deeply involved into the EU integration process and widely proclaiming strict adherence to the principles of the consciously designed institutions supposed to produce stability (TINA Initiative and SPSEE within EU), Balkan political elites fail to cooperate on the implementation of large pan-European transport and energy corridors, thus disregarding the 'collectively-

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17 Hugh Ward, 'Rational Choice' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (2nd edition), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (eds), (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp.65-89.

18 Blyth, 'Institutions and Ideas', p. 302.

19 Mark Blyth, 'Any More Bright Ideas? The Ideational Turn of Comparative Political Economy', *Comparative Politics* Vol. 29 (1) January 1997 and Mark Blyth, 'Institutions and Ideas'.

20 Geoffery Garrett and Barry R. Weingast, 'Ideas, Interests And Institutions: Constructing The European Communities Internal Market', in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993)

21 See Blyth, 'Any More Bright Ideas?' and Blyth, 'Institutions and Ideas'.

superior' benefits of cooperation.<sup>22</sup> At the same time they are actively embedded in these organizations and agree that EU is the best institutional design providing most benefits for agents. For rationalist might be difficult to answer such dilemma-why some actors are 'rational' within CPR-problem-solving organization and some are 'irrational' despite the common organizational context providing 'information, relevant to the behaviour of others, enforcement mechanisms for agreements, penalties for defection' and 'collectively-superior' outcomes from cooperation for all agents, involved in this institutional context.<sup>23</sup> Rational institutionalists argue that 'institutions persist, because they embody something like a Nash equilibrium' and 'individuals adhere to these patterns of behaviour because a deviation will make the individual worse off than will adherence.'<sup>24</sup>

Sociological, and especially historical institutionalism, is better prepared to face such a dilemma than rational institutionalism. Introducing history, path dependency, ideas, culture and context in the analysis, rather than relying on interest and calculation is a major advance analytically. To understand political phenomena, timing and sequence matter more than relying on certain a-historical equilibria, offering predictability across time. The empirical part of this research explores the paradox (perceived so by rationalists), where Balkan elites fail to cooperate on the commissioning of the pan-European transport and energy corridors where the superior economic benefits from the latter are clear and also institutionalized through the EU and its TINA initiative, explored in the following chapters. Empirical observation supports the ideational theorists approach that the 'policy preferences of political actors are shaped primarily by the normative guidelines and criteria provided by their ideas. Ideational theorists argue that interests are neither given, nor can they be inferred from the environment; instead, they evolve from ideas and beliefs held by actors themselves. Such approach helps explain why Balkan elites perceive some agents as 'more special' than others. They might cooperate with the one agent out of material gains calculations, but this should be in compliance with the 'appropriateness' and 'psychic returns' of such action, or the extent they fit with the actors' ideas of such action.<sup>25</sup> Through the moral and cognitive templates, arising from institutionalized ideas, political elites interpret and respond to a situation. In the case studies through such templates, some neighbouring countries were considered *ideationally-enlightened*, while others *ideationally-deprived*. This meaning that according to institutionalised ideas and the logic of appropriateness (rather than strategic calculation), political elites could cooperate with an ideationally enlightened agent, regardless of the fact that cooperation with the ideationally deprived agent might have been more economically justified, simply because that is what ideas tell them to and because such action is deemed right'. In this respect, the research supports ideational theorists' findings that the rationalist approach misses a part of the political phenomena, by relying on fixed or given interest, strategic calculation and logic of increasing returns.

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22 SPSEE (Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe) is explored in detail in the EU Involvement Chapter. TINA (Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment) Initiative is explored in the EU Involvement Chapter and the Transport Infrastructure Chapter.

23 Hall and Taylor, 'Political Science', p. 939.

24 Randall Calvert, 'The Rational Choice Theory of Social Institutions' in Jeffrey Banks and Eric Hanushek (eds), *Modern Political Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) in Aspinwall and Schneider, 'Same Menu, Separate Tables', p. 4 and Hall and Taylor, 'Political Science', p. 940.

25 Peter Hall, 'Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: The case of economic policymaking in Britain', *Comparative Politics*, 25 (3), 1993, pp. 275-296.

## ***Sociological Institutionalism***

If the last three decades in social sciences might be termed the ‘age of institutionalism’ the most recent tendencies within that age might be framed as the ‘cultural’ or ‘cognitive’ revolutionary turn.<sup>26</sup> Hall and Taylor argue that for sociological institutionalists there is a ‘highly interactive and mutually-constitutive’ relationship between institutions and agency.<sup>27</sup> Sociological theorists argue that ‘institutions do not only constrain and/or enable specific choices to actors but they also shape their choices and their relative preferences’, thus rejecting the rationalist idea of exogenous, timeless, strategically fixed preferences. Institutions shape not only the actor’s behaviour but ‘what one can imagine oneself doing in a given context.’<sup>28</sup> This is extremely important as it determines what actors actually regard as politically feasible. Preference formation is a dynamic process in which institutions and contexts have a pronounced shaping power. Furthermore ‘procedures, rules, norms, and belief systems that are embodied in institutions do not only reflect the initial preferences of their founding actors [but] also reflect cultural features akin to the myths and ceremonies prevailing in certain societies.’<sup>29</sup> As Hall and Taylor observed, by doing so, sociological institutionalists conflate institutions and culture, ‘breaking the conceptual divide between them.’<sup>30</sup> This is the first major endeavour in social sciences to institutionalize culture, reconceptualizing it as ‘network of routines, symbols or scripts providing templates for behaviour.’<sup>31</sup>

Contrary to the rationalists’ perception of institutional existence justified by better serving the ‘material ends of those who accept it’, sociological institutionalists argue that institutional redesign aims to enhance the ‘social legitimacy of the organization or its participants’ and such redesign takes place ‘because the latter [is] widely valued within a broader cultural environment’.<sup>32</sup> This provides an answer to why organizations often adopt practices which might be considered ‘dysfunctional with regard to achieving the organization’s formal goals [...] [Also] common institutional practices are said to emerge from a more interactive process of discussion among the actors in a given network-about shared problems, how to interpret them, and how to solve them [...] [Through such negotiated interaction actors] develop shared cognitive maps [...] embodying a sense of appropriate institutional practices, which are then widely employed.’<sup>33</sup> For social institutionalists institutional change is ‘seen as a process of isomorphism or diffusion through mechanisms such as pressures to appear legitimate and normative schemes embedded in training and practice.’<sup>34</sup>

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26 Paul Di Maggio, ‘Culture and Cognition’, *American Review of Sociology*, 23, 263-287 in Klaus Nielsen, ‘Review of Institutionalists Approaches in the Social Sciences: Typology, Dialogue and Future Prospect’s’, Research Paper no. 7/01, Research papers Network Institutional Theory, Roskilde University, [www.ssc.ruc.dk/institutional/Research\\_Paper\\_7-01.pdf](http://www.ssc.ruc.dk/institutional/Research_Paper_7-01.pdf); accessed May, 2007.

27 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 948.

28 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 948.

29 Neo-institutionalism and the study of the domestic impact of EU policies, <http://amor.rz.hu-berlin.de/~koutalac/Neo-institutionalism.doc>; last accessed May, 2006.

30 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 947.

31 Ann Swidler, ‘Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies’, *American Sociological Review*, 51(1986), 273-286.

32 Cf. Campbell, ‘Institutional analysis and the role of ideas in political economy’; March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*, ch. 2. quoted in Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms’, p. 949.

33 Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, ‘Political Science’, pp. 949-950.

34 Klaus Nielsen, ‘Institutionalist approaches in the social sciences: Typology, dialogue; and future challenges’, *Journal of Economic Issues*, Jun 2001, pp. 1-2.

## **Historical Institutionalism**

Historical institutionalism evolved from state theory when the latter was struggling to provide explanations for less macro-level phenomena, when the demand for a lower level of abstraction revived institutions and state theorists became historical institutionalists.<sup>35</sup> Hall and Taylor identify two strains within the historical institutionalism: normative and rational. Despite the divergent strains, proponents of this paradigm widely accept that ‘time and history matter and shape policy outcomes in ways that do not fall in simple cause-effect rational choice theories of action [...] [They also emphasize that actors are embedded in a] ‘world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation...out of which a course of action is constructed.’<sup>36</sup> The disagreement is on the degree of embeddedness. Rationalists insist on autonomy on the part of agency, while more sociologically biased theorists emphasize a greater degree of embeddedness and co-determination of structure and agency. Such embeddedness is defined by the ‘extent to which institutional effects are ‘internalized’ by agents’; [according to] rational choice perspective, institutions are most often external to the agent -- including voting procedures and conflict resolution mechanisms ...from the sociological perspective institutions are internalized -- including identitive institutions such as nationality or religion.<sup>37</sup>

Historical institutionalists argue that ‘behaviour is not fully strategic, but bounded by individual’s worldview’ and ‘the choice of a course of action depends on the interpretation of a situation rather than on purely instrumental calculation.’<sup>38</sup> Historical institutionalists do not necessarily disagree that actors could act rationally to maximise their gain, but that ‘the formation of their preferences and the ways they pursue them are contingent upon historical developments that define the range of strategic choices available to them.’<sup>39</sup> HI is often considered as a ‘meso-level approach’ between individualism and social constructivism, using both rational and social institutionalists’ premises.<sup>40</sup> Historical institutionalism defines institutions as ‘the formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions, embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy’ it also ‘associates institutions with organizations and the rules or conventions, promulgated by formal organizations’, or simply-formal and informal rules and institutions provide ‘moral and cognitive templates for interpretation and action’.<sup>41</sup> Moreover institutional arrangements not only provide a context for action, as in the rationalist institutionalist perspective, but they affect the identities, self-images and preferences of the actors.<sup>42</sup> Thelen and Steinmo implied that not just the strategies but also the goals actors pursue are shaped by the institutional context.<sup>43</sup> Summarizing

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35 See: S.Steinmo, K. Thelen & F. Longstreth (eds.), *Structuring politics*, Peter Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Policy of State Intervention in Britain and France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

36 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 939. See also: James March and Johan P.

Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: the Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York NY, Free, 1989)

37 Aspinwall and Schneider, ‘Same Menu, Separate Tables’, p. 6.

38 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 939.

39 See Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, ‘Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics’, in Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, Frank Longstreth (eds.), *Structuring Politics. Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

40 Steimo, Thelen, Longstreth, ‘Structuring politics’, p. 2.

41 Hall and Taylor, ‘Political Science’, p. 938.

42 See March and Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions*.

43 Steimo, Thelen, Longstreth, ‘Structuring politics’, pp. 2-5.

the agenda of historical institutionalists would note that they are generally interested in how institutions structure choices.

### *The notion of path dependence*

The most basic concept which historical institutionalists work with is the notion of path dependence. In general, the term explains how the set of decisions one faces for any given circumstance is limited by the decisions one has made in the past, even though past circumstances may no longer be relevant. Path-dependence generally was developed in economics to explain certain theoretical inconsistencies of neo classical economics, applied to reality. The concept of path dependence helped them explain why a standard, which is first-to-market, can become entrenched, in spite of its suboptimal economic benefits. The most famous example is the QWERTY layout in typewriters still used in computer keyboards, despite the proven better efficiency of the alternative DSK standard.<sup>44</sup> Economists explained that inferior standards could persist simply because of the legacy they have built up. Through a 'lock in' in particular time, an inferior technology could be adopted and followed if the costs for introducing the better standard outweigh the benefits of its adoption.

The concept of path dependence was quickly applied in political science and sociology to help theorists face the basic challenge of accounting for both continuity and change over time. The common presumption was that institutions shape 'the order in which things happen [and] affects the way how they happen; the trajectory of change up to a certain point itself constrains the trajectory after that point; and the strategic choices made at a particular moment eliminate whole ranges of possibilities from later choices while serving as the very condition of existence of others.'<sup>45</sup> However a difference should be noted between the notion of path dependence adopted by the rational and the normative strain within new institutionalism. Historical rational institutionalists rely on the transaction-costs theory to explain institutional persistence. The latter is based on the 'fundamental assumption that any given institutional matrix determines its own transaction costs, in the sense of measuring and enforcing costs' and 'established courses of action provide increasing returns to the relevant actors, which make them difficult or virtually impossible to reverse even if they prove to be inefficient. Rationalist historical institutionalists introduce the notion of *increasing returns*, which are the source of *path dependence*. They believe that:

Any given institutional matrix determines its own transaction costs, in the sense of measuring and enforcing costs. Established courses of action provide increasing returns to the relevant actors, which make them difficult or virtually impossible to reverse even if they prove to be inefficient. (...) Political institutions succeed over others and dominate in certain markets even in cases that alternative ones have been proved as more efficient (path inefficiency) in the same way that certain technologies do in markets. Once a certain type of technology gains an initial advantage over others, due to even minor or accidental events, positive feedback effects may lock-in the preferences of the relevant actors making them inflexible over the adoption of alternative technologies. This is because increasing returns create strong incentives to actors to continue developing within the initial path.<sup>46</sup>

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44 Paul A. David, 'Clio and the Economics of QWERTY', *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 75, No. 2, 1985, pp. 332-337.

45 *Neo-institutionalism and the study of the domestic impact of EU policies*, <http://amor.rz.hu-berlin.de/~koutalac/Neo-institutionalism.doc>, last accessed May, 2007.

46 *Neo-institutionalism and the study of the domestic impact of EU policies*, p. 1.

Such a notion of path dependence is applicable mainly to technologies, markets, economies. However proponents of the rational strain within historical institutionalism fail to account for path dependence caused by cultural and historical factors. Such a theory focusing on increasing returns, creating strong incentives to actors to continue developing within the initial path, fails to explain why certain policies are followed if they do not yield increasing returns, and even why they are followed when they generate increasing losses.

For historical and sociological institutionalists path dependence has been used primarily in comparative politics and sociology to analyze the development and persistence of institutions. Primarily used in comparative historical analyses normative institutionalists distinguish mainly two types of path-dependent processes-the 'critical juncture' and the 'reactive sequences'. In the critical juncture framework, 'antecedent conditions define and delimit agency during a critical juncture in which actors make contingent choices that set a specific trajectory of institutional development and consolidation that is difficult to reverse. This is akin to the concepts of vendor lock-in or positive feedback derived from path dependence in economics. The other path-dependent process deals with "reactive sequences" where a primary event sets off a temporally-linked and causally-tight chain of events that is nearly uninteruptible.'<sup>47</sup>

In other words for historical institutionalists, path dependence can express the idea that 'outcomes at a 'critical juncture' trigger feedback mechanisms [negative or positive] that reinforce the recurrence of a particular pattern into the future'. Pierson and Skocpol argue 'once actors have ventured far down a particular path, they are likely to find it very difficult to reverse course...The "path not taken" or the political alternatives that were once quite plausible may become irretrievably lost. "Path dependence analysis" highlights the role of what Arthur Stinchcombe has termed "historical causation" in which dynamics triggered by an event or process at one point in time reproduce themselves, even in the absence of the recurrence of the original event or process.'<sup>48</sup> As Pierson stated in general terms, path dependence came to mean simply 'history matters' in a broad concept and that institutions are self reinforcing in a narrow concept.<sup>49</sup>

How this worked however was a matter of content with some scholars emphasizing lock-in and increasing returns, self-reinforcing sequences and the 'mechanisms of reproduction' of particular historical legacies respectively.<sup>50</sup> Boas implied such works played an 'important role of systematizing arguments about historical causation and moving the discussion of institutional stability beyond the arguably unassailable notion

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47 Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*, (University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), pp. 1-25.

48 Paul Pierson & Theda Skocpol, 'Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science', in Ira Katznelson & Helen V. Milner (eds). *Political Science: State of the Discipline*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), p. 665.

49 See Paul Pierson, 'Positive Feedback and Path Dependence' in *Politics in Time: Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 17-54.

50 Paul Pierson, 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics', *American Political Science Review* 94(2), 2000, pp. 251-267, James Mahoney, 'Path Dependence in Historical Sociology', *Theory and Society*, 29, 2000, pp. 507-548, Collier and Collier *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991) quoted in Taylor C. Boas, 'Conceptualizing Continuity', p. 34.

Taylor C. Boas, 'Conceptualizing Continuity and Change: The Composite-Standard Model of Path Dependence', *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 19(1), 2007, pp. 33-54.



that “history matters.”<sup>51</sup> More recently, neo-institutionalists and especially the historical strain have attempted to move away from the notion of path dependence, focusing on how institutions change, rather than being stable over time. Many authors argued that ‘prevailing models of path dependence overstate the degree of stability in political institutions... [and] have distanced themselves from the notions of increasing returns, lock-in, and switching costs that were central to the economics literature on path dependence.’<sup>52</sup> Rather they have focused on other mechanisms of institutional change such as layering and conversion.<sup>53</sup>

Bringing institutions back in did not help rationalists overcome their internal theoretical limits. Such inconsistency provoked theorists to look for alternative explanations and that is when they turned to ideas. However, the ‘rationalist adoption of ideas runs in the same problems as its adoption of institutions’, as ideas could not also give satisfactory explanation to the problem with stability these theorists faced.<sup>54</sup> Rationalists believe cooperation in situations of uncertainty occurs when a new institution is designed, after an idea ‘becomes a focal point’ and stabilizes the situation. Garrett and Weingast explained how the agreement for EC single market was reached in 1992.<sup>55</sup> They argue that a ‘focal point’ is chosen as it ‘*promote[s] stability* where self-interest alone would not suffice.’ However, rationalist theory poorly conceptualizes how exactly agents and ideas ‘meet’, how certain ideas become focal points over which agents agree, and why, after choosing a certain focal point, one can still observe a lack of cooperation. Blyth argues ‘ideas are not just “out there” things which agents use to coordinate their actions by randomly stumbling into them.’ They are not a pick-and-mix tool to satisfy the interest of agents. Ideas need to be developed, deployed, repeated, proselytised, spread, disseminated. As much as supplying institutions is a collective action problem, so is the dissemination of ideas, therefore neither institutions, nor ideas could resolve the rationalist dilemma with stability in a world of self interested egoists.

Blyth continues on a more general level rational choice theory is constricted by its own ontological assumptions. In a theory where agency is the ‘theoretical primitive’, ideas and institutions can only be regarded as tools, which agents instrumentally use to satisfy their ‘means-end’ logic. Anything extra-individual such as ideas and institutions could not fundamentally alter what in fact agents want as this would position the former as theoretical primitives prior to agents, thus violating the very core of rationalist ontology.<sup>56</sup> Hay and Gofas also acknowledge that ‘ideational factors are not easily incorporated within the parsimonious theoretical core of rational choice. Indeed, the

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51 Taylor C. Boas, ‘Conceptualizing Continuity and Change: The Composite-Standard Model of Path Dependence’, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 19(1), 2007, pp. 33-54.

52 Kathleen Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Herman Schwartz, *Down the Wrong Path: Path Dependence, Increasing Returns, and Historical Institutionalism*, Unpublished Manuscript, University of Virginia. Colin Crouch, and Henry Farrell, ‘Breaking the Path of Institutional Development? Alternatives to the New Determinism’, *Rationality and Society* 16(1), 2004, pp. 5–43 in Boas, ‘Conceptualizing Continuity’, p. 34.

53 Jacob Hacker ‘Privatizing Risk without Privatizing the Welfare State: The Hidden Politics of Social Policy Retrenchment in the United States’, *American Political Science Review* 98(2), 2004, pp. 243–260, Kathleen Thelen, ‘How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis’, in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) pp. 208–240 in Taylor C. Boas, ‘Conceptualizing Continuity’, p. 34.

54 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 304.

55 See Garrett and Weingast, ‘Ideas, Interests And Institutions’, pp. 2-25.

56 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, pp. 300-305.

recognition of the potential significance of ideas may serve in itself to undermine the very elegance and analytical simplicity that has long constituted rational choice's principal appeal.<sup>57</sup>

Blyth further argues unlike rationalist institutionalists' failure in explaining stability, historical institutionalists' theories have been very successful in producing satisfactory and convincing research explaining stability. As discussed above for normative institutionalists, institutions are formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions, embedded in the organizational structure of the polity that constrain, rather than facilitate political action. Therefore historical institutionalism predicted 'a world of stability, path-dependence and persistence.' As known in such a world change was somehow hard to explain. Furthermore, if institutional contexts actively shaped individual behaviour how could one account for why agents ever got the desire to do something different in situation where starkly different behaviour emerges within one and the same long established institutions. Blyth gives an example from the Thatcher period in relation to the British economy, where 'change is difficult to explain because, if all parties in power do not behave the same way (as the Thatcher period clearly demonstrated), then one must wonder about where such agents ever got the desire to do anything different from their forebears' and 'if their choices were dictated by the institutional context, then how would agents within such institutions ever get the desire to do something different?'<sup>58</sup>

Within such path dependent institutions and their contingent historical trajectories, change was seen as occurring only due to large-scale external events such as wars or depressions or more generally due to *ad-hoc* exogenous punctuations.<sup>59</sup> Life often contradicted theory. Institutions appeared to change much more often than historical institutionalist's 'world of persistence' predicted. Blyth states that this is when historical institutionalists turned to ideas to explain change. Therefore, while rationalists turned to ideas to justify stability, historical institutionalists used ideas to explain change. Unlike rationalist paradigm, incorporating ideas in historical institutionalist analysis did not make their theory incoherent, nor violated their ontology. On the contrary, introducing ideas greatly enriched our understanding of politics by forcing all political scientists to question the notion of agents having fixed or 'given' interests.<sup>60</sup>

We have explored the general framework of how historical institutionalists were more successful than rational institutionalists in appropriating ideas in their theoretical paradigm. However, we need to explore the ideational turn, in more detail, focusing on the role accorded to ideas in political analysis and the relationship between material and ideational factors.

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57 Andreas Gofas and Colin Hay, 'The Ideas Debate in International and European Studies: Towards a Cartography and Critical Assessment', *IBEI Working Papers*, 2008/11, (Barcelona: CIDOP, 2008), p. 8.

58 Blyth, 'Institutions and Ideas', p. 301.

59 Stephen Krasner, 'Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics', *Comparative Politics*, 16, 1984, pp. 223-246

60 Blyth, 'Institutions and Ideas', pp. 307-310.

## ***The Ideational Turn***

The ideational turn has appeared in political studies since the late 1980s and has generated a profound implication for contemporary social policy research.<sup>61</sup> 'Ideational turn' refers to an upturn of interest in the idea in social studies, 'Ideational turn', the reflection of the role of idea on politics and policies, not surprisingly, leads to a fundamental and ontological question about the relationship between agency (or idea) and context.<sup>62</sup> Depending on the assumption on the relationship, as Hay argues, perspectives in social science could be divided into two categories: those who believe ideas should be accorded a casual role independent of material actors and those who do not. He also states that 'rather like the issue of structure and agency ..., positions on the relationship between the ideational and the material can be differentiated into those who privilege either moment in the process of social and political causation and those which explore the interaction between the two. Thus, in the same way that we can distinguish between simple and dialectical accounts of the relationship between structure and agency so we might differentiate between simple and dialectical accounts of the material-ideational relationship.'<sup>63</sup>

The materialist position claims that ideas are epiphenomenal-or in other words, they are simply the consequence of other factors and are therefore not worth studying in their own right.<sup>64</sup> One of the first proponents of this view were Marxists. Marx argued 'The phantoms formed in the human brain are [...] necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, [...] have no history, no development; but men, developing their material intercourse, alter, along with this, their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life.'<sup>65</sup> For Marx and historical materialists, ideas were best viewed, as the result of material factors, having little or no independent value or impact. Many contemporary scholars, predominantly rational choice theorists, realists and neo-realists have followed in Marx's footsteps viewing ideas of individuals and groups as primarily shaped by material circumstances and economic interests. Therefore, they also presume ideas could not have casual role and cannot account as independent variables of analysis. For E.H. Carr, the ideational is 'product of circumstances and interests and weapons framed for the furtherance of others.'<sup>66</sup>

As Hay noted idealist position (represented by postmodernists, interpretivists, deconstructivists, discourse analysis) is materialism's polar opposite and in general, idealists claim that there is no relationship between the material and the realm of

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61 Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes, *Interpreting British Governance*, (London: Routledge, 2003), Campbell, John L. (2002) 'Ideas, Politics, and Public Policy,' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, 21-38, Robin Corey, *Fear: The History of a Political Idea*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

62 Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 205-215.

63 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 205.

64 Sheri Berman, *The Social Democratic Moment: Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 16.

65 Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,' reprinted in Robert Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, (New York: Norton, 1978), p. 595.

66 J. Goldstein and R. O. Keohane, (eds.), *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 68. Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

language, text, discourse, ideational. They also reject casual relationship between the two; rather they try to 'establish the (discursive) conditions of existence of specific social and political practices.'<sup>67</sup>

The third position is that of constructivists, normative institutionalists, critical realists and namely, that privilege neither ideational, nor material, but rather adopt a more dialectical stance that both matter. Constructivists argue that 'we cannot hope to understand political behaviour without understanding the ideas actors hold about the environment in which they find themselves' and most importantly they accord ideas an independent casual role in political explanation.<sup>68</sup> Hay claims that 'the development of the system depends not merely on the context, the condition of the system itself and the preferences and/or rationality of the actors within it, but on the understandings of those actors. Such ideational variables may be difficult to gauge, but there are excellent reasons for thinking both that they exist and that they should be accorded a far more central role in contemporary political analysis.'<sup>69</sup>

A prominent critical realist, Margaret Archer, develops her morphogenetic approach, applying it to the problem of structure and agency. Since structure and agency constitute different levels of stratified social reality, each possesses distinctive emergent properties which are real and causally efficacious but irreducible to one another. The problem, therefore, is shown to be how to link the two rather than conflate them, as has been common theoretical practice. Archer not only rejects methodological individualism and holism, but argues that the debate between them has been replaced by a new one, between elisionary theorising and emergentist theories based on realist ontology of the social world. The morphogenetic approach is the sociological complement of transcendental realism, and together they provide a basis for non-conflationary theorizing which is also of direct utility to the practising social analyst. Archer further argues that the relationship between culture and agency is analytically similar to that between structure and agency. She, like Blyth is dissatisfied because existing theories tend to conflate culture and agency in manners similar to the way in which the structuralist and intentionalist reductively conflates structure and agency. Therefore culture and structure should be conceived of as relatively autonomous. Ideas 'should be accorded a crucial role in political explanations, since actors behave the way they do because they hold certain views about the social and political environment they inhabit. Moreover, those ideas cannot simply be derived from the context itself.'<sup>70</sup> Positioning of ideas and culture as major explanatory factors alongside structure and agency 'cuts against the grain of most current theorizing in political science by explicitly discussing when and how ideas influence political behaviour.'<sup>71</sup> Culture should be regarded as having a 'defined role' alongside structure and agency. Moreover 'the distinction between the realm of ideas (the ideational) and the material should not be seen as that between the realm of the superficial or non-real (the ideational) and that of the real (the material). Ideas and beliefs are both real and have real effects.'<sup>72</sup> McAnulla reflecting

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67 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 207.

68 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 208.

69 Colin Hay, "Taking Ideas Seriously" in Explanatory Political Analysis' in *The Interpretive Approach in Political Science: a Symposium*, *Political Studies Association*, BJPIR: 2004 VOL 6, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), pp. 129–164.

70 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 213.

71 'Review of Sheri Berman', *The Social Democratic Moment: Ideas and Politics in the Making of Interwar Europe*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 1.

72 Hay, *Political Analysis*, pp. 213.

on Archer's morphogenetic approach argues that the main aim of drawing a distinction between structure and culture is to avoid conflating the material and the ideational.<sup>73</sup>

The materialist failure to 'take ideas seriously' and the self-conceited assumptions of ideationalists are both unconstructive to move beyond the current vogue for epistemological polemic', as most recent theorizing on the structure-agency debate advises'.<sup>74</sup> Gofas and Colin argue that the 'incommensurability thesis between causal and constitutive logics is only credible in the context of a narrow, Humean, conception of causation. If we reject this in favour of a more inclusive (and ontologically realist) understanding then it is perfectly possible to chart the causal significance of constitutive processes and reconstrue the explanatory role of ideas as causally constitutive.<sup>75</sup>

Lowndes claims current theorizing in the discipline adopts a stance that 'political scientists [should] no longer think in the either/or terms of agency or structure, interests or institutions as the driving forces [and that] virtually all serious students of the discipline would say [good research] is a matter of a judicious blend of both'.<sup>76</sup> This is certainly true for the material-normative debate as well. To overcome such dualisms we have to acknowledge the distinct role of culture and ideas as a 'key meta-theoretical concept'.<sup>77</sup>

Therefore, ideational theory within the constructivist/normative institutionalist position offers a good way forward towards a dualistic approach of material and ideational factors without violating its ontological and epistemological premises and this study is positioned within this paradigm. Justification for such choice is first, the epistemological and ontological inconsistency rationalists encountered when appropriating ideas into their analysis, second, the belief that dualistic approach attributing casual role of normative factors is more inclusive and ontologically realist and third, the Balkan case of path dependent patterns of 'irrational' obstruction and 'irrational' cooperation, regardless of changing external factors could not be explained by materialist, or purely ideational explanations. After we have positioned this study in constructivist/normative institutionalist realm let us look in more detail, the main arguments of ideational theorists, working in that paradigm.

Ideas and beliefs are both real and have real effects. They 'should be accorded a crucial role in political explanations, since actors behave the way they do because they hold certain views about the social and political environment they inhabit'.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, those ideas cannot simply be derived from the context itself' and we can hardly assume that 'political actors are blessed with perfect information of their context. They have to make assumptions about their environment and about the future consequences of their actions and those of others if they are to act strategically'.<sup>79</sup> Therefore ideational theorists in constructivist/normative institutionalist paradigm clearly distinguish between, as Jervis

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73 Margaret Archer, *Realistic Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996).

74 Andreas Gofas and Colin Hay, 'The Ideas Debate in International and European Studies: Towards a Cartography and Critical Assessment' (January 2008). *IBEI Working Paper* No. 2008/11, p. 3.

75 Gofas and Hay, 'The Ideas Debate', p. 3.

76 Vivian Lowndes, 'Institutionalism' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (2nd edition), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (eds), (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.107.

77 Stuart McAnulla, 'Structure and Agency Theory and Methods' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (2nd edition), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (eds), (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 287.

78 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 213.

79 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 213.

put it, 'the operational milieu' (the world in which a decision is carried out) and the 'psychological milieu' (the world as the actor sees it).<sup>80</sup>

Hay implies actors rely upon cognitive short-cuts in the form of more or less conventional mappings of the terrain in which they find themselves...This suggests a very significant role for ideational factors in political analysis' and 'the ideas political actors hold about the environment are, then, crucial to the way they act and hence to political outcomes.'<sup>81</sup> Pierson also states that political actors should rely on a 'wide range of cognitive shortcuts in order to make sense of the social world.'<sup>82</sup>

Actors appropriate a world which is always already structured, yet they are confined to do so through lens of understanding and, inevitably, misunderstanding. The agent's point of access is then, irreducibly ideational [positioning] ideas at centre stage in political analysis for all but the most structuralist of positions.<sup>83</sup> Also the 'elementary screening devices used by individuals in looking at the world tend to obscure those elements of reality that are not consonant with prior attitudes. As far as possible, individuals see what they want to see.'<sup>84</sup>

Hay makes a significant contribution to the material-ideational dialectic. 'For particular ideas, narratives and paradigms to continue to provide cognitive templates through which actors interpret the world, they must retain a certain resonance with those actors' direct and mediated experiences.' In this way, the context comes to exert a discursive selectivity upon the understandings actors hold about it...However accurate and inaccurate, such understandings inform strategy and that strategy in turn yields both intended and unintended consequences. Unintended consequences, in particular, provide an opportunity for strategic learning, offering a clue to the inadequacies of existing understandings of the context and inviting revisions...In this way ideas about the context and the strategies they inform [might] evolve over time. Whether this results in a process of cumulative learning, as might be reflected, say, in more effective policy-making...can be answered only on case-by-case basis.'<sup>85</sup>

Not only the context influences ideas, but vice-versa such 'ideas, however, misinformed they may prove to have been, exert their own effect upon the development of the context over time through strategic action they inform.'<sup>86</sup> This in short represents the dialectical relationship between the ideational and the material in constructivist/normative institutionalist framework.

Ideational theorists within the constructivist/normative institutionalist paradigm argue that adoption of certain idea is directly linked to two important factors- 'carriers' and 'institutionalisation'. Bernstein argues that the adoption of such ideas will depend

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80 Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 13.

81 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 211.

82 Paul Pierson, 'When Effects Become Cause: Policy Feedback and Political Change', *World Politics*, 45, July 1993, p. 611.

83 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 213.

84 March and Olsen, *The New Institutionalism*, p. 20 in Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 31.

85 Hay, *Political Analysis*, pp. 212- 213.

86 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 214.

‘largely on the perceived legitimacy of the source of new ideas by relevant actors.’<sup>87</sup> Sikkink maintains that ‘ideas held by powerful individuals are the key to understanding the adoption of policies.’<sup>88</sup> The chief mechanism for this is the ability of a carrier to build a consensus around an idea, getting it accepted as the most suitable means of understanding and reacting to vents in a particular sphere.’<sup>89</sup>

Regarding institutionalisation, ‘most ideas have some power of their own ... but the social power of any set of ideas is magnified when those ideas are taken up by a powerful political organization, integrated with other ideological appeals, and widely disseminated.’<sup>90</sup> Indeed, one of the main arguments of ideational theorists is ‘that ideas acquire force when they find organizational means of expression.’<sup>91</sup> When ideas are institutionalised they ‘take a life of their own, changing the motivation and perception of political actors, affecting their decision making over the long term’, often regardless of changing external factors.<sup>92</sup> This is so because well-developed ideas ‘generally resist change and can even persist in the face of disconfirming evidence (belief perseverance)’.<sup>93</sup> Haas implied ‘faced with a new situation, we identify and interpret problems within existing frameworks and according to past protocols and then try to manage the problems according to operating procedures that we have applied in analogous cases. Aspects of a situation that cannot be dealt with in established ways are only incompletely perceived and processed, with the result that the salient dimensions of a problem or issue at hand are often ignored.’<sup>94</sup>

Normative ideational theorists claim that when new ideas and paradigms change old institutionalised ideas, policy change might occur. They also claim that in times of crisis and uncertainty it is more likely for new ideas to challenge old ideas.<sup>95</sup> For example, Berman says that ‘ideas play a greater role where situational stimuli are weakest or most confused. Also ‘political behaviour is a function of both the environmental situations in which actors find themselves and the ideas they use to interpret and respond to those situations, the less clear or direct pressures the environment provides, the more leeway actors will have to follow the dictates of their own beliefs.’<sup>96</sup> Similarly, Haas says ‘that ideas matter most during periods of great uncertainty: when political actors find both

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87 Steven Bernstein, ‘Ideas, Social Structure, and the Compromise of Liberal Environmentalism’, *European Journal of International Relations*, (6) 4, 2000, p. 465.

88 Kathryn Sikkink, *Ideas and Institutions: Developmentalism in Brazil and Argentina*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 26, 48.

89 G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, ‘Socialization and Hegemonic Power’, *International Organization*, 44, Summer 1990, p. 289 and

90 Hall in Martin Marcussen, *The Social Construction*, p. 20.

91 Peter Hall in Albert S. Yee, ‘The Causal Effects of Ideas on Policies’, *International Organization*, 50, 1, 1996, p. 92 in Claudia Fabbri, *An Analytical Framework for Understanding Processes of Regional Integration: The Role of Ideas and Institutions*, p. 10. See: Kathryn Sikkink, *Ideas and Institutions*, pp. 23-27, 248-250.

92 Peter Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning and the State: The Case of Economic Policy Making in Britain’, *Comparative Politics*, 25, April 1993.

93 Marcussen, *The Social Construction*, p. 17.

94 Peter M. Haas, ‘Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination’, *International Organization*, 46, 1, winter 1992, p. 28.

95 Clifford Geertz, ‘Ideology as a Cultural System’, in David Apter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent*, (New York: Free Press, 1964), pp. 60-65, Ann Swidler, ‘Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies’, *American Sociological Review*, 51, April 1986, p. 273, Peter Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Ithaca: N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 9-33.

96 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 35.

their most general cultural orientations and their most down-to-earth rules of thumb inadequate.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, studying crises proves to be very rewarding for students of ideas. During such times, ‘the historical legacies and structural factors that may normally influence political behaviour recede in importance. Crises are also times, however, when a shift in historical trajectories is possible because it is during such periods that traditional patterns of political, economic, and social life are questioned, providing political actors with unique opportunities to reshape dramatically the contexts within which they operate.’<sup>98</sup>

Hay makes important modification to this, stating that no matter how ‘tempting though it may seem to see ideas as somehow more significant-as “mattering more” in the uncertainty and confusion of the moment of crisis, this is a temptation we should resist. For it implies an ontological inconsistency-a variable relationship between the ideational and the material over time. Arguably more convincing, and certainly more consistent, is the view that the ideational and the material are always intimately connected but that the significance of that dialectical relationship is rather more obvious and immediate in a context in which one set of perceptions and cognitions is replaced by another. It is not that ideas matter more in times of crisis, then, so much that new ideas do. Once the crisis is resolved and a new paradigm installed, the ideas we hold may become internalized and unquestioned once again, but it does not mean that they cease to affect our behaviour.’<sup>99</sup>

Once we have selected the broad church of that position, historical institutionalism, amplified by ideas is advanced as best fit to the case study of path-dependent political behaviour on the Balkans. This study will employ the theoretical framework of Sheri Berman’s, *The Social Democratic Moment* to explore path-dependent political behaviour in the Balkans, as it represents an exemplary research which acknowledges the transformative power of ideas within historical institutionalist framework. However, Berman’s theory is amplified by Hay’s observation that ‘it is not that ideas matter more in times of crisis, then, so much that new ideas do’, which makes the dialectical relationship even more obvious and convincing.<sup>100</sup> I present Berman’s theory and Hay’s modification in the next section.

### ***Berman’s Ideational Theory***

Berman explores why the German and Swedish Social Democratic parties acted so differently in the pre-war and post-WWII-period, regardless of the fact that ‘they belonged to the same transnational political movement and faced similar political and social conditions’ which has had ‘crucial consequences for the fates of their countries and the world at large.’<sup>101</sup> Berman was puzzled by the fact that the interwar German Social Democratic Party (SPD), being the largest and most powerful social democratic party in the world at the time after taking the power in the interwar period ‘did not even attempt to fight the economic crisis which created political vacuum and facilitated Hitler’s ascent to power. In contrast Swedish Social Democrats (SAP) resisted the fascist threat and subsequently laid the foundations for the world’s most successful

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97 Peter M. Haas, ‘Introduction’, pp. 25-30.

98 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 35.

99 Hay, *Political Analysis*, pp. 214-215.

100 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 215.

101 Harvard University Press, *Review of Sheri Berman*.



experiment in social democracy. Berman argues each party had very different ideas about politics and economics; what she calls their ‘programmatically beliefs.’ Such opposing notions of socialism accounted for the different paths taken.

The German Social Democrats ideologically burdened by Marx’s intellectual legacy, which placed SPD as the leading actor of the revolution which was supposed to ‘come first in Germany’, could not later adequately face the economic crisis and implement any policies from the ‘anarchic capitalist system.’ While the SPD became ‘a kind of defender of the faith’, Swedish Social Democrats did not bear such ideological and expectational burden and were ‘free to interpret Marxism as a statement of goals, rather than of means.’<sup>102</sup> Therefore the SAP was much more ready to face the challenges of the economic depression flexibly, adopting new ideas about the economy and its performance, unlike their German counterparts who slavishly adhered to their programmatically beliefs ‘suspicious of reform, reluctant to embrace Keynesian solutions during the Depression, and inflexibly Marxist’ even at the height of the economic depression. It is ‘through such ideational inflexibility, Hitler came to power.’<sup>103</sup> Blyth contends that Berman’s study is so valuable because it introduces ideas so creating a convincing model of change within historical institutionalist framework without making the theory incoherent. In such a theory ideas have major explanatory power unlike in rationalist theory, where they are at best a sticking plaster for their existing theories.<sup>104</sup>

To continue the metaphor in such world ‘institutions are ‘crystallized ideas’ about how to organize things’, while ‘agents have ideas about what institutions to construct to produce a desired end... [Once established], ‘such institutions embody and give continuing content to agent’s wants...[Institutional change in such world] becomes the question of challenging the ideas such institutions rest upon.’<sup>105</sup> Ideas are neither reducible to individual preferences, nor to a mere structure (which Archer warns would be conflation of material and ideational). Ideas are distinct, powerful concepts which allow us to comprehend how structure and agency relate to one another over time.

Acknowledging more the role of ideas in contemporary politics, normative reservations have most recently been replaced by methodological concerns, most notably that ‘ideas are epiphenomenal—that is, they are simply the consequence of other factors and are therefore not worth studying in their own right’ and that they are vague, amorphous and ‘have never surrendered easily to empirical study or quantification’.<sup>106</sup> According to Berman to overcome the first reservation, for an ideational theorist most important is to show that ideas can be considered independent variables, it should be demonstrated that they cannot be reduced to some other (structural) factor in the *contemporary* system; Thus careful attention should be paid to the evolution and acceptance of an idea in order to be able to show that it indeed can be considered independent variable, which would require examining how different conditions enable certain ideas to take on a life of their own, influencing political behaviour over an extended period of time. Therefore, most important if this can be done is to show that over time an idea takes on a life of its own,

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102 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, pp. 176-180 and Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 305.

103 Stanley Hoffmann, review of Berman and Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 78, Number 2, March/April 1999.

104 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 310.

105 Blyth, ‘Institutions and Ideas’, p. 309 and Mark Blyth, ‘The Transformation of the Swedish Model: Economic Ideas, Distributional Conflict, and Institutional Change’, *World Politics*, 54, 2001, pp. 1-26.

106 Philip Converse, ‘The Nature of Belief Systems’, in D. Apter, *Ideology and Discontent*, (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 206 in Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 16.

*separate from the context within which it arose*-then the fact that its development was influenced by other factors is an analytically distinct subject that is only related to the ultimate outcomes being explained.

Berman also states to determine causality, then, requires two things: first, establishing a connection between the proposed independent and dependent variables, and, second, explaining *why* this connection exists-showing precisely how the independent variable influences the dependent one which translated to the study of ideas means we must not only show that ideas are *correlated* with political behaviour but also be able to explain how ideas *actually influenced* behaviour. Then the criteria for suggesting causality would seem to be met 'if it can be shown that a specific idea held at time T cannot be reduced to any other variable...and had an effect at time T+1.'<sup>107</sup>

To address the second reservation that ideas are too vague to study would require proper definition of terms, as a part of developing of a 'rigorous theoretical framework for the analysis of ideas [...] [Also] in order to be useful independent variables, ideas must be able to be clearly identified and associated with specific political actors.'<sup>108</sup> Berman operationalizes 'programmatic beliefs' which are positioned in between ideology, too broad to have explanatory power and policy positions, too narrow to be interesting. This research adopts that defining ideas in such middle range between ideologies and policies is in a good position to explain how political actors interpret such ideas and how such interpretation affects policy outcomes.

In short, Berman's ideational theory is concerned with two things: 'showing that particular idea can be considered independent variable, and, second, describing the mechanisms through which it influences the dependent variable'.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, first we need to examine how certain ideas are able to become and remain a powerful force in politics by looking at how different condition enable certain ideas to attain political salience and start to influence political behaviour over an extended period. Berman states that two factors in particular stand out: carriers and institutionalization.

Ideas 'achieve political salience through carriers. In order 'to be heard in a world where different ideas are calling out for attention, an idea must be adopted by a person or group that is able to make others listen or render them receptive. Carriers act as intellectual entrepreneurs, bringing different ideas into the political system' and the position of such carriers in the system 'will affect the likelihood of an idea's gaining political salience: the greater the influence of the carrier, the greater the chance that the idea carried will attain political importance.'<sup>110</sup> Berman argues the lengthier and more successful the carrier's career, the more likely it is that his or her ideas ideas will gain acceptance. The longer a carrier has to mobilize support and provides incentives and disincentives for cooperation, the greater will be the chance that others will come to accept the idea. Prominent carriers, moreover, 'will be better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene.' Here is a situation where leadership 'can play a crucial role in shaping history: by inserting new ideas into the political arena and working to ensure their acceptance by others, individuals can critically influence the evolution of politics.'<sup>111</sup>

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107 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 18.

108 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 19.

109 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 24.

110 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 25.

111 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 25

However recognizing the power of agency in originating a certain idea, should be regarded in the broad context that ‘while carriers can play a key role in inserting ideas into political debate and helping them gain salience, the most important factor determining whether ideas are able to influence politics over the long term is ‘institutionalisation’, or ‘whether or not an idea becomes embedded in an institution or organization.’ When ideas are institutionalised they ‘take a life of their own, changing the motivation and perception of political actors, affecting their decision making over the long term’, often regardless of changing external factors.<sup>112</sup> If investigating what factors enable certain ideas to become and remain a powerful force is one part of the study of the connection between ideas and politics, ‘another is examining how ideas exert an independent influence over political behaviour’, or in other words: What are the mechanisms by which ideas shape the choices of political actors?<sup>113</sup> What do actors want: Ideational theory argues that ‘preferences are endogenous: political actors strive to ensure that their behaviour coincides to as great a degree as possible with their own particular ideas about the way the world works... [and] action is often based more on identifying the normatively appropriate behaviour than on calculating the return expected from alternative choices [Also the behaviour of political actors] will often be motivated by an attempt to achieve the particular ends posited as paramount by ideas they hold: the policy preferences of political actors will, in other words, be shaped primarily by the normative guidelines and criteria provided by their ideas.’<sup>114</sup> Why do actors want that: Ideational theory argues ‘ideas play a crucial role in shaping how political actors perceive the world around them’ and ‘ideas play a crucial role in structuring actors’ views of the world by providing a filter or channel through which information about the external environment must pass’, therefore political behaviour will often be based by distorted or incomplete information flows.<sup>115</sup>

Therefore, based on Berman’s ideational theory we could derive certain hypotheses and later test them through the case studies. Ideational explanations predict political actors will evaluate their options based on their expected psychic returns—on the extent they fit in with the actor’s ideas, rather than what is most likely to provide the greatest reward (given a particular economic situation, for example, as political economy explanations would predict).<sup>116</sup> Therefore, appropriateness would then be the most important factor, contributing to the choice of policy alternatives and since ‘definition of what is appropriate will remain reasonably constant *within a given set of ideas, ideational explanations predict that a particular actor will make similar choices over time, even as the environment changes.*’<sup>117</sup> At the same time since ‘decision making should often be influenced by incomplete or distorted information flows, [actors] with different ideas should consequently evaluate similar situations in different ways and judge the value of different alternative courses of action accordingly. *Ideational explanations predict, therefore, that actors with different ideas will make different decisions, even when*

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112 Peter Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning and the State: The Case of Economic Policy Making in Britain’, *Comparative Politics*, 25, April 1993.

113 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 29.

114 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 29.

115 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 30

116 Peter Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning and the State: The Case of Economic Policy Making in Britain’, *Comparative Politics*, 25, April 1993; ‘The Movement from Keynesianism to Monetarism: Institutional Analysis and British Economic Policy in the 1970s’ in K.Thelen and S. Steinmo, et al., Eds., *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

117 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 32. (emphasis in the original)

placed in similar environments.’<sup>118</sup> Also change is possible, when new ideas are powerful enough to challenge or supplant political elites’ own particular ideas about the way the world works. If ideational theory is correct, political actors will be much less sensitive to changes in the external environment and less concerned with strategic calculation, rather with logic of appropriateness. Indeed ‘if an ideational explanation is correct, we should find that decision making is a path-dependent rather than an efficiency driven process, in which previous decisions and cognitive criteria constrain and facilitate the evolution of political choice.’<sup>119</sup> An action, fundamentally different than that dictated by institutional contexts, would not only clash with political elites’ own perception of what is right but also be regarded by the public as a loss of integrity, national treason and lack of credibility. Potential courses of friendly or cooperative action ‘that differed from previous behaviour [of hostility] were rejected simply because they represented a break with the past, while other initiatives were legitimized when practical or intellectual precedents for them could be found.’<sup>120</sup>

### **Applying Berman’s ideational theory to the case**

Berman claims that in ideational theory, the case selection ‘in an ideal scenario,... would have to use cases where the outcomes to be explained vary and the relevant political actors are matched in everything except the ideas they hold. In such a situation everything would be held constant except the proposed independent variable (ideas), thereby ensuring that an analysis could provide us with unequivocal evidence of causality. In the real world, however, it is virtually impossible to find such situations.

Consequently, the best the political scientist can attempt is to construct good comparisons and to be explicit about their drawbacks, as well as alternative explanations. As Marc Bloch, one of the great comparativists, once noted, a good comparison involves choosing ‘from one or several situations, two or more phenomena which appear at first sight to offer certain analogies between them; then to trace their line of evolution, to note the likenesses and differences, and as far as possible explain them.’ Bulgarian and Greek case treated here seem to fit these criteria well.

For centuries they were all part of the Ottoman Empire and have experienced their independence revolutions at nearly the same time at the middle of the XIX century, they had similar political, social and economic conditions and were nearly equal in population and size.

In Berman’s theory appropriateness is the most important factor, contributing to the choice of policy alternatives and since definition of what is appropriate would remain reasonably constant *within a given set of ideas, a particular actor will make similar choices over time, even as the environment changes.*

Viewed from such theoretical perspective influential ideas about neighbours became institutionalized in Balkan polities during the time of their modern state formation, and later taking a life on their own, started to influence subsequent policies towards that neighbour, often regardless of changing external environments. This theory fits the case

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118 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 33. (emphasis in the original)

119 John Campbell, ‘Recent Trends in Institutional Analysis: Bringing Culture Back into Political Economy’ paper presented to the *Seminar on the State and Capitalism since 1800*, Harvard University, 1995, p. 1.

120 Sheri Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 33.

well and allows for formulation of the hypothesis that Greece and Bulgaria have formulated persistent policies of obstruction during most of the XX c. due to institutionalized ideas of the other as an enemy and normative prescriptions that prevented cooperation. Moreover, Greece and Bulgaria kept very antagonistic position towards each other with remarkable persistence, regardless of changing external factors and were always on opposite sides during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s. Vice versa, the Serbian national programme stood opposed to Bulgarian and Albanian national ideas and because of the Serbian animosity to Turkey, it is no surprise Serbia was perceived as the closest natural ally of Greece. Therefore, Greece and Serbia (later Yugoslavia) sided not only in both Balkan Wars 1912-1913, but also in the two World Wars and maintained warm relations, in spite of the ideological differences during the Cold War and regardless of very different external environments.

Furthermore, Berman predicts that actors with different ideas will make different decisions, even when placed in similar environments. Also change is possible, when new ideas are powerful enough to challenge or supplant political elites' own particular ideas about the way the world works. In Berman's case where the German and Swedish Social Democratic parties had very different ideas about politics and economics and such opposing notions of socialism accounted for the different paths taken. Acting on their different programmatic beliefs, responded so differently in the pre-war and post-WWII-period, regardless of the fact that 'they belonged to the same transnational political movement and faced similar political and social conditions. Similarly, Greek and Bulgarian political elites could only start cooperating, only after an idea powerful enough (EU-idea) was able to challenge old programmatic beliefs of friends and enemies and old normative criteria if cooperation was possible, in spite of the fact that impetus for cooperation and possible benefits from such cooperation were often an available option long before the 1990s. However, that was very hard to materialize in the old ideational set-up.

The thesis tests Berman's theory by not only exploring persistence, regardless of changing environments (first research question and hypothesis), but also exploring change, attributed to powerful new ideas, challenging old path-dependent ideas (second research question and hypothesis).

This first hypothesis that, in Greece and Bulgaria, path-dependent programmatic beliefs influence policy preferences towards the other will be tested in the ideational mapping chapters of Greece and Bulgaria.

The second hypothesis that the EU idea is the first idea, powerful enough, to successfully challenge obstruction ideas and lead to policy change is tried in the two empirical chapters on transport infrastructure in SEE in 1990-2000 and in 2000-2010, respectively.

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this chapter was to justify why new institutionalism, amplified by ideas was selected as a best fit to the case study, to present the theory selected and how its is applied to the Greek-Bulgarian case study. The chapter first explored the rise of new institutionalist paradigm in current political science as a reaction to the inherent problem rational choice and state theorists' analysis encountered when they had to account for persistence and change respectively. The different strains of new institutionalism, and namely- historical, rational and sociological were explored as well. Similar to earlier

turn to institutions, more recently ideas were introduced as a 'fix' by normative and rational institutionalist framework to better explain why institutions changed or persisted, respectively. Historical institutionalism was identified as a paradigm that incorporates ideas more successfully within its paradigm, without violating its ontological or epistemological basis.

Then the chapter looked at the ideational turn in political science to give more detail on the debate of ideas, presenting how ideational, material and constructivist approaches incorporated ideas in their analysis. By elaborating on similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses of each approach historical institutionalism plus ideas is identified as the best fit for the case studies.

Third, the chapter explored Berman's ideational theory. This theory was selected as it is one of the exemplary 'new institutionalism plus ideas' studies, creating a convincing model of change within historical institutionalist framework, without making the theory incoherent. End of the chapter elaborates on applying Berman's ideational theory to the selected case of path-dependent Balkan political behaviour and the methods to do that.

After we have derived two hypotheses from Berman's ideational theory, we will test them in the next four chapters that present our Greek-Bulgarian empirical case. The Greek and Bulgarian ideas and behaviour chapters (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), reflect on the first research question to test the hypothesis that Bulgarian and Greek modern states' remarkably persistent mutual obstruction during most of the XX c., regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. The second question and hypothesis if EU idea could lead to ideational and policy change will be tested in the two empirical chapters (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6) on transport infrastructure during the 1990s and 2000s.

### Chapter 3. Ideational Mapping and Elite Behaviour: The Case of Greece

*A man encounters an unfriendly group of warriors in the jungle.*

*'Are you with us or with the others?' the warriors ask.*

*'With you' is the man's immediate answer.*

*'Sorry', the warriors' retort, 'we are the others.'*<sup>1</sup>

#### **Introduction**

One of the two key research questions of this study is why and how nineteenth century emerging modern Bulgarian and Greek states, despite so many similarities, have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other, that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during most of the twentieth century.: the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s. The second explores if after 1990, we could observe policy change.

The Greek and Bulgarian ideas and behaviour chapters, reflect on the first research question to test the hypothesis that Bulgarian and Greek modern states' remarkably persistent mutual obstruction during most of the twentieth century, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatically beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. From the very formation of their modern states, Bulgaria and Greece had clashing ideas for development of their states and such institutionalized ideas later informed political elites that cooperation with the other was highly inappropriate, which led to the choice of obstruction policies towards the other in the explored period. The second question and hypothesis if EU idea could lead to ideational and policy change will be tested in the two empirical chapters on transport infrastructure.

Thus the independent variable in our case is the set of ideas (programmatically beliefs), institutionalized in Greek and Bulgarian government institutions about the neighbour, which largely determine if cooperation with the neighbour is normatively appropriate (possible). The dependent variable is the choice of policy towards that neighbour in key historical periods during the XXc. investigated in this study.

The chapter describes Greek political and cultural development in the early nineteenth century, focusing on the period after the modern Greek state formation and the development of the Greek programmatically beliefs towards Bulgaria. This, in other words, means identifying the ideational map how in Greece, or in other words how the idea 'Bulgarians are an enemy' crystallized, why exactly that idea for the neighbour was adopted, who were the carriers of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up and identity of the modern Greek state in the late XIX c. Then the chapter explores how later acting under the influence of such programmatically beliefs, Greek political elites decided on policies of obstruction towards Bulgarians with remarkable persistence during most of the XX c.(Balkan Wars, WWI, WWII, the Cold War), regardless of changing external factors.

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<sup>1</sup> Loucas Tsilas, quoted in G. T. Allison and K. Nicolaidis (eds.), 'Introduction', *The Greek Paradox*, (Boston: The MIT Press, 1997).

## ***The Megale Idea: Carriers and Institutionalisation***

*Constantinople, not Istanbul...*

The Modern Greek Enlightenment (Diafotismos/Διαφωτισμός) of the eighteenth century was given impetus by the Greek predominance in trade and education, in the Ottoman Empire. Greek merchants financed a large number of young Greeks to study in universities in Italy and the German states. There they were introduced to the ideas of the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The Greek students also became aware of the admiration that their Western counterparts had for the culture and language of ancient Greece and Byzantium, this realization arousing a consciousness of their own past. Most notable among this first wave of intellectual entrepreneurs of Greek nationalism were Riggas Feraios and Adamantios Korais (see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4). In the half century, leading up to 1821 a veritable flood of books on ancient Greek, literature and history of the ancient Greek world was written and published for an eager Greek readership. Such scholarship influenced second wave of intellectual carriers, such as Spyridon Zampelios and Constantine Paparrigopoulos to come with the idea that finally tied modern Greece to its classical and medieval roots, a position which implied valid claims to all the lands of the Byzantine Empire, which in turn led to the crystallization of the Μεγάλη Ιδέα (*Megale Idea*), which is Greek for *Great Idea*. There could hardly be a better example of a powerful idea, brought in by prominent carriers that originated in a critical period of time, and which became institutionally embedded and took a life of its own.

*The Great Idea* is the crystallized nationalist ideology which emerged as a result of the Modern Greek Enlightenment of the nineteenth century with the goal of uniting all former territories of the Medieval Byzantine Empire into a modern Greek state. This, however, disregarded the demographical and cultural realities of the region because the former Byzantine Empire's territories, were now populated by Slavic, Albanian, Turkish, Vlach populations after hundreds of years of Ottoman rule. However to the Greek Enlightenment leaders and their followers, such as Feraios, Korais, Paparrigopolous and Zampelios, 'the Grand Idea echo[ed] in its ardour, "an amalgamation of Greece's ancient glories and the grandeur of Byzantium."'.<sup>2</sup> Such leaders also dreamt of the recovery of Constantinople and the re-creation of Christian Byzantium with all the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire, included in this Greek world. The Megale Idea was a project much larger than recapturing of territories, but 'was [also] the aspiration for [total] Greek cultural and economic dominance [over the whole Orthodox population] within the Ottoman Empire'.<sup>3</sup> Influenced by the Megale Idea, Greek modern states's first leaders, such as Ioannis Kolettis, believed there were two great centres of Hellenism: Athens and Constantinople. Athens was just the capital of the Greek kingdom, but Constantinople was the coveted capital city of the projected big state.<sup>4</sup>

After we have identified what the main Greek nationalist idea is, we need to identify who were the carriers of this idea, why precisely that idea gained salience and how it became institutionalized. After nearly 400 years of Ottoman domination, at the end of the eighteenth century, numerous Western educated Greek émigrés and others began questioning the political and economic status quo of current Greek political, economic and social life. Such critical period of challenging the old ideas of Greek people's

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2 George Leon, *Greece and the Great Powers*, 1914-1917, (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1974), p. 105.

3 Leon, *Greece and the Great Powers*, pp. 32-65.

4 Michael Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922* (2nd ed.), (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1999), p. 2.



existence as Ottoman subjects was reached because by the end of 18th century the Greek population has gained momentum to stimulate mass support for action, due to its growing comparatively prosperous class of merchants, sailors, tax-farmers, many of which were increasingly dissatisfied with the political, economic and social status quo.<sup>5</sup> There was even bigger support for change among people who did not share the power and prosperity of collaboration with the Ottomans. The growing material foundation for a critical change was coupled with the process of national awakening. Ideational revolutionary entrepreneurs were empowered by the newly accumulated economic wealth and influenced by the new ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The material and ideational foundations, discussed above signified that at the turn of the nineteenth century, Greek society was entering into a critical period of change. This created an ideational vacuum and opened the market for ideas. Ideational theory states that to be heard in a world where different ideas are calling out for attention, an idea must be adopted by a person or group that is able to make others listen or render them receptive. Carriers act as intellectual entrepreneurs, bringing different ideas into the political system.

In the Greek case, influential ideational entrepreneurs soon appeared. Enlightenment leaders, such as Korais and Feraios, could appeal to both -merchants and peasants using their belief systems, united behind the idea of a Greece free from Ottoman rule. Merchants and entrepreneurs found the economic and political concepts of liberalism and the Enlightenment attractive and the Ottoman domination as hindering their economic interests. Peasants under Ottoman rule, who were hardly influenced by Enlightenment ideas, but rather by Greek Orthodox Christianity found the idea of independence as a chance to change their deprived economic and political status quo.

The carriers who crystallized the language and ideas for revolutionary struggle came from the rich and prominent eighteenth century Greek diaspora in places like Paris, Vienna, Livorno, Calabria, Bari, Alexandria, Liverpool and London. They were intellectual entrepreneurs whose ideas were widely acknowledged by both prosperous class and peasants and later institutionalized. Most influential were Adamantios Korais and Rigas Velesinlis-Feraios.<sup>6</sup> Korais ideational input was mostly cultural, while

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5 Along with the religious advantage of the Constantinople patriarch who was delegated the right to administer, to tax, and to exercise justice over all the Christians in the Empire, Greeks were also allowed by the Ottomans to hold various administrative position in the high administration such as the office of the Dragoman, the Sultan's interpreters' service, some participated in diplomatic negotiation or acted even as ambassadors, or on lower level as contractors to the Ottoman court, supplying food and other services or as contractors for tax-farmers (men who bid to collect a district's taxes, and took their profits from excess revenues squeezed out of the peasants). Greeks outside of the administration often acted as commercial agents, ship owners and captains.

6 Adamantios Korais (1748-1833) was born in Smyrna. He was a humanist scholar credited with laying the foundations of Modern Greek literature and a major figure in the Greek Enlightenment. His activities paved the way for the Greek War of Independence and emergence of a purified form of the Greek language. The Britannica asserts that 'his influence on the modern Greek language and culture has been compared to that of Dante on Italian and Martin Luther on German.' Korais graduated from the school of medicine of the University of Montpellier in 1788 and was to spend most of his life as an expatriate in Paris, pursuing literary career. Source: Adamántios Korais. (2008) in Encyclopaedia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322120/Adamantios-Korais>, assessed July 2008.

Rigas Feraios (1757-1798) was born in Velesino, Thessaly. He received his education at the Ampelakion School. He later went to the monastic community of Mount Athos, and later became a clerk for the Wallachian Prince Nicholas

Velestinlis' was largely political. Most of Korais' works were published with the help of merchants from Chios. He identified language with nationality which challenged the centuries old idea of identification solely on the basis of religion, regardless of national, ethnic or cultural differences. This idea, influenced by the Enlightenment was easily accepted by intellectuals as by the time it was brought in all the necessary preconditions (such as growing material wealth, increased national awareness, western revolutionary ideas) for an ideational change were present. Korais redefined the Greek language and promoted a purified form known as *Katharevousa*. He also propagated the secular cultural national awareness and he tried to revive past Greek glories, writing modern versions of tales from Greek antiquity, translated parts of Herodotus and Homer, and composed a Greek language dictionary. Korais also believed that mass education was the pre-requisite for Greek national awakening, self-identification and liberation. This would seem to require a modern state to raise taxes, make policy and get children to school. Korais played an important part in the shaping of a new consciousness among the intelligentsia, which later facilitated the creation of a new national movement.

Rigas Velestinlis-Fereos, known as Rigas Feraios was the other prominent ideational entrepreneur in the Megale formation. In 1797, Velestinlis published *The Revolutionary Manifesto* that 'envisaged a large country occupying both the Balkans and Anatolia, sheltering all the ethnic groups found there but ruled according to Greek ideas.'<sup>7</sup> His manifesto was the first blueprint for a new Greek state that would rise from the ashes of revolution against the Ottoman Empire. Since its inception the Greek national idea was a project not only for liberating all Greeks, but restoring as many of the former territories of the Byzantium Empire, united in some kind of form of modern Greek state, with the capital at Constantinople.<sup>8</sup>

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Mavrogenes. Feraios was developing support for an uprising against the Ottomans by meeting with Greek bishops and guerrilla leaders. Later he moved to Bucharest to serve for some time as dragoman at the French consulate. He moved to Vienna around 1793, where he was asking for support for a Greek uprising from Napoleon Bonaparte. He printed pamphlets, translated into Greek foreign classics, edited newspapers, created and published a proposed political map of Great Greece which included Constantinople. Source: E. M. Edmonds, *Rhigas Pheraios* (London, 1890).

7 Rigas Velenstinlis (Feraios) (1797), *The Revolutionary Manifesto*, in Vranousis L. (1958), *Rigas*, Basic Library, Athens.

8 The economic and religious advances which Ottomans allowed to the Greeks helped to keep alive visions of a revived state among the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover they created the pre-conditions for Greek' feeling of superiority above the other Christian subjects of the Empire, which was later crystallized in the Greek Megale.



*Fig. 3 Adamantios Korais (1748-1833)  
1798) (Αδαμάντιος Κοραΐς)*



*Fig. 4 Rigas Velestinlis Feraios (1757-  
1798) (Ρήγας Βελεστινλής- Φεραΐος)*



*Fig. 5 Constantine Paparrigopoulos (1815-1891)  
(Κωνσταντίνος Παπαρρηγόπουλος)<sup>9</sup>*

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9 Source: Greek War of Independence, Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/244575/War-of-Greek-Independence#tab=active~checked%2Citems~checked&title=War%20of%20Greek%20Independence%20--%20Britannica%20Online%20Encyclopedia>, accessed October, 2008.

Spyridon Zampelios and Constantine Paparrigopoulos (1815-1891) can be regarded as the second wave of modern Greek intellectual entrepreneurs after Korais and Feraios, who set the basis for the formation of national identity in modern Greek society (Fig. 5). Zampelios and Paparrigopoulos had introduced influential ideas into the Greek political and cultural context that were institutionalized, complementing the ideas of Korais and Feraios. Zampelios introduced a tripartite examination of Greek history, ancient Hellenism, medieval Hellenism and modern Hellenism, directly appropriating the Ancient Greek and Byzantine heritage.<sup>10</sup> Byzantium's Greek portrayal in the work of Zampelios supported the idea that the 'ancient Greek civilization had not faded away, but had been creatively reshaped as it met Christianity, which took place during the Byzantine Empire.' Another of his influential ideas was the term Greek-Christian, by which he introduced the union of Hellenism and Christianity. According to Zampelios, the merging of these two different traditions (ancient Greek civilisation, Christianity) occurred inside the Byzantine Empire, and it gradually penetrated and marked it. Zampelios' purpose was a total national history to be written for the past, the continuous course of the Greek nation from antiquity till the 19th century, to be narrated.<sup>11</sup> Only by such continuity the theories of Fallmerayer, who supported that the Greek nation had disappeared because of the descent of Slavs and Albanians to Greek territory during the 6th-10th century could be refuted.<sup>12</sup>

That monumental task was undertaken by Paparrigopoulos.<sup>13</sup> His work shows how ideas underlay politics. Paparrigopoulos is deemed 'the greatest historian of modern

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10 Spyridon Zampelios (1815-1881) was born in Lefkada, having studied in Corfu (Ionian Academy) and Pisa, Italy, he had been familiarised with Western European intellectual and ideological tendencies, mainly the one of Romanticism, in the framework of which the embellishment of notions on the Middle Ages was attempted. Sp. Zampelios, who shaped his ideology and intellect in this climate, became interested in the Byzantium and attempted to prove that it was Greek. By the work of Sp. Zampelios and mostly the Folklore Songs of Greece, published after a historical study on Medieval Hellenism (1852) and the Byzantine Studies. On sources of the New Greek Nationality from 800 to 1000 A.D. (1857) the Byzantium was organically placed in a new perspective as regarded the course of the Greek nation and the unbroken continuation of its civilisation from Antiquity till the 19th century. Within this perspective, the Byzantium was seen as a cradle of shaping the special character of the modern (Greek-Christian) civilisation.

Source: *K Paparrigopolous and the History of the Greek Nation*,

[http://www2.fhw.gr/chronos/12/en/1833\\_1897/society/+sfgRmluamFuX1R5cGU9amF2YSZGaW5qYW5fRW50cniQb2lu dD1tZW51My5jbGFzcw==+/people/02.html](http://www2.fhw.gr/chronos/12/en/1833_1897/society/+sfgRmluamFuX1R5cGU9amF2YSZGaW5qYW5fRW50cniQb2lu dD1tZW51My5jbGFzcw==+/people/02.html), accessed July 2008.

11 Pavlos Karolidis, 'Biography of Constantine Paparrigopoulos' in *History of the Hellenic Nation*, Volume I, Editions: Eleftheroudakis, 1925, p. 5.

12 Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790 –1861) Tyrolean traveller, journalist, politician and historian, who is well known for his theories concerning the racial origins of the Greeks, where he claims that 'The race of the Hellenes has been wiped out in Europe. Physical beauty, intellectual brilliance, innate harmony and simplicity, art, competition, city, village, the splendour of column and temple — indeed, even the name has disappeared from the surface of the Greek continent... Not the slightest drop of undiluted Hellenic blood flows in the veins of the Christian population of present-day Greece Source: T. Leeb, Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, *Publizist und Politiker zwischen Revolution und Reaktion* (Munich, 1996), p. 5.

13 Constantine Paparrigopoulos (1815-1891) was born in Constantinople, studied in France and Germany and was permanently installed in Greece in 1834. At first he worked as an employee at the Ministry of Justice, then taught in the secondary education sector, and in 1851 he was elected professor of history at the University. His first piece of writing was the study On the settlement of some Slavic nations in the Peloponnese in 1843. The goal to which he was devoted was the refutation of the theories of the German historian Fallmerayer. In his famous work History of the Greek Nation, From Antiquity till Modern Times which was published in five volumes from 1860 to 1874 he conceived and wrote the entire national history. In this work he adopted the tripartite examination of periods already introduced by Sp. Zampelios (ancient Hellenism, medieval Hellenism, modern Hellenism) and used it as a tool for the narration of the course of the

Greece, because he was the first who, in his six-volume *History of the Hellenic Nation*, regarded the history of Greece from the ancient years onwards as a unity, insisting on the continuity of the Greek nation. At the same time he promoted the importance of the Byzantine Empire and of the Byzantine history in general.<sup>14</sup> Paparregopoulos utilizing the ideas of Zampelios introduced the powerful idea that Modern Greeks were direct descendants of ancient Greeks and the Byzantium Empire.

According to ideational theories, the carrier's status within the system will affect the likelihood of an idea's gaining political salience: the greater the influence of the carrier, the greater the chance that the idea carried will attain political importance. Also the lengthier and more successful the carrier's career, the more likely it is that his or her ideas will gain acceptance. The longer a carrier has to mobilize support and provides incentives and disincentives for cooperation, the greater will be the chance that others will come to accept the idea. The ideas of Korais, Feraios, Zampelios and Paparrigopolous achieved political salience among so many competing ideas through their prominent status in Greek society. They were able to make others 'listen' through their position as government officials, university professors and intellectuals and prolific writers. Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming intellectual elite of the young Greek state toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances.

Korais and Veletinlis's had an instrumental role in the shaping of a new consciousness among the intelligentsia, which later facilitated the creation of a new national movement. Korais could do that through his position as university lecturer in Paris and through his numerous literary contributions, sponsored by the Chios merchants. Veletinlis' role could make others listen to his ideas through the Greek-language newspaper, *Ephemeris*, published in Vienna (where he created and published a proposed political map of *Great Greece* which included Constantinople), through his Revolutionary Manifesto and published poems and books about Greek history that became widely popular. He was aware that his ideas will attain political importance, justified by his words 'I have sown a rich seed; the hour is coming when my country will reap its glorious fruits'.<sup>15</sup>

Paparrigopolous could maintain the importance of his ideas through his unique position as the greatest historian of modern Greece, his longevity as ideational carrier through his books, magazines, university lectures, government appointments, combined with his uncommon talent of writing style. By virtue of such particular talents and long tenure as a public figure, he could exert unparalleled influence over the development of the national narrative of the forming modern Greek state. Because of his profound surveys, the disdain towards the Byzantine history was limited. In 1843, while working in the Ministry of Justice, Paparrigopoulos published his first survey, *About the emigration of Slav tribes in Peloponnese*, contradicting Fallmerayer's opinion that modern Greeks are of Slav descent, having no racial relation with the ancient Greeks. In 1844, he published his second survey, *The last year of the Greek independence*, describing the fall of Corinth.<sup>16</sup> In 1855, he gave important lecture as professor of the university,

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Greek nation throughout the centuries. Source: *K Paparrigopolous and the History of the Greek Nation*, [http://www2.fhw.gr/chronos/12/en/1833\\_1897/society/people/03.html](http://www2.fhw.gr/chronos/12/en/1833_1897/society/people/03.html), accessed July 2008.

14 Karolidis, 'Biography of Constantine Paparregopoulos', p. 5.

15 Peter Mackridge, 'Aspects of language and identity in the Greek peninsula since the eighteenth century', *The Newsletter of the Society Farsarotul*, Volume XXI & XXII, Issues 1 & 2.

16 Karolidis, 'Biography of Constantine Paparregopoulos', p. 6.

contradicting a theory that did not recognise the importance of the Dorian influence on the civilization of ancient Greece. In 1851 Paparrigopolous became a professor of history of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. His classes at the University, 'which constituted the raw material for the writing of his memorable History, were frequently published in *Pandora* magazine, of which he was the co-publisher, as well as in the Athenian Press.'<sup>17</sup> Their work did not relate to only a closed and restricted circle of specialists and academics. It was directed at the society of their times, in order to strengthen their national self-knowledge.

His ideas remained a force in politics long after he has left the scene became embedded in the institutions of the liberated Greek state, and most notably through school textbooks in the educational system and through public discourse in government institutions. He could make others listen through his position as most respected Greek historian, his position in the Ministry of Justice, his longevity as university professor and public figure and his prolific publications in the press. As an example the idea for historical continuity from the antiquity to 19th century and that modern Greeks are direct descendents of Ancient Greece and Byzantium penetrated most state institutions. The other idea Greek-Christian which was devised also did not remain just a simple instrument of analysis in the hands of specialists. Both ideas became a canvass on which the ideology of the Greek state was developed and shaped, becoming part of the self-understanding and identity of Greeks. The content of education, the orientation of historical studies and the study of tradition (folklore) were organised on this basis.'<sup>18</sup> As a result of those ideas the Byzantine Empire, which had now been acclaimed a cultural mould of the Greek state which was still small, became the model for its territorial expansion. The Megale, which was nebulous until that time, acquired flesh and bones. If the works of Korais and Feraios laid the broad foundations of the Megale Idea in unstructured and idealistic way, the second wave of ideational entrepreneurs, such as Zampelios and Paparrigopolous crystallized 'what, why and how' had to be achieved.

Prominent carriers, moreover, will be better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene. The chief mechanism for this is the ability of a carrier to build a consensus around an idea, getting it accepted as the most suitable means of understanding and reacting to vents in a particular sphere.'<sup>19</sup> Here is a situation where leadership 'can play a crucial role in shaping history: by inserting new ideas into the political arena and working to ensure their acceptance by others, individuals can critically influence the evolution of politics. This explains why precisely Megale Idea was adopted and not some other idea. Korais, Feraios, Paparrigopolous and Zampelios were successful through their professional positions and literary scholarship to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Greek state is in line with the Megale Idea. We have already identified the Megale idea and who were its carriers. In theory,

while carriers can play a key role in inserting ideas into political debate and helping them gain salience, the most important factor determining whether ideas are able to influence politics over the long term is 'institutionalisation', or in other words 'whether or not an idea becomes embedded in an institution or organization.' When ideas are

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17 Karolidis, 'Biography of Constantine Paparregopoulos', p. 8.

18 Karolidis, 'Biography of Constantine Paparregopoulos', p. 20.

19 G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, 'Socialization and Hegemonic Power', *International Organization*, 44, Summer 1990, p. 289 and

institutionalised they ‘take a life of their own, changing the motivation and perception of political actors, affecting their decision making over the long term.’<sup>20</sup>

1830-1832 is the critical juncture, when most of the institutions of the new Greek state were founded and the ideational legacy of Feraios, Korais and others that largely shaped the Megale Idea, was institutionalised mostly through the educational system and history textbooks. Several scholars on the topic of schooling and education contend that ‘history textbooks have traditionally served as a tool to transmit historical information that forms in an individual’s conscious and collective memory a basic concept of a national identity-especially when some form of overarching national history is explicitly introduced.’<sup>21</sup>

Education in Greece after the Greek Revolution was the main driving force in shaping and inculcating a Greek national identity through a connection to the ancient Greek past.<sup>22</sup> The Megale legacy was further enhanced by Paparrigopolous and Zampleios’ ideas. For example, in 1853 Paparrigopoulos published a history school textbook, which was widely used in the Greek schools for years to come.<sup>23</sup> Once the Greek state incorporated the ideas for restoring the territories of the former Byzantium Empire and the struggle for incorporating most Christian subjects in a modern Greek state, those ideas ‘took a life of their own’ and started to influence all those later operating within such institutions. For example, Greek political elites were educated not only by the schooling system, dominated by Paparrigopolous, Zampelios and others, but they were also influenced by the public discourse outside education that such intellectual carriers had managed to dominate for many years through their positions of prestige and power, explored above.

### ***How Bulgarians were viewed through the prism of the Megale Idea***

After we have identified the Megale Idea, its carriers and institutionalization, we have to explore how Bulgarians were viewed as enemies through the prism of the Megale Idea and how such ideas shaped the normative prescriptions that cooperation with Bulgarians was not appropriate, which in turn shaped policies of obstruction, explored later in the chapter.

After dominant ideas are institutionalised they provide the ideational context for action in future policy formation and implementation. This is the case with Megale, where the machinery of the state began consistently promoting, educating and pursuing the idea as the core of the state building process. In early years of Greek Independence, elites looking through contemporary institutional and ideational contexts applied the geography of classical Greece and especially Byzantium to modern geo-politics. The

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20 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 26.

21 CharleTaylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, (Harvard University Press, 1989) quoted in Theodoros Zervas, ‘Resurrecting the past, constructing the future: A historical investigation on the formation of a Greek national identity in schools, 1830-1922’, Paper presented at the *Annual meeting of the 53rd Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society*, Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina, Mar 22, 2009, p. 18

22 Frederic Miller, Agnes Vandome and John McBrewster, *Diafotismos: Age of Enlightenment, Ottoman Empire, Adamantios Korais, Rigas Feraios, Filiki Eteria, Theophilos Kairis, Eugenios Voulgaris*, (VDM Publishing House, 2009), pp. 15-30.

23 Miller, Vandome and McBrewster, *Diafotismos*, p. 35.

problem was that history clashed with human and political geography and presaged major conflicts with Albanians over Epirus, with Bulgarians over Macedonia and with Ottomans over Istanbul (Constantinople), the western coast of Anatolia, and islands from the Aegean to Cyprus. The particular historical and ideational context, in which Megale Idea crystallized, clashed with the crystallizing national programmes of Bulgarians and Albanians as well with the Ottomans trying to hold the Empire together.

The period of national liberation revolutions in the Balkans (1830-1878) is the precise historical moment, when Bulgarians, Albanians and the Ottomans started to be regarded as 'ideationally deprived', since their national programmes and territorial aspirations clashed with the Megale Idea and vice versa. As the Serbian national programme *Nachertanie* (Strategy) stood opposed to Bulgarian programme *San-Stefano* and Albanian national ideas and because of the Serbian animosity to Turkey, it is no surprise Serbia was perceived as the closest natural ally of Greece. In addition, *Nachertanie* and Megale complement each other territorially and programmatically as both Greece and Serbia were seeking expansion in Albanian and Bulgarian-populated territories and both shared interest in demolishing the Ottoman Empire. This is how the idea of Serbia as the most trustworthy Greek ally was born. Serbia was perceived as ideationally enlightened agent in terms of cooperation, since it could facilitate the Greeks by helping Greece in its territorial quest against Bulgarians, Albanians and Ottomans. The period when Megale Idea (1830-1832) and *Nachertanie* (1843) crystallized is the critical juncture when the idea of Greek-Serbian 'eternal' alliance emerged as a result of overlapping interests. The idea that Bulgarians, Albanians and Turks have contradictory interests to the Greeks and are 'the enemy' was institutionalized as well.

Since 1830-1843 these ideas became institutionalized mostly through the schooling system, or in other words becoming programmatic beliefs, shaping the normative guidelines of Greek political actors that cooperation with Bulgarians, Albanians and Turks is not appropriate and that cooperation with Serbia is highly desired and normatively acceptable. Such an ideational configuration contributes to explaining subsequent Greek policy choices of persistent cooperation/obstruction towards certain neighbours during most of the XX c. Greece and Serbia (later Yugoslavia) sided not only in both Balkan Wars 1912-1913, but also in the two World Wars and maintained warm relations, in spite of the ideological differences during the Cold War. On the contrary Greece and Bulgaria have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s.

### ***How programmatic beliefs 'Bulgarians are enemies' shaped policies of obstruction towards Bulgaria***

After we have identified how programmatic beliefs towards Bulgarians crystallized, in this section we explore if in critical periods, like the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War, the Fall of Communism, etc. (when ideas are most likely to change), we observe a significant change of the *given set of ideas* in Greece about Bulgaria. Then we correlate it with the policies between Greece and Bulgaria in that historical moment. In general, if the given set of ideas did not largely change, we could expect no significant change in the existing policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the*



other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation). However, if we find policy change (no denationalization, negative propaganda and existing political, social and economic cooperation) that would most likely mean that there is change in the given set of ideas. This is done through the methods of process tracing and decision-making during crises analysis. In addition the study of the distinctive historical and structural contexts of Greece and Bulgaria during the different periods should help uncover the most important factors influencing the development and decision making of respective political elites.

### Late XIX c.-Early XX c.

First step towards the fulfilment of the Megale Idea was achieved in 1864, when Britain ceded the Ionian Islands to Greece as a reward for adopting a pro-British King George I (1864–1913). (Fig.1) A second step was fulfilled when, taking advantage of the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78), Greeks received Thessaly and parts of Epirus in 1881 (see Fig.6 and Fig. 10A).

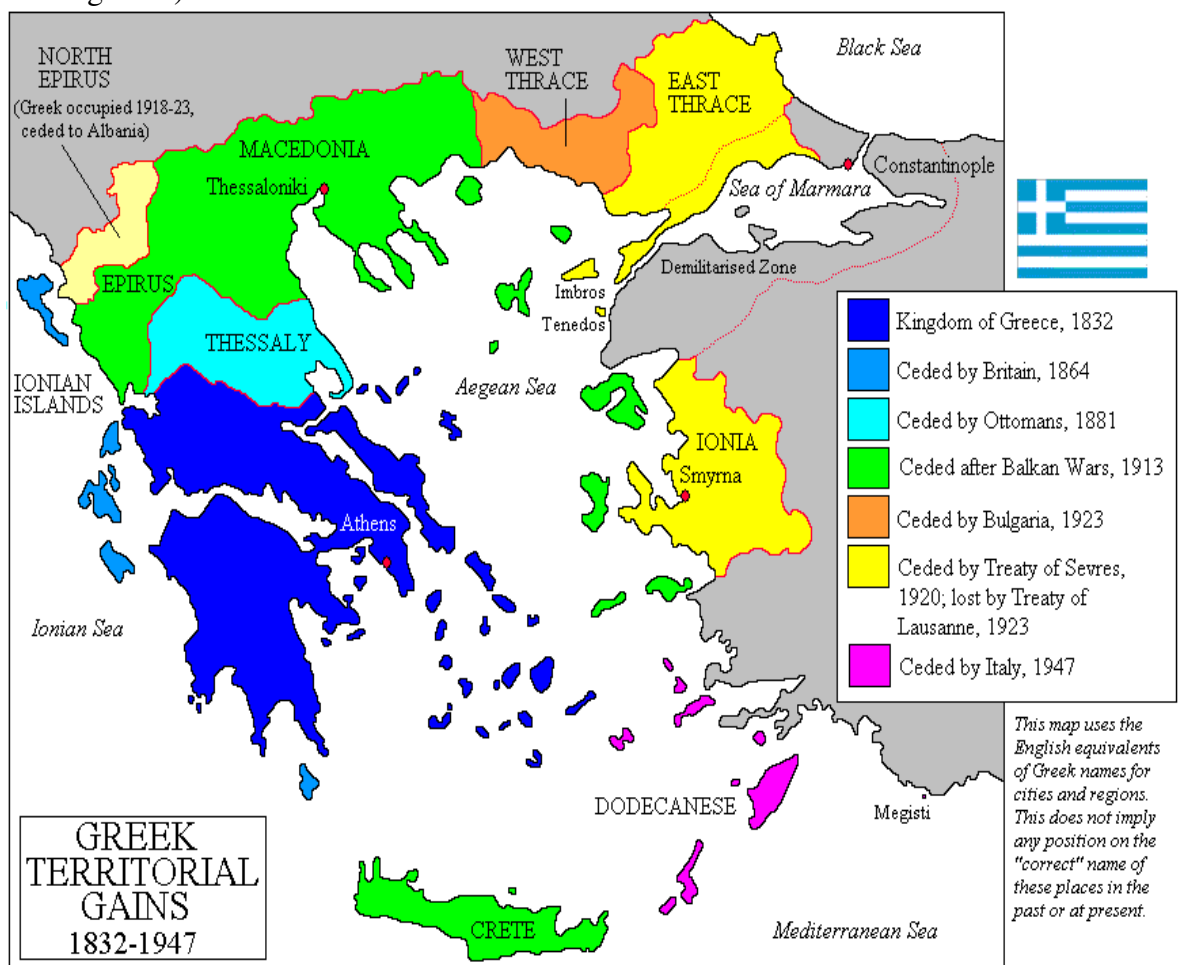


Fig. 6 The Evolution of the Greek State: 1832-1947.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Map Greece expansion 1832-1947-fr.svg (adaptation of Image: Population exchange 1923.gif, GFDL). Image renamed from Image: L'expansion territoriale de la Grèce 1832-1947.svg, Historicaire, translator Rursus

The third phase of the achievement of the *Megale* would not go as smoothly. Thessaly and the Ionian Islands were predominantly Greek, so unification proceeded with few obstacles. However, Macedonia and Epirus had predominantly Bulgarian-Slav and Albanian population respectively and very few Greeks.<sup>25</sup> Serbia also aspired to the northern parts of Macedonia, despite the fact that she did not have any substantial population on that territory. The ardour with which Greece aspired to the region of Macedonia and Epirus were direct result of the nineteenth century's *Megale* and modern Greek nationalists who took as a territorial basis for a reconstituted Greece the Byzantium Empire at its fullest extent. The territories belonging to the former Byzantine Empire were for centuries populated by Slavic, Albanian, Turkish, Vlach populations, since it was a universal Christian Empire, populated by many nationalities. In areas, such as Northern Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace and Anatolia, Greeks lived mostly in the peripheries.<sup>26</sup>

Guided by the prescriptions of the already-forming Great Idea in the the nineteenth century, the Greek Patriarchate started to work effectively to Hellenize the Slav population in Macedonia and Albanian in Epirus by establishing various religious educational institutions and setting up Greek schools in the non-Greek territories. They received further support through the institutions of the liberated Greek state (1830). If such polices were somehow not that explicit, the first very clear clash between Bulgarian and Greeks occurred after 1870, when the Bulgarian Exarchate declared autonomy from the Constantinople Greek Patriarchate, after decades of church struggle. Majority of the Slav population in Macedonia declared allegiance to the Bulgarian Exarchate in plebiscites (1871-1873). The Treaty of Berlin (1878), creating an independent Bulgarian state left large masses of Bulgarian population in Macedonia and Thrace under Turkish rule. They were deprived of political independence, but had their religious autonomy under the Exarchate.

The Ilinden (St Elijah's Day) Uprising (1903) aimed at national independence of the Slav population in Macedonia with a final result incorporation in Bulgaria, or creation

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25 Ethnographie Des Vilayets D'Adrianople, De Monastir et De Salonique Courrier D Orient, (Ethnography of the Adrianople, Monastir and Thessaloniki regions), (Constantinople, 1878) and Ireneusz Slupkov, *The Communist Party of Greece and the Macedonian National Problem 1918-1940*, (Szczecin, 2006), p. 110.

26 Slupkov, *The Communist*, p.11.

of an independent Macedonian state, if the Great Powers do not agree to the former. The uprising was brutally suppressed by Ottomans after three months of struggle. The Bulgarian Exarchate's growing influence in Macedonia and the Ilinden Uprising signalled to Greeks that they were gradually losing these regions to the Bulgarian Idea. Guided by the programmatic beliefs that Bulgarians are the ultimate rivals for the spoils of the falling Ottoman Empire, after 1903 Greece intensified its obstruction policies towards Bulgaria and namely initiated campaign to Hellenize the Slav population in Macedonia. The Greek state organised military units of Greek *andarts*, Greek state-sponsored military officers who were sent to Macedonia in order to thwart Bulgarian efforts to bring all of the Slavic speaking majority population of Macedonia on their side by prevent the population from switching allegiance from the Patriarchate to the Exarchate. The most famous was Pavlos Melas, who after his death, soon after he entered Macedonia was considered to be the symbol of the Greek cause in Macedonia.

The *andarts* abused their status and started terrorising and killing the innocent civilian population.<sup>27</sup> This led to bloody conflicts between local Bulgarian *chetas* (bands), many of which formed during the Ilinden Uprising and Greek *andarts* between 1904 and 1908. These events later became known in Greek historiography as the Greek Struggle for Macedonia (Μακεδονικός Αγών). In other words the Greek Struggle for Macedonia had an aim to defend the Greek and Greek Orthodox clerical interests against the Bulgarians in then Ottoman Turkish-ruled Macedonia. The struggle was officially put to an end by the Young Turks' revolution in 1908, but tension continued until the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). The Greek state, through its Consulate in Thessaloniki became the centre of the struggle, coordinating the guerrilla troops, distributing of military material and nursing wounded. Fierce conflicts between the Greeks and Bulgarians started in the area of Kostur (Kastoria), in the Giannitsa (Pazar) and elsewhere; both parties committed cruel crimes at points.<sup>28</sup>

The *andarts* also closely collaborated with the Greek Church and the Greek government. Brailsford writes in his personal account: 'The leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church were the most crazed supporters of the Greek state's plan to eliminate the Bulgarian element from Macedonia. This allegiance is typified by the actions of the Metropolitan Bishop Germanos Karavangelis', nicknamed the Devil's Disciple for his actions.<sup>29</sup> Karavangelis was sent to Macedonia by the ambassador of Greece Nikolaos Mavrokordatos and the consul of Greece in Monastiri, Ion Dragoumis, realising that it was time to act in a more efficient way and started organising Greek opposition. Information on Karavangelis's psychotic behaviour is available directly from his autobiography, published in 1959 by the Salonica Institute for Studies. In that work we note admissions and comments by Karavangelis.<sup>30</sup> He was the first and most fervent champion of the emergence of the *Andarts* movement in Macedonia. For seven years (1900-1907), as Metropolitan Bishop of Kostur/Kastoria (Slavic/Greek), he maintained the slogan 'let no single Bulgarian remain alive', not only followed in practice, but printed in books, on post cards, etc. as a manifestation of the state sponsored campaign

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27 Lithoksoou, Dimitrios, *The Greek Anti-Macedonian Struggle: From Ilinden to Zagorichani (1903-1905)* [Ellinikos Antimakedonikhos Aghonas: Apo to Illinten sti Zagkoritsani (1903-1905)], (Athens: Ekdoseis Megali Poreia, 1998).

28 Ioannis Koliopoulos, *History of Greece from 1800, Nation, State and Society*, (Thessaloniki, 2000).

29 Dr HN Brailsford, *Personal Account- Macedonia: Its Races and their Future* (London: Methuen & Co., 1906), pp. 193-194.

30 Germanos Karavangelis 'The Macedonian struggle', *Archives of the Macedonian struggle of Penelope Delta*, (Thessaloniki, 1959), Γερμανού Καραβαγγέλη. "Ο Μακεδονικός Αγών (Απομνημονεύματα), Εταιρία Μακεδονικών Σπουδών, Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου", 1959

against Bulgaria by the Greek government both in Greece and in the region of Macedonia (see Fig .7) Similar state-sponsored campaign against Greece was initiated by the Bulgarian state (explored in the next chapter) that culminated in the Anti-Greek riots in Bulgaria in 1906.<sup>31</sup>



*Fig. 7 Greek Propaganda Post Card from the Macedonian Struggle with Pavlos Melas and the slogan -Voulgaros Na Mi Meini (Let no single Bulgarian remain alive), the Motto of Greek Andarts<sup>32</sup>*

In his memoirs, Karavangelis admits that together with Vardas, a Greek army officer, he inspired and helped organise the massacres against the Slav villages of Zeleniche (Lerin) and Zagorichane (Kostur).<sup>33</sup> Massacres which shocked the international

31 Kostadin Kostadinov, *The Anti-Greek Movement in Varna*, (Fondacia VMRO: Varna, 2009)

32 Source: Petar Dobrev, 'Review of Anastasia Karakasidou', *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*,

[http://images.google.bg/imgres?imgurl=http://e-vestnik.bg/imgs/bulgaria/Bulgarin%2520da%2520ne%2520ostane\\_976.jpg&imgrefurl=http://e-vestnik.bg/3743&h=553&w=850&sz=129&hl=bg&start=11&um=1&usg=\\_\\_yfqXLQtqwfzuWh7G90uwfBDljl=&tbnid=9oP1JmnbRW4uEM:&tbnh=94&tbnw=145&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpavlos%2Bmelas%26ndsp%3D20%26um%3D1%26hl%3Dbg%26sa%3DN](http://images.google.bg/imgres?imgurl=http://e-vestnik.bg/imgs/bulgaria/Bulgarin%2520da%2520ne%2520ostane_976.jpg&imgrefurl=http://e-vestnik.bg/3743&h=553&w=850&sz=129&hl=bg&start=11&um=1&usg=__yfqXLQtqwfzuWh7G90uwfBDljl=&tbnid=9oP1JmnbRW4uEM:&tbnh=94&tbnw=145&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpavlos%2Bmelas%26ndsp%3D20%26um%3D1%26hl%3Dbg%26sa%3DN), accessed October 2008.

33 The burning of the village of Zagorichane (Kostur district) and the massacre of its inhabitants was done by 7 Greek andart bands (lead by the so-called 'kapetans' Vardas [Lt Georgios Tsontos from Crete as chief commander], Kaudis, Karavitis, Makris, Kukulakis, Pulanas, and Melios) on 25th of March 1905. It is also important to state that at the time of the Greek attack on Zagorichane, there were no Bulgarian revolutionaries in the village. Also, just a few days before the attack, the Turkish asker (commander) came to the village to search for arms. Before he entered, the asker had his troops blow military horns, an act which frightened the village population.

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However, the Turkish officer explained to the peasants, that this sounding of horns was simply a military protocol, and whenever they heard it they should remain calm and realise it meant no danger. Not uncoincidentally the Greek attack on Zagorichane began with the same blowing of military horns as used by the Turks. Stamatis Raptis provides the andarts' quote that 'When Bulgarians hear the horn, they will think, that it is a Turkish asker, and will hurry to hide their weapons, where they can. So that we shall have time.' The massacre at Zagorichane was documented afterwards by the Italian gendarme officers Manera, Gastoldi and Albera, Russian consul Kol, Austro-Hungarian consul Prohaska, and many others. In his report the Bulgarian diplomat A. Toshev wrote 'They - Russian and Austrian consuls, and Italian officers Albera, Gastoldi and Manera - were horrified at all that they saw and found.

The streets, and around the church, was strewn with corpses, many of which had been sadistically mutilated. There were 5-year-old children with their stomachs cut-open and their intestines ripped out; murdered women with their arms

community by the level of depravity and sadism which occurred. Karavangelis writes that he regularly used assassins to eliminate people he had pre-selected. These killers were paid 5 pounds by Karavangelis, on delivery of the person's severed head. He admitted being proud of his actions, that he had one of these 'trophies' photographed and displayed in his office in his bishoprics (see Fig. 8 and 9).<sup>34</sup> This was the head of a Bulgarian *cheta* leader Lazar Poptraykov. This is also witnessed by Brailsford, who writes,

But there, above my head, on the wall, in a conspicuous place hung the photograph of a ghastly head, severed at the neck, with a bullet through the jaw, dripping blood. And then I remember the tale. That head belonged to a Bulgarian chief. A band of bravoos in the Archbishop's pay had murdered him as he lay wounded in hiding. And the tale went on to tell how the murderers carried the bleeding trophy to the Palace and how the Archbishop had had it photographed and paid its price of fifty pieces of gold. And there, over my head, hung the photograph. Somehow, we stopped talking moral philosophy.<sup>35</sup>

As the level of Andart activity increased, he writes in his autobiography 'I kept regular contact with them [andarts] through the consulate in Bitola and the Metropolitan bishops. I personally met them and instructed them to kill all priests and Bulgarian teachers.'<sup>36</sup> Karavangelis succeeded to enstrengthen the Greek positions in Macedonia and thus according to the Greek historians helped the later incorporation of a part of Macedonia by Greece in the Balkan Wars, for which Greece officially praises him as a national hero of the Greek Struggle for Macedonia. He is referred to as one of the so-called Macedonian fighters (*Makedonomachos*).

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hacked off. Some of the dead had their skulls smashed and their brains removed, others had eyes gouged out, many had severed limbs. The body of the 60 year old priest was covered with wounds. An entire family had been killed by bombs thrown through the chimney, and from two holes in the roof. The bodies of the father, mother, and two children were appalling disfigured by the bombs. The youngest child, a 5 year old girl, had tried to escape through the door, but was killed by Greek bayonets. Russian consul Mr Kol was weeping. Austrian consul Mr Prohaska also had tears in his eyes. They both claimed that they had not witnessed such horrors and barbarities even in the time of the rebellion (1903).'

Source: Stamatias Raptis, *O kapetan Poulakas - Captain Pulakas. All Macedonian Struggle. Heroic Battles. Avengers Bulgarian-Killers. Most Patriotical Reading. With the True Images of the Heroes*, (Athens, 1910), p. 990 and A.Toshev *Report* (No. 447, from 30th of March, 1905).

34 Karavangelis 'The Macedonian struggle'.

35 Dr HN Brailsford, *Personal Account*, pp. 193-194.

36 Karavangelis 'The Macedonian struggle'.



*Fig. 8 Lazar Poptraykov 1878-1905*



*Fig. 9 Photograph of the severed head of the Bulgarian cheta leader and poet, Lazar Pop Traykov, killed by andarts in October 1905 at the instigation of the Greek Archbishop Karavangelis.<sup>37</sup>*

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<sup>37</sup> Source: Macedonian Scientific Institute, Illustartion Ilinden (Илюстрация Илинден) Magazine, Vol. 6 (1), 1929, p. 6.



The success of Greek efforts in Macedonia during the so-called Struggle for Macedonia (1903-1908) was an experience that gave confidence to the Greek state. It caused large masses of the Slav population in Macedonia to stay under the Greek Patriarchate, rather than the Bulgarian Exarchate. The Slav population that stayed under the Patriarchate was called Graecomans [Greek leaning] by Bulgarians and Slav-speaking Hellenes by Greece. The presence of such Slav population, leaning towards Greece gave grounds for the latter to seek expansion into most of Macedonia, referring to the Graecomans as Slav-speaking Greeks. After the Balkan Wars the part of Macedonia ceded to Greece included most of the areas that they controlled during the conflicts with the Bulgarians from 1903 to 1908. Megale Idea was put to practice and since Bulgarians and Albanians were perceived as enemies over the future spoils of the Ottoman Empire, cooperation with them was not appropriate and this was the period when in Greece the first policies of obstruction towards Bulgaria were officially adopted as a result of such ideas. The policies included the Hellenization of the Slavs in Macedonia, the negative propaganda against Bulgarians in Greece and among the population of Macedonia and the total lack of political, economic and social cooperation between the two states.

### ***Balkan Wars and WWI***

We explored that Greek obstruction policies towards Bulgaria in the period 1904-1908 could largely be explained by the programmatic beliefs –Bulgarians are enemies and the main contenders over the spoils of the Ottoman Empire. Let us explore if there is significant change to such programmatic beliefs and the policies of obstruction during the following period of the Balkan Wars. Exploiting the growing instability of the Ottoman Empire flowing from the Young Turks' Revolution (1908-1909) and the Italo-Turkish War (1911-1912), Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia formed a secret alliance and simultaneously declared war on the Ottomans in October 1912. What made such an uneasy alliance possible was the fact that no single country could defeat the Ottomans.

The main aim of the war was to liberate all remaining Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire, since all four countries still had significant populations under Ottoman power. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 Serbia had more than doubled its territory by acquiring significant territories to the East on the boundary with Bulgaria, Greece expanded into Thessaly and newly liberated Bulgaria (1878) was enlarged by the unification of the two Bulgarian states (1885), artificially separated by the Great Powers with the Treaty of Berlin (1878) to prevent from creating a strong Slavic state near the Straits. Therefore, with a new acquired confidence these young Balkan states declared war on Turkey, after the latter rejected their ultimatum for administrative reform and autonomy for Macedonia and Thrace. The four countries (The Balkan League) entered the war with their own national agendas. Bulgaria was aiming at Macedonia and Western Thrace and an outlet to the Aegean, Serbia looked for expansion into Vardar Macedonia, parts of Albania and outlet to the Adriatic Sea, Greece wanted Macedonia, Epirus and numerous Aegean islands. Montenegro was looking for territorial expansion into North Albania, the Shkodra region.

On May 30, 1913, Turkey signed the Treaty of London, conceding all its European territories beyond the Midia-Enos line to the allies, except for a strip of land, around the Straits. Serbia and Greece refused to withdraw from any territory in Macedonia and

Thrace in spite of the pre-war arrangements with Bulgaria and the fact that both countries had agreed that those territories should go to Bulgaria if the League was victorious. Two days after the signing of the London Peace Treaty, Greece and Serbia concluded a secret pact with a military protocol against Bulgaria. Greece was acting according to its programmatic beliefs that Bulgarians are enemies and Serbians are friends, regardless of the pre-war arrangements and the normative prescriptions to cooperate with Serbia against Bulgaria to achieve the Megale. It dictated that Macedonia and Thrace are the next step towards the 'Return to Constantinople'. Serbia was acting in compliance with its secret programme of 1843 *Nachertanie* that dictated that Serbia should control Vardar Macedonia and acquire a common border with Greece at any price. Bulgaria was trying to incorporate all territories which had in 1870 joined the Bulgarian Orthodox Church Exarchate, which if accomplished would re-enact the short-lived San Stefano Treaty (1878), that created a large Bulgarian state. Serbia and Greece acting on their institutional and ideational logic expected that, if victorious, they would come into conflict with Bulgaria. It seems that the Bulgarian governments underestimated the special ties that had developed between Greece and Serbia in the previous eighty years from Greek Liberation to the Balkan Wars (1832-1912). Serbia signed a secret alliance against the Turks with Bulgaria on 13 March 1912 and Greco-Bulgarian alliance followed on 29 May 1912. At the same time Greece and Serbia had signed a secret agreement in 1867 agreeing to partition Macedonian territories at Bulgarian expense. The document stated that the two countries should cooperate with all means possible to have a common frontier.

By knowing the programmatic beliefs of Greece one can understand that having to choose to respect either the secret pact signed with Serbia against Bulgaria or the one concluded with Bulgaria against Turkey, the Greeks would follow the former as Serbia was perceived as closest partner. Bulgaria was perceived as an enemy, as evidenced by the centuries' long church and educational struggle and the Struggle over Macedonia (1904-1908). The second pact and military protocol against Bulgaria, concluded on 1 June 1913, by former allies Greece and Serbia, comes as no surprise, but as a completely appropriate policy dictated by the ideational institutional contexts of the latter countries.

By the terms of the treaty of alliance the two states agreed upon a mutual guarantee of territory, promised not to come to any separate understanding with Bulgaria in regard to the division of the former Turkish territory in Europe, drew a common boundary line for the two states, defined a Serbo-Bulgarian boundary line which was to be claimed, and bound themselves 'to afford assistance with all their armed forces,' if Bulgaria 'should attempt to impose her claims by force.' The alliance was to last for at least ten years. The treaty included a stipulation that it '*be kept strictly secret*'. By this treaty Serbia secured, as she hoped, the possession of Monastir and the surrounding districts, and Greece secured Saloniki and Kavalla. The treaty was, of course, one of reciprocal obligation. If Bulgaria threatened Greece, Greece was entitled to call upon Serbia for aid. Should Serbia be attacked by Bulgaria, Greece was bound to go to the aid of Serbia.<sup>38</sup>

By referring to the programmatic beliefs, we could easily outline what the actual priorities for the Greek foreign policy in the period 1830-1920 were. The Balkan League Pact was doomed at the time of its signing. As a result of the two Balkan Wars,

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38 Frank Maloy Anderson and Amos Shartle Hershey, 'The Greco-Serbian Alliance, 1913' in *Handbook for the Diplomatic History of Europe, Asia, and Africa 1870-1914*, Prepared for the National Board for Historical Service, Government Printing Office: Washington, 1918, excerpt <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/boshtml/bos150.htm>, p. 1, (emphasis added)



Greece gained southern Epirus, coastal Macedonia, Crete, and the Aegean islands except the Dodecanese, which had been acquired by Italy. These gains nearly doubled Greece's area and population and Megale seemed within reach (Fig. 5). Such favourable outcome for Greece would hardly be possible without the guidance of Eleftherios Venizelos (1864-1936), statesman, Prime Minister and ardent supporter of the Megale. During the WWI, both the Triple Entente and the Central Powers, tried to form alliances in the Balkans. Both alliances promised privileges to any country that took their side. Eventually, Serbia allied with the Triple Entente while Bulgaria and Turkey preferred the Central Powers. Prime Minister Venizelos shaped through the traditional Greek programmatic beliefs also argued that Greece should enter the war on the side of Serbia, against Bulgaria. He was also urged by the defense treaty of 1913, according to which Greece was obliged to come to Serbia's aid if attacked from the Kingdom of Bulgaria.<sup>39</sup> As in the Balkan Wars, Greek political leaders chose to side with Serbia against Bulgaria, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter.

Siding with the victorious powers in World War I, according to the Treaty of Sevres (August 1920) Greece was awarded all of Thrace and a large area of western Anatolia in Asia Minor around Smyrna. The future of Constantinople was left to be determined. The treaty was never ratified. A new Turkish nationalist movement, led by Mustafa Kemal (later Kemal Ataturk), led a successful war of resistance. The Greeks were routed and Smyrna fell to the Turks in August 1922. The Treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923) fixed the boundaries between Greece and Turkey and imposed exchange of populations. More than a million Greeks had to be resettled from Turkish territory to Greece and 500,000 Turks and a large number of Albanians and Bulgarians were expelled from Greece. Those refugees would later come to play a significant part in Greek politics, and especially those settled among indigenous Slav population near Thessaloniki and the Greek northern border, causing unrest in Slav villages and taking part in the Civil War (1946-1949). Greece was also forced to yield eastern Thrace, Imbros and Tenedos to Turkey.<sup>40</sup> This was referred as to the Smyrna Catastrophe in Greek historiography.

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39 John Keegan, *The First World War*, (Knopf, 1999), pp. 5-40.

40 'Treaty of Peace with Turkey Signed at Lausanne', July 24, 1923 in *The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923*, Vol. II, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1924.



Fig. 10 A. The territorial accretion of Greece, 1830–1947

B. The partition of Macedonia

C. Slav ethnic traces in Greek Macedonia and Albania<sup>41</sup>

41 Source: John Agnew, *No Borders, No Nations: Making Greece in Macedonia*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 407.

Since Greece no longer dreamed of expansion, it turned to policies of state consolidation.

### ***Interwar Period (1923-1936)***

The Smyrna catastrophe marked the end of Megale in its classical form, but it did not alter the already institutionalized beliefs of Bulgarians as an enemy, neither had it changed the normative criteria that cooperation with them is not appropriate, regardless of the very changed external context. The interwar period marked a shift in the Greek foreign policy. If the dominant idea of the previous period 1830-1922 was 'looking outside' at territorial expansion in line with Megale Idea, the period 1923-1946 was a period of almost constant crisis marked by 'looking inside' with the idea of preserving the status-quo and the integrity of the country. In spite of the population exchanges with, Bulgaria, Albania and Turkey, the Greek state still had significant Slav, Albanians and Turk populations in the newly acquired territories to the North (see Fig. 10 C).<sup>42</sup>

The Ideational shift was, then, towards consolidating the Greek element in the newly acquired lands, in other words assertion of national identity. The large Bulgarian minority that found itself in Greece after WWI was perceived as the 'the enemy within', while Bulgaria was viewed as the 'enemy from the North' in line with traditional Greek programmatic beliefs (see Fig. 10 C). Therefore, the new situation and changed environment, neither significantly challenged the old perceptions of enemies and friends, nor had real policy implications. In other words, Megale was muted in its classical form, but its legacy was felt in the new idea of 'the enemy within', namely the foreign populations in the new territories should become Greek, or would pose a threat to national integrity. This was evidenced by the statement of educational minister Papandreou:

The Great Idea remains immortal. It simply changed its content. Instead of the increase of territory, it aims at the increase and elevation of civilization... The nation united strives for its economic, intellectual, and moral development.<sup>43</sup>

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42 The research will refer to the Slavic population, remaining in Greece after the Balkan Wars as Slav, rather than Bulgarian or Macedonian. Linguists before the war tended to consider Slavonic-oriented idioms in Greek Macedonia and southern Yugoslavia--now the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)--as western Bulgarian dialects. The large part of the population in the region, split between Yugoslavia (40%), Greece (52%) and Bulgaria (8%) in 1913, on numerous occasions had manifested its Bulgarian allegiance, evidenced by Ottoman archives, Patriarchate and Exarchate church archives, birth certificates, war actions, etc.

Since 1944, however, the idioms spoken in regions of FYROM were transformed, by government decree, into a literary language named Makedonski. Political considerations in Yugoslavia at the time sought to weaken the ties with the Bulgarian language and instead to strengthen the linguistic links with Serbo-Croatian and other Slavonic languages. After that a separate Macedonian identity emerged in FYROM. In Greek Macedonia some of the Slavs continued to identify with Bulgaria, while others developed Macedonian national identity. Therefore, for practical reasons the research will refer to the minority in Northern Greece as Slavs or Slav Macedonians, without any political connotation, but to delimit it from Greek majority.

Source: *Human Rights Watch*- Report 'Denying Ethnic Identity: The Macedonians of Greece', (Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 94-75891, USA, 1994), p. 38.

43 G. Papandreou, *Politika Keimena*, quoted in Mark Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis*, (Oxford, 1991), p. 34.

If 'improvement was the national ideal, national unity was the necessary prerequisite to attain that ideal, and social stability was the primary element needed to attain that unity. That is why the interwar period is characterized by brutal policies of Hellenization.'<sup>44</sup> That was a policy of securitization of minorities plus national integration defined by reference to 'the other'. Attitudes towards neighbours did not dramatically change after the Smyrna crisis; for Greeks, Serbians were the allies, and Bulgarians, Albanians and Turks were still regarded as 'the enemy'.<sup>45</sup> Difference is that if before 1923 the conflict was localized at the contact zones of those ethnic groups, while after 1923 the conflict was within the territory of the expanded Greek state with a large number of non-Greek populations. Koliopoulos and Veremis write that 'with the acquisition of Epirus and Macedonia in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 the frontier was pushed so far to the north and northwest that the Greeks met and faced' new realities deep into Bulgarian and Albanian populations.<sup>46</sup> Also, 'the frontier was no longer a gate leading to the promised land or a world...that exercised irresistible attraction and fascination' of unredeemed Greek lands. Rather 'the long and vulnerable new frontier was an outpost of Hellenism facing the Barbarians and keeping at bay enemies who coveted the Hellenic state.'<sup>47</sup> The land beyond was no longer inviting; This perception was reinforced 'after the 1940-1 Axis invasion from the north and the 1946-9 Civil War, in which the country's Communists received political and military support from that quarter, the northern frontier and the north itself came to be associated with insecurity and war.'<sup>48</sup> The ideas that came to dominate the Greek political and institutional context after 1923 could be summarized as defence from the 'danger from the north' outside the country and active process of Hellenization towards the 'enemy within' (Slav, Albanian, Turk minorities) inside the country.

In line with the idea that 'everyone who lives in Greece should be Greek', Greek elites devised elaborate policies to accomplish that aim. By the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923, the Greco-Turkish war came to an end. Greece and Turkey signed a population exchange agreement using 'religion as the basic criterion for nationality'.<sup>49</sup> The total population in Greece rose between 1907 and 1928 from 2,600,000 to 6,200,000.<sup>50</sup> Many of those came from Asia Minor following the Smyrna crisis. Not surprisingly 'searching for locations in which to settle this mass of humanity, the Greek government looked north to the newly incorporated land in Macedonia' and 'by 1930, 90 percent of the 578,844 refugees settled in rural Greece were concentrated in the regions of Macedonia and western Thrace. Thus Macedonia, Greece's newly acquired second "breadbasket" (after Thessaly), became the depository for East Thracian, Pontic, and Asia Minor refugees.'<sup>51</sup> The new arrivals were quite heterogeneous and 'the hundreds of different communities had very little in common save their Christian religion and a weak

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44 Gerasimos Augustinos, *Hellenism and the Modern Greeks* in Peter Sugar, *Eastern European Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, (Washington D.C.: American University Press, 1995), p. 181.

45 The constitution of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1.12. 1918, and later Yugoslavia did not affect much Greek political perception, since the country dominated by Belgrade, and policies devised closely following Serbian national aspirations Misha Glenny, *Balkans: 1804-1999 Nationalism, War and the Great Powers*, p. 366.

46 John Koliopoulos and Thanos Veremis, *Greece-The Modern Sequel: From 1821 to the Present*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2002), p.331.

47 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 331.

48 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 332.

49 Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, (Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 120.

50 Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 121.

51 Anastasia Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 145.

penetration of Megale<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, newcomers were settled among Slavic, Albanian (Aegean Macedonia) and Turkish (remaining pockets in Western Thrace) population and local Greek population, creating further social problems, where coexistence was already uneasy. The conflicts between the local population and the refugees from Asia Minor were quite pronounced. During my visit to numerous villages in the region of Lerin (Florina), Kostur (Kastoria) and Voden (Edhessa) in Aegean Macedonia, people still referred to categories such as endopii (locals) and madzhiri (refugees).<sup>53 54</sup> Eighty years after the influx of refugees local villagers were explaining how many houses belong to the endopi and how many to the madzhiri. Nearly, a century later the two communities did not marry between themselves and kept memories of the conflicts over land, houses, etc when after the war Greece was bankrupt. The severe economic difficulties that interwar Greece faced were invariably blamed on minorities and partially on refugees.

The Smyrna catastrophe marked the end of the state building era and signified the beginning of an era of overcoming economic and political crisis and state consolidation. In other words, that meant that after the Bulgarian-Greek (1919) and the Turkish-Greek (1923) population exchange, the minority issue was considered close and that everyone who stayed in Greece in the newly-acquired lands to the north should be Greek.<sup>55</sup> If Greece 'exists today as a homogeneous ethnos, she owes this to [the Asia Minor Catastrophe]. If the hundreds of thousands of refugees had not come to Greece, Greek Macedonia would not exist today. The refugees created the national homogeneity of our country.'<sup>56</sup> Speaking numbers 'after the Greek advances of 1912, for instance, the Greek elements in Greek Macedonia had constituted 43 percent of the population. By 1926, with the resettlement of the refugees, the Greek element has risen to 89 percent.'<sup>57</sup> The Hellenization idea has penetrated all state institutions and media of the time. Anything foreign is presented as Barbarian. This is evidenced by a publication in Vradini Newspaper, typical of the time:

Our Macedonian question is neither a question of the population's language, nor of the Bulgarian Macedonian Committee...nor of our military weakness in Macedonia. It is a question of adapting the local population to the Greek organism- a question of its official assimilation. To be able to win over the Bulgarian symbols in Macedonia, we would need to create from the inside, from local population other symbols, which would be superior or at least equal to the Bulgarian ones. Does anyone know of another means, to permanently bring peace to the region and forever secure Macedonia from Greek point of

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52 Misha Glenny, *Balkans: 1804-1999 Nationalism, War and the Great Powers*, (London: Granta Books, 1999), p. 394

53 Interview with A.B.,B.C., D.D dwellers of Embore (Emborio) village, Kaylari region, 20.10.2009, field notes [in Bulgarian].

54 Interview with T.T., S.S., A. K- dwellers of Vrbeni (Ekshi su) and Voshtarani (Meliti) in the Lerin (Florina) , 21.10.2009, field notes [in Bulgarian].

55 The Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine was signed on November 27, 1919. It was dealing with Bulgaria for its role as one of the Central Powers in World War I. The treaty established borders over contested territory between Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. As a Central Powers belligerent, Bulgaria had to cede western Thrace (the last Bulgarian outlet to the Aegean Sea) to Greece and parts of Dobrudzha to Romania, The Western Outlands to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. It also had to recognise the existence of the latter and was required to reduce its army to 20,000 men, pay reparations exceeding \$400 million. As a consequence of the Treaty of Neuilly some 50-70 000 Slav-speakers moved to Bulgaria and 25 000 moved to Greece

56 Antonios Kandiotis, *Metropolite of Florina* in Anastasia Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 141.

57 Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 121.

view. At least we do not see other means, but clearing up the mess by force by expelling the unfortunate foreign tongue population from their villages.<sup>58</sup>

By law promulgated on November 21, 1926 in Government Gazette #331 all names of cities, villages, mountains and rivers in Macedonia and Thrace were changed from Slav, Albanian and Turkish to Greek and new names published in the government daily *Efimeris tis Kiverniseos* no. 322 and 324 of November 21 and 23, 1926. Thus Kostur became Kastoria, Lerin-Florina, Voden-Edhessa, Kukush-Kilkis, Ber-Veria, Greben-Grevena, Subotsko-Aridhea, etc. Slavic inscriptions and evidence of Slavic language were removed from churches, icons, monuments, archaeological sites and cemeteries in Macedonia; Slavonic church or secular literature was seized and burned. Church services at the local language are outlawed. The use of the Slavic language was strictly forbidden also in personal communication between parents and children, among villagers, at weddings and work parties, and in burial rituals.<sup>59</sup> During 1927, the Slav people are ordered to abandon their personal names and under duress adopt Greek names assigned to them by the Greek state.<sup>60</sup> This involved complete change of their first names and adopt surnames ending in 'os', 'is', or 'poulos', according to the Greek system.<sup>61</sup>

By 1928 1,497 Macedonian place-names in Aegean Macedonia were Hellenized. English journalist V. Hild revealed 'the Greeks do not only persecute living Slavs..., but they even persecute dead ones. They do not leave them in peace even in the graves. They erase the Slavonic inscriptions on the headstones, remove the bones and burn them.'<sup>62</sup> Even nowadays in all areas North of Thessaloniki, there are no graves of people buried before 1940s, as though people never lived there before. This is to erase the memory that prior to 1912 there was no significant Greek presence in Aegean Macedonia north of Thessaloniki, but the region was mostly populated by Turks, Bulgarians and Vlachs.

In 1929, under Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, a legal Act was issued and enforced On the Protection of Public Order, was promulgated whereby demands for nationality rights were defined as high treason. This law is still valid.<sup>63</sup> Law 4096 further encourages the Hellenization of places names. The newspapers, schools and public places were decorated with posters Voulgarofagos (Bulgar-eater), presenting a Greek soldier, drinking the blood of a Bulgarian one (see Fig. 11). Such posters were put in many schools in the interwar Greece period. This was an example that the negative propaganda towards Bulgarians did not change much and we could observe it during the Macedonian struggle, the Balkan Wars, The WWI and in the interwar period. The propaganda and Hellenization policies and the complete lack of social, political and economic cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece, regardless of external change could be explained by the stability of the programmatic beliefs and normative criteria of political elites.

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58 Vradini Newspaper (Βραδινή), Athens, 1 October 1927.

59 John Shea, *Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation*, (McFarland & Company, 2007) p. 109.

60 Slupkov, *The Communist*, p. 110.

61 Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: From the End of Byzantium to the Present days*, (London: Phoenix, 2001), p. 121.

62 Slupkov, *The Communist*, p. 111.

63 Loring M. Danforth, 'Claims to Macedonian identity', *Anthropology Today*, 9/4 (1993), 7.

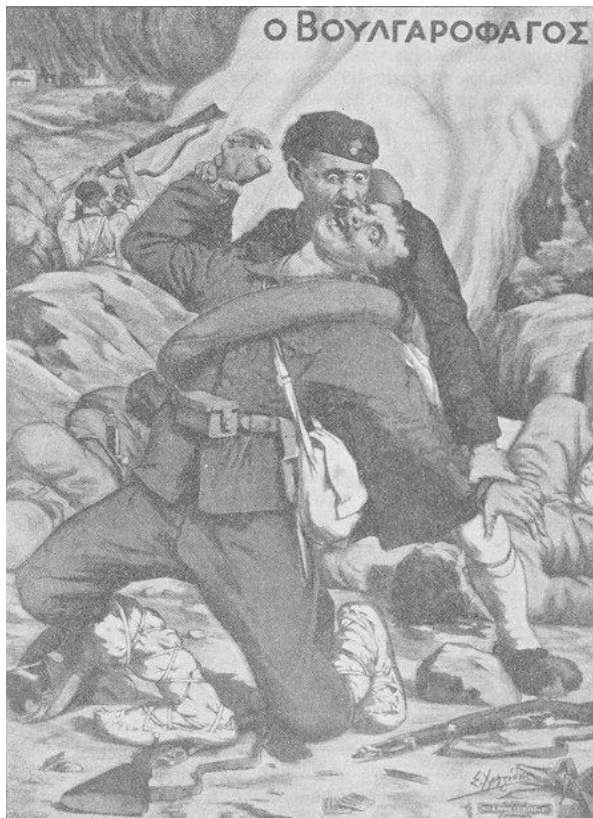


Fig. 11 Greek Propaganda: The Bulgar-Eater Poster<sup>64</sup>

### **Metaxas Dictatorship (1936-1941)**

The culmination of such policies was reached during the Metaxas dictatorship.<sup>65</sup> Ioannis Metaxas is among the most prominent royalist politicians during the Republic of 1924-35. After restoration of the monarchy and with the support of King George II, Metaxas dissolved parliament on August 4th, 1936 and established a National Socialist regime. Within six years, Metaxas 'implemented dozens of social, industrial and economic reforms while stabilizing the tumultuous political situation of those years.' He also achieved macroeconomic stability. His 'grandiose vision was to create a Third Greek Civilization based on its glorious Ancient and Byzantine past, but what he actually created was more a Greek version of the Third Reich.'<sup>66</sup> The legacy of Megale was present in and influenced both his ideas and the nature of the regime. He continued the policies of Hellenization and national consolidation with even more enthusiasm than his predecessors did.

On December 18, 1936, Metaxas' government issued *On the Activity Against State Security*, on the strength of which thousands of Slavs, Albanians and Muslims were

64 Municipality of Thessaloniki, Sotiris Xristidis, -*Digitalisation of Cultural Documents*, [http://culture.thessaloniki.gr/eng/painting\\_details.asp?newsid=946](http://culture.thessaloniki.gr/eng/painting_details.asp?newsid=946), accessed October 2008.

65 Ioannis Metaxas was born in Kefalonia. A career soldier, he served in the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, studied military science in Germany and fought again in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, in which he was assistant chief of the general staff. He was later chief of staff, but was exiled (1917) to Italy, along with most other prominent figures of Constantine I's government, as pro-German when Greece joined the Allies in World War I.

66 Andreas Markessinis, *Who was Metaxas?*, <http://www.metaxas-project.com/who-was-metaxas/>, accessed July, 2008.

arrested, imprisoned, expelled or exiled to arid, inhospitable Greek islands, where many perished. Law 6429 reinforced Law 4096 on Hellenization of toponyms. Decree 87 was published to accelerate the denationalisation of the Slav and Albanian Helsinki minority. In 1936, the Greek Ministry of Education sends 'specially trained' instructors to accelerate conversion to the Greek language.<sup>67</sup> On September 7, 1938 Act No. 2366 was issued banning the use of the Slavic local languages. Macedonia was flooded with posters: 'Speak Greek' and evening schools were opened in which adults were taught Greek.<sup>68</sup> People were being publicly humiliated by having their tongues pierced by needles and having to drink castor oil for being caught speaking the Slav language.<sup>69</sup> Metaxas died in 1941, which was the end of his regime, followed by a fascist puppet government placed into power through a large-scale German invasion of Greece.

### **Civil War 1946-1949**

The period after the Lausanne Treaty (1923-1946) marked the ideational shift from 'outward expansion' to 'inward consolidation' from Megale to Hellenization. After 1944-46, In addition to the already strong identification of 'others' in national terms, it introduced the idea of 'others' in terms of ideology, notably Communism. In the power vacuum after the German occupation, The Communist Party of Greece (*Kommunistikon Komma Ellados* or KKE) which bore the mark of Moscow controlled Comintern rose in prominence. It opposed Hellenization and nationalism, partly because it was drawing its largest support from the new territories to the north (Macedonia and Thrace) with their significant minority populations. This automatically 'placed the party on a collision course, not only with the ruling parties of the time but with the entire state system.'<sup>70</sup> KKE and the Comintern brought in the Greek polity new influential ideas that were very radical to the whole political establishment. The KKE was immediately presented by its opponents both from the internationally recognized Greek government and opposition forces 'as an agent of external subversion-which in sense it was and continued to be for most of its life.'<sup>71</sup> The KKE promoted the idea that 'nation's interests lie not with the triumph of national aspirations...but in the defeat and humbling of those who pursued these aspirations by means of war.'<sup>72</sup> The KKE found popular support in the north regions of Greece. 'Almost two-thirds of the destitute refugees were settled in the part of Macedonia which had been won by the Greek army in the Balkan Wars. They were settled next to a multilingual population, of which as many as 250,000 were of Slav origin before the wars. They and the Vlachs, as well as the Albanians and the Greeks, both indigenous and refugees, became a fertile ground for Communist propaganda. Furthermore, in 1924 the KKE acting on Comintern instructions introduced the idea to create a sizeable Macedonian state using territories from Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania forming a Balkan Soviet republic. The KKE condemned the Greek state's efforts to Hellenise parts of Macedonia and Thrace and supported the right of

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67 Slupkov, *The Communist*, p. 111.

68 Danforth, 'Claims to Macedonian identity' and Hugh Poulton, *The Rest of the Balkans, Minority Rights in Europe*.

69 *Interview with local population in the villages Shestevro (Sidhirohori), Nesram (Nestorio), Zhelevo (Andhartiko) and Zagorichani (Vasilias) in Kostur (Kastoria) region of Greek Macedonia*, taken in September 2008. Also in Slupkov, *The Communist*, p. 111. Also documented in Helsinki Watch, *Human Rights*, p. 40.

70 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 110.

71 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 110.

72 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 112. See Alekos Papanagiotou, *To Makedoniko Zitima kai to valkaniko kommounistiko kinima, 1919-1939 (The Macedonian Question and the Balkan communist movement, 1919-1939)*, Athens, 1992, for a thorough analysis of the question.



‘Macedonian people’ and ‘Thracian people’ to unite their dismembered lands into ‘independent’ Communist states. This would have a ‘destabilising effect on the “bourgeois” governments of the existing nation-states in the region.’<sup>73</sup> The Greek state and political elites presented KKE and its supporters as treasonous by advocating for the cession of national territory. During Metaxas KKE leaders were imprisoned and deported under Law 4229 (1929) passed to combat the spread of ideas seeking to overthrow the existing regime. Under the Metaxas dictatorship was when such policies were transformed into a crusade against Communism, when the entire leadership and almost all middle ranking cadres, numbering 2000 were imprisoned or internally exiled on inhospitable Greek islands.<sup>74</sup> During the Nazi occupation KKE witnessed impressive growth of its appeal and supporters.

After the liberation in 1944 the biggest Anti-Nazi resistance organization, the Greek People's Liberation Army (Ελληνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός, ELAS), the leadership of which was controlled by the KKE, clashed with the British sponsored Royalist regime for control of the state. This led to the brutal Civil War of 1946-9. Since most of the KKE's popular support was coming from Macedonia and Thrace, the interwar idea of the cultural ‘enemy within’ was now coupled with the ideological ‘enemy within.’ The ELAS and KKE's supporters were now portrayed not only Vlach, Albanians or Bulgarian/Macedonian ‘others’, but also Communist Vlach, Albanian or Bulgarian/Macedonian ‘others’. The fatal blow to the KKE was political rather than military. When Tito's Yugoslavia broke with the Soviet Union and its satellites in June 1949, communist insurgents in Greece lost their closest supporter and subsequently lost the war. This was viewed in the west as victory in the Cold War against the Soviet Union. However the revolutionary ideas of KKE remained influential in Greek polity and KKE's is still a factor in modern Greece. In other words the ideas that KKE crystallized did strongly challenge traditional Greek programmatic notions of friends and enemies. Furthermore, they challenged the whole existence of Greek polity. However, they were not able to displace traditional programmatic beliefs due to the short period, intellectual carriers had to propagate their ideas and to the lack of institutionalization in the Greek organizational set-up.

Therefore the perception of enemies and friends did not largely change.<sup>75</sup> For Greece the interwar idea of a ‘danger from the north’ was joined by the ‘ideological enemy from the north’, as communist regimes were established in neighbouring Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia that supported Communist insurgents in Greece.<sup>76</sup> The civil war and its end facilitated Greece's alliance with the United States and joining NATO, and further shaped the enemy-perception of Communist northern neighbours. The policies of Hellenization through exchange of populations and repressive actions through the machinery of the state have largely been successful. The Greek elements (declaring

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73 Giorgis D. Katsoulis, *Istoria tou Kommounistikou Kommatos Elladas (History of the Greek Communist Party)*, vol. II, Athens, 1976, pp. 120-132.

74 Kollopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 120.

75 Similar practices against minorities in newly acquired territories were conducted in interwar Yugoslavia. Similarly to the Megale transformed into ‘national consolidation’, The Nachertanie Idea was transformed in the idea to impose Serbian domination of Yugoslavia. Greeks and Serbians were grappling with similar problems-large national minorities in the newly acquired lands and pursued similar de-nationalisation policies which further strengthened Greek -Serbian alliance and ‘eternal ally’ perception of each other.

76 As discussed, regardless of the fact that Greece and Yugoslavia belonged to different ideological camp, Greece could not perceive the latter as a true enemy. However, there was a short exception to that during the Civil War 1946-49, when Yugoslavia for a short time was considered as a perceived threat.

as Greek) in Greek Macedonia had gone from 43 percent in 1912 to 89 percent in 1926.<sup>77</sup> This was further strengthened by the large number of KKE supporters from the north regions (many of whom of Slavic origin) emigrating to Albania, Bulgaria or Yugoslavia during and after the end of the Civil War. Slavs and Albanians were now regarded with suspect not only because of their ethnicity, but in addition because of their possible infiltration from the Communist north.

### ***The Cold War Period (1949-1974)***

After completing the task of national consolidation it was a time of economic reconstruction and strengthening the ideological division lines along the Cold War status-quo.<sup>78</sup> US influence on Greek policy making increased dramatically due to factors as 'strategic concern over a Soviet or a Balkan threat; the solely needed economic aid to finance reconstruction; and the political weight that the stamp of US endorsement carried in the 1950s.'<sup>79</sup> Greece joined NATO in 1952. Conservatives and liberals agreed that 'Greece's main security was in the northern borders, that Communism threatened common cherished values, that NATO was indispensable for the defence of the country, and that America was Greece's natural ally and guarantor' for the next three decades.<sup>80</sup>

Regarding the minority policies, in 1947 those who had fought against the government in the civil war and fled Greece were deprived of their citizenship and their property confiscated by the state.<sup>81</sup> Due to the fact that the Slav and Albanian minority joined the forces of KKE, after the war the Hellenization policies of 1923-1949 were significantly intensified. This is evidenced by a publication in Macedonia newspaper:

We believe that the people responsible should more seriously start changing the names of many lakes, rivers, mountains, towns, villages, etc. In Old Greece, even in Peloponnesus, let us not be ashamed there are Bulgarian and Turkish names, such as Turnovo, Zmokovo, Dobrena, Tzaritchena, Prostova, Varibombi, Demilri, etc. After the liberation of Thrace and Macedonia from Turkish yoke there was a very serious campaign for rooting out foreign names. We need to start a new policy to liquidate once and for all the foreign Barbaric names.<sup>82</sup>

In Greece the ideological fight with communism was used as a pretext for following persistent and structured obstruction policies in line with traditional nationalist ideology. With the pretext to protect Greece against communist influence, several laws were introduced that allowed further confiscation of property of those who left the country during the Civil War. During my visit to the regions of Lerin (Florina), Kostur (Kastoria) and Voden (Edhessa) in September 2008, nearly in all villages the grandfather generation spoke freely only the Slavic idiom, the middle generation spoke Greek and the Slavic idiom with more difficulty, while the younger generation mostly

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77 Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 121.

78 The Truman Doctrine meant that the threat from the communism enabled the United States, which replaced Britain as the major power in Greece to freely operate within the country. Greece (together with Turkey) was 'increasingly seen as a bulwark against Communist expansion and its administrative, military, economic and political institutions were shaped to serve that purpose.' Source: Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece-The Modern Sequel*, p. 296.

79 T. Coulombis, 'The Greek Junta Phenomenon', *Polity*, vol. VI, no. 3 (spring), 1974 in Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 297.

80 T. Coulombis, *Greek Political Reaction to American and NATO Influences*, New Heaven: Yale University press, 1966, pp. 33-89 in Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 298.

81 Decree LZ/1947; later by Law 2536/1953 and Decrees M/1948, N/1948.

82 *Makedonia Newspaper* (Μακεδονία), Thessaloniki, 25 July 1953.

knew Greek and English and could not communicate in the local language with their parents and grandparents. To my question how was it possible for parents not to transmit their mother tongue to kids, villagers explained that crèches and nursery schools were created in all the regions where the Slav and Albanian minority live after the Civil War to eradicate the local language from the youngest generation.<sup>83</sup> People were living in situation of fear and they were eavesdropped while in their houses to hear if they spoke Greek or the local idiom at home. A very interesting story was told in the village Prekopana (Perikopi) in the Lerin (Florina) district by local villagers. After the end of the Civil War a fine of 8 drachmas was imposed for every Slavic word said at a public place. An old villager spoke on the occasion of his grandson's birthday in the presence of the local nomarch (mayor), who was writing down the number of words and after the villager finished paid the bill. Villagers in Atrapos (Krapeshina) confirmed Danforth's account that in 1959, several Macedonian villages introduced "language oaths". . . administered in several Macedonian villages, which required Macedonians to swear that they would renounce their "Slavic dialect" and from then on speak only Greek.<sup>84</sup> The oath, published in *Phoni tis Kastorias* (4 Oct 1959) said:

I do promise before God, the people, and the official state authorities, that from this day on I shall cease to speak the Slav dialect which gives ground for misunderstandings to the enemies of our country - the Bulgarians - and that I will speak always and everywhere the official language of our fatherland, the Greek language, in which the holy gospel is written.<sup>85</sup>

Such measures led to many emigrating to Australia or Canada.<sup>86</sup> The Greek junta or 'The Regime of the Colonels' started on 21 April 1967 with a coup d'état and right-wing military governments ruled Greece until 1974. The Colonels justified their action as an attempt to prevent George Papandreou's victory in the upcoming election and the Communist takeover that would, supposedly, follow it.<sup>87</sup>

They claimed that 'communist conspiracy' had infiltrated institutions-academia, the press, even the military. To protect the country from communist takeover a drastic action was needed. So the coup d'état was a 'revolution to save the nation'. The defining characteristics of the Junta were its staunch anti-Communist, pro-American, and Western stance. The regime was internally characterised by the absence of civil rights and an atmosphere of fear, persecution, torture and oppression, division and long lasting trauma. Externally, 'the absence of human rights in a country belonging to the western block during the Cold War was a continuous source of embarrassment for the free world and this and other reasons made Greece an international pariah abroad and interrupted

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83 *Conversations with villagers in Voden (Edhessa), Visheni, (Visinea), Dumbeni (Dhendhrochori) and Tiolishcha (Tihio)* in northern Greece in September 2008.

84 Danforth, *Anthropology Today*, p. 4. The villages in which oaths were required in 1959 were Kardias (Ptolemaida District), Kria Nera (Kastorian prefecture), and Atrapos (Florina prefecture).

85 *Phoni tis Kastorias Newspaper*, Kastoria 4 Oct 1959.

86 Human Rights. *Helsinki Report*, p. 40.

87 George Papandreou (in Greek Georgios Papandreou or Γεώργιος Παπανδρέου) (18 February 1888 - 1 November 1968) was a Greek politician, who served three terms as Prime Minister of Greece. After the elections of "violence and fraud" of 1961, Papandreou declared an "uncompromising fight" against the right-wing ERE. His party won the elections of November 1963 and those of 1964, the second with a landslide majority. His progressive policies as premier aroused much opposition in conservative circles, as did the prominent role played by his son Andreas, whose policies were seen as being considerably left of center. After the April 1967 military coup by the Colonels' junta led by George Papadopoulos, Papandreou was arrested. He died under house arrest in November 1968. His funeral became the occasion for a large anti-dictatorship demonstration.

her process of integration with the European Union with incalculable opportunity costs.<sup>88</sup> Military Junta continued the policy of Hellenization and colonizing the confiscated lands in Aegean Macedonia and land was handed over to persons with a 'proven patriotism' for Greece.

The Cold War posed an ideational challenge to the Greek political elite. The coup provoked a systemic crisis. The traditional national ideational contexts were challenged by ideational input along ideological lines, i.e. communism-non-communism. Not surprisingly, the contradictions of Greek policy emerged. It was easy to denounce ideologically Bulgarians and Albanians with their Communist regimes as 'enemies' as political ideology overlapped with traditional national ideology. Ideological difference with the communist Albania and Bulgaria reinforced the institutionalized idea of Bulgarians and Albanians as the traditional national enemies. However, Yugoslavia and Turkey posed a serious dilemma. Greek elites were trapped between their traditional emotional support for an idea of friendly Serbia (now communist) whilst being part of NATO and massively dependent on US and later EU aid. Turkey, also a member of NATO, was an ideological 'friend', a notion that clashed with the idea of Turkey as the nation's greatest enemy. Did the new ideas challenge old nationalist ideas in the case with Yugoslavia and Turkey? The new 'ideological difference' ideas, based on Cold War division were institutionalized in the Greek polity but they joined traditional national programmatic beliefs ideas, because the former were not strong enough to challenge and displace them. Political elites selected ideas for political purposes, securing their own position, and pushing the country towards the United States and NATO security umbrella and generous aid. During periods of crisis elites resorted to the long institutionalized old nationalist ideas, rather than the new 'imposed' and 'somehow partially-institutionalized' for domestic political reasons and gaining legitimacy. National ideational contexts proved much stronger than political ideology in the case of Turkey and Yugoslavia. No matter that both countries belonged to the same ideological camp, Greece could not perceive Turkey as a true friend. Nor it could vision socialist Yugoslavia as an inevitable enemy (with a short exception during the Civil War 1946-49). This is evidenced by the Greek-Turkish crisis over Cyprus during and after the 1874 invasion which proved that old ideational contexts were still very influential.

### ***Democratization and Europeanization***

This section explores the moment when previously uncontested path dependent nationalist ideas met with new democratization ideas that emerged after 1974 and started to challenge traditional doctrines by pressure from outside actors. The restoration of democracy in Greece after the Military Junta (1967-1974), came about largely through a dramatic external event, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus (23 July 1974), which triggered the disintegration of the military regime.' As a consequence 'a broad consensus was thus formed among Greeks of all political tendencies that the immediate threat to their national security no longer emanated from Greece's communist neighbours but from Turkey.'<sup>89</sup> The conflict over Cyprus and the feeling of insecurity that prevailed brought up the need for further strengthening ties with the EU, decreasing the dependence on the US and developing the economy, in other words the need for

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88 *Time Magasin*- 5.08.1974, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,879413-2,00.html>, Accessed July 2008

89 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 308.

democratization as a response to the systemic crisis was the ideational force behind internal and foreign policies of the time.

Turkish aggression on the side of the Turks challenged for the first time traditional ideas of Albanians and Bulgarians as historical and ideological enemies. This was possible because the policies of Hellenization (1923-1974) proved successful and the Slavic and Albanian minorities in Northern Greece had shrunk to lesser numbers through assimilation and expulsion and the country was largely homogenised. In addition by 1970s, neither Albania, nor Bulgaria had any territorial or population claims towards Greece. Also both people could be possible allies against the Turks. Michaletos claims,

that the best side effect, the silver lining as it were of the Cyprus catastrophe, was that Greek-Bulgarian relations became more normalized over the next 15 years than they had been at any time since the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In developing its relations with Bulgaria, Greece had been in a way prepared by the events of 1974 for those of 1989. The former had been, as it were, a trial run, meaning that when the final collapse of the Soviet bloc came, Greece was in a favourable and prepared position to welcome its old rival to the world of the free market. Tens of thousands of Bulgarians were also eager to taste the fruits of capitalism, many illegally, by working in Greece.<sup>90</sup>

This is not to say that the policies of oppression towards the Slav and Albanian minority were discontinued and the dominant ideology was still in place. A nationalist ideology, incorporated in institutions is strongly path-dependent. The argument here is that after 1974 other ideas that opposed the traditional nationalist ones started for the first time to propose a powerful alternative agenda, based on cooperation and reach institutions. However traditional programmatic beliefs that Bulgarians, Turk and Albanians were 'enemies' was still the dominant ideology. As evidence of that in 1974 the Greek state created a special institution, called Ministry of Northern Greece, dealing with the problematic regions of the country, where despite the successful Hellenization, Slav, Albanian and Turkish minorities still lived. According to a Secret Report of the Greek Security Service, drafted on 16 February 1982 there was a need of a new institution to facilitate the assimilation of the Slav minority in Northern Greece; Such new institution 'will depend from the Prefectures of the regions near the borders, lined with the suitable and specially trained to the "Plot against Macedonia" subject, personnel. This institution will engage itself only with this subject, with the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will collaborate closely, but in secret, with the Security Authorities and all the public services (Tax office, Schools, Army, Church, etc.).'<sup>91</sup> It also instructs that in the public services and especially in the educational institutions the employees who will be in service have to be ignorant of the local idiom (Slav language), insertion of various obstacles (non-recognition of diplomas, postponement of military service, etc.) for the Greek students who wish to study in Skopje, encouragement, by the leadership of the Army, of meetings and marriages of Army officers, who are on duty there and have origins abroad, with women that speak the idiom (See Appendix 1 for the whole report).<sup>92</sup> As a result the Ministry of Northern Greece was renamed to Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace in 1985 and it started to coordinate the policies, outlined in the report. In 1982, a 'Greek ministerial Decree 106841 of 29 December 1982 provided that "all *Greeks by genus* [i.e. of Greek origin] who during the Civil War of 1946-1949 and

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90 Ioannis Michaletos, 'Greek-Bulgarian Relations, 1912-2006: A Historical Synopsis', *Balkanalysis*, <http://www.balkananalysis.com/2006/04/12/greek-bulgarian-relations-1912-2006-a-historical-synopsis/>, accessed June 2008.

91 Ministry of Public Order, 'National Security Service', *Number of Protocol 6502/7-3042* of 16 February 1982, p. 1.

92 Ministry of Public Order, 'National Security', p. 2.

because of it have fled abroad as political refugees may return to Greece, in spite [of the fact] that Greek citizenship has been taken away from them.<sup>93</sup> In 1985, a law was enacted that permitted political refugees who were 'Greek by origin' to reclaim their property, thus excluding Macedonians from doing so.<sup>94</sup> A high school teacher currently teaching in northern Greece, told the Helsinki Watch Fact Finding Mission in 1994 that,

During breaks in high school, kids speak Macedonian to each other. They speak Macedonian with me, too, because they know I'm Macedonian. Whether a kid gets in trouble for speaking Macedonian depends on the teacher--if the teacher decides to report it, the kid's parents may be called in. Other teachers are open-minded, and don't report such things. In the old days, when I was a child (I'm thirty-eight now), teachers would hit kids with sticks if they spoke Macedonian, and would say things like, 'You dirty Bulgarians, you'll never learn Greek.'<sup>95</sup>

### *The Balkan Wars of the 1990s*

Having explored the development of traditional contexts, we would focus on the new democratization ideas that started to challenge old nationalist ideas. The EU ideational push for democratization and the proliferation of regional cooperation organizations in the post-communist years initiated the formation of a new international cooperation and integration normative agenda that started to pressure Greek polity and clash with traditional nationalist ideas. Greece officially applied for membership in the EC shortly after restoration of democracy in 1975. The transformative power of this idea was noted by the Prime Minister Constantinos Karamanlis, who in May 1973, referred to a European orientation as being Greece's new 'Great Idea.'<sup>96</sup> Greece signed the accession treaty with the EC in May 1979 and officially joined the EU in 1981. The reasons for which Greece chose full accession to the Community can be summed up as follows from the position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:<sup>97</sup>

- Greece considered the Community to be the institutional framework within which stability could be brought into its democratic political system and institutions.
- Greece sought to enforce its independence and position within the regional and international system as well as its 'power to negotiate', particularly in relation to Turkey, which, after the invasion and occupation of Cyprus (July 1974), appeared as a major threat to Greece. Within this context, Greece also sought to loosen its strong post-war dependence upon the US.
- Accession into the Community was regarded by Greece as a powerful factor that would contribute to the development and modernization of the Greek economy and Greek society.
- Greece wanted, as a European country, to have "presence" in, and an impact on, the process towards European integration and the European model.
- The Commission (...) proposed the institutionalization of a pre-accession transition period before full institutional integration, in order for the necessary economic reforms to take place.

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93 Human Rights, *Helsinki Report*, p. 9.

94 Human Rights, *Helsinki Report*, pp. 9-10.

95 Human Rights, *Helsinki Report*, pp. 40-41.

96 Koliopoulos and Veremis, *Greece*, p. 311.

97 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Greece in the EU' in *Greece in the World*, <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Europe+Policy/Greece+in+the+EU/>, accessed July 2008.

According to the Greek Foreign Ministry, Greece's participation in the European Community / Union could be divided into three periods: the first, 1981 to 1985, the second, 1986 to 1995, and the third, 1996 to date. After 1974 and especially after 1981 Greece has been 'under constant pressure to import and internalize a set of policies and practices that appear in conflict with traditional domestic policies and politics.' At the time of its accession Greece embodied the archetype of a centralized state with a long history of entrenched resistance to decentralization.<sup>98</sup> European Commission considered decentralization and economic stabilisation as instrumental to Greece's modernization. Logically, the first period was 'characterized by strong doubts concerning certain serious aspects of European integration'. However, gradual decentralization and economic benefits as a result of the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes contributed to allowing Europeanization ideas into national polity during the second and especially third period after 1996.<sup>99</sup>

In 1982 Greece the anti European PASOK government submitted a Memorandum requesting permanent derogations from the *acquis communautaire* and for increased EU funding.<sup>100</sup> In response, the European Commission devised the Integrated Mediterranean Programs (IMPs), approved in 1985. Through the IMP, the EU managed to play a crucial role during the establishment of the regional level of government that followed in 1985-1986.<sup>101</sup> Taking advantage of 'PASOK's revisionist policy, the Commission managed to establish a novel policy model that would have profound consequences for the conduct of structural policies.'<sup>102</sup> The regulation for the IMPs stipulated that the EU would contribute ECUs 2 bln for Greece for the period 1985-1992. The general economic effects of the IMPs, decentralization and increased funding were quickly felt and the second period was characterized by gradual adoption of stronger pro-integration positions. Greece's net receipts from the Community budget grew from ECU 170 m in 1981 to ECU 1020 m in 1985.<sup>103</sup> In 1997, a major reform of local government authorities was carried out, leading to 'drastic reduction of the number of municipalities and to the transfer of certain government responsibilities to the local level.'<sup>104</sup>

Greece 'began to support the "federal" integration model as well as the development of joint policy in new departments (education, health, and environment)', but discord was felt in 'the sector of economy, with the country diverging from the average "community" development level, and the political sector. The first Community Support

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98 Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, p.14

99 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Greece in the World*.

100 'Greek Memorandum. Position of the Greek Government on Greece's Relation with the European Communities', 22 March 1982, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No. 3/1982. Stressing the structural difficulties of the Greek economy and the economic discrepancies between it and the other member states, the Memorandum advocated the extension and activation of the Community financing mechanisms in order to support the Greek economy and the recognition by the Community that a time interval was necessary before Greece could fully comply with the entire body of EC competition rules. Moreover, the Greek government stressed that the criteria of Community's financial contribution should 'reflect the particularities of the Greek reality, social, economic and administrative' (Hellenic Republic 1982) Source: George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance, The Dynamics of EU Cohesion Policy in Greece*, University of Athens, (Dublin European Institute 1994), p. 19.

101 George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, p. 16.

102 M Smyrl, 'When (and How) Do the Commission's Preference Matter?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 36/1, pp. 82-84.

103 George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, p. 19.

104 George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, p. 17.

Framework (CSF) 1989-1993, adopted in 1990. The first CSP is considered the largest developmental plan in Greek history. The financial weight of the EU co-financed programmes reached unprecedented levels of ECU 16.86 billion. The second CSP for Greece was approved in 1994. EU financial support for Greece for the period 1994-1999 was double that of period 1989-1993, amounting to ECU 29.7 bln. Together with the other Community Initiatives, the Cohesion Funds and the loans of the EIB the amount rose to ECU 37.1 billion for a period of only five years.<sup>105</sup> Between the second and the third planning period, negotiations between the EU and the Greek government, the Commission pushed for creation of structures as independent as possible from the mainstream public administration, or at least structures with transparent procedures and high quality of human capital. Despite ‘considerable resistance from certain ministers, civil servants and implementation agencies’ new institutions such as Management Organisation Unit, Joint Steering Committee for Public Works, Expert Agent for Quality Control of Infrastructure, etc were formed. Moreover a ‘number of semi-independent companies were set up to manage big infrastructure projects, according to the Public Private Partnership model (PPP).<sup>106</sup> An example of such a company that proved instrumental for the breakthrough in transport infrastructure impasse was Egnatia Odos, explored in the empirical chapter.

The third period started in 1996 and has been characterized by even further support for the idea and process of European integration and intensifying integration in every department, in line with the federal model. It is also characterized by an effort towards greater economic and social convergence with the fulfilment of the ‘convergence criteria’ set by the Maastricht Treaty and Greece's participation as a full member in the single currency (Euro) and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) since January 1, 2002.<sup>107</sup> During the negotiations for the third CSF for the period 2000-2006, Greek authorities were negotiated into carrying further reforms, which ‘further reinforced the logic behind the institutional innovations that took place in the mid 1990s and namely provisions for creation of managing and paying authorities, reinforcement of monitoring, evaluation and control for tighter co-financing requirements gave an extra impetus to the “de-politization”, ...favoured by the European Commission.’<sup>108</sup> The Regional Development Plan that Greece submitted to the Commission in 1999 was by far the best of all Plans Greece ever produced in terms of planning procedures, strategic thinking and consistency, abiding by all EU standards. In 2000 Greece passed the legislation that established the current institutional framework in accordance with the last CSF Programme.<sup>109</sup> Cohesion Policy has been of utmost importance to Greece's Europeanization. The outcome of each previous CSP negotiations framed the rules of the next game. In this context, ‘actors are constrained by decisions taken previously at a higher level, but have plenty of room to pursue their own negotiating strategies. In the light of this argument, the implementation of cohesion policy in Greece has not been simply a response to ‘European’ prescriptions, but the outcome of continuous interaction between a great number of actors, be it supranational, national and sub-

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105 EU's contribution in the First Community Support Framework was ECU 7.5 billion, IMPs –ECU 1.78 billion, the Community's Initiatives –ECU 1.2 billion, the Cohesion Fund –ECU 0.32 billion, EIB loan ECU 1.46 billion. Source: George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, pp. 21-23.

106 D. Ioannou, *Institutions, Development and European Regional Policy in Greece, 1981-1999*, unpublished PhD dissertation, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1999), pp. 258-269.

107 Later became evident that Greek government have fiddled the figures and have given false information about the annual inflation rate in the country

108 George Andreou, *Multilevel Governance*, p. 17.

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national institutions or domestic interest groups.’<sup>110</sup> The 1999 reforms and the stricter criteria, imposed on Greece during the negotiations of the third CSF programme could be regarded within the framework of EU conditionality imposed on CEECs introduced in 1997-1999. This overlapped with the end of the Yugoslav Wars and the election of truly democratic governments in Bulgaria and Romania. Therefore, as a result of these three developments Europeanization ideas significantly penetrated Balkan policies and structures. This was manifested by change in policies, explored in the infrastructure chapter.

Having explored the Europeanization pressure from outside on Greek polity during the 1990s, we would now explore how were the competing traditional nationalist mentalities evolving during the same period. The demise of the communist system created a vast ideational vacuum in many countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe. The change was so sudden and abrupt that it caught policy makers in the East and the West unprepared. Huliaras and Tsardanidis argue three ideas, or ‘geopolitical codes’, about the Balkans dominate Greek politics and institutions in the post-communist era. These are the ‘Muslim Arc’ (in the beginning of the 1990s), ‘the natural hinterland’ (the middle of the 1990s) and the Europeanization (from late 1990s on). All three were introduced by the Greek political elite and decisively influenced public attitudes and foreign policy making in Greece for about half a decade each.<sup>111</sup>

With the ‘collapse of the Soviet Empire in Eastern and Central Europe, Greece’s usefulness as an eastern bulwark of NATO had disappeared.’<sup>112</sup> The same however did not apply to Turkey, who was still perceived as a key ally due to its strategic proximity to Central Asia and the Middle East. The 1991 Gulf War was perceived in Greece as substantially increasing the strategic value of Turkey, which added to Greek feelings of insecurity and the feeling that the West (especially the US) was abandoning them. This encouraged a ‘siege mentality’ in Greek foreign policy circles.<sup>113</sup> The collapse of Yugoslavia was so dramatic that it caught Greek policy makers unprepared and as in the past, perception of insecurity reinforced the idea of the danger from the North. It was neither nations, minorities, nor ideology that underpinned this, but religion. The idea of the Muslim Arc became increasingly influential. In other words ‘Muslim populations of the Balkans formed an axis, an ‘arc’ from Turkey to Albania that transgressed Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Kosovo and Bosnia’, which ‘threatened the stability of the whole region and posed a significant threat to Greek national security.’<sup>114</sup> The Muslim Arc idea was a continuation of the longstanding idea of ‘danger from the North’ and the ‘enemy within’, and it developed in the post-Cold war vacuum, Greeks resorted to the traditional national contexts, because of disappearance of the idea of external ideological threats, and the yet not firmly institutionalized EU idea. The proponents of the Muslim Arc idea, such as foreign minister Antonis Samaras argued Greece should develop a ‘counter strategy aiming at

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110 A. Benz and B. Eberlein, ‘The Europeanization of Regional Policies: Patterns of Multi-level Governance’, *Journal Of European Public Policy*, 6/2, p. 343.

111 Asteris Huliaras and Charalambos Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans: Greek Geopolitical Codes of the Post-communist Era’, *Geopolitics*, 11, 2006, pp. 1-19.

112 A. Nicolson, ‘A Fall from Cultural Grace’, *The Spectator* (12th November 1993) in Asteris Huliaras and Charalambos Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 4.

113 G.J. Dijkink, *National Identity and Geopolitical Visions: Maps of Pride and Pain* (London: Routledge 1996), p. 11 in Asteris Huliaras and Charalambos Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 4.

114 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 5.

[encouraging] “Orthodox Arc”.<sup>115</sup> In practice however, an Orthodox Arc was rather difficult to create as Greece had entered into a bitter conflict with (Orthodox) FYROM over the republic’s name while in Orthodox Bulgaria Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS, Dvizhenie za prava i svobodi -Движение за права и слободи) representing the Muslim minority, became part of the governing coalition. Thus, the “Orthodox” arc was [one more time] limited in Greek discourse to the Greek-Serbian friendship.<sup>116</sup> Again Greece's opponents were Albania, Bulgaria (its Muslim minority) and Turkey and the ally was Serbia. The Cyprus Crisis and the Yugoslav Wars showed that in spite of the started process of democratization and Europeanization old ideational contexts were still very much in place in 1995.

Greece was the only NATO and European Union member to support Slobodan Milosevic’s regime. Greece broke ranks with its Western allies, weakening their efforts to impose sanctions against Serbia. Takis Michas stresses that ‘what seemed incomprehensible during the Bosnia and Kosovo wars was not so much that Greece sided with Serbia, but that it sided with Serbia’s darkest side’<sup>117</sup> Michas quotes Serb intellectual Zoran Mutic:

When I hear so many Greeks -journalists, academics, politicians, intellectuals- expressing their admiration for Karadzic, what can I say? How can they consider as a hero a criminal, somebody who bombed hospitals, who placed snipers to kill kids on the streets?’ Karadzic was honoured in an open-air mass meeting in Piraeus, in the summer of 1993, attended or supported by all political parties, trade unions, media and the Orthodox Church: the handful of demonstrators who opposed the meeting were even arrested.<sup>118</sup>

Michas recalls also ‘the refusal in Greece to condemn Serb atrocities in all recent wars and to accept that rapes were used as an ethnic cleansing weapon by Serbs; as well as the eagerness to refute any such allegations. The government of Andreas Papandreou even challenged the credibility of the Hague Tribunal or other international expert commissions and the Greek Central Bank refused to cooperate with the Chief Prosecutor of the Yugoslavia Tribunal in The Hague, Carla Del Ponte.’<sup>119</sup> Greek banking authorities had repeatedly denied foreign press reports concerning the existence of Milosevic's secret funds in Greece.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, ‘many business activities involve[ed] Greeks [...] to break the embargo against Serbia, acquire companies in Kosovo, launder Milosevic money, all that with full state support’, as evidenced in the Dutch report on Srebrenica and especially in the volume by Cees Wiebes *Intelligence en de oorlog in Bosnie*, later published in a book.<sup>121</sup> The volume deals with ‘the

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115 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans, p. 6.

116 N Zahariadis, ‘Nationalism and Small State Foreign Policy: The Greek response to the Macedonian issue’. *Political Science Quarterly* 109/4 (1994), pp. 647-668; D.M. Perry, ‘Crisis in the Making? Macedonia and Its Neighbours’, *Sudosteuropa* 43/1-2 (1994), pp. 31-58 in Charalambos Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans, p. 7.

117 Takis Michas, *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milosevic's Serbia in the Nineties*, (Texas A&M University Press, 2002), p. 4.

118 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, p. V.

119 Cees van Zweeden, ‘DutchBat in Srebrenica beschoten door Grieken’ (DutchBat in Srebrenica shot at by Greeks), *Rotterdams Dagblad*, 22/06/02.

120 Matthew Kaminski, ‘Greece’s Balkan Ghosts’, *Wall Street Journal*, October 21, 2002, commenting on Takis Michas, *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milosevic's Serbia in the Nineties*.

121 ‘Intelligence en de oorlog in Bosnie’ is part of the *Dutch report on Srebrenica*, compiled over five years by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation by the instruction of the Dutch Government See: Cees Wiebes, ‘Intelligence En De Oorlog in Bosnie, 1992-1995: De Rol Van De Inlichtingen- En Veiligheidsdiensten’ by and Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie.

involvement of foreign secret agencies and foreign powers in the war in Bosnia.' Wiebes 'has had for five years unrestricted access to the Netherlands intelligence community and to various foreign archives and the archives of the United Nations. Moreover, more than 90 foreign intelligence officials were interviewed for the project. It found that Bosnian Serb army was supported by the Greek secret services which provided them with arms and ammunition.<sup>122</sup> Moreover this is even more credible, when taken into account that NATO military secrets leaked out to the Bosnian Serb side. Michas claims that 'NATO military secrets on the August 1995 air strikes were passed on to Mladic on direct orders of then socialist Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou.<sup>123</sup> The author's source is 'none other than Papandreou's personal intermediary with Karadzic and Milosevic, Aris Mousionis, the then and now-President of Greek-Serbian Friendship Association, who was carrying out the mission.'<sup>124</sup> NATO simply stopped sharing intelligence with the Greeks.<sup>125</sup> According to the Dutch report, the 'Greek paramilitaries took part in the Srebrenica massacre and the Greek flag was hoisted in the city after it had fallen to the Serbs. The report bases its findings on telephone intercepts of the Bosnian Serb Army provided by Bosnian intelligence.'<sup>126</sup>

Michas points that culmination of such 'irrationality' came at the time of the Kosovo bombings, and the 'near unanimity of Greeks opposed them; almost all Greek media reported events along the official Serb government line; and anti-Americanism reached a new high during the same year's US President Bill Clinton's state visit.'<sup>127</sup> According to opinion polls published during the period of the Kosovo War, '96-98 percent of the Greek public opposed the NATO air campaign.'<sup>128</sup> Michas concludes,

Surely Milosevic feels sorry that he did not pursue this matter further. Had his plan for a Greek-Serb federation materialized, he might well have won the 2000 election. The majority of Greeks would have voted for him at any rate...How can one contest it, when his popularity rating in Greece, to the very end of his rule, was many times higher than that of all Western leaders and even than his popularity among Serbs? Or when a few hours after his extradition to the Hague, in June 2001, 79 of the some 100 Greek deputies present in Athens signed a petition opposing it and all other extraditions of Serbs to the Hague Tribunal?<sup>129</sup>

This 'irrational pro-Serbian stance' shocked many who assumed that all members of NATO would follow the lead of the United States and the United Nations. Instead, Greece supported Serbia'<sup>130</sup> Edgar Morin, who was visiting Athens during Clinton's visit, characterized what was going on as 'fundamental irrationalism.'<sup>131</sup> The ideational mapping of Greece, explored in this chapter makes it possible to comprehend such 'irrationality'. The idea of Serbia as the ultimate eternal partner has been

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122 Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, *Report on Srebrenica, Srebrenica. A 'safe' area*, Appendix II. 'Intelligence and the war in Bosnia 1992 – 1995: The role of the intelligence and security services, Chapter 4. Secret arms supplies and other covert actions, 4. Military assistance to the Bosnian Serbs, Western intelligence services on the support of the VJ to the VRS', official report <http://193.173.80.81/srebrenica/>

123 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, pp. 38-39.

124 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, pp. 38-39.

125 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, 39, quoting Aris Mousionis, taped interview with author, Thessaloniki, May, 2001.

126 Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, *Report on Srebrenica, Srebrenica. A 'safe' area*, Appendix II.

127 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, pp. 77-80.

128 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, p. 79.

129 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, pp. 105-106.

130 Michalis Papakonstantinou, *Foreword to Michas, Unholy Alliance*.

131 Michas, *Unholy Alliance*, p. 79.

institutionalised in Greek political context since 1830-1832. Initial ideas such as the Megale were challenged and transformed and coupled with other ideas, but attitudes towards neighbours (Serbia-friend/Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey-enemies) largely remained in line with traditional ideational contexts till down to the late 1990s. This is evidenced by the public speeches, delivered by political and spiritual leaders of the time.

Former Republic of Srpska President Radovan Karadzic said ‘The Serbs have only two friends, God and the Greeks’; on the twentieth anniversary of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Bishop Nicolas of Sarajevo stated, ‘We, the Serbs, are blessed to have God in heaven and Hellenes on earth. You the Hellenes have us Serbs as your friends. We will continue the struggle you undertook in 1974 against the Muslims until Constantinople becomes a centre for Orthodoxy’ on the 20th anniversary of the Turkish invasion. May the traditional Greek – Serbian friendship flourish! [...]; ‘The Greeks have always been friends of our people’, Serbian Patriarch Pavle stated. Former Serbian President and PM, Vojislav Kostunica announced that ‘Greek and Serb peoples will remain united until Doomsday’ [during his visit to Greece in 2000]. HRH Crown Princess Catherine of Serbia (living in exile) stated on 18 Dec 2004 ‘we have more in common than differences. The Greek people stood by our side more than any other nation. Up there we do not say the Greeks, we say our brothers. Whatever happens here – let’s hope the time will never come – they will be by your side in no time. They are yours. You have won their brotherhood.’ This relationship is mutual. Former Prime Minister Konstantinos Mitsotakis is known to have said on numerous occasions ‘The Serbs are our true friends [...]’; Andreas Papandreou went further stating ‘As a Greek I swear eternal friendship with the Serb people’ [during his visit to Belgrade in 2003]. Secretary General for European Affairs Dimitrios K. Katsoudas pronounced in 2007 ‘Greece and Serbia are two countries linked by ancient and inextricable bonds. Our relationship is lost in the depths of time. Serbian culture and religion were greatly influenced by our common roots in the great civilisation of Byzantium.’<sup>132</sup> Even in mid 1990s, the dominant idea that Serbia is the *Idee Fixe*, eternal partner for Greece has not been significantly challenged since 1830-1832.

However the EU-ization and Europeanization ideas and the respective normative agenda, started to shift the decades-long held ideas of ‘enemies’ and ‘friends’ and ideas of ‘threats outside and within’. This is not to say that new ideas have displaced the old ideational contexts, but for the first time there is an ideational framework, powerful enough that could challenge the ideational status-quo and change the normative base of politics in SEE. An example of such tendency is an article by Greek intellectuals in the daily *Eleftherotipiya*,

The Government, political parties, prominent journalists, high-ranking officers and the Church are giving signals for immediate danger. Greece is presented as continuously surrounded and aimed for suffocating by its enemies [...] We wish to live in peace with all nations in the Balkans [...] There is nothing abnormal in the existence of one harmonious society, which is built by different cultures and ethnoses. On the contrary - the reverse is admired. It is a real disgrace to suppress and eliminate minorities in the name of national unity. Let’s respect these minorities, as we respect each citizen of Greece. We do not need neither to eliminate them, nor to assimilate them. On the contrary, we insist they have the same rights and opportunities as each one of us and support their specific rights as language, religion and politics, emerging from their ethnic base. Finally, isn’t it this that

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132 *Serbian-Hellenic Brotherhood*, <http://www.serbia-hellas.f2g.net/>, accessed June 2007.

the Greek Government requests constantly from other nations, where Greek minorities live?<sup>133</sup>

### *Greece: A Regional Superpower?*

The deepening of EU-involvement and the state of Balkan post-communist economies lead to the abandoning of the Muslim Arc idea to give way to the ‘regional superpower’ or ‘Balkans as a Greek Hinterland’ idea.<sup>134</sup> Greek political elites ‘saw their country as the most powerful state in the region, the “natural” leader of the Balkans. This idea is a turning point as for the first time since the Greek Independence (1830-1832), the Balkans and the North were not perceived as a threat on ‘national’, ‘ideological’, ‘religious’, etc. terms, but rather as an opportunity, as an ‘El Dorado, full of economic opportunities, cheap workforces and untapped markets.’<sup>135</sup> This period could largely be characterized as ‘westernisation’ or ‘modernisation’ of Greek foreign policy, which engaged in developing relations with Balkan countries ‘not only at the bilateral but also at the multilateral level... to promote regional cooperation schemes... [and] building a new climate of trust.’<sup>136</sup>

On Greece’s initiative, a summit of all Balkan leaders took place in Crete in November 1997. The ‘regional superpower’ idea soon took over Greek political elites and the media. *I Kathimerini*, the leading conservative centre-right newspaper wrote ‘the idea of a Balkan hinterland has been one of the foundations upon which the Greek development vision was built.’<sup>137</sup> In Greek context ‘all businesses with headquarters in Greece were considered as “agents” of Greek national interest, business people were compared to diplomats, investments were thought of as Greek foreign policy instruments.’ However, it gradually became clear that Greece ‘had major economic interests in the Balkans and a new political approach to reflect them had become necessary. Therefore, Greek foreign policy priorities and the interests of the Greek business have begun to converge as never before.’ The Greek Deputy Minister of National Economy stated ‘Each one of the Greek companies developing its activities abroad constitutes a bridge of cooperation and contributes to the further development of the relations of friendship and cooperation with the neighbouring countries. We need the relevant support of the companies to accomplish this goal.’<sup>138</sup> As a sign of the changing attitudes is the changing of names of some streets. In Greece nearly every town or village has a central street, called *Boulgaroktonos*, literally meaning the Bulgar-killer (see Fig. 12). Only in Athens there are eleven streets with that name, one of them being a central boulevard. This is to honour Byzantium Emperor Basil II, who in 1014 won a battle against Bulgaria and captured 15,000 prisoners and blinded 99 of every 100 men, leaving 150 one-eyed men to lead them back to their ruler Samuel of Bulgaria, who fainted at the sight and died two days later suffering a stroke.<sup>139</sup> This gave Basil his nickname *Boulgaroktonos*, ‘the Bulgar-killer’ in all Arab, Byzantium, Armenian, etc. medieval chronicles.

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133 *Eleftherotipiya*, 30.03.1992.

134 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 8.

135 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 8.

136 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 10.

137 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 10.

138 Tsardanidis, ‘(Mis)understanding the Balkans’, p. 11.

139 Byzantium Emperor Basil II was surnamed the Bulgar-slayer (Greek: Βασίλειος Β΄ Βουλγαροκτόνος, Basileios II Boulgaroktonos, 958 also known as Basil the Porphyrogenitus and Basil the Young reigned from January 10, 976 to December 15, 1025. Under his reign, the Byzantine Empire reached its greatest strength in nearly five centuries. At the start of the second millennium, he took on his greatest adversary, Samuel of Bulgaria. After 24 years of constant wars between Byzantium and the Second Bulgarian Empire, finally, on July 29, 1014, Basil II outmaneuvered the Bulgarian



*Fig. 12 Odos Boulgaroktonos ( Bulgar-Killer Street), present in most Greek towns and villages<sup>140</sup>*

In 2006, just before Bulgaria's accession representatives of the Bulgarian and Greek government renamed the Vasil II Boulgaroktonos Street in Thessaloniki to Basil II. This also happened in Serres and Athens. While most of the hundreds of Bulgar-killer street still remain as a road map of the past, the trend is quite indicative. A Street that ran in one direction for a thousand years had finally changed course.

The immense significance of EU-ization normative agenda (that will be explored in detail in the EU Chapter), has been powerful enough to displace the old ideational contexts, rather than uneasily coexisting with old ideas as in previous critical junctures. However, it is only by the end of 1990's, and especially after the Kosovo war when the idea of Europeanization became dominant in Greek foreign policy making and it started to penetrate Greek institutions, political elites' ideas and media discourse. This was possible due to the idea and realization that Greece's role in the EU could be a major resource in its dealings with SEE. The Thessaloniki Summit 2003 held under the Greek presidency was a major and significant opportunity to delineate the outlines of Greek policy and its new dominant ideology/ideational approach. The integration of the Balkans into the EU was now considered by Athens to be a number one priority, a factor capable of contributing decisively to the consolidation of stability, democracy and market economy in the region.' Also, 'only the EU framework could provide the means for cementing peaceful relations in the region, mainly through an integration process that could bring about the same reconciliation as in the case of relations between France and Germany. For Greece, the option of leaving even part of the Balkans permanently outside the European institutional structures was considered destabilizing, and could

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army in the Battle of Kleidion, with Samuil separated from his force. Having crushed the Bulgarians, Basil was said to have captured 15,000 prisoners and blinded 99 of every 100 men, leaving 150 one-eyed men to lead them back to their ruler, who fainted at the sight and died two days later suffering a stroke. Although this may be an exaggeration, this gave Basil his nickname Boulgaroktonos, 'the Bulgar-killer/slayer' in later tradition. Four years later Bulgaria fell to the Byzantines (1018).

140 Source: Author.

lead to a new round of violent conflict. Greece's national interests in the Balkans were seen as better served via multilateral efforts in the EU framework, rather than via unilateral and bilateral one. Not only was the nationalistic and opportunistic policy of the early 1990s abandoned, but... "multilateral" came almost exclusively to mean 'integration into the European Union'.<sup>141</sup>

In Greece the era of state building (1830-1922) was entirely shaped by the Megale Idea, or the *recovery of Constantinople and the re-creation of Christian Byzantium with all the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire in a Greek –controlled modern national state*. After independence, guided by the institutionalized ideas of Korais, Feraios, Zampelios and Paparrigopolous the machinery of the state began consistently promoting, educating and pursuing the idea. As a result of such policies and successful wars, by 1922, Greece doubled its territory and population and Megale seemed within reach. The Smyrna catastrophe marked the end of Megale in the classical form. The subsequent interwar period marked a shift in Greek foreign policy.

If the dominant idea of the previous period 1830-1922 was 'looking outside' at territorial expansion in line with the Megale Idea, the period 1923-1946 was a period of economic problems marked by 'looking inside' with the idea of preserving the status-quo and the integrity of the country, in other words, characterized by policies of state consolidation and Hellenization. Megale was muted in its classical form, but its legacy was felt in the new idea that: *everyone who lives in Greece should be Greek*. The objective was directed at the large Slav, Albanian and Turkish minorities in the newly acquired lands to the North. The ideas that came to dominate the Greek political and institutional context after 1923 could be summarized as foreign policies of defense from the *danger from the north* (Bulgaria, Albania, Turkey) and the brutal policies of Hellenization of the *enemy within* (Slav, Albanian, Turk minorities) at home. The Metaxas regime (1936-1941) was marked by the grandiose vision was to create a *Third Greek Civilization based on its glorious Ancient and Byzantine past*, but what he actually created was more a Greek version of the Third Reich'<sup>142</sup> In such respect the legacy of the Megale was present and influenced his ideas and the nature of the regime. He continued the policies of Hellenization and national consolidation with even bigger strife than his predecessors.

The World War II (1941-1945) and the Civil War (1946-1949) period in addition to the already strong identification of 'others' in national terms, introduced the idea of 'others' in terms of ideology, notably Communism. During the Cold War period, (1949-1974) Greece was a bulwark against Communist expansion and its administrative, military, economic and political institutions were shaped to serve that purpose. Thus the interwar ideas of national 'enemy within' and national 'danger from the north' on ethnic terms was now coupled with a political ideological dimension. The perception of a threat now came from the ideological *enemy within* (minorities) that were now portrayed not just as Albanian or Bulgarian/Macedonian 'others', but as Communist Albanian or Bulgarian/Macedonian 'others'. Also the interwar idea of national danger from the north was joined by the *ideological enemy from the north*, as communist regimes were established in neighbouring Albania and Bulgaria. The policies of Hellenization through exchange of populations and repressive actions through the machinery of the state have largely been successful.

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<sup>141</sup> Tsardanidis, '(Mis)understanding the Balkans', p. 13.

<sup>142</sup> Andreas Markessinis, *Who was Metaxas?*, <http://www.metaxas-project.com/who-was-metaxas/>, accessed July, 2008, (emphasis added)

The Greek elements (declaring as Greek) in Greek Macedonia had gone from 43 percent in 1912 to 89 percent in 1926.<sup>143</sup> In spite of the overall success of Hellenization they were not discontinued. The Greek Junta (1967-1974) described their coup d'état as a *revolution to save the nation* from a communist conspiracy. The defining characteristic of the Junta was its staunch anti-Communism and pro-American and Western stance, terror, oppression and lack of civil rights.

As a result of the Cyprus conflict of 1974 the regime of the colonels fell and a broad consensus was thus formed that the *immediate threat to their national security no longer emanated from Greece's communist neighbours but from Turkey*. The feeling of insecurity brought up the need for further strengthening ties with the EC, decreasing the post-war dependence on the US and developing the economy, in other words the need for democratization which was the ideational forces behind internal and foreign policies of the time, which led to the country's full membership in the EC in the 1981. Turkish aggression on the side of the Turks, started to challenge for the first time traditional ideas of Albanians and Bulgarians as eternal historical and later ideological enemies. This was possible since the policies of Hellenization (1923-1974) have largely proved successful and the country had more or less been homogenised. In general the whole post-1974 and especially the post 1989 development is marked by the uneasy coexistence of traditional nationalist ideas with the cooperation international agenda. This explains the contradictions of Greek policy (e.g., emotional support for an idea of Serbia whilst being part of NATO and massively dependent on EU, and now EU aid). Such pressure on local elites was especially visible during the mid 1990s, when demise of the communist system created a vast ideational vacuum in many countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe. At the beginning of the 1990s, as in previous critical junctures plethora of ideas was calling for attention in Greek society. Most notable among them were the idea of the *Muslim arc* surrounding the country and the need for Orthodox solidarity (early 90s), also the *Balkans-as-a-Greek-economic hinterland* idea (mid 90s) and finally *Europeanization and EU-ization* ideas (late 90s) started to penetrate deeper in Greek institutions and challenge old assumptions of enemies and friends.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter started with a discussion how the idea 'Bulgarians are an enemy' emerged, who was the intellectual carrier of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up of the modern Greek state in the late XIX c. Then the chapter explored how such programmatic beliefs influenced actors, coming in different periods to those institutions, to form the same normative guidelines that cooperation with Bulgarians is not appropriate. The chapter reconstructed how such normative guidelines shaped the process through which Greek political elites decided on policies of obstruction towards Bulgarians with remarkable persistence during most of the XX c., regardless of changing external factors. One of the most critical turning point during that period, the Smyrna catastrophe, marked the end of the Megale in its classical form and the expansionist policies were discontinued. Post-Smyrna Greek politics turned to policies of state consolidation. In other words, that meant that after the Bulgarian-Greek (1919) and the Turkish-Greek (1923) population exchange, the minority issue was considered closed and everyone who stayed in Greece in the newly-acquired lands to the north should be Greek and was subjected to policies of Hellenisation. No matter the

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143 Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, p. 121.



Megale was muted in its classical form, in post-Smyrna Greece, perception of Bulgarians as historical external enemies was joined to the idea of the enemy within the state (the Slav national minority) that was dangerous and needed to be made Greek. Communist regime further added the anti-communist negative image to the historical animosity towards the Slav minority in Greece and Bulgaria in general. Therefore, in spite of Smyrna change, Greek programmatic beliefs towards Bulgarians and normative criteria that cooperation was unthinkable were not changed (they were even re-enforced).

To summarize at successive historical junctures the dominant ideational framework has been challenged, but traditional programmatic beliefs of mistrust towards each other have remained unchanged. The national ideology has included more than one discourse and has displayed remarkable adaptability to different ideologies and regimes for legitimizing purposes, but perception of the other as an enemy and the inappropriateness of cooperation from the early XX c. to the 1990s did not change. As a result policies of obstruction during that period did not change as well. It is only with the EU involvement in SEE, the significant power of the EU-normative agenda and Bulgaria's membership perspective that traditional persistent nationalist ideas started to be gradually challenged by new ideas.

The first hypothesis that Bulgarian and Greek modern state' mutual obstruction, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes has been confirmed in the Greek case. That specific nationalist attitudes of Bulgarian and Greek political elites would most likely be path-dependent regardless of the different changes of external environments, if such changes do not produce an idea powerful enough to supplant old ideas and beliefs of what is deemed appropriate was confirmed as well has also been confirmed. Chapter 4 will repeat this procedure for Bulgaria and the idea –'Greeks are an enemy', shaping Bulgarian obstruction policy vis-à-vis Greece during the same period to determine if the hypothesis will be confirmed by the Bulgarian case as well.

## Chapter 4. The Case of Bulgaria

*Moesia, Thrace, Macedonia*<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction**

The chapter describes Bulgarian political and cultural development in the early nineteenth century, focusing on the period after the modern Bulgarian state formation and the development of the Bulgarian programmatic beliefs towards Greece. This, in other words, means identifying the ideational map how in Bulgaria, the idea ‘Greeks are an enemy’ crystallized, why exactly that idea for the neighbour was adopted, who were the carriers of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up and identity of the modern Bulgarian state in the late XIX c. Then the chapter explores how later acting under the influence of such programmatic beliefs, Bulgarian political elites decided on policies of obstruction towards Greeks with remarkable persistence during most of the XX c., regardless of changing external factors.

Maria Todorova claims that ‘Bulgarian nationalism throughout the past century demonstrates a remarkable continuum of ideas and feelings with some...differences between the separate sub-periods.’<sup>2</sup> The initial cornerstone idea of Bulgarian national ideology, San Stefano, could be traced through all phases till the 1990s and it is only in the post-communist environment that it was successfully challenged by the EU normative agenda. Indeed, San Stefano merits a special attention, since without it we cannot talk about Bulgarian nationalism and the modern Bulgarian state.

### **San Stefano Idea: Carriers and Institutionalisation**

‘*San Stefano*’ (Сан Стефано) is the Bulgarian equivalent of the Greek Megale. Bulgaria’s national idea, adopted in 1878 was the restoration of the borders according to the Treaty of San Stefano, (3 March 1878) or in other words the very powerful idea of restoring the ideal ethnic territory of the nation envisioned by the short-lived San Stefano Treaty, then dismembered by the Berlin Congress (June 13 - July 13, 1878) (see Fig. 13). In this view, the Bulgarian state would only be complete by encompassing the three historic provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia, as was according to the San Stefano Treaty, since those were the ethnic territories of the Bulgarian nation, justified by two criteria: Bulgarian language and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate. The latter became ‘the sui generis metahistorical event in the development of Bulgarian nationalism, a dream almost come true, and an *idée fixe* for decades to come.’<sup>3</sup> After the country’s liberation from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, Bulgarian political elites had involved the country in five wars to accomplish this. How the idea crystallized, who were its carriers and how it became institutionalized in the following sections.

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1 The Bulgarian national idea could be simplified to the unification of the three historic provinces of the antiquity into a modern Bulgarian state, since it was believed they were the demographical limits of the Bulgarian people at the time.

2 Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 100.

3 Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 77.



Fig. 13 Establishment of the Bulgarian State. Treaty of San Stefano (1878) and Congress of Berlin (1878)<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Source: Todor Bozhinov, 2008.

The Second Bulgarian Empire fell to the Ottomans in 1396 and Bulgarians had to wait for their National Revival for more than four centuries. The Ottoman Empire organized the Christian millet (Greek and Slav) under the Greek Orthodox patriarch (Patriarchate of Constantinople), who assumed thus the jurisdictional responsibility for the rights of all Christian subjects in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>5</sup> The Constantinople patriarch was delegated the right to administer, to tax, and to exercise justice over all the Orthodox Christians of the Empire thus providing Greeks with substantial religious, educational, administrative and legal power in the Ottoman Balkans. The Greek language 'prevailed everywhere in schools and churches, and the remains of ancient Bulgarian literature were destroyed to a large extent by the Greeks. Thus Bulgarians were subjected to double oppression, political by the Ottomans and cultural by the Constantinople Patriarchate. On the demand of the Greek higher clergy the centuries old Serbian Pec Patriarchate and Bulgarian Ohrid Archbishopric saw the last remnants of their autonomy abolished in 1766 and 1767, respectively. 'With the rise of Greek nationalism in the second half of the 18th century, the cultural oppression turned into an open assimilatory policy which was aimed at imposing the Greek language and a Greek consciousness on the emerging Bulgarian bourgeoisie and which used as its basic tool the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The opening of a number of schools with all-round Greek language curriculum and the virtual banning of the Bulgarian liturgy at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century threatened the very survival of the Bulgarians as a separate nation with its own, distinct national culture.'<sup>6</sup>

After we have identified what the main Bulgarian nationalist idea is, we need to identify who were the carriers of this idea, why precisely that idea gained salience and how it became institutionalized. As a reaction to the policies of the Greek clergy, Paisius of Hilendar (1722-1773), a monk from the south-western Bulgarian town of Bansko, wrote a short historical pamphlet in 1762, called *Istoriija Slavjanobulgarskaja* (A History of Slav-Bulgarians), which later became the 'bible of Bulgarian nationalism'.<sup>7</sup>

This was the first work written in the Bulgarian vernacular and was the first call for a national awakening. Father Paisius revived ancient glories and urged his compatriots to speak their native language and 'not be ashamed to call themselves Bulgarians', since 'of all Slav people, Bulgarians had had the mightiest medieval kingdoms, were Christened first [885 AD], created the alphabet to the benefit of all Slavs, had the most glorious Tzars and the longest written history [since 681 AD]'.<sup>7</sup>

He urged his compatriots to fight against the cultural subjugation to the Greek language and Church and the political subjugation to the Ottomans. If Rigas Feraios was the first intellectual entrepreneur of the Megale, Paisius of Hilendar was his Bulgarian counterpart. The modern Bulgarian nation was constructed around the idea of the 'majestic medieval continuity' and 'the old grandeur',

But there are those who do not like to know about their Bulgarian kin and turn to foreign culture and to foreign tongue and do not care for their Bulgarian tongue but learn how to read and speak Greek and feel ashamed to call themselves Bulgarians. O, you misshapen

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5 In the Ottoman Empire '[P]opulation was administered within four administrative units, the millets, which were organized on the basis of religion and not ethnicity nor territory. These were the Umma, regulating the Muslims' affairs and the Christian, Jewish and Armenian millets. The Ottoman state treated them as corporate bodies, dealing with their leaders and not with their individual members.

6 Pedro Ramet and Sabrina P. Ramet, *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, (Duke University Press, 1989), pp.20-21.

7 Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 74.

creature, bereft of reason! Why are you ashamed to call yourself Bulgarian and do not read and speak your own language? As though the Bulgarians have not had a kingdom and a state? For so many years they reigned and reaped glory and were famous all over the world and many a time they exacted tributes from powerful Romans and from wise Greeks. And emperors and kings gave them their royal daughters for wives in order to live in peace and love with the Bulgarian tsars. The Bulgarians were the most famous of all Slav peoples, they were the first to call themselves tsars, they were the first to have a patriarch, they were the first to become converted into the Christian faith and it was they who conquered the largest territory. Just as powerful and respected by all the Slav peoples were also those first Slav saints who came to shine in radiance descending from the Bulgarian people and speaking the Bulgarian language, as I have written all about it in this history. For this too the Bulgarians have testimony from many histories because everything about the Bulgarians is true, as I have said.<sup>8</sup>

In this text there is ‘an intensive defensiveness, a feeling of humiliation, and a struggle against an inferiority complex. At the same time, there is also an acute counter offensiveness, based on intensive pride in the glories of the past.’ The defensiveness stems out of the fact that ‘Bulgarians were defining themselves in opposition against the earlier nationalisms and previously articulated irredentist programs of [their] neighbours.’<sup>9</sup> Paisius’ pamphlet is a reaction to the Greek economic, cultural and political influence through church and schools over the Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire. He was even more critical to the Greek-leaning Bulgarians from the more affluent circles, such as merchants. Paisius crystallized the idea that Greek educational and ecclesiastical influence was detrimental to Bulgarian people and they needed to overthrow it. He justified that with the glories of the Medieval Past, when Bulgarian people had their own Empire and did fight with the Greeks to preserve it.

Paisius was followed by a number of others and most notably by Sophronius of Vratsa (Sofroni Vrachanski) (1739-1813). Paisius’ History and its distribution by Sophronius and other disciples gave birth to a mass national political, religious, educational and cultural struggle for independence.<sup>10</sup> The influential ideas he introduced quickly spread over the population and instigated a process, known as Bulgarian Enlightenment (1762-1878), which was a time of national awakening and dominated by three main ideas: *independent educational system, independent ecclesiastical organization* as prerequisites for *political independence* for all Bulgarian populated lands of the Ottoman Empire. These ideas were triggered by Paisius’ History that had a clearly pronounced anti-Greek sentiment and later became the bible of Bulgarian nationalism. Therefore, the whole Bulgarian nationalism was born with the idea of Greeks as ‘enemies’.

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8 Paisius of Hilendar, *Istorija Slavjanobulgarskaja ( History of Slav-Bulgarians)*, original manuscript kept in the Zograph Monastery on Athos, 1762. Bulgarian text <http://scriptorium.hit.bg/istoria.pdf> and partial English translation by P.Miltenov <http://members.tripod.com/~zlatnite/Paisiy.htm>, accessed October 2007.

9 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, pp. 74-75.

10 Saint Sophronius of Vratsa (or Sofroniy Vrachanski; Bulgarian: Софроний Врачански) (1739–1813) was born in Kotel, Central Bulgaria. He was a Bulgarian cleric and a prominent figure in the National revival, publishing *Nedelnik* („Неделник“)—a collection of precepts and sermons for every holiday of the year based on Greek and Slavic sources. The collection had historical importance in initiating book printing in modern Bulgarian and establishing the Bulgarian vernacular as the language of literature. He also wrote another collection, *Sunday Evangelic Interpretation* in 1805, as well as a very popular autobiography, *Life and Sufferings of Sinful Sophronius* („Житие и страдания грешнаго Софрония“, *Zhitie i Stradaniya Greshnago Sofroniya*)

Due to the Greek domination over the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire, for Bulgarians religious divider was not as important as linguistic in the national ideology crystallization. Sharing same religion, Bulgarians had to first emancipate through language and education, then through religion to finally strive for political independence. That explains the fierce struggle for independence of the educational system. By 1820s, 'there had developed a distinct impulse to establish Bulgarian secular schools instead of the existing Helleno-Bulgarian schools, which offered a bilingual Greek and Bulgarian education and which dated from the beginning of the century.'<sup>11</sup> Through the support of the growing class of Bulgarian merchants, who facilitated the creation of a dense network of secular schools in the Bulgarian lands, the struggle for educational emancipation had achieved its goals by the time of the Crimean War (1854-56).

The ideas of Paisius of Hilendar influenced the second wave of ideational entrepreneurs such as Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski (1812–1875). They followed Paisius' ideas and started to address the need for Bulgarian ecclesiastical organization independent of the Greek Patriarchate. Such ideas gained large support and provoked unrest against the Greek clergy that intensified dramatically during the 1860s turning into a mass movement for an independent Bulgarian church. Neofit Bozveli became the leader of the movement, initiating large scale propaganda campaign against the Patriarchate within the Empire, supported from Bulgarians of the Diaspora in Southern Russia, Moldova, Wallachia and Austria.

Bozveli realized that the first clashes with Greek clergy demand the creation of management center to coordinate and direct the struggle of the Bulgarians. He choose the imperial capital as the seat of the movement due to its closeness to the Patriarchate and the Turkish government, the presence of foreign diplomatic missions and especially the existence substantial wealthy and influential Bulgarian community in the city.

The leaders of the movement prepare a memorandum to the Patriarchate with demands to appoint Bulgarian bishops in the Bulgarian lands, instead of Greeks, to allow the publishing of Bulgarian newspapers and books, to demand Bulgarian secular schools free from Greek influence, to have own spiritual representatives in Istanbul to express their national interests before the Turkish government, etc.<sup>12</sup>

As a result the Greek clerics were ousted from most Bulgarian bishoprics by the end of the decade.<sup>13</sup> On 3 April 1860, during the so-called Easter Action or Bulgarian Easter, Makariopolski intentionally did not mention the name of the Patriarch of Constantinople, but mentioned the Sultan instead, which, according to the canon law, is an act of throwing off the Patriarchate authority, while respecting the authority of the Ottoman state. Infuriated by such action, the Patriarchate sent Makariopolski into exile

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11 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 73.

12 Selected primary sources from the *Bulgarian Enlightenment*, Vol. 3, (Sofia: Tangra TanNakRa, 2008)

13 Ilarion Makariopolski (Bulgarian: Иларион Макариополски), (1812–1875) Born in Elena, Central Bulgaria. He was one of the most prominent figures during the 19th-century Bulgarian church struggle against the Constantinople Patriarchate. He was raised in a prominent Bulgarian family and received his education in his native town and later at Arbanasi Greek School. He became a monk in the Hilendar Monastery on Mount Athos in 1832 and was later educated on the island of Andros, and famous high school in Athens. He chose to guide the Bulgarian church struggle from Constantinople together with Neofit Bozveli, and as a result was exiled to Mount Athos between 1845 and 1850 and later between 1861-1864. After the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870 he was Metropolitan of Tarnovo, and died in Constantinople in 1875. He was buried in the yard of the Bulgarian St Stephen Church in the city, where the Sultan's firman was first read.

to Mount Athos (1861-1864). However, the news of such act spread over through all Bulgarian eparchies and further intensified the church struggle. Acknowledging the mass unrest Sultan Abdülaziz established the Bulgarian Exarchate, an independent Bulgarian ecclesiastical organization by firman of 28 February 1870. The Greek Patriarchate declared the Bulgarian Exarchate schismatic and its adherents heretics. The crucial idea of what constituted Bulgarian territories was outlined in article 10 of the firman. This identified the dioceses of the Bulgarian Exarchate, covering Moesia and parts of Thrace and Macedonia, for which there was no doubt of their belonging to the Bulgarian nation.<sup>14</sup> For those eparchies in Thrace and Macedonia with mixed population and claimed by the Greek Patriarchate the firman provided for holding a plebiscite. The firman of 1870 was the first time a Sultan's decree allowed a free referendum.

If all, or at least two thirds of the Orthodox Christian population [...] are willing to accept the supremacy of the Bulgarian Exarchate in religious matters and if this is duly proved, they will be allowed to do so, but this shall happen only by the will and with agreement of all or, at least two thirds of the population. Those, who try by these means to create trouble and disturbances among the population, will be persecuted and punished according to the law.<sup>15</sup>

The population voted overwhelmingly in favour of joining the Exarchate (Skopje by 91%, Ohrid by 97%). The establishment of an autonomous Bulgarian Church had enormous significance far more than a simple administrative act within the Empire, as it signified to Bulgarians 'the legalization of a new nation on the Balkans'.<sup>16</sup> The significance of this firman for Bulgarian nationalism is that it recognized the existence and the first official delimitation of the boundaries of the Bulgarian nation.<sup>17</sup> From this moment there was no question as to what was meant by Bulgarian nation. It was 'the official recognition of separate Bulgarian millet, under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian exarchate in 1870 that specified the extent of the Bulgarian nation and which became a significant step toward further political independence.'<sup>18</sup>

Similar to the Greek case, the ideas of Paisius, Sofronius, Bozveli and Makariopolski achieved political importance among so many competing ideas through the latter's prominent position in society. They were able to render others receptive to their ideas through their position as ecclesiastical officials, intellectuals and prolific writers. Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming Bulgarian intellectual elite's views toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances.

Paisius and Sofronius' had a crucial role in the shaping of a new consciousness among the intelligentsia, to emancipate and overthrow the Greek spiritual oppression, which later facilitated the creation of a new national movement. Their prolific literary contributions were supported by Bulgarian merchants from within the Empire and wealthy immigrants in Austria, Wallachia and Southern Russia. Sofronius could make

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14 Emil Kazakov, 'Geopoliticheskite Modeli v Bulgarskata Vunshna Politika: Sanstefanizmut' (The Geopolitical Models in the Bulgarian Foreign Policy: The Syndrom of San Stefano) in *Geopolitika i geostrategia*, 2-2004. pp. 40-43.

15 *Some Authentic Turkish Documents About Macedonia*. 'Sultan's Ferman for the establishment of a Bulgarian Exarchate.', [http://www.macedoniainfo.com/books/dg2en/sultans\\_ferman.htm](http://www.macedoniainfo.com/books/dg2en/sultans_ferman.htm), accessed August 2008.

16 Joelle Dalegre, *La Trace grecque. Population et territoire*, 'Harmattan', P., 1997, p. 268.

17 Grigor Velev, *Bulgaria prez XXI vek. Bulgarskata Nacionalna Doktrina* (I chast), [(*Bulgaria in XXI Century. The Bulgarian National Doctrine* (Part I))], (Sofia: Znanie, 1997), p. 128.

18 Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 81.

others listen to his ideas through his position as the most influential Bulgarian writer from the beginning of the XIX c. and through his books, most notably *Kiriakodromon sirech Nedelnik (Sofronie)*, where he urged Bulgarians to emancipate from Greeks, published in 1806 in 1000 copies, which was an impressive number for those times.<sup>19</sup> Bozveli and Makariopolski could make others accept their ideas through their role as leaders of the national movement for church independence. The latter also had substantial influence through his position as representative of the Bulgarian church in Istanbul and through the first Bulgarian newspaper, published in Istanbul *Tsarigradski vestnik* (Tsarigrad's newspaper). Makariopolski influential ideas were maintained through the newspapers *Dunavski lebed* (Danube Swan), *Budushtnost* (Future), *Branitel* (Defender), *Bulgarska starina* (Bulgarian heritage), published in Novi Sad, Belgrade and Odessa between 1855 and 1865.<sup>20</sup>

Paisius and Sofronius were the carriers that crystallized the idea Bulgarians should emancipate from Greeks and should overthrow their influence. Their ideas were developed by Bozveli and Makariopolski who directed the struggle for independent Bulgarian church and education. Therefore, if in the Greek case, Megale ideology prescribed to be Greek meant to be Orthodox Christian, in the Bulgarian case, to be Bulgarian meant to speak the language and to belong to the Bulgarian Exarchate. Thus, Greek ideology sought for the modern Greek state to incorporate all Orthodox Christians within the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarian ideology sought to unite all lands, populated by Bulgarian speakers, adhering to the Exarchate. Such criteria encompassed the population living in the three historic provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia, or in other words the territories incorporated later by San Stefano. Both ideas of language and independent church as markers of Bulgarianness, became a canvass on which the ideology of the future Bulgarian state was developed and shaped, becoming part of the self-understanding and identity of Bulgarians. If the works of Paisius and Sofronius laid the broad foundations of the Bulgarian national idea in unstructured and idealistic way, the second wave of ideational entrepreneurs, such as Bozveli and Makariopolski crystallized 'what, why and how' had to be achieved. As a result of those ideas the territories, envisioned by the Sultan's firman from 1870 for the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate, became the model for the territorial expansion of the future state.

Similar to the Greek case, Sofronius, Paisius, Bozveli and Makariopolski were better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene. The chief mechanism for this was their ability to build a consensus around an idea, getting it accepted as the most suitable means of understanding and reacting to events in a particular sphere. They successful through their professional positions and literary scholarship to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Bulgarian state is in line with the educational and ecclesiastical emancipation from Greeks and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate.

The second step towards the formation of the modern national ideology is the Tzarigrad Conference (1876-1877) and its blueprint for autonomous Bulgaria.<sup>21</sup> The Russian

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19 *Sofronii Vrachanski. Sbornik Izsledvania (Sofronius of Vratsa. Collection)*, (Sofia: Marin Drinov Academic Publishing House, 2004), *Sofronii Vrachanski, Suchinenia v dva toma, (Sofronius of Vratsa-Primary sources in two volumes)*, (Sofia: Marin Drinov Academic Publishing House, 1989-1992).

20 Ivan Shishmanov, *Ot Paisii do Rakovski (From Paisius to Rakovski)*, (Sofia: Zahari Stoyanov, 2009).

21The conference was held in Istanbul (Tsarigrad in Bulgarian, meaning 'City of the Tzars') Reluctant to let Russia take the role of the sole protector of the Balkan Christians, and under pressure from public opinion, the governments of the European countries decided to intervene on the issue. This led to the convocation of an international conference in



Ambassador countered the British plan to split the Bulgarian national territory into one east and one west provinces, but it had to accept the Austro-Hungarian plan to divide it into north and south. Both plans were motivated by the unwillingness of the Great Powers to prevent the creation of a very powerful pro-Russian state in the Balkans in very close proximity to the Straits. The Ottomans introduced a new constitution that attempted to address all issues with the Christian subjects that were to be dealt at the conference.<sup>22</sup> Despite the plans for dividing Bulgarian territories into two different states, the Tzarigrad Conference was considered by Bulgarians and by the outside world as the first internationally acknowledged recognition of the nation defined by the boundaries of the eparchies of the Bulgarian Exarchate.<sup>23</sup> The boundaries of Bulgaria in the Sultan's firman of 1870 were according to the firmly declared affiliation of the population with the Bulgarian Exarchate, following a plebiscite in 1871-1873. The plebiscite profoundly influenced the decisions of the Tzarigrad Conference of 1877 and the national Bulgarian boundaries that were discussed were identical with the boundaries, outlined by the Sultan's firman and by the plebiscites 1873-4.

The third and most decisive event contributing to the crystallization of the modern national ideology and territory of the Bulgarian nation is the Russo-Turkish War (1877-8) that ended with the Treaty of San Stefano between Russian and the Ottoman Empire, signed on 3 March 1878. It established a great autonomous principality of Bulgaria reborn after 500 years Ottoman domination. It extended from the Black Sea to Lake Ohrid and from the Danube to the Aegean. San Stefano's Bulgarian borders were drawn following 'the dioceses of the Bulgarian exarchate [28 February 1870] and [were] considered, therefore, to conform most closely to the natural ethnic (e.g. linguistic and religious) boundaries of the Bulgarian nation.'<sup>24</sup> Such boundaries were already recognized as Bulgarian-populated by the Ottoman Empire with the firman of Sultan Abdülaziz and according to the borders recognized by the Tzarigrad Conference.<sup>25</sup> Bulgarian territory embraced the three historical provinces with predominantly Bulgarian population; Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia. With a total area of 172 000 square kilometres, the new kingdom became by far the largest Balkan state in terms of both territory and population, twice as large as Greece and Serbia taken together. Great Britain and Austria-Hungary feared that such a large pro-Russian state, close to the Straits, would dramatically increase Russian power in the region and so initiated the Congress of Berlin between June 13 and July 13 1878 to revise the Treaty of San Stefano. Under Russian pressure Serbia, Montenegro and Romania were recognized as independent principalities, but full independence of Bulgaria was denied. The territory identified by San Stefano was split into three. Thrace was separated as an autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire with artificial name 'Eastern Rumelia', Macedonia was returned to Ottoman rule, and only the remaining strip of land 'squeezed between the Danube and the Balkan range', Moesia, was proclaimed as

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the Turkish capital with the task of devising a strategy of reforms in the Ottoman Empire. The forum was held at the level of ambassadors of the Great Powers. The conference opened on 23 December 1876 with the participation of the ambassadors of Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Russia and Turkey.

22 Emil Kazakov, 'Geopoliticheskiye Modeli', p. 41.

23 Grigor Velev, *Bulgaria prez XXI vek*, p. 70.

24 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 76.

25 Reluctant to let Russia take the role of the sole protector of the Balkan Christians, and under pressure from public opinion, the governments of the European countries decided to intervene on the issue. This led to the convocation of an international conference in the Turkish capital with the task of devising a strategy of reforms in the Ottoman Empire. The forum was held at the level of ambassadors of the Great Powers. The conference opened on 23 December 1876 with the participation of the ambassadors of Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Russia and Turkey.

the Principality of Bulgaria.<sup>26</sup> Another two parts of the Bulgarian Exarchate were given to Serbia and Romania (the Nish province and the Northern Dobrudzha) as a sign of their contribution to the war outcome. (Fig. 3)

1870-1878 is the critical juncture, when most of the institutions of the new Bulgarian state were founded and the ideational legacy of carriers that largely shaped the San Stefano idea, was institutionalised. The intellectual entrepreneurs, Paisius of Hilendar and Sophronius of Vratsa influenced profoundly not only the pre-independence network of schools, but their ideational legacy was institutionalised through the schooling system of the young Bulgarian Kingdom. Similarly, the powerful ideas of Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski were institutionalised through the first Bulgarian independent institution, namely the Bulgarian Exarchate and later passed in the ecclesiastical organization of the modern state.

Their intellectual legacy was transmitted through their prominent position as prolific writers, leaders of the independent church and school movement, public figures and state officials and the events of, the immensely powerful San Stefano Idea became institutionalized and unquestionably shaped the Bulgarian politics from 1878 to 1944 and as in the Greek case, can be felt even today. However, all pre-1878 revolutionary propaganda, which had as its ideal the educational, and political independence of the Bulgarians, was based almost exclusively on demographic, not on historical rights as in the case of Greece, who tried to justify their claims over foreign populations through history. Bulgaria had the argument of human geography to back its ideology.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the predominant feeling of elite and population was that they were fighting for a just cause-national unity. Regardless of the nature of the political regime in Sofia, the fulfilment of the idea remained the basis of every government and became the fundamental and most stable marker of modern Bulgarian national identity.

It is quite common for a liberated state not to encompass all its ethnic territories. The intriguing fact is that before the Principality of Bulgaria was established as a result of the compromise of conflicting interests of the Great Powers, another large or Great Bulgaria, coinciding with the perceptions of the territorial limits of the nation, was outlined. By the Treaty of San Stefano the 'Bulgarian nationalism obtain[ed] a brilliantly simple blueprint, and namely to correct the injustice of Berlin, by restoring the Bulgaria of San Stefano.'<sup>28</sup> San Stefano's ideational power originates in the discrepancy between the Bulgarian ethnic populated territories (170 000-200 000 sq km) and the tiny polity of some 63 000 sq km. Both the Bulgarian political elites and the population felt this was a grave injustice and humiliation. The broader context of San Stefano was so powerful and all encompassing that it permeated all state institutions and was elevated to a sacred objective, and some kind of a moral duty with near religious power and influence. This is evidenced by all media and political speeches of the time, for example,

For us, the Bulgarians San Stefano is not only a historic and all encompassing name: it rather is an ideational flag, a mesmerizing programme. [...] And we hope that Bulgaria will never forget that program. And the Bulgarian people will never extinguish their belief

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26 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 77.

27 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 81.

28 Emil Kazakov, 'Geopoliticheskite Modeli', p. 43.

in a better future. They will repeat as one the prayer: 'I believe in a unified Saint Stefano eternal and long lived Bulgaria'.<sup>29</sup>

Bulgarian political elites were educated not only by the schooling system, dominated by Sofronius, Paisius and others, but they were also influenced by the public discourse outside education that such intellectual carriers had managed to dominate for many years through their positions of prestige and power, explored above.

Once the ideas for restoring the territories of the short-lived San Stefano, become embedded in the educational and ecclesiastical institutions of the Bulgarian state, they took on a life of their own and were therefore difficult to change. This was due not merely to the attachment of certain important individuals to these ideas, but more importantly, to a widespread fear that abandoning these ideas would decrease the political elites' appeal, coherence and political power. Consequently, although the political, social and economic environment, confronting Bulgarian governments changed radically during the XX c., it proved extremely difficult to shift their policy responses accordingly. Indeed, as we will see later in the chapter, even when new policies appeared to hold out the promise of greater political success, it proved extremely difficult, if not impossible to get them accepted if they conflicted with the Bulgarian governments' long-held principles of San Stefano.

### ***How Greeks were viewed through the prism of the San Stefano Idea***

After we have identified the San Stefano Idea, why that idea was adopted, who were its carriers and how it became institutionalized, we have to explore how Greeks were viewed through the prism of the San Stefano Idea and how such institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) shaped the normative prescriptions that cooperation with Greeks was not appropriate, which in turn shaped policies of obstruction, explored later in the chapter.

The Third Bulgarian state started its political life with unresolved national question. The initial Bulgarian geopolitical vision stated that the ideal Bulgarian national territory was delimited by the boundaries of the Bulgarian language speakers and the borders of the Bulgarian Exarchate. The series of political events in the period 1870-1878, creation of the Bulgarian exarchate (1870), the Tzarigrad Conference (1877), the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) and the Treaty of Berlin (1878), further facilitated the consolidation of a modern Bulgarian national identity, evolving from the vague idea of some kind of unification of Moesia, Trace, Macedonia into a geographically relatively precise idea.<sup>30</sup> By dismembering Bulgaria, the Congress of Berlin added the final touch in the codification of the Bulgarian national idea. Bulgarian nationalism 'actually began in 1878, the year of its greatest triumph and its greatest defeat.'<sup>31</sup> This is the critical juncture in Bulgarian history when imperative geopolitical aim for restoration of the San Stefano Bulgaria and reunification of all Bulgarians developed. The latter became the sui generis metahistorical event of Bulgarian nationalism, a dream almost fulfilled, and an *idée fixe* for decades to come.

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29 Stefan Bobchev, 'The Bulgarian Prayer' in *Slavyanski Glas (Slavic voice)*, 1927-1, pp. 3-6.

30 Emil Kazakov, 'Geopoliticheskiye Modeli', p. 39.

31 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 76.

After dominant ideas are institutionalised they provide the ideational context for action in future policy formation and implementation. The very first Bulgarian institution, the Exarchate crystallized as a result of the direct struggle against the Greek clergy. Nearly the entire Bulgarian Enlightenment (1732-1878) was marked by the movement to overthrow Greek influence in church and school. Not surprisingly, such ideas passed in the modern Bulgarian state, through carriers and institutionalization, as explored above. Bulgarian political elites perceived the modern Greek state and the Greek Constantinople Patriarchate as the fiercest threat to the fulfilment of San Stefano (the demise of the Ottoman Empire was only a matter of time). Such perceptions were further exacerbated by the fact that the two states and their ideologies clashed directly over the territories of Macedonia that were still part of the Ottoman Empire.

The period 1878-1913 was a fierce rivalry between the Greece and Bulgaria and precisely between the Greek Patriarchate and Bulgarian Exarchate to win the loyalty of Macedonian population through education, propaganda, terror, bribes, etc. The struggle over Macedonia reconfirmed the already institutionalized perception of Greeks as enemies and the Greek state as ultimate threat to the Bulgarian cause of San Stefano. Since 1878-1913 these ideas became institutionalized mostly through the schooling and ecclesiastical system, or in other words becoming programmatic beliefs, shaping the normative guidelines of Bulgarian political actors that cooperation with Greeks is not appropriate or normatively acceptable. Such an ideational configuration contributes to explaining subsequent Bulgarian policy choices of obstruction towards Greece that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s.

### ***How programmatic beliefs ‘Greeks are enemies’ shaped policies of obstruction towards Greece***

The programmatic beliefs ‘Greeks are enemies’ played a crucial role in structuring Bulgarian actors’ views that cooperation with Greeks was not appropriate. This section reconstructs the process through which the Bulgarian political elites decided on the policies of obstruction towards Greeks, exploring the filter or channel (provided by the normative guidelines and criteria) through which information about the external environment passed during different key periods of the XXc. In more detail, it explores if in key historical periods during the XX c., the programmatic beliefs that the other is an ‘enemy’ and the normative guidelines that ‘cooperation with him is not appropriate’, were challenged by new ideas that were powerful enough to replace the established path dependent programmatic beliefs. This observation is correlated with the observation if the path dependent policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*) still occurred in that same historical period.

#### ***Late XIX c.-Early XX c.***

The ‘separation of southern Bulgaria into a separate artificially created state was a guarantee against the fears expressed by Austria-Hungary and Great Britain that Bulgaria would gain access to the Aegean Sea, which logically meant that Russia was getting closer to the Mediterranean. [...] The third large portion of San Stefano Bulgaria

— Macedonia — did not get even this slight taste of liberty, as it remained in the Ottoman borders like it had been before the war? (see Fig. 14).<sup>32</sup>

In these conditions, it was natural that Bulgarians in Bulgaria, Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia strove for unity. By mid-1885 most of the active unionists in the Principality of Bulgaria and in Eastern Rumelia shared the vision that the preparation of a revolution in Macedonia should be postponed and all efforts should be concentrated first on the unification of Bulgaria and Rumelia. On 6 September 1885, armed unionist groups and Rumelian militia entered the capital Plovdiv and took over the Governor's residence. The Governor was Gavrail Krastevich, a Bulgarian patriot who, naturally, did not resist the unionists.<sup>33</sup> Knyaz Alexander I accepted the Unification on 8 September and entered Plovdiv a day later against the will of the Great Powers and all neighbours. Defying most expectations Russia did not support the unification and ordered all its officers to leave Bulgaria. Britain initially assumed that powerful support by St. Petersburg stood behind the bold Bulgarian act. However, they soon realized the reality of the situation, and after the Russian official position was announced, Great Britain gave its support for the Bulgarian cause.

The strongest reaction came from Greece and Serbia who threatened Bulgaria with war. Greece mobilized its army, but since then it still did not have a common border with Bulgaria, it only concentrated its army at the Ottoman border. Serbia declared war on Bulgaria on 14 November 1885. Since the Bulgarian government had expected an attack from Turkey, the main forces of the Bulgarian Army were situated along the southeastern border. In the conditions of 1885 Bulgaria, their redeployment across the country would normally take at least 5-6 days, but the morale of the army and population was very strong, as well as the feeling among the men that they were fighting for a just cause, that it took the armies 48 hours to reach the battlefield. Despite their military advantage and surprise attack, the Serbs suffered a humiliating defeat.

As a result of the war, the Great Powers and the neighbours accepted the unification and Bulgaria with a territory of 96 345 sq km became the largest Balkan country at the time. The unification of the Bulgarian principality with Eastern Rumelia in 1885 and the subsequent Serbo-Bulgarian war are the first decisive moment in the evolution of the Bulgarian nationalism after 1878.<sup>34</sup> The Serbian attack of 1885 surprised Bulgarian government and population. However, the support Greece gave to Serbia was not very surprising. This is evidenced by the publications, pamphlets of the time and most notably by the Bulgarian King Alexander I's War Manifesto, stating,

The government of our neighbourly Serbian people, motivated by personal egoistic purposes and aiming at preventing the sacred unification of the Bulgarian people into one unity, today, without any lawful or justified reason, has declared war on our country and has ordered its armies to enter into our lands. With a big regret we heard this piece of news, since we never believed, that our brothers in blood and in religion will start such a fratricidal war in those complicated times...and to act so inhuman and senseless towards their neighbours, who without causing anyone harm, have worked and have fought for a noble and just cause. Leaving the whole responsibility for such fratricidal war between two brotherly people and for the grave consequences for both countries, we announce to our beloved people, that we have accepted the war with Serbia and have ordered our brave

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32 Jono Mitev, *Suedinenieto 1885 (Unification 1885)*, (Sofia: Hristo G. Danov, 1985), p. 22.

33 Jono Mitev, *Suedinenieto 1885*, p. 22.

34 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 77.

armies to involve in the military action against the Serbs and defend the land, honour and freedom of the Bulgarian people.<sup>35</sup>

The young Bulgarian state failed to understand Serbian ideational context that crystallized in the independent Serbian Kingdom from the autonomy to the Serb-Bulgarian War (1830-1885). This is because the Serbian national programme *Nachertanie*, devised in 1844 by Iliya Garashanin was kept secret until 1906, when it was officially published.<sup>36</sup> In its decision to attack Bulgaria, Serbian King Milan I was acting on the tenets of *Nachertanie*. According to the latter, the new independent and unified Bulgarian Kingdom was perceived as a grave threat to the Serbian aspirations towards Macedonia and the idea of Great Serbia. Therefore, Milan I wanted to seize the opportunity of the young and dislocated Bulgarian army and quickly capture Vidin and the capital Sofia, only 55 km away from the border. His vision was then to dictate the peace conditions from there: All territories from the Serbian border to the river Iskur, including the capital annexed by Serbia, the remaining territory occupied by Serbia, relocation of the Bulgarian capital further east to Turnovo, military parade of the Serbian army in the Bulgarian capital and a huge financial compensation.<sup>37</sup> The Serbian attack marked the painful realization in Bulgaria that Serbians were siding with Greeks to compete with Bulgaria, especially over Macedonia.

First step towards the fulfilment of the San Stefano Idea was achieved in 1885 with the unification of North and South Bulgaria (see Fig. 14). The second phase of the achievement of the San Stefano, incorporating Macedonia would not go as smoothly, because of the Greek pronounced interest in the region. Bulgarian school and church institutions presented Macedonia as a sacral land, the birthplace and cradle of the Bulgarian medieval culture and civilization, the land where Cyrillic alphabet was created, the most Bulgarian land, a land of brave *voevodi* (freedom fighters) and dignity, the Bulgarian land with the best dances and songs, the Bulgarian land that

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35 Manifest for the Promulgation of Serbia-Bulgarian War. Plovdiv, 2.11.1885 by Alexander Joseph of Battenberg I Prince of Bulgaria, Bulgarian States Archives Agency,

<http://www.archives.government.bg/index.php?lang=en&page=33>, accessed August 2008, (Emphasis added)

36 Independent Serbian Kingdom appeared in 1830. Iliya Garashanin is a Serbian statesman and the intellectual entrepreneur, who in 1844 creates the national programme *Nachertanie*, that similar to Greek *Megale*, will become institutionalised and will profoundly influence Serbian policy-making for about a century. *Nachertanie*'s legacy is felt even in The Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. Garashanin introduces the idea, that since Serbia is the first Slav country, liberated from the Turks it should unite all South Slavs in one country under Serbian domination. Garashanin justifies this with the short-lived Medieval Serbian state of Stefan Dushan (1331-1355).

Garashanin writes that the Slav population in the Ottoman Empire should be subjected to an active Serbian propaganda through books, sending priests, agitators. Serbia should acquire the foreign Slav territories (Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Bulgaria) 'stone by stone'. Serbian prince Mihailo Obrenovic III (1860-1868) appoints the creator of the Serbian national doctrine Garashanin as his prime minister. The *Nachertanie* evolves from the idea of Serbian dominated Slav state, to a Yugoslav state, still dominated by Serbia. After the San Stefano Treaty (1878) Serbia is given its first Bulgarian populated lands in the Nis and Leskovac region. Some months later, according to the Berlin Treaty it is awarded additional Bulgarian territories in the Vranja and Pirot region. Serbia is acting on the *Nachertanie* annexing 'stone by stone' from the Bulgarian lands.

37 E. Lavele, *Balkan Peninsula* (*Balkanskii Poluostrov, Балканский полуостров*), (Moscow, 1889), p. 181, 191, 199

suffered most of all.<sup>38</sup> The idea of Macedonia in Bulgarian national psyche is closely corresponding to the very powerful 'lost territory' myth of Serbs and Kosovo.

However, this clashed with the Greek ideas for incorporating the territory of Macedonia within the Greek state. As a reaction to the perception of Greece as the main enemy to the Bulgarian cause in Macedonia, the Bulgarian state devised policies to counterweight the attempts of the Greek Patriarchate to prevent the population from switching allegiance from the Patriarchate to the Exarchate. The Exarchate and the Bulgarian state started intensive campaign to build schools and churches in Macedonia in the period 1878-1913. As a result only in Macedonia and in the Adrianople Region alone the Bulgarian Exarchate disposed of over seven dioceses with prelates and eight more with acting chairmen in charge, with 38 vicariates, 1 218 parishes and 1 212 parish priest, 64 monasteries and 202 chapels, as well as 1 373 schools with 2 266 teachers and 78 854 pupils.<sup>39</sup> The most notable among those schools was the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Men's High School of Thessaloniki (*Solunska balgarska mazhka gimnazia* „Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodii“), in operation between 1880 and 1913. It turned into one of the most influential Bulgarian educational centres in Macedonia and Southern Thrace.

The Bulgarian Exarchate's growing influence in Macedonia and the Ilinden Uprising of 1903 signalled to Greeks that they were gradually losing these regions to the Bulgarian Idea. As a result after 1903 initiated campaign to Hellenize the Slav population in Macedonia. The Greek state organised military units of Greek *andarts*, Greek officers who were sent to Macedonia in order to thwart Bulgarian efforts to bring all of the Slavic speaking majority population of Macedonia on their side. Andarts abused their status and started terrorising and killing the innocent civilian population.<sup>40</sup> Bulgaria supported the creation of local *chetas* (bands) that entered into bloody conflicts with the Greek andarts between 1904 and 1908. The Greek armed efforts to Hellenize Bulgarian Slavs in Macedonia provoked fierce anti-Greek campaign in Bulgaria that escalated during 1905-6. Many newspapers published Anti-Greek articles. For example, *Svoboden glas* (Free voice) urges the Greek minority of Bulgaria to be expelled and propagated the need for total defeat of Hellenism in Bulgaria.<sup>41</sup> There is an organised campaign not to buy merchandise from the shops belonging to the Greek minority.<sup>42</sup> The unrest escalates and leads to armed clashes between Bulgarians and representatives of the 60,000 strong Greek minority in Bulgaria. Churches, schools and other public buildings, belonging to the Greek minority are appropriated by Bulgarians. Such policies culminated in the Asenovgrad, Plovdiv, Burgas riots in 1906, when within a year more than 10 000 Greeks were forced to leave Bulgaria.<sup>43</sup>

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38 Naum Kaichev, *Makedonijo vuzzhelana-Armiata, uchilisteto i gradezhut na naciata v Serbia i Bulgaria 1878-1912* (Macedonia, beloved-Army, school and nation-building in Serbia and Bulgaria 1878-1912), (Sofia: Paradigma, 2003), pp. 117-123.

39 Voin Bozhinov, *Bulgarskoto obrazovanie v Makedonia i Odrinska Trakia 1878-1913* (Bulgarian education in Macedonia and the Adrianople region of Thrace -1878-1913) , (Sofia: Publishing house of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1982, p. 356.

40 Lithoksoou, Dimitrios, *The Greek Anti-Macedonian Struggle: From Ilinden to Zagorichani (1903-1905)*, (Athens: Ekdoseis Megali Poreia, 1998), Dimitrios Lithoxoou, *Ellinikos Antimakedonikhos Aghonas: Apo to Ilinten sti Zagkoritsani (1903-1905)*.

41 *Svoboden glas*, (Free Voice), N23, 24.06.1906.

42 *Svoboden glas*, (Free Voice), N28, 29.07.1906

43 Kostadin Kostadinov, *The Anti-Greek Movement in Varna* , (Fondacia VMRO: Varna, 2009), p.36 and p. 50.

Therefore, in the period 1878-1913, as a result of the normative criteria of Greeks as enemies, the Bulgarian state formulated obstruction policies towards the Greek Patriarchate by creating a dense network of schools and churches in Macedonia and by supporting the cheta (bands) in their armed struggle against the Greek andarts. In addition, the state organized negative campaign against Greece in Bulgarian press and supported campaign against the Greek minority in Bulgaria-Greeks were forced to leave the country and their economic activities were suppressed by the campaign not to buy Greek merchandise.





*Fig. 14 Unified Bulgaria — a lithography by N. Pavlovich (1835-1894), showing the Unified Bulgarian Principality and Eastern Rumelia, represented by two women. Macedonia is represented by a third woman in black in the background, symbolizing its still not liberated status.<sup>44</sup>*

44 Source: National Museum of History Sofia-Permanent Exhibition.

## ***The Balkan Wars and WWI***

The Bulgarian government engaged in the First Balkan war (1912-1913) entirely guided by the San Stefano ideational impetus. Prime Minister Ivan Geshov said in his memoirs: 'We had a program. [...] Could the aim of the war be any other than to fulfil our dream of San Stefano Bulgaria, which [...] [the Great Powers] forbade us even dream of?'<sup>45</sup> Geshov also expressed the belief of most Bulgarians at the time that all the misfortunes of liberated Bulgaria dated from the despised Berlin Congress that partitioned the Bulgarian ethnic territory into three and cancelled out the 'noble and just virtue of San Stefano.'<sup>46</sup> The exclusivity of the idea in the Bulgarian institutional setting was so unquestionable, that there was no other perceived political discourse.

In the Second Balkan War, Greece and Serbia refused to evacuate any conquered land (mainly in Macedonia) despite the Bulgarian pre-war arrangements with Bulgaria and the ethnic character of the population in favour of Bulgaria. As said earlier, even when new policies appeared to hold out the promise of greater political success, it proved extremely difficult, if not impossible to get them accepted if they conflicted with the actor's long-held principles. Bulgaria decided to attack Greece and Serbia over the spoils in Macedonia, when it was clear that negotiations with other neighbours Turkey and Romania were needed to secure the flanks. Russian Empire also warned Danev that Romania could also attack Bulgaria and in such case Russians would not respect the Russian-Bulgarian military convention of 1902 to help Bulgaria.<sup>47</sup> Also due to the pre-war agreements the Russian Emperor had to act as an arbiter in case of conflicts between the Balkan states.<sup>48</sup> Securing the flanks and negotiations appeared to hold the promise of greater political success. However, the Bulgarian government of Stoyan Danev and King Ferdinand could not wait for such negotiations, acting on their beliefs and urged by public opinion they decided immediately declare war on Greece and Serbia. Danev justified the Bulgarian attack on Greece and Serbia with 'Bulgarian rights' over those lands justified by the ethnic argument in the firman and San Stefano.<sup>49</sup>

Ideational theory argues 'ideas play a crucial role in shaping how political actors perceive the world around them' and 'ideas play a crucial role in structuring actors' views of the world by providing a filter or channel through which information about the external environment must pass', therefore political behaviour will often be based by distorted or incomplete information flows. Such distorted information flows and the normative filter through outside information passed could explain the decision of Bulgarian King Ferdinand and Danev to engage in the Second Balkan War, instead of waiting for the arbitration of the Great Powers was framed by the Bulgarian historiography as the 'Criminal Insanity'.<sup>50</sup> Adhering to their beliefs, Danev and Ferdinand engaged Bulgaria in a fight against all its neighbours at the same time (Greece, Serbia, Turkey and Romania). Bulgaria suffered a heavy defeat and lost nearly all territorial gains from the First Balkan War with the Treaty of Bucharest (1913).

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45 Ivan Evstratiev Geshov, *Prestupnoto Bezumie i anketata po nego. Fakti I dokumenti (The Criminal Insanity and the Survey, Factology and Documents)*, (Sofia: Balkan, 1914), pp. 103, 129.

46 Ivan Evstratiev Geshov, *Prestupnoto Bezumie*, p. 130.

47 Andrey Toshev, *Balkanskite voini. Tom 2 (The Balkan Wars, Vol. 2)*, (Plovdiv: H.G. Danov, 1931), pp. 341-344, 349.

48 G. Markov, *Bulgaria v Balkanskia sayuz sreshtu Osmanskata imperia, 1912-1913 (Bulgaria in the Balkan Coalition against the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1913)*, (Sofia, 1989).

49 Stoyan Danev, *Memoari (Memoirs)*, (Sofia: Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 1992), pp. 254, 262.

50 Alexander Fol et al, *History for the 11th Grade of the General Profile High School*, (Anubis: Sofia, 1996), p. 300.

After the defeat Danev was replaced by Vassil Radoslavov of the Liberal Party (LP), a party of officers and politicians who were the most radical proponents of the national idea. He stated ‘Bulgaria would make no compromise with the San Stefano or the Bulgarian-Serbian contract of 1912 regarding Macedonia. Those will be the fundamentals of the foreign policy of the government’ and also ‘San Stefano Bulgaria was buried for the second time—first time in 1878 and now in 1913 in Bucharest. The Bucharest Peace is the second partition of the Bulgarian people.’<sup>51</sup> The tragic aftermath of the Second Balkan War is known as the First National Catastrophe in Bulgarian history. After 1913 the idea that the country is surrounded only by enemies takes shape. Unlike the Greek case, where Serbians were perceived as the ally, and Bulgaria, Albania and Turkey as the threat, in Bulgarian ideational context *all neighbouring countries conspire against Bulgaria to preserve the status-quo* and also *Bulgaria borders on itself in all four directions*. However, Greeks (together with Serbians) are considered the biggest enemies of the nation and the San Stefano due to the events from the Balkan War II.

It comes as no surprise that the Radoslavov’s Government and the population enters into First World War with eagerness, since ‘Bulgarians remained undeniably faithful to their ideal—the unification and could not wait for the moment of its attainment.’<sup>52</sup> The Triple Entente and the Central Powers, tried to form alliances in the Balkans. Both fractions promised to Bulgaria to more or less restore the boundaries of the Treaty of San Stefano. As in the Balkan Wars, Bulgarian political leaders chose to side with the factor that was against Serbia and Greece, and namely —the Triple Entente, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter.

During the war, Bulgaria occupied most of these lands, but was forced to once again evacuate them after the war. Between 1878-1918, there were no political factors, which deviated from the national programme for reunification, as defined by San Stefano with the exception of some worker’s and agricultural parties which were so weak they did not exercise any influence over Bulgarian politics.<sup>53</sup> This program, ‘whether it was used as a blueprint for practical political action or merely as an unattainable, but justified ideal, continued to be the main inspiration of Bulgarian nationalism throughout the next period, until World War II.’<sup>54</sup>

### ***Interwar Period (1919-1944)***

Following defeat World War I, the Treaty of Neuilly (1919) forced Bulgaria to cede its last part of Aegean coastline in its possession to Greece (Western Thrace), recognize the existence and cede nearly all of its Macedonian territory to Yugoslavia, and transfer Southern Dobrudzha to Romania. The country was forced to reduce its army to less than 20,000 men, and pay reparations exceeding \$400 million. The results of the treaty are popularly known as the Second National Catastrophe. The two national catastrophes that followed within a short span of five years (in 1913 and 1918): the second Balkan war and World War I ‘produced a profound public frustration which has been handed down from generation to generation and the effects of which can be felt even today.’ The large influx of refugees from the lost territories intensified to an unprecedented

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51 Vassil Radoslavov, *Bulgaria i svetovната kriza (Bulgaria and the World Crisis)*, (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1993), pp. 56, 94.

52 Vassil Radoslavov, *Bulgarija i svetovната kriza*, p.77.

53 Emil Kazakov, ‘Geopolitichesките Modeli’, p. 45.

54 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 83.

degree the tensions in Bulgaria proper. This, 'coupled with a severe economic crisis and raging social problems could not but make the Neuilly Treaty of 1919 into the counterpart of Versailles for Germany. The response was an outcry of bitter and humiliated nationalism.'<sup>55</sup>

The disruption and trauma in Bulgaria after Neuilly was so enormous that it marked a new era in the strategy of how to achieve the national goals. After four wars and two national catastrophes in the course of only 33 years in pursuit of the national idea reunification and the restoration of San Stefano Bulgaria, Bulgarian political elites opted for peaceful revision. Bulgaria seemingly conforms to the new European order, without giving up on its national idea. In other words the San Stefano idea stays the same after 1918, however the means are changed by the doctrine of peaceful revision. This was largely followed by the new Bulgarian King Boris III (1918-1943). The San Stefano achieved by war 'had lost its mass appeal, surviving 'in numerically small pockets, such as the officers' corps, segments of the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie and, of course, the refugees' organizations.'<sup>56</sup> Clearly 'the fiasco of the national unification program produced a social and political climate that led to the type of introspective mood that infected the intelligentsia en masse.'<sup>57</sup> This did not lead to 'denunciation of the national idea; on the contrary, there is no question that the national idea is justified and worth fighting for. What is attacked are the ways and manner of achieving the national idea: 'we imagined that we can achieve the reunification of the Bulgarian people at once, instead of at separate stages.'<sup>58</sup> This is undoubtedly 'a discourse that lies within the framework of the national idea, but which has realism and wisdom borne of defeat and which has a sobriety of manner quite distinct from the elevated prose of the previous period.'<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the programmatic beliefs for Greeks as enemies did not change, but the approach towards them was modified, namely peaceful revision of the boundaries. A parallel could be made between post-Smyrna Greek politics and post-Neuilly Bulgaria, when in spite of major societal change, and major recast of the national idea-pursuits, traditional negative programmatic beliefs about the neighbour did not change and normative criteria that cooperation was not appropriate remained constant.

In 1934 the Balkan Entente, an alliance formed by all neighbours- Yugoslavia, Romania, Greece, and Turkey was created to safeguard their territorial integrity against neighbours' revisionism. This entente fuelled the Bulgarian ideational belief that Greece (and Serbia) were the arch enemies, since they were the most ardent supporters of the Balkan Entente. Bulgaria did not sign the pact, mainly because of Greece (and Serbia) among the signatories and any cooperation with them was deemed inappropriate.

During the WWII, the Axis Powers and the Allies Both promised to Bulgaria territories in Vardar Macedonia and outlet to the Aegean. As in the Balkan Wars and WWI, Bulgarian political leaders chose to side with the factor that was against Serbia and

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55 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 84.

56 Marin Pundeff, 'Bulgarian Nationalism', Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer eds., (Seattle: University of Washington press, 1969), p. 145 in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 84.

57 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 86.

58 Constantine Gulubov, 'The Psychology of the Bulgarian' in *Ornamenti* (Filosofski i literaturni eseta), [*Ornaments* (Philosophical and Literature Essays)], (Sofia, 1934) in Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 87.

59 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 87.

Greece, and the Axis Powers, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter. On 1 March 1941, Prime Minister Bogdan Filov signed the Tripartite Pact and Bulgaria officially joined the Axis bloc. As a result the country briefly fulfilled San Stefano gaining control of Macedonia, Western Thrace and the Western Outlands between 1941 and 1947, but it had to cede again those territories to its neighbours. In August 1944, Bulgaria unilaterally announced its withdrawal from the war and asked the German troops to leave, declaring war on Germany, in order to prevent Soviet troops from occupying the country. This did not prevent the Soviet Union to declare war on Bulgaria on 8 September and occupy the country a week later. At the same time the country was still at war with the allied powers, so for a brief period Bulgaria was at war with, the UK, the US, the allied powers, Germany, the Soviet Union and most of the neighbouring countries. As recognition of the military inclusion on the side of the Allied Powers towards the end of the war, the Paris Peace Conference (1947) restored the country to its pre-war boundaries. Bulgarian foreign policy towards fulfilment of the San Stefano remains largely unchanged in the period 1878-1944, despite the two different approaches- 'all means possible' and 'peaceful revisionism' after 1918. This is also evidenced by the words of Genchev,

After the Berlin Treaty of 1878 there is one, fundamental, ever standing national task of the Bulgarian foreign policy. This is the idea of completion of the national revolution, for reunification of the lands inhabited [...] by people, speaking the Bulgarian language. [...] In the policy of all Bulgarian governments from 1879 to 1939 this idea and aim were the primary objective.<sup>60</sup>

Despite changing contexts the institutionalized programmatic beliefs of Greeks as enemies did not change and the inappropriateness of cooperation with Greeks materialized in the Bulgarian governments' persistent choice of obstruction policies towards Greece, regardless of changing environment.

### ***The Cold War Period (1944-1989)***

World War II was a watershed in the development of the Bulgarian national idea. If the nationalism of the pre-war period can be generally defined as irredentist...the nationalism of the post-war period is unambiguously status quo nationalism.<sup>61</sup> The building of 'real socialism' or communism 'included the appropriation of some elements of the Marxist doctrine [...] primarily its modernizing potential, especially in the drive for industrialization.'<sup>62</sup> From the very beginning 'the variety of communism practiced in and exported from Russia, especially after World War II, was, among other things, an ideology of modernization, an attempt to produce a unique way to meet the challenge of a hegemonic West. Both nationalism and state communism responded to the same challenge, becoming tools of modernization.'<sup>63</sup>

In attempt to displace old nationalist ideas after 1944, the communist regime in Bulgaria initiated the formation of an ideology, based on socialism, 'bright future', 'heavy industrialization' and 'international solidarity'. The national heroes were now seen through the socialist lenses and the state became the sole producer of history. The

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60 Nikolay Genchev, *Vunshnata politika na Bulgarija 1938-1941 (The Foreign Policy of Bulgaria 1938-1941)*, (Sofia: Vector, 1941), pp. 173-174.

61 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 92.

62 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', pp. 88-89.

63 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', pp. 88-89.

Bulgarian new ‘others’ were the capitalist world and the pre-war fascist Bulgarian regimes. National heroes were regarded according to their appropriateness for the socialist ideology until the late 1950’s. The decade of ‘non-national Communist experiment’ (1944-1956) was characterized by supranational considerations and ‘primacy of class struggle over national issues, subordination to national interests to the cause of the global proletarian revolution, adherence to the proletarian international discipline’.<sup>64</sup> The ‘ongoing [ideational] conflict between the two [mutually exclusive] discourses’ of communist internationalism and traditional nationalism reflected the power struggle within the intellectual elite. Marxism ‘failed to develop an adequate theory [idea] of nationalism’ because of the nature of Marxist ideology itself: ‘the incompatibility between a cosmopolitan, universalist ideology and a particularist romantic creed precluded their theoretical syncretism.’<sup>65</sup>

From the early 1960s, political elites understood that the international socialist agenda was not powerful enough to adequately displace the national idea ‘and the state began reviving some national heroes and stories suppressed for over a decade (such as the 1903 Ilinden uprising revolutionaries and the whole myth of Macedonia as the lost land and most important part of Bulgarian culture and history). This is a direct result of the awareness of political elites that at the time ‘absolutely nobody ...already believed in anything... referring to people’s belief in the communist ideology, as defined by the ruling Communist Party, which was presumed to underlie individuals’ public, if not necessarily their private, behaviour.’<sup>66</sup> Communist ideology failed to articulate a powerful enough idea to adequately challenge traditional institutionalized nationalist ideas. In the Greek case communist ideas could render other receptive, they had powerful carriers, but they did not gain salience in the Greek polity due to the lack of institutionalization of such ideas and due to the short period their carriers exerted influence before the communist fraction lost the Civil War. In the Bulgarian case, communist ideas were institutionalized in the totalitarian state, but they never had large popular support, they were imposed from outside, lacked popular carriers and could not render others receptive.

Therefore, after the death of Stalin and the famous April Plenum of the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1956, in order to gain legitimacy political elites re-introduced old suppressed national ideas in the political context and a renewed interest in the inter-war heritage came out. ‘The “genuine” Marxist discourse was very soon replaced by the imagery of nationalism, translated into an idiosyncratic Marxist slang’<sup>67</sup> Initially official view was that communist nationalism adopted national ideology in order to be overcome, but as a result ‘it was national ideology that adopted the language of Marxism in order to gain legitimacy.’<sup>68</sup>

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64 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 90

65 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 89. Also see Todorova, ‘Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Communist Legacy in Eastern Europe.’

66 Nadia Kaneva, *Memories of Everyday Life in Communist Bulgaria: Negotiating Identity in Immigrant Narratives*, Colorado Research in Linguistics, Volume 19 (2006), p. 11.

67 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 91.

68 Katherine Verdery, *National ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu’s Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 314 and Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 92.

By early sixties ‘the so-called communist nationalism was nothing but a transvestite, ordinary nationalism.’<sup>69</sup> One example being ‘after the 1960s the anniversary of the San Stefano Treaty (3 March) was increasingly commemorated in public meetings, concerts and other ceremonies.’<sup>70</sup> This, however, came after careful ‘blending’ the national discourse with socialist elements, since ‘in Bulgaria, where the official policy was [...] one of complete consent with the centre (Moscow), the majority of the party leadership and the ruling elite shared the national ideology but articulated it in a more cautious way, using the hegemonic Marxist discourse clearly for purposes of gaining legitimacy [at home and abroad].’<sup>71</sup> The national idea was somehow muted abroad in the name of ‘socialist solidarity’ and ‘communist brotherhood’, but it flourished on the internal scene in school textbooks, academic discussions, official celebration of certain historic events and numerous monuments, although heavily diluted with socialist ideology and symbols. Marxist discourse, blended with national ideology further reinforced traditional programmatic beliefs for Greeks as the enemy since now they were enemies not only according to the nationalist but according to the communist ideology as well. This cemented the normative guidelines and criteria that cooperation with them is inappropriate. Moreover, since Bulgaria was external border of the Communist bloc, the frontier with Greece was one of the most heavily guarded in Europe. Along the 500 km border there was only one border check point, but no one passed through it. There was no political, economical and social cooperation of any kind between the two states and the borders were effectively closed.<sup>72</sup>

Political elites had to operate on two levels adhering to the principles of proletarian internationalism abroad and advocating high national self esteem at home to gain legitimacy. As said the Bulgarian ‘socialist patriotism’ is the resulting compromise between these opposing discourses. Status quo nationalism or socialist patriotism stripped of the irredenta of the pre-war periods advocates not geopolitical cultural, linguistic and historical rights, but ‘high national esteem’, ‘healthy respect for one’s historical achievements, and the pride ‘of having been able to give something to the world.’<sup>73</sup> The educational system, media, books, political rhetoric, as another example of the obstruction policies, is in line with such more nuanced approach. Regarding anti-Greek propaganda in that period, it unites traditional hostility and Cold War sentiments. Typical example of this new ideology is Bulgarian poet Dzhagarov’s poem from the eighties dedicated to Bulgaria, where Greece is compared to ‘poison’ through the historical image of Byzantium,

A land just like a human palm...  
 A bigger land I don’t require.  
 I’m glad your mountains are flint-hard  
 And that your blood has southern fire.

A land just like a human palm...  
 But tougher, able to withstand  
 The poison of Byzantium,  
 The bloody Turkish yatagan.

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69 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 91, (emphasis added)

70 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 92.

71 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 92.

72 Ioannis Michaletos, ‘Greek-Bulgarian Relations, 1912-2006: A Historical Synopsis’, *Balkanalysis*,

<http://www.balkananalysis.com/2006/04/12/greek-bulgarian-relations-1912-2006-a-historical-synopsis/>, accessed June 2010.

73 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 94.

Traders in blood and in tobacco  
Who parcelled out your earth for sale  
Fell to the ground with broken backs  
For you, though small, were never fail.

A land just like a human palm...  
To me you are the world entire.  
I measure you not by the yard  
But by the love that you inspire.<sup>74</sup>

One of the biggest manifestations of such trend is ‘the lavishly and expensively prepared festivities commemorating the 1300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bulgarian state [created 681 AD], which was supposed to [...] raise Bulgaria’s self esteem and international reputation.’<sup>75</sup> The celebrations were directly linked to Lyudmila Zhivkova, the daughter of the Communist leader Todor Zhivkov.<sup>76</sup> As a Minister of Culture (1975-1981) she started a massive campaign for promoting foreign art and culture in communist Bulgaria. Even more successful are her policies for popularizing Bulgarian culture and historical heritage abroad. Under her initiative the First International Children’s Assembly and the World Children’s Parliament, under the aegis of UNESCO are created and convened in Sofia in 1979, 1982, 1985 and 1988. She also initiated the building of the massive National Palace of Culture, the Gallery for Foreign Art in Sofia and facilitates the opening of literally tens of thousands cultural houses, libraries, museums and galleries throughout the country. Such initiatives, and especially the one year celebrations under the ‘13 centuries Bulgaria’ programme were considered in the Soviet Union as a dangerous resurgence of nationalism in Bulgaria, endangering the proletarian socialist ideology.

Zhivkova mysteriously died in the middle of the celebrations in 1981, at the age of 39, and the accident is directly linked to Moscow, according to popular belief. Zhivkova’s ideational input had shifted the nationalist discourse to a more transcendent, esoteric narrative but generally follow the line of the socialist patriotism. After her death, the discourse returns to the nationalist mainstream and culminates in the middle of the

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74 *Anthology of Bulgarian Poetry*, Peter Tempest, transl., (Sofia, 1980), p. 443.

75 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 97.

76 Lyudmila Zhivkova was born in Sofia in 1942. She graduated in History from the Sofia University and later majors History of Art in Moscow and University of Oxford. From 1975 she is elected chairman of the Committee for art and culture, which had a rank of Ministry. She is the initiator of the “Banner of Peace” Movement, which is of universal humane nature and has no political orientation. The Movement’s motto reads: ‘Unity, Creativity, Beauty’, while its basic principle is: ‘Anyone can be a creator in the Peace Assembly’. It has been accepted as a new form of diplomacy and cooperation in the name of Peace and has been supported by the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF, INCEA and other international organizations.

In 1981 the inspirer of the “Banner of Peace” Movement Ludmila Zhivkova passed away but the high intellectual and creative charge she had helped accumulate, made possible the successful convention of three more Children’s Assemblies in Sofia - in 1982, 1985 and 1988. Zhivkova was influenced by astrology, numerology, a variety of esoteric schools of thought, and most profoundly by the teachings of the founder of an original Bulgarian esoteric movement in the interwar period, Petur Dunov. Her policies are widely acclaimed in the West as a manifestation of independence and as a window to the West. Foundation Lyudmila Zhivkova ‘Banner of Peace’, *Historical Background of the ‘Banner of Peace’ Movement*, <http://www.bannerofpeace.hit.bg/en/a/is.html>, accessed August, 2008.



1980s with the ‘renaming’ of the Bulgarian Turkish minority.<sup>77</sup> This is a proof that despite blending with Marxist discourse, traditional nationalist programmatic beliefs had primacy over proletarian internationalism. For example, Bulgaria continued its isolationist policy of the pre-war times in communist times, according to its national ideology, and namely as one surrounded by hostile neighbours from everywhere, but the Black Sea. The ‘national enemies’, Greece and Turkey now became ‘ideological enemies’; the national enemy Serbia/Yugoslavia was a ‘socialist traitor’. Romania, despite being in the same ideological camp, was never perceived as a true friend, since the memories of the country occupying Southern Dobrudzha, attacking Bulgaria in the Second Balkan War and participating in the Balkan Entente against Bulgaria (1934) were still alive. As a consequence commercial, cultural and economic ties were much more developed not with neighbouring communist Romania but with the USSR, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. In the period 1944-1989, similar to the Greek case communist ideology in Bulgaria reinforced traditional nationalist ideas of Greeks as enemies, materializing in the complete lack of political, economic or social cooperation between the two states and the negative campaign in media, educational system, political discourse, numerous publication, etc.

### ***Return to Europe***

Post-communist ideational discourse in Bulgaria is marked by two periods. The first (1989-1999) is characterized by clearing the nationalist discourse of communist clichés and reviving aspects and narratives forbidden under the regime. At the same time this period was a period of ideational vacuum, characterized by feeling of loss of identity and clear direction, economic difficulties, suspicion towards the West and feeling of being abandoned. The second (2000-2010) is dominated by the ‘Return to Europe’ idea with its Europeanization and democratization normative agenda. During the first period in the post-communist ideational vacuum and lack of any clear EU/NATO engagement, the status quo nationalism of the previous era was the only safe and stable marker of national identity. Indeed after 1989 and the collapse of communism, Bulgarian ‘“communist nationalism” as being ordinary transvestite nationalism...gloated in its newly acquired nudity-it no longer had to pay lip service to the formerly dominant jargon.’<sup>78</sup> As a sign that San Stefano ideas were not completely dead was the fact that Bulgaria in 1992 became the first country in the world to recognize the independent Macedonian state. However it failed to recognize the existence of a Macedonian language and nation, different from Bulgarian. Bulgaria restored 3 March 1878, the day of the signing of the San Stefano Treaty, as a present Bulgarian national holiday and reaffirmed the old national motto ‘In Unity is Power’. However, from 1989 to 1997 ‘all signs indicate[d] that there [was] no reversal of the status quo nature of nationalism, no matter how and by whom it [was] articulated. The two potentially sensitive spots of Bulgarian nationalism [were] the Macedonian question and the Turkish [minority] problem [...] despite the creation of several Macedonian minority organizations, the

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77 The program ironically called the ‘Renaissance process’ (Възродителен процес), which began in 1984, forced all Turks and other Muslims in Bulgaria to adopt Bulgarian names and renounce all Muslim customs. Communist Bulgaria no longer recognized the Turks as a national minority, explaining that all the Muslims in Bulgaria were descended from Bulgarians who had been forced into the Islamic faith by the Ottoman Turks. The Muslims would therefore ‘voluntarily’ take new names as part of the ‘rebirth process’ by which they would reclaim their Bulgarian identities. During the height of the assimilation campaign, the Turkish government claimed that 1.5 million Turks resided in Bulgaria, while the Bulgarians claimed there were none. *A Country Study: Bulgaria*, Library of Congress, Call Number DR55.B724 1993

78 Maria Todorova, ‘The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism’, p. 98.

issue seems [...] to be likely to remain within the confines of cultural nationalism-even in its most outspoken, and even shrill, articulations, the irredenta is absent.<sup>79</sup>

The resentment and suspicion towards the West in that period was coming from the economic difficulties, loss of direction, but also from a humiliated feeling of pride of not being acknowledged of a perceived discrepancy between glorious past and mediocre present. One of the main reasons for such discourse was the lack of clear engagement on behalf of the EU and NATO to accept Bulgaria. In addition putting the country in the 'Black Schengen list' and the visa regime with the long queues in front of foreign embassies as well as the negative imaging of Bulgaria in foreign newspapers added to the idea of holding back to traditional nationalism and scepticism towards the EU and the West. Bulgarians searched for comfort in real or imaginary sources of national pride. Aspects of the national discourse forbidden under communism were revived. At the same time new national myths were created and disseminated by media. An example of real or imaginary sources of national pride in that period are: Bulgaria is one of the oldest European states, Bulgarians gave the Cyrillic alphabet to all Slavs, Bulgarians are second in IQ tests only after Israeli, Bulgarian Asen Yordanov constructed the first Boeing, John Attanasoff was the inventor of the first automatic electronic computer, Bulgarian aviators for the first time in history used airplane for a military action during the Odrin (Edirne) siege in the first Balkan War and many others.

However from the mid 1990s the ideological vacuum was filled by a very powerful idea of Euro-Atlantic membership and integration and the respective EU normative agenda started to more and more challenge old nationalist ideas, making them look ever more inadequate in the new conditions. EU normative agenda had one goal: to bring the region to normalcy and extend over it the EU achievements in the political, economic and security spheres. Therefore the objectives can be summarized as- building strong institutions, build mutual trust, generate a mutual awareness dialogue and share lesson learned by the region with the extra regional partners, create conditions for genuine private enterprise, encourage free trade and customs union, fight corruption and organized crime, create free media, respect human rights and minorities, link up the region- transport infrastructure, create a common European education area.

The EU, on its part has always relied on conditionality in its policies towards Member states, applicant countries and third countries to impose its normative criteria.<sup>80</sup>

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79 Maria Todorova, 'The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism', p. 98.

80 See, Frank Shimmelfennig, Stefan Engert and Heiko Knobel, 'The Conditions of Conditionality', *European Consortium for Political research*, 20 October 2002, p. 1., Frank Shimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, 'Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11-4, August 2004, pp 669-687 and Othon Anastasakis and Dimitar Bechev, 'EU Conditionality in South East Europe: Bringing Commitment to the Process', European Studies Centre, St Anthony's College, University of Oxford, April 2003, pp. 4-6.

Shimmelfennig et al. have explored 'democratic conditionality as the main mechanism through which international organizations such as the EU induce non-member states to comply with their fundamental rights.' Anastasakis and Bechev write that 'Conditionality is the EU's most powerful instrument for dealing with the candidate and potential candidate countries in post-communist Europe. To summarize the ultimate goal of EU's conditionality policies in SEE is instalment of liberal democracies throughout the region. The latter goal is also manifested by the explicit requirement that only democracies and functioning market economies are eligible for membership in the union. However, most interesting is how conditionality actually works and the degree of its effectiveness. Shimmelfennig et al. stress that 'in the case of post-communist applicants for EU membership conditionality works through reactive reinforcement- the international

However, the early 1990s witnessed the practice of setting out political and economic conditions.<sup>81</sup> Thus Central and East European countries (CEECs) and later South East European countries (SEECs) 'became the first target of a very demanding political, social and economic conditionality, closely linked with the process of transition towards democracy and market economy.'<sup>82</sup> However, initially the 'conditions were not backed up by the promise of membership, despite CEECs' demands.'<sup>83</sup>

The Copenhagen European Council in 1993 is the turning point for EU leverage and conditionality in SEE. It generated and conveyed to CEECs and SEECs two very powerful ideas. Firstly that *CEECs and SEECs have the possibility to join the EU*, and secondly *what the criteria for starting of negotiation process are*. Going back to the theoretical chapter and ideational theory 'the most important factor determining whether ideas are able to influence politics over the long term is 'whether or not an idea becomes embedded in an institution or organization.' The two Copenhagen Council fundamental ideas were institutionalized through the SAP/CARDS and the negotiation process and in a broader framework through DG Enlargement of the European Commission. The EU's conditionality requirements, as set out by the Copenhagen Council required that before a country could become a candidate for EU membership it has to achieve 'stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.' In addition a state has to have the capacity 'to take on the obligation of membership, including adherence to political, economic and monetary objectives.'<sup>84</sup>

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organization reacts to the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of its conditions by granting or withholding rewards, but does not proactively punish or support non-compliant states' and also that effectiveness of reactive enforcement 'depends on domestic conditions in the target countries at the level of governments and state elites.'

Furthermore, as discussed in the theoretical chapter the research employs the social learning model of conditionality, and namely that 'a state adopts EU rules if it is persuaded of the appropriateness of EU rules.' Therefore according to the 'logic of appropriateness', 'the actors involved are motivated by internalized identities, values, and norms. Among alternative courses of action they choose (the most) appropriate or legitimate one.' Furthermore the process of rule transfer and rule adoption is characterized by 'arguing about the legitimacy of rules and the appropriateness of behaviour (rather than bargaining about conditions and rewards), persuasion (rather than coercion), and 'complex' learning (rather than behavioural adaptation). Or as discussed above the normative programme promoted by EU and other regional institutions should be powerful and appropriate enough to challenge and displace the old nationalist institutional agendas. To comprehend the complexity behind the EU conditionality in SEE, the nature of EU-regional strategy should be explored in detail:

The EU has always relied on conditionality in its policies towards Member states, applicant countries and third countries. However the early 1990s witnessed the practice of setting out political and economic conditions. Thus Central and East European countries (CEECs) and later South East European countries (SEECs) 'became the first target of a very demanding political, social and economic conditionality, closely linked with the process of transition towards democracy and market economy.'<sup>80</sup> However, initially the 'conditions were not backed up by the promise of membership, despite CEECs' demands.'

81 Othon Anastasakis and Dimitar Bechev, 'EU Conditionality in South East Europe: Bringing Commitment to the Process', *European Studies Centre*, St Anthony's College, University of Oxford, April 2003, pp. 4-6.

82 Anastasakis and Bechev, 'EU Conditionality in South East Europe', p. 5.

83 Anastasakis and Bechev, 'EU Conditionality in South East Europe', p. 6.

84 *European Council in Copenhagen: Conclusions of the Presidency*,

[http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/72921.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/72921.pdf) 21-22 June 2003, accessed April 2007, p.13

The next major stage in the formation of EU conditionality strategy towards SEE came with the adoption of ‘Conclusions on the principles of conditionality governing the development of the European Union’s relations with certain countries of south-east Europe’ in April 1997.<sup>85</sup> The introduction of the document stated that ‘in an effort to consolidate peace and stability in the region and to contribute to its economic renewal, the EU intends to develop bilateral relations with the countries of the region within a framework which promotes democracy, the rule of law, higher standards of human and minority rights, transformation towards market economies and greater cooperation between those countries. In this context, particular importance is attached to the principles of conditionality’, and also that the EU has agreed to ‘establish, in the framework of the regional approach, political and economic conditions as the basis for a coherent and transparent policy towards the development of bilateral relations in the fields of trade, of financial assistance and economic cooperation as well as of contractual relations, allowing for the necessary degree of flexibility. The EU strategy should serve as an incentive, and not an obstacle, to the countries concerned to fulfil these conditions.

In that sense Bulgaria (together with Romania) was the laggard in the accession process, but have just elected reform-minded government in 1997 and was among the first countries to be subjected to such structured and focused policy of EU conditionality. In other words the reward for compliance was twofold: the country was promised membership, but it was also granted access to funds released under the SAPARD (agricultural aid) and ISPA (regional aid) programmes, in addition to the PHARE programme. What was the impact of EU conditionality on Bulgaria through the pre-accession funds?

Phare impacted in three ways on the country’s domestic policies and public administrations. First, there was the programme’s express concern with building and strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law, so that Bulgaria could implement the *acquis* and participate fully in EU policies upon accession. One of the key changes between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ Phare was the increased funding targeted at institution building. After 2000 roughly 30% of Phare funding was allocated to institution building through transfer of know-how, and another 35% to physical investment in key regulatory institutions.<sup>86</sup> While working with pre-accession funding, Bulgarian authorities were also expected to design and implement national strategies for human resources development and adopt national laws guaranteeing civil service professionalization and neutrality,

Many Phare projects had a wider effect on horizontal/non-*acquis* public administration reform (Commission, 2005: 138). Phare management required harmonisation of national legislation with Community *acquis* on public procurement, state aid and competition, environment and equal opportunities. In the area of budgetary management, legislation has to be passed to facilitate multi-annual commitment and reallocation of funds between and within programmes. National legislation on regional policy and statistics also needed to be brought in line with EU practices.<sup>87</sup>

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85 ‘Conclusions on the principles of conditionality governing the development of the European Union’s relations with certain countries of south-east Europe’, 29 April 1997 in *EU Bulletin* 4 (1997)

86 Pavlina Nikolova, ‘The Implementation of Phare, Ispa and Sapard in Bulgaria’, paper presented at Workshop- *A Roadmap for the Western-Balkans: Using IPA and other EU Funds to Accelerate Convergence and Integration*, held in Brussels, 11 October 2007, [http://web.ceu.hu/cens/assets/files/conference/Nikolova\\_IPA](http://web.ceu.hu/cens/assets/files/conference/Nikolova_IPA), accessed October 2008, p.8

87 Nikolova, ‘The Implementation of Phare’, p.8.

Transfer of expertise happened mainly through the so-called twinning. It is a three-party instrument, involving member states, candidate administrations and the Commission as a co-ordinator. For example, in the period 1998-2000 Bulgaria was involved in 40 twinning projects. It was successful in creating an 'administrative market' where candidate states could 'shop for' most appropriate administrative practices offered by incumbent EU member states.<sup>88</sup> Second, the actual management of Phare funding by Bulgaria yielded significant institutional learning benefits. For aid to flow from the Commission, Phare administrative and budgetary structures had to be set up and integrated into the national administration. Last, but not least, Phare implementation provided for a redefinition of relations between the national and the regional and local administrations. Phare provided an impetus to candidate states to strengthen the competences of their sub-national levels (regions, municipalities) and streamline their territorial organisation. Crossborder projects expected local and regional authorities to provide for the programming, implementation and monitoring of activities. Similarly, beneficiaries of ESC projects were often regional or municipal administrations.<sup>89</sup> In short, EU conditionality managed to impose its normative agenda on Balkan polities mainly through new institution building, learning of new practices within old institutions, coupled with facilitating the increase of regional governance capacity. This facilitated new Europeanization ideas to challenge decade old nationalist contexts, which led to change in policies, explored in the transport infrastructure chapter. The implementation and scope of action of Phare, Ispa and Sapard Programmes in Bulgaria and Romania went far beyond the simple transfer of funds, although money was by itself a powerful incentive for governance change at the national and the sub-national level. They provided institutional and legislative models for the state administration, as well as benchmarks, advice and training and new ideas to penetrate the Balkan states' polity. Out of all tools of the EU's conditionality vis-à-vis SEE, described above, the common infrastructural projects under the TINA initiative (together with the perspective of EU-membership) had the most powerful ideational appeal. The following two chapters would explore the power of EU conditionality, represented by the TINA network vis-à-vis Bulgarian and Greek political elites and their traditional nationalist ideas for the neighbour and cooperation with that neighbour.

## **Conclusions**

Chapters 3 and 4 tested the first hypothesis that, in Greece and Bulgaria, path-dependent programmatic beliefs shape the remarkably persistent obstruction policies towards each other during most of the XX c., regardless of constantly changing external factors. Each of the two chapters started with a discussion how the idea for the other as an enemy emerged, who were the intellectual carriers of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up of the modern Greek and Bulgarian state respectively. Then each chapter explored how such programmatic beliefs played a crucial role in structuring actors' views that cooperation with the neighbour is not appropriate and reconstructed the process through which the Greek and Bulgarian political actors, shaped by such normative guidelines and criteria decided on the policies of obstruction towards the other during key periods of the XX c., regardless of changing environment.. This, in conjunction with a comparative study of the distinctive historical

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88 Papadimitriou, D. and D. Phinnemore (2004), 'Europeanization, Conditionality and Domestic Change: The Twinning Exercise and Administrative Reform in Romania', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42, 3, pp. 619-39 in Nikolova, 'The Implementation of Phare', p. 8.

89 Nikolova, 'The Implementation of Phare', pp. 9-10.

and structural contexts of Greece and Bulgaria uncovered the most important factors influencing the development and decision making of respective political elites during these years.

To acquire data about the programmatic beliefs about the neighbour in Greece and Bulgaria, the two chapters relied on documentary research, using published and unpublished government publications, laws, published national doctrines, strategies and programmes, historical documents, letters, reports, newspaper articles, memoirs, biographies, etc. The data was analyzed through the method of *ideational mapping*. To collect data about the normative guidelines and policies towards the neighbour during the XX c., both primary (participant observation) and secondary (documentary research) were used. The data was analysed through *process tracing* and focus on *decision-making-during-crisis* methods. We operationalized obstruction policies with more concrete *policies of denationalization of the minority of the other and negative propaganda campaign* in the domestic policies (existing/non existing) and *policy of political, social and economic obstruction* (existing/non existing) in the foreign policy during the different periods explored.

The chapters explored if in critical periods, like the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War, the Fall of Communism, etc. (when ideas are most likely to change), we observed a significant change of the *given set of ideas* in Bulgaria and Greece about the other. Then we correlated ideas with the policies between Greece and Bulgaria in that historical moment. In general, if the given set of ideas did not largely change, we could not have expected significant change in the existing policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*). However, if we have found policy change (no denationalization, negative propaganda and existing political, social and economic cooperation) that most likely meant that there was change in the given set of ideas.

In Greece the dominant idea was the Megale. It was a crystallized national ideology with a goal of uniting all former territories of the Medieval Byzantine Empire into a modern Greek state. Korais and Velstinlis revived the ancient glories and provoked the interest towards Greek history. Zampelios and Paparregopoulos introduced a tripartite examination of Greek history, ancient Hellenism, medieval Hellenism and modern Hellenism, claiming that Modern Greeks were direct descendants of ancient Greeks and the Byzantium Empire. The ideas of Korais, Feraios, Zampelios and Paparrigopolous achieved political salience among so many competing ideas through their prominent status in Greek society. They were able to make others 'listen' through their position as government officials, university professors and intellectuals and prolific writers. Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming intellectual elite of the young Greek state toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances. Korais could do that through his position as university lecturer in Paris and through his numerous literary contributions, sponsored by the Chios merchants. Feraios could make others listen to his ideas through the Greek-language newspaper, *Ephemeris*, published in Vienna through his Revolutionary Manifesto and published poems and books about Greek history that became widely popular.

Paparrigopolous could maintain the importance of his ideas through his unique position as the greatest historian of modern Greece, his longevity as ideational carrier through his books, school textbooks, published magazines, university lectures, government appointments, combined with his uncommon talent of writing style. By virtue of such

particular talents and long tenure as a public figure, he could exert unparalleled influence over the development of the national narrative of the forming modern Greek state. Megale Idea and not some other idea was adopted since Korais, Feraios, Paparrigopolous and Zampelios were successful through their professional positions and literary scholarship to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Greek state is in line with the Megale Idea.

The particular historical and ideational context, in which Megale Idea crystallized, clashed with the crystallizing national programmes of Bulgarians-San Stefano, since both people were claiming the same lands, mostly in Macedonia. San Stefano and Megale were mutually incompatible. As a result Bulgarians were viewed as enemies through the prism of the Megale Idea and such idea were institutionalized in the modern Greek state and shaped the normative prescriptions that cooperation with Bulgarians was not appropriate, which in turn shaped policies of obstruction during most of the XX c. During the early XIX c. Megale Idea was put to practice and since Bulgarians were perceived as enemies over the future spoils of the Ottoman Empire, cooperation with them was not appropriate and this was the period when in Greece the first policies of obstruction towards Bulgaria were officially adopted as a result of such ideas. The policies included the Hellenization of the Slavs in Macedonia, the negative propaganda against Bulgarians in Greece and among the population of Macedonia and the total lack of political, economic and social cooperation between the two states.

The Smyrna catastrophe marked the end of Megale in its classical form, but it did not alter the already institutionalized beliefs of Bulgarians as an enemy, neither had it changed the normative criteria that cooperation with them is not appropriate, regardless of the very changed external context. During the Balkan Wars, WW I and WW II, Greek political leaders chose to side against Bulgaria, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter. The chapter confirmed that during those periods, policies of Hellenization and negative propaganda against Bulgaria intensified. During the Civil War, the ideas that KKE crystallized did strongly challenge traditional Greek programmatic notions of friends and enemies. Furthermore, they challenged the whole existence of Greek polity. However, they were not able to displace traditional programmatic beliefs due to the short period, intellectual carriers had to propagate their ideas and to the lack of institutionalization in the Greek organizational set-up. During the Cold War the perception of Bulgarians as enemies according to nationalist ideology was joined by the perception of Bulgarians as enemies according to communist ideology. The period is characterized by complete lack of communication, intense propaganda and continued assimilatory policies.

In Bulgaria, San Stefano is the crystallized national ideology that the Bulgarian state would only be complete by encompassing the three historic provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia, since those were the ethnic territories of the Bulgarian nation, justified by two criteria: Bulgarian language and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate. This idea was reconfirmed through the short-lived San Stefano Treaty that created large state for couple of months, before it was dismembered by the Berlin Treaty. Paisius crystallized the idea that Greek educational and ecclesiastical influence was detrimental to Bulgarian people and they needed to overthrow it. He justified that with the glories of the Medieval Past, when Bulgarian people had their own Empire and did fight with the Greeks to preserve it. Paisius was followed by a number of others and most notably by Sophronius of Vratsa (Sofroni Vrachanski) (1739-1813). Therefore, the whole Bulgarian nationalism was born with the idea of Greeks as 'enemies'

The ideas of Paisius of Hilendar influenced the second wave of ideational entrepreneurs such as Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski (1812–1875). They followed Paisius' ideas and started to propagate the need for Bulgarian ecclesiastical organization independent of the Greek Patriarchate. Similar to the Greek case, the ideas of Paisius, Sofronius, Bozveli and Makariopolski achieved political importance among so many competing ideas through the latter's prominent position in society. They were able to render others receptive to their ideas through their position as ecclesiastical officials, intellectuals and prolific writers. Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming Bulgarian intellectual elite's views toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances. Makariopolski influential ideas were maintained through the newspapers *Dunavski lebed* (Danube Swan), *Budushtnost* (Future), *Branitel* (Defender), *Bulgarska starina* (Bulgarian heritage), published in Novi Sad, Belgrade and Odessa between 1855 and 1865. Similar to the Greek case, Sofronius, Paisius, Bozveli and Makariopolski were better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene because they were able to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Bulgarian state is in line with the educational and ecclesiastical emancipation from Greeks and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate.

1870-1878 is the critical juncture, when most of the institutions of the new Bulgarian state were founded and the ideational legacy of carriers that largely shaped the San Stefano idea was institutionalised. And namely, the intellectual entrepreneurs, Paisius of Hilendar and Sophronius of Vratsa influenced profoundly not only the pre-independence network of schools, but their ideational legacy was institutionalised through the schooling system of the young Bulgarian Kingdom. Similarly, the powerful ideas of Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski were institutionalised through the first Bulgarian independent institution, namely the Bulgarian Exarchate and later passed in the ecclesiastical organization of the modern state.

Nearly the entire Bulgarian Enlightenment (1732-1878) was marked by the movement to overthrow Greek influence in church and school. Not surprisingly, such ideas passed in the modern Bulgarian state, through carriers and institutionalization, becoming programmatic beliefs, shaping the normative guidelines of Bulgarian political actors that cooperation with Greeks is not appropriate or normatively acceptable explaining obstruction policies during subsequent periods. In the period 1878-1913, as a result of the normative criteria of Greeks as enemies, the Bulgarian state formulated obstruction policies towards the Greek Patriarchate by creating a dense network of schools and churches in Macedonia and by supporting the cheta (bands) in their armed struggle against the Greek andarts. In addition, the state organized negative campaign against Greece in Bulgarian press and supported campaign against the Greek minority in Bulgaria-Greeks were forced to leave the country and their economic activities were suppressed by the campaign not to buy Greek merchandise. During the Balkan, WWI and WWII, Bulgarian political leaders persistently chose to side with the factor that was against Greece, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter. The Communist period nationalism was blended with Marxist discourse, blended with national ideology further reinforced traditional programmatic beliefs for Greeks as the enemy since now they were enemies not only according to the nationalist but according to the communist ideology as well. This cemented the normative guidelines and criteria that cooperation with them is inappropriate. The lack of any contact and the anti-Greek propaganda in the educational system, media, books, political rhetoric, are typical examples of the obstruction policies of the time.



To summarize at successive historical junctures the dominant ideational framework has been challenged, but traditional programmatic beliefs of mistrust towards each other have remained unchanged. The national ideology has included more than one discourse and has displayed remarkable adaptability to different ideologies and regimes for legitimizing purposes, but perception of the other as an enemy and the inappropriateness of cooperation from the early XX c. to the 1990s did not change. As a result policies of obstruction during that period did not change as well. The first hypothesis that *Bulgarian and Greek modern state' mutual obstruction, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes has been confirmed. That specific nationalist attitudes of Bulgarian and Greek political elites would most likely be path-dependent regardless of the different changes of external environments, if such changes do not produce an idea powerful enough to supplant old ideas and beliefs of what is deemed appropriate was confirmed as well.*

After the 1990s, traditional obstructionist programmatic beliefs between Bulgaria and Greece were gradually challenged by the EU normative agenda. This is not to say that 'Europeanization' ideas have completely displaced old ideas, rather it is still a process in the making. This was possible due to the role of the EU as a powerful ideational carrier, longevity of such ideational pressure and the appeal of such EU idea making old beliefs increasingly inadequate and the fact that old ideas and policies started to yield more and more unintended consequences.

During the 1990s, Greek and Bulgarian political elites had to engage in a multiple level game-Euro-Atlantic solidarity and conformity on the international arena and nationalist discourse, according to old ideas on the domestic. During the 1990s Bulgarian governments (mostly former Communist Party in power) informed by traditional nationalist ideas payed lip service to EU's demands for reforms and did not engage in completion of common infrastructure projects or any form of cooperation with the only EU-neighbour country, Greece. With the election of a truly democratic government in 1997, the normative agenda of the EU and EU conditionality started to influence Bulgarian polity at regional, domestic and international level. This also challenged the programmatic beliefs of Greeks as enemies and the normative ideas cooperation with them is not appropriate due to the latter's membership in EU and NATO, so coveted by Bulgarian governments of that time. Similarly, in Greece it is not until the involvement of the EU in SEE in the 1990s and the Bulgarian perspective for EU-membership that there emerged a normative/ideational challenge with sufficient power to challenge the traditional attitudes displayed by the Greek elites towards Bulgaria.

After a decade of ideational struggle between the discourses of nationalism and Euro-Atlantic supranationalism, by late nineties political elites in the region started to increasingly translate and promote the Euro-Atlantic agenda into their domestic contexts. Institutions also started to feel the ideational challenge. This is evidenced by the fact that after 1999, all Bulgarian political forces reached an agreement on the Euro-Atlantic's agenda centrality in the Bulgarian geopolitical aims and started EU accession negotiations. Such developments correspond to the Greek case, discussed in the previous chapter, where by late nineties, there was an ideational turn towards perception of Bulgarians as possible allies within the EU and NATO and its normative framework started to significantly challenge old nationalist contexts and displace decades-old national ideas. Such change in perception, as evidenced by the documentary research

and elite interviews in the following chapters was to a large extent possible through the appeal of the EU membership idea and the imposing of the EU's normative agenda.

Unlike in Bulgaria, Greek elites were not subjected to such direct conditionality, but they were indirectly taught to cooperate. Both Bulgarian and Greek elites were increasingly feeling the pressure of regional and supranational levels informing them that continued lack of cooperation in the new condition started to produce undesired results and was making traditional policies of discord ever more inadequate. For example, Bulgaria's EU entry was delayed for the failure to satisfy conditionality, while Greek governments were ever more being criticized both by supranational EU-level and domestic regional level for the lack of progress of infrastructural projects between Bulgaria and Greece, the delay of the opening of new border points and economic backwardness of the border regions.

*Chapters 5 and 6* reflect on such developments and through EU-imposed infrastructure cooperation (as one of the main instruments of EU conditionality in SEE during the 1990s and 2000s) will test the second hypothesis if EU idea is linked to change of traditional perception of Bulgarians and Greeks as enemies and change of policies between the two states. This will be achieved through the elite interview method and documentary research. The empirical chapters on transport infrastructure reflects on the contradicting pressures on political elites, having to balance between nationalism at home and supra-nationalism outside, between traditional programmatic beliefs and 'modern' EU ideas. The 1990-2000 period is characterized by dominance of the old beliefs and obstruction, while the 2000-2010 is marked by new ideas and cooperation.

## **Chapter 5. Transport infrastructure between Bulgaria and Greece. First Phase 1990-2000: Traditional obstruction**

*Via Vita Est*  
*-Roman saying*

### ***Introduction***

The first hypothesis that, in Greece and Bulgaria, path-dependent programmatic beliefs influenced obstruction policies towards the other, regardless of changing contexts was tested in the ideational mapping chapters of Greece and Bulgaria. The second hypothesis is explored in the two following empirical chapters. Namely, that EU with its normative agenda and conditionality could be such a powerful idea effectively challenging for the first time, traditional national-interest mentalities in Bulgaria and Greece and lead to change in obstruction policies.

The two chapters look at transport infrastructure between Bulgaria and Greece during 1990-2000 and 2000-2010 periods, respectively. Such periodization is backed by the observation that a significant difference in terms of political, social and economic cooperation could be observed between the two periods as a result of the EU ideational impact. The justification for choosing to explore large EU infrastructure projects to test if EU-idea can lead to change of policies of obstruction in the Balkans is that this case presents us with a unique opportunity to test such hypothesis. First, such projects were devised to enforce good neighbourly relations and cooperation. The financing of the projects and their commissioning depended on the national governments' fulfilment of a certain criteria. Therefore, during that period (1990s) the most powerful EU ideational challenge, confronting old programmatic beliefs in the region through the EU conditionality, was represented by the policies to commission the large infrastructure projects, such as Corridor IV, VIII and X. Second, the successful commissioning of such pan-European projects required high level of political and economic cooperation among neighbours. They could also hardly materialize between states that enforce assimilation or engage in negative public campaigns towards the other. In that sense looking at large infrastructure projects between Bulgaria and Greece is a logical continuation of the narrative of previous chapters looking at normative guidelines shaping policy preferences towards the neighbour, operationalized through policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and political, social and economic cooperation-existent/non existent*). Cooperation over the large infrastructure projects to take place under the EU framework, required political, social and economic cooperation at regional, national, supranational level, and precluded any assimilation or propaganda policies towards the other.

The first period (1990-2000) is characterized by contradicting pressures between old programmatic beliefs and the pressure of new EU-integration ideas. Local political elites were exposed to an enormous ideational pressure from the different levels at which they operate in. They had to reconcile two powerful forces: the ideational contexts of the path-dependant, nationalist, parochial, over-historic institutions and the EU normative framework, at the international level. This is a period when political, social and economic cooperation between the two states was wary and reluctant, as justified by the common EU large infrastructure projects that were in a state of impasse

for a decade, in spite of firmly secured EU funding, proven economic benefits and clear technical specifications. As hinted by the preliminary primary research, decision makers in Bulgaria and Greece tended to identify and interpret the challenges they faced within the old normative guidelines and criteria and matched problems with solutions they had applied in the past, rather than searching for politically or economically ‘optimal’ solutions.’<sup>1</sup> In other words during that first period traditional programmatic beliefs could not be displaced by EU-ideas, as happened many times before.

However, during the second period (2000-2010), a historical breakthrough occurred. Cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece started to emerge in the economic, political and social sphere and gradually increased with each year. That was also manifested by starting work on the long-delayed infrastructure projects and even commissioning some of them towards the end of the period. The task of the two chapters is: First, to explore if change of obstruction policies between Bulgaria and Greece occurred between 1990s and 2000s. Second, to link such historic policy change to ideational change through the documentary sources and elite interviewing. Third, to explore why this time, it happened. What made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous ‘weaker’ ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs?

The 1990-2000 chapter, first, explores traditional ideology in the Balkans regarding regional infrastructure. Second, the initiative for the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN) and TINA Network as the main EU-policy tools towards SEE during the 1990s is introduced. Third, it discusses the three concrete sub-cases of EU-backed projects between Bulgaria and Greece. It is explored that during the 1990s those projects were in a situation of impasse, regardless of EU pressure, secured financing and obvious benefits if completed. This was a result of old programmatic beliefs that still shaped normative criteria during that period that cooperation was still not appropriate. This is supported by the documentary research on government publications, newspaper articles, international memorandums, etc. and corroborated by elite interviews of current Greek and Bulgarian policy makers and their views of that period.

The 2000-2010 period demonstrates how after the 2000, cooperation suddenly emerged and very intensive work on the infrastructure projects was undertaken. To find policy change, the data will be collected through archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles. As discussed in detail in the methodology section of the introductory chapter, to link such historic policy change to ideational change, as a result of EU leverage, I complement the documentary research with primary research data of elite interviews. Elite interviewing was undertaken after careful non-probability purposive and chain-referral sampling of relevant top-policy makers in Bulgaria and Greece, operating on regional, national and European level. 25 Bulgarian and 25 Greek Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interviews mostly during 2006-2009.<sup>2</sup> They were asked question, exploring their ideas, opinions/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory and background to the past and present attitudes towards the neighbor, appropriateness of cooperation with that neighbour, how they felt about the infrastructure projects (our three sub-cases) between the two

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1 Berman, *The Social Democratic*, p. 33.

2 Non-probability purposive and chain-referral sampling and justification for its application are elaborated in the empirical Chapter 6: Transport Infrastructure 2000-2010.

countries, if the EU had to do with the change of perception towards the neighbour (if there was such) and why it was able to do that;

Process tracing requires the collection of data concerning key political decision-making and activity, often at the highest political level, and elite interviews will frequently be a critical strategy for obtaining this required information. In our case the elite interview subjects were selected using a combination of reputational and positional criteria– that is, interview respondents were chosen not just by virtue of their political positions and their known involvement in the process of interest, but also by virtue of their reputation among their peers.<sup>3</sup> The goal of collecting data from elite interviewing was to confirm information collected from documentary sources. Documents, memoirs, newspaper articles and other secondary sources provide an initial overview of the events or issues under examination, interviews with key players were used to corroborate the early findings. In this way, interviews contributed towards the research goal of triangulation, where collected data is cross-checked through multiple sources to increase the robustness of the findings.<sup>4</sup>

After we have found policy change and linked it to ideational change, the 2000-2010 chapter concludes with analysis what made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous ‘weaker’ ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs.

### ***Infrastructure and Traditional Ideology in SEE***

Situated ‘at the periphery of Europe, a gateway to three continents, with shores washed by six seas and the second longest European river the Danube, the Balkans are one of the world’s greatest crossroads.’<sup>5</sup> Such location has influenced the region’s history and determined the great geopolitical stake concentrated on its relatively small territory. Historically, ‘infrastructure in the Balkans has meant much more than mere roads, rails, pipelines or bridges. Infrastructure has been the material expression of the region’s striving for Europe; it has meant channels of communications, modernity, culture, ideas, fashions, etc.’<sup>6</sup> As Nikova commented people from the Balkans still say ‘I take the train to Europe’ when traveling to Vienna or Paris. Paradoxically, this attitude has not helped but has strongly impeded the actual construction of infrastructure in the region as what and how was built depended on normative perceptions what was feasible rather than based on most-rational routes.

When the Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans dominated the region, it represented one geographical and political entity and infrastructure has been created in the course of centuries along vectors of long lasting links between commercial, industrial or cultural urban centers within the Empires. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, ‘the small area of the peninsula was divided between the national states, most of the time hostile and isolated from each other, but always eager to reach the developed part of the

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3 For more on Process tracing via elite interviewing, see Oisín Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling*, Nuffield College, University of Oxford.

4 Philip H. J. Davies, ‘Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services’ in *Politics*, Vol.21, No.1, 2001 in Oisín Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling*, Nuffield College, University of Oxford

5 Ekaterina Nikova, ‘Roads Connecting, Roads Dividing: on Infrastructure in South East Europe’, Institute of Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Etudes Balkanique*, 2007, N1, p. 4.

6 Nikova, ‘Roads Connecting’, p. 10.

continent.<sup>7</sup> Since then the question of infrastructure direction was entirely political. Their competitive instincts led them to block roads to one another in favour of road and rail routes linked with their allies or Great Power sponsors. Indeed certain projects were obstructed not only due to narrow national interest planning, but also by the intervention of Great Powers.

Towards the mid-nineteenth century, the British were pushing for the construction of Ruse-Varna rail line connecting the Danube with the Black Sea, while the Russians pushed for Russe-Sofia line. Similarly, Austria-Hungary was pushing Serbia to construct the Nis-Skopje-Thessaloniki line, while Hungarians blocked the Zagreb-Vienna rail construction to hinder Austria's economic performance.<sup>8</sup> Rail connection between Sofia and Skopje was always blocked, opposed and even destroyed by mistrustful neighbours, motivated by the fear that Bulgaria might want to liberate, infiltrate and incorporate Macedonia, in line with the former's ideational contexts, which interpret Macedonians simply as western Bulgarians. Even today, Sofia and Skopje are the only Balkan capitals, not connected by rail, no matter that the distance between them is less than 200 km. Great Power intervention and traditional programmatic beliefs of friends and enemies have contributed to the perception of what roads, rails and tunnels to build, between the states rather than pure economic sufficiency.

The infrastructure discord in the Balkans was exacerbated by Communism, which added new ideological divisive lines to the already existing national prejudices, with nationalism taking precedence over other ideology, when in conflict. As discussed in the ideational mapping chapters, for Greece, the traditional programmatic belief was 'Danger from the North' and mistrust towards Albania, Bulgaria and Turkey, while keeping warm relations with Yugoslavia, regardless of the ideological differences during most of the XXc., as explored in the previous chapters. In line with such programmatic beliefs that shaped normative criteria, that transport cooperation with the Northern neighbours was not appropriate, Greece has constantly worked to bypass Bulgaria and build European Route E-5, re-routing traffic from the historic Great Diagonal [Istanbul-Sofia-Vienna] to Nish- Thessaloniki. The isolation of Bulgaria was further confirmed by the refusal of Yugoslavia to build a simple [65 km] road from Pirot to Kalotina [at the Bulgarian border], which later Bulgaria built...at its expense. So the country remained practically capsuled for almost 50 years.<sup>9</sup> Having previously fought against all its neighbours, Bulgaria did not mind such development, dominated by the idea that all neighbouring countries conspire against her to preserve the status-quo and believing that as a country surrounded by hostile states from everywhere it has to make as little connections with the 'world outside' as possible. Indeed such ideology is closely reflected by the development of a so-called ring infrastructure, where all main cities were connected in a circle and very little roads were constructed towards the periphery regions of the country. Even nowadays Bulgaria has only 22 crossing points on its 1808 km long borders; there is a border crossing point at each 82 km, while France and Germany before Schengen had similar crossings at each 7 km.<sup>10</sup> Therefore,

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7 Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 6.

8 Michael Palaret, *The Balkan Economies 1800-1914: Evolution without Development*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and John R. Lampe & Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981)

9 Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 9.

10 Milena Chervenova, 'Transportni experti podgotviha programa za granichnite prehodi' (National programme for cross-border points development), *Stroitelstvo. Gradut Online Magazine*, N30, July 2007

the communist regime built large-scale infrastructural projects, but of the wrong kind and in the wrong place to serve current purposes of extensive exchange with neighbours.

### ***EU's main policy tool in SEE during 1990s: The TEN Networks***

The 'idea of Trans-European Networks (TEN) emerged by the end of the 1980s in conjunction with the proposed Single Market.'<sup>11</sup> In 1990, the Portuguese presidency developed the proposal for a European infrastructure agency to coordinate the national plans and make the network infrastructures interoperable. Some countries like UK, France, Germany and Italy did not favour such move, since they were concerned that such agency would reduce their 'planning autonomy'. The agency was never commissioned, but 'the idea, the name and last not least the logo of Trans-European Networks (TEN) had such a strong appeal in Europe that the TEN kept alive and a variety of additional networks followed on the track of the first approach which were also called "Trans-European."<sup>12</sup>

They are also seen as essential is the objective of ensuring economic and social cohesion of the EU is to be achieved, and they will also play a vital role in the programme to transform the economies of the CEE and reorientate them westwards'<sup>13</sup> According to the White Book of the European Commission for Development, Competitiveness and Employment the reasons dictating the construction of the TENs, which as well consist their aims, were the following,

- Financial development
- Improved operation of the European market
- Improved competition
- Improved financial and social coherence
- Improved quality of life
- Decreased pollution
- Easier integration of new members in the European Union
- Improved relationship between the European Union and its neighbors<sup>14</sup>

The TEN idea was officially institutionalized by Articles 154-156 of the Maastricht Treaty (1992), with the aim of fostering the *creation of an internal market* and the reinforcement of *economic and social cohesion* in the European Union. Indeed the fundamental values of the union were based on the freedom of movement of goods, people and services. Therefore, a mechanism was required to coordinate the development of a modern and efficient infrastructure to adequately connect the various regions and national networks within the union. This was seen as a basic precondition to create functioning internal market, boost economic growth and create employment. In other words the idea behind TEN was promoting *interconnection and interoperability* of national networks as well as access to such networks. To meet these goals, the Community developed 'guidelines covering the objectives, priorities, identification of

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11 European Commission-official site, *Trans-European Networks*, [http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index_en.html), last accessed August 2008.

12 Pilsoo Jung, 'Annex III, EU common Transport Policy: Trans-European Networks', United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, [http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS\\_pubs/pub\\_2354/pub\\_2354\\_ann3.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS_pubs/pub_2354/pub_2354_ann3.pdf), last accessed August 2008, p. 67.

13 R. H. Williams, *European Spatial Policy and Planning*, (London: Paul Chapman Publishing, 1996), p. 168.

14 Andrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou, Rizos Charalampos, 'Egnatia Highway and Pan-european Corridor 8: Complementarity or Competition?', paper presented at *46th Congress of the European Regional Science Association: Enlargement, Southern Europe and the Mediterranean* August 30th – September 3rd, 2006, pp. 1-3.

projects of common interest and broad lines of measures for the three sectors concerned (Transports, Energy and Telecommunications). The European Parliament and the Council [normally] approve... [such] guidelines after consultation of the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.’<sup>15</sup> The Maastricht treaty defined three classes of networks, and namely,

- Trans-European transport networks (TEN-T)
- Trans-European Energy Network (TEN-E or TEN-Energy)
- Trans-European telecommunications network (eTEN)

This research will concentrate on the TEN-T network development and its implementation in the EU and SEE in particular. At the Essen European Council 14 TEN-T ‘specific’ projects were endorsed drawn up by a group chaired by then Commission Vice-President, Henning Christophersen. Those were the project of utmost importance to the Union and had to be commissioned first. In 1996, The European Parliament and Council adopted Community guidelines for the development of the TEN-T with Decision N° 1692/96/EC.<sup>16</sup> These guidelines ‘carry the bulk of the long distance traffic and bring the geographical and economic areas of the Union closer together.’<sup>17</sup> This meant that for the first time in the history of the European Union ‘there exists a framework for national transportation planning which sets a future vision and priorities for the development of a common transport infrastructure in the Union.’<sup>18</sup> In 2001 the TEN-T guidelines were amended to encompass seaports, inland ports and intermodal terminals.<sup>19</sup> Presently the Trans-European transport network consists of nine components- road networks, rail networks, inland waterway networks and inland ports, maritime ports, airports, networks for combined transport, management and information networks for maritime transport, air traffic management networks and satellite positioning and navigation networks.<sup>20</sup>

Interoperability within TEN-T network means that the provision of the infrastructure allows for activities of many operators regardless of their territorial origin. The time framework to complete the network was set at 2010. At the end of 2003, the Commission revised the TEN-T guidelines and extended the deadline for completion to the 2020 ‘in view of the time which has passed since the initial proposal was presented in October 2001 and also the time it will take to build the transport infrastructures’ and adopted a list of 30 priority projects (including the original 14).<sup>21</sup> Based on that ‘new outline plans for 2020 will be drawn up with the aim of efficiently channelling future

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15 European Commission-official site, *Trans-European*.

16 Decision No 1692/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (*Official Journal of the European Communities* No L 228 of 9 September 1996) .

17 European Commission-official site, *Trans-European Transport Networks “Ten-T”*, Community Guidelines, [http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/guidelines/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/guidelines/index_en.htm), last accessed August 2008.

18 Pilssoo Jung, ‘Annex III’, p. 67.

19 Corrigendum to Decision No 1346/2001/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 amending Decision No 1692/96/EC as regards seaports, inland ports and intermodal terminals as well as project No 8 in Annex III (OJ L 185 of 6.7.2001) .

20 Pilssoo Jung, ‘Annex III’, p. 68.

21 Commission of the European Communities, 01/10/2003, Extended Impact Assessment of the proposal amending the amendable proposal for a decision amending decision No 1692/96/EC on the Trans European Transport Networks, SEC(2003) 1060.



trans-European flows in the enlarged Union.’<sup>22</sup> By 2020, ‘TEN-T will include 89 500 km of roads and 94 000 km of railways, including around 20 000 km of highspeed rail lines suitable for speeds of at least 200 km/h. The inland waterway system will amount to 11 250 km, including 210 inland ports, whilst there are a further 294 seaports and some 366 airports.’<sup>23</sup>

### ***Transport Infrastructure Needs Assignment (TINA) Initiative***

In 1995, at the time of the adoption of the TEN Community guidelines for the fifteen Member states, a common initiative for analysing the needs of future transport infrastructure in the accession countries has been launched. Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment (TINA) in CEE was devised to be the extension of TEN-T in Western Europe. A key task of these corridors is to interconnect not only the central and eastern European countries, but to establishing connections between the main economic centres in EU and non-EU countries. Under the TINA Initiative, three Pan-European Transportation Conferences were held in Prague (1991), Crete (1994), and Helsinki (1997). In Prague was decided that the accent must be placed on a corridor-based approach. In Crete, nine transportation corridors were proposed and confirmed three years later, when the so-called Helsinki corridors or Pan-European corridors were officially defined, in order to connect the EU’s Trans European Networks (TEN-T) with the infrastructure of Eastern Europe (see Fig. 15). On the third Transportation Conference in Helsinki, ‘as a consequence of the [Greek] lobby that the Balkan countries made for a better connection between the Western Europe and the Balkans, a tenth corridor was added to the network bringing additional connectivity in the Balkans.’<sup>24</sup> As planned, at its final stage the TINA Network should comprise of ‘18,683 km of roads, 20,924 km of railway lines, 4,052 km of inland waterways, 40 airports, 20 seaports, 58 river ports and 86 terminals (out of which, 20 are situated in seaports and river ports, and 66 stand alone)’ and should be fully integrated into the already existing Trans European Networks (TEN). The EU has set 2015 as an objective for reaching that goal. The estimated budget for the whole project by the year 2015 is 90 billion EUR, as for the Balkan part of the project, nearly 11 billion EUR.<sup>25</sup>

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22 Commission of the European Communities, 01/10/2003, Extended Impact Assessment of the proposal amending the amendable proposal for a decision amending decision No 1692/96/EC on the Trans European Transport Networks, SEC(2003) 1060, p. 54. in Enza Petrillo, *Trans European*, p. 4.

23 European Commission, DG Energy and Transport, *Trans-European Transport Network, TEN-T Priority Axes and Projects 2005*, Brussels, 2005, pp. 6-7.

24 Traceca Online, *Traceca Program-Reconstruction of the historical Silk Road*, Pan European Transport Corridors (Helsinki Corridors), <http://www.mt.ro/traceca/english/maps.html#a5>, last accessed August 2008.

25 Pilssoo Jung, ‘Annex III’, p. 71.



Fig. 15 Map of TINA Network-the 10 Pan-European Transport Corridors in CEECs.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Source: TINA Vienna Transport Strategies GmbH,  
[http://www.tinavienna.at/index.php?p\\_id=64&last\\_id=64&l\\_id=en&s\\_id=4d714bdccad2bb119b7c4cba17e68c7d](http://www.tinavienna.at/index.php?p_id=64&last_id=64&l_id=en&s_id=4d714bdccad2bb119b7c4cba17e68c7d),  
 accessed October 2008.

An analysis of the Commission's documents on TEN and TINA from the 1990s to present indicates that the EU considers the Pan-European multimodal corridors as one of its main tools for promoting Europeanization and democratization in SEE. They are closely related with the enlargement process and the mechanism of conditionality. The European Commission ties the construction of the Corridors to a whole series of internal reforms in the states concerned. EU promotes creating, upgrading and linking infrastructure, guided by the belief that infrastructure promotes development. Road, rail, electricity, and telecommunication networks with old member states is a necessary condition for extending the EU to countries of Central and South-East Europe. By creation of such multimodal network, the EU aims to 'create the base for a new economic upturn and a peaceful social integration of countries with very different history, ethnical roots and economic performance.'<sup>27</sup> In this sense, TENs are intended to facilitate the Europeanization of national economies, to improve mobility by promoting the exchanges and the flows of capitals of the member states and to create a "Europe of networks".<sup>28</sup>

Funding is mainly through the Structural and Cohesion Funds. Only for the period, 2000–06 around EUR 20 billion have been contributed to TEN-T projects, in particular in Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Additional Structural Funding has been allocated to the new Member States, including EUR 2.48 billion in pre-accession support. For the period 2004–06, EUR 4.24 billion and EUR 2.53 billion are committed from the Cohesion and Structural Funds respectively. Beyond 2007, both the Cohesion Fund and Structural Funds will remain a major source of funds for TEN-T projects in regions with weaker economic performance and in SEE in particular. Additional funding is provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB), which has lent EUR 50 billion for TEN-T projects in the period 1995-2005 and is expected to lend as much for 2005-2010. The EC has allocated a separate TEN-T budget, which is estimated at EUR 3 billion for 2007-2013.<sup>29</sup> The remaining funds should be generated by regional, national governments and the private sector.

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<sup>27</sup> Pilssoo Jung, 'Annex III', p. 73.

<sup>28</sup> Enza Petrillo, *Trans European Network (TENs) V in Slovenia: EUization or strategic planning*, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Trans European Transport Networks, Ten-T Priority Axes and Projects 2005*, European Commission, DG TREN, (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2005), p. 8.

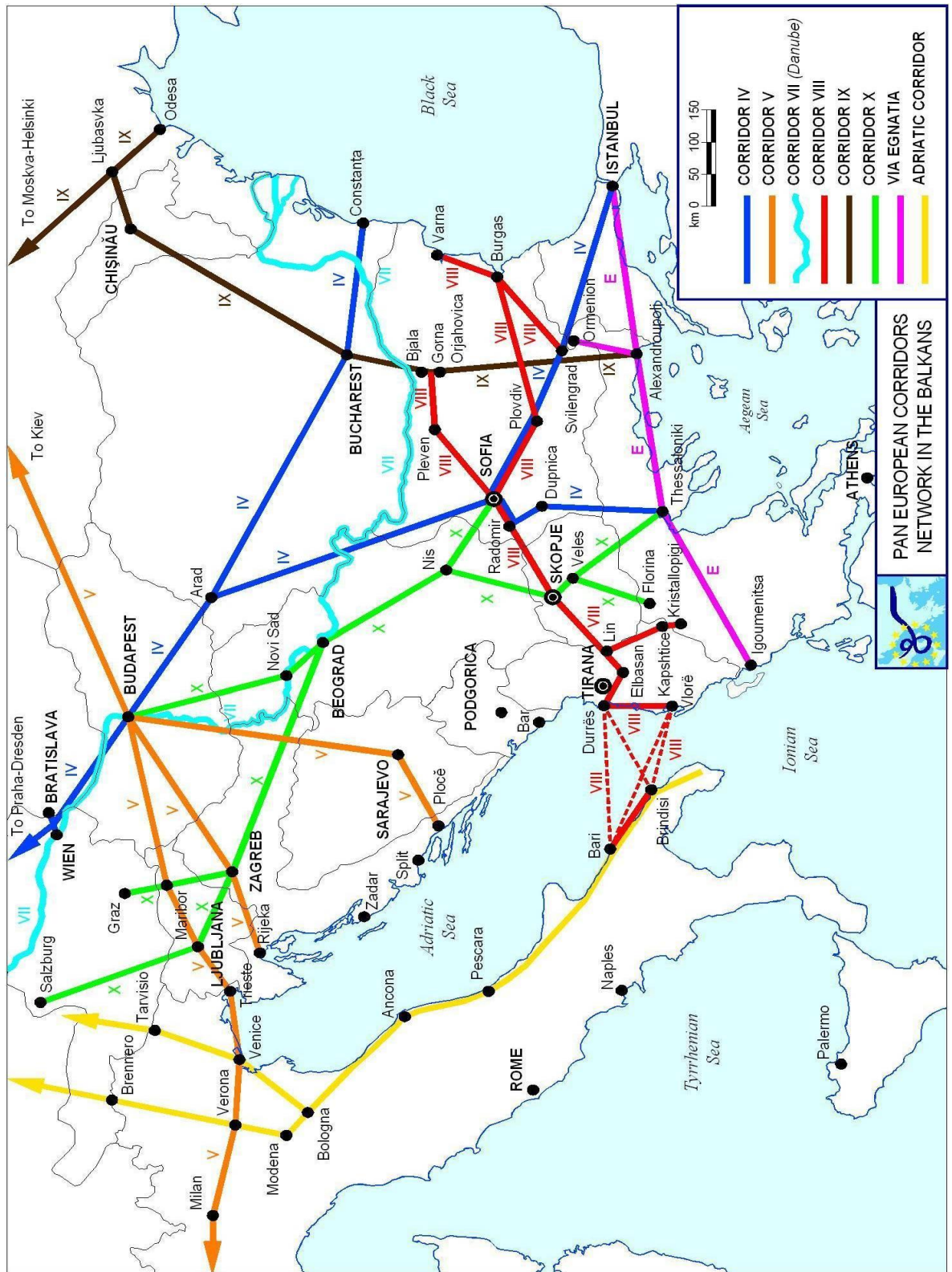


Fig. 16 Map of Pan-European Transport Corridors in the Balkans.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Source: Secretariat of the Corridor VIII, <http://corridor8.org/index.php>, accessed October 2008.

## **TINA in the Balkans**

The prospect of EU membership ‘puts an end to the vulnerability and scuffle of the small Balkan countries, of their fear of the Great Powers’ interventions or the “treacherous” neighbours’ mischief. In a longer perspective the region is facing a historic opportunity to advance toward genuine peace and development. A real breakthrough is in the making. The Balkan countries are learning how to overcome problems and coordinate national priorities, how to lead a more open and dynamic political dialogue<sup>31</sup> For the first time in modern history Balkan infrastructure completion could follow a strategy, which is above any national strategy with simple and clear criteria: shortest and most profitable routes, situated according to where the natural geographical morphology of the Balkans is most facilitating to such projects. As Hristo Genchev writes ‘these should be linkages among industrial and demographic centres, long established by geographical and historical factors, such as crossroads, water resources, favourable climate, rich hinterland, labour force.’<sup>32</sup> For the first time there is an overarching idea that could challenge and displace old ideational contexts.

As a backbone of its Europeanization policies the EU is extending the trans-European networks for energy, transport and telecommunications to the South East of Europe. Promoting infrastructure is part of the EU’s normative agenda, since it is ‘not only a technical, but an all-embracing process, which includes harmonization of legislation, regulations and standards, emphasis on open markets, competition, and last but not least on the ability to compromise and cooperate regionally.’<sup>33</sup> As a part of the Trans European Networks and the TINA Initiative, six out of ten Pan-European multimodal Corridors are planned to pass through South Eastern Europe (Corridor IV, V, VII, VIII, IX and X) and integrate them into a pan-European space (see Fig. 16). In addition, the strategic geopolitical location of the Balkans positions them on the route of a system of great transcontinental projects, aiming to connect the EU with the Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia such as TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe – Caucasus – Asia). A system of planned oil pipelines like Bourgas-Alexandroupolis, Bourgas-Vlore and the gas projects South Stream and Nabucco bringing gas and oil from the Caspian shelf and Central Asia to Europe are believed to be the EU’s great projects of the century. This is all to say that ‘infrastructure is said to be for South Eastern Europe what coal and steel were for Western Europe.’<sup>34</sup> Only such thinking could provide for the best investment of the limited local and external funds for these projects. However this requires the supplanting of path dependent nationalist ideas by internalization of the EU normative agenda by Balkan political elites.

In our case, implementation of the all-European infrastructure projects between Bulgaria and Greece was very slow during the 1990-2000 period. While it is true that the process depended on powerful external institutions and international financiers, it is also true that the main obstacles were not the lack of funding or external support, but

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31 Regional Infrastructural Projects in Southeastern Europe, Sofia, Institute for Regional and International Studies, 1999 in Ekaterina Nikova, ‘Roads’, p. 11.

32 Hristo Genchev, ‘Geography-Arbiter in the Rivalry Called Balkan Cooperation’ in *Makedonia Newspaper*, 34 (1997), 8.

33 Nikova, ‘Roads Connecting’, p. 12.

34 Ekaterina Nikova, ‘Regional Cooperation in the Balkans Revisited’, Institute of Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Etudes Balkanique*, 2002, N 1, p. 30.

were created by local governments, still trapped between the traditional national context mentality ‘fear your neighbour’ and the integration and cooperation normative agenda coming from outside. During the 1990-2000 period traditional programmatic beliefs of Bulgarians/Greeks as enemies continued to inform governments that cooperation with the other was not appropriate and led to the situation of a decade-long impasse between the infrastructure projects between the two states. This also corresponded to popular ideas at that time, thus bringing legitimacy inside the country. At the same time that same governments had to follow Brussels’ objectives to gain external legitimacy. However, during the 2000-2010, Bulgarian and Greek governments were increasingly becoming aware of the inadequacies of their existing understandings of the other as an enemy, under the EU pressure for cooperation and the popular pressure at home, which came to see the transport cooperation as bringing very tangible benefits, especially in the cross border regions. This led to change of ideas and normative contexts and in turn, to change in policies.

### ***Subcase Studies: The politics of infrastructure***

Out of the six Pan-European multimodal Corridors planned to pass through South Eastern Europe, three pass through Bulgaria and Greece (Corridor IV, IX and X). They form the basis of the two sub-case studies. The third sub-case study looks at Corridor VIII (Bulgaria) and its Greek alternative Via Egnatia.

In short, the sub-case studies deal with the following development: The EU develops a policy on transport infrastructure that it sees as vital for binding the new and old Europe. SEE, and Bulgaria and Greece in particular, are primary location of such policy but it is complicated by a) historic conflicts of interest and the ideational perception of historic ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ and normative criteria, shaped by such ideas; and b) conflicts based on more recent events (break-up of Yugoslavia) and its aftermath. According to such historic ideas Greece and Bulgaria see themselves as historic foes and cooperation among them as inappropriate. The result is conflict over transport routes during the period 1989-1999, when nationalist attitudes were still stronger than EU ideas. However, in the second period, after 2000, the impact of the EU can be seen in these conflicts being modified by the EU’s normative agenda and conditionality criteria due to a series of overlapping events in the period 1997-1999, such as end of the Yugoslav Wars, election of truly democratic governments in both countries and introduction of the new enhanced conditionality policy of the EU in 1997. Such developments, changed external contexts dramatically and Bulgarian and Greek governments were increasingly realising the inadequacies of their programmatic beliefs through the discursive selection of the context and namely the EU and inside popular pressure for implementing the infrastructure projects. As a result of such developments nationalist ideology was significantly challenged for the first time in modern history, which led to change in policies over transport infrastructure, where the decade long impasse was overcome after 2000, evidenced by increasing of financing and speeding of the projects construction after that period. The result is a slow growth of cooperation between Greece and Bulgaria as members of the EU or in other words we observe policy change.

The three sub-case studies explored below are Sub-case Study 1: Via Egnatia vs. Corridor VIII, Sub-case Study 2: New Check Points between Bulgaria and Greece and Case Study 3: Corridor VIII vs. Corridor X. In the first years after the democratic changes Balkan elites seemed to conform much more to traditional nationalist contexts at home, rather than the integration impetus, coming from outside and the declared commitment to the EU normative agenda. As an example, despite the clear agreement

on where the corridors should pass, and the generous funding Corridor VIII, was in its infancy stage, obstructed by Greece, while overlapping alternative routes (Via Egnatia), not recognized by the EU as transcontinental projects, were being developed (see Fig. 16). Each country perceived the other corridor as overlapping and competing, rather than complementary within a broader European framework. However, after 2000, the projects started to be regarded as complementary, Greek obstruction was removed and 9 vertical axes were planned to connect the two previously competing corridors. This is explored in the first sub-case study.

The second sub-case study deals with the situation where Greece and Bulgaria have a land border of 494 km with only two border crossing points, located at the extreme ends of the border, a legacy of the troubled historical relations between the two countries in the past. Similarly for 282 km border between Greece and Albania even nowadays there is one border crossing. In 1995 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Bulgaria and Greece, with a provision to open three more border points within a period of three years.<sup>35</sup>

However, the first new border point was opened thirteen years later in 2008, followed by one more in 2010. During the 1990-1999, acting on its programmatic beliefs and searching for an excuse not to open the border points, the Greek side demanded that a 500 metre-long tunnel be built to protect 'the reproduction of a family of brown bears' in Greece. As a result, it took thirteen years and EUR 4 billion to complete this new border crossing between the already two EU member states. Like the first sub-case, this also confirms that in line with traditional institutionalized ideas, explored in the previous chapters, Bulgarian and Greek governments of the period had their 'own, inward oriented infrastructural priorities...often reluctant to go beyond the scope of national strategic planning, to see the Balkans as an integral part of a broader region and become part of global economic plans. Intra-regional rivalries remain[ed] strong, the willingness to compromise – weak.'<sup>36</sup> However, the two recently-opened border points and the 3 nearly-ready, indicate that such policies remained in the past.

Sub-case study 3 looks at the situation, when during the Yugoslav Wars, Corridor IV was devised as a bypass route from Turkey and Greece via Romania and Bulgaria, to Western Europe, since at the time all the roads through Serbia were not accessible. In spite of the clear EU instruction, pressure, financial support and urgent need of the countries involved and the EU itself, the Corridor's commissioning did not even start during the 1990s, when it was most needed. Moreover, on the Transport Conference in 1997, Greece lobbied for the adoption of a tenth corridor (Corridor X) as an alternative to Corridor IV, from Greece via Serbia to Western Europe. Peculiarly enough, such proposal came in the height of the Yugoslav Wars, the Embargo and the fact that Corridor IV from Greece via Bulgaria to Western Europe has already been adopted in 1994 (Fig. 16). After the end of the war, Corridor IV was included among the 30 priority axes of utmost importance for the Union, which should be completed first. While Greece did not stop constructing Corridor X even during the Wars and NATO bombing of Serbia, construction of Corridor IV, which passed entirely through EU member states (Bulgaria, Romania), started only after 2000.

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35 Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agreement on the Opening of Three New Border Posts and Arterial Road Links between Greece and Bulgaria (Sofia 22/12/1995),

<http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/enUS/Policy/Geographic+Regions/SouthEastern+Europe/Balkans/Bilateral+Relations/Bulgaria/>, last accessed August 2010.

36 Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 11.

Having explored the traditional programmatic beliefs of Bulgaria and Greece in Chapter 3 and 4, we could provide answers to the puzzling cases of obstruction during the 1990s, despite new cooperation context. In the Corridor VIII vs. Egnatia sub-case, the commissioning of Corridor VIII along the East-West axis in the Balkans (Bulgaria-Macedonia-Albania) was perceived by Bulgaria as a chance to economically and culturally reconnect itself to Macedonia in line with the beliefs that the latter was part of the Bulgarian polity in the past. Greece has historically been suspicious of such East-West infrastructure among its ideational foes and worked for commissioning of alternative Via Egnatia project and the North-South infrastructure through ‘friendly’ Serbia. Therefore in the 1990s, similar to previous periods, new ideas (this time EU), still could not challenge the traditional perception between Bulgarians and Greeks. This is evidenced by the documentary research on speeches of policy makers of that time and corroborated by the elite interviews of current policy makers, sharing how they viewed the neighbour during the 1990s and 2000s, respectively.

Similarly in the border points case, the obstruction to opening of new border points between Greece on one side and Bulgaria and Albania on the other, should be regarded through the traditional Greek perception of possible ‘danger from the North’ and that cooperation with Bulgarians and Albanians was not desirable, typical of the previous periods and still influential during the 1990s.

Last, in the Corridor IV vs. X case, according to the Greek institutionalized national ideas and logic of appropriateness route from Greece to Europe should have passed through its ‘ideational ally’ Serbia, rather than through EU member Bulgaria (ideational foe). In the 1990s still acting on its traditional logic of appropriateness, Greece was favouring Corridor X and obstructing the commissioning of Corridor IV, regardless of EU support and funding for the latter. Such Greek position was not altered even during the Yugoslav Wars and the embargo over Serbia, when the link was vital to whole Europe as a bypass route. No work was undertaken and Greece continued building Corridor X, unmoved by Serbia’s distant EU perspective, or arguments in support of Corridor IV as shorter and economically more viable route.

However, recent developments in the period after 2000, as the agreements on the new Danube bridge, as part of Corridor IV, the opening of two border crossings between Greece and Bulgaria and the Greek consent for constructing linkages between Via Egnatia and Corridor VIII are a sign that policy has changed. A new ideology is in the making-where roads connect more than divide. That the EU had a crucial role in such change of perception and then policy was confirmed by the elite interviews.

### ***Subcase study 1: Via Egnatia vs. Corridor VIII***

During the European Council held in Corfu in 1994 a list of projects of immediate priority was approved. Egnatia Highway was among those projects as it was believed that it would comprise an important factor of development in the North Greece and the Balkan region generally. This fact was more than positive for Greece, as for several years such a transportation corridor was considered to be the means for serving the socioeconomic development and improving the connectivity between cities and regions in Greece and between Greece and neighboring countries as well. Meanwhile, a second road corridor of immediate interest for the Balkan region was among the nine priority corridors, which the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pan European Transportation Conference, held in Crete in 1994,



decided to promote. This was the so called Corridor VIII.<sup>37</sup> The European Union insisted that the two corridors would be complementary, since they had different functional and technical characteristics.<sup>38</sup>

However, through Greek and Bulgarian nationalist normative criteria during the 1990s, the two projects were interpreted as mutually-exclusive (especially in Greece), regardless of the fact they were devised under common EU framework with the aim of all-regional cohesion and diverting huge amounts of goods, traffic and profit to the whole region. As a result of obstruction towards the ‘competing’ corridor, both projects were significantly delayed. That applied most to Corridor VIII, since Greece could capitalize on its EU-member status to hinder the project’s development. Corridor VIII was devised as part of the continent-scale project TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia). It was considered to be the modern ‘Eurasian renaissance of the [Great] Silk Road.’<sup>39</sup> Its main objective was to provide for new transport routes between Europe and Asia, as well as to integrate the Caucasus and Central Asian countries to the transport infrastructure of the EU. It should also promote political and economical sustainability as well as enhance cooperation between the countries along the corridor. The modern TRACECA corridor did not completely overlap with the ancient *Silk Road*, as it was shifted southward to circumvent the turbulent region of the Near and the Middle East (Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, etc). The slightly altered route would create a thousand km-long diagonal of Euro-Atlantic-values-committed countries, passing in-between the ‘risk region’ to the south and Russia to the north.

On the financial part, the EU and the initiative for technical assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) helped to attract IFIs, such as the World Bank (WB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have made commitments to provide more than 1.7 billion Euros for the project.<sup>40</sup> TRACECA is planned to be fully operational by 2020. At the conference in Helsinki it had been recognized that one of the weaknesses of the TRACECA route, in the context of the EU Tacis program, was the lack of linkage between the western end and the European market. Therefore it was decided that the TRACECA corridor would be integrated to the pan-European Trans-European Networks (TENs) by a link on ‘corridors IV and VIII, via the port of Varna’ on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. As Eric Cotte stated, ‘the planned development projects on the European continent scheduled for the next 20 years depend on the building of corridors crossing the Balkans.’<sup>41</sup> Furthermore the whole feasibility of the connection between Europe and Asia (TEN and TRACECA) on the revived *Silk Road* depends on the link through the Balkans and namely: port of Poti

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37 Theodoros, Karakotsoglou, Charalampos, ‘Egnatia Highway’, pp. 1-5.

38 M Chrysostomidou, ‘The European Union confirms the worries about Egnatia’, article in Macedonia newspaper, Thessaloniki, 6 January 1996.

39 In antiquity the Great Silk Road has been the shortest route between Europe and the Far East. It stretched for nearly 7000 km, starting from the north-western provinces of China and finishing at the East Mediterranean. The Great Silk Road was in fact a trade route between Rome and China with mainly silk departing westward and wool, silver gold on the way back. However after the fall of the Roman Empire and the Great Geographical Discoveries era in the later centuries, the significance of this route diminished and it was neglected for the centuries to come. During the communist era the ancient Silk Road has been further completely blocked and such situation deformed the natural economical and cultural flows along this route.

40 Traceca: 1993-2002: Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia <http://www.traceca.org/rep/brochure/brochure.pdf>; last accessed May 2008, pp. 2-4.

41 Eric Cotte, ‘Where is the Eight Corridor?’, <http://www.scarabee.com/article103.html>, accessed May, 2007.

[Georgia] in the Caucasus-port of Varna [Bulgaria] on the Balkans, how it was initially adopted.

Corridor VIII is one of ten 'Trans-European Corridors' designed to make the exchange of goods, people, oil and other energy supplies in CSEE easier.<sup>42</sup> It is planned as the Balkan section of the *Great Silk Road* and envisioned as main 'street' for exchange between the EU and Central Asia. Pan-European Corridor VIII is the energy and infrastructure axis connecting the Adriatic with the Black Sea through Italy, Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria. The route of the corridor starts from the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Varna, passing through Sofia, Skopje, Tirana to reach the Adriatic coast at Durrës in Albania with a ferry connection to the Italian Adriatic ports of Bari and Brindisi (see Fig.17). The length is approximately 1000 km and the project encompasses road, rail and telecommunication links. The estimated price of the project is EU 1 billion.<sup>43</sup>

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42 This Intermodal Pan-European Corridor refers to the port, road, rail, airports when appropriate, and combined and intermodal transport infrastructures, including ancillary installations such as access roads, border crossing stations, service stations, freight and passenger terminals, warehouse, and installations necessary for traffic management, on the route defined above as well as the interactions of the afore mentioned features with transport activities of all modes on reasonably related routes. Source: Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Pan-European Transport Corridor VIII, signed in Bari on 9 September, 2002, <http://www.corridor8led.net/network-docs/index.asp>, accessed October 2008.

43 Марин Деведжиев (Marin Devedzhiev), *Българските геополитически шансове (Bulgarskite Geopoliticheski Shansove)*, (Veliko Turnovo: Faber, 2008), p. 178.



Fig. 17 Pan-European Corridor 8.<sup>44</sup>



Fig. 18 Greek project 'Via Egnatia'<sup>45</sup>

44 Source: Secretariat of the Corridor VIII, <http://corridor8.org/index.php>, accessed October 2008.

45 Source: Templari, Boemondo i di Antiochia, [http://www.templarcavalieri.it/boemondo\\_primo\\_di\\_antiochia.htm](http://www.templarcavalieri.it/boemondo_primo_di_antiochia.htm), accessed October 2008.

The corridor East-West (corridor VIII) was not only supported by the EU in Crete 1994, but also by the US-government. In New York (1995) four Balkan Presidents (Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey), in the presence of President Clinton, announced the South Balkan Development Initiative (SBDI). 'The SBDI is designed to help Albania, Bulgaria and FYR Macedonia further develop and integrate their transportation infrastructure along the east-west corridor that connects them.'<sup>46</sup> This project received the strong support by Washington and later was reconfirmed by the EU at the Helsinki conference as Corridor VIII was proclaimed the shortest and most efficient trade route between Europe and Asia, which is evidenced by the economical indicators below;

The length of Corridor N8, defined on the basis of the now functioning road, is 995 km. The mutual trade of countries within the Balkan segment is USD 13 420 million for 1997, and of those along the continuation of the Corridor towards Central Asia - USD 34 213 million, or totally along the whole length of the Corridor - USD 47 633 million. For most of the countries prognoses and trends indicate a GNP increase - in Bulgaria by 3% yearly, in Albania - 5%, Macedonia - 1-1,5%, Armenia - 5%, Azerbaijan - 5-6%, Georgia - 10%, Kazakhstan - 2%, Kyrgyzstan - 6%, Tajikistan - 3-5%, Turkmenistan - 2%, Uzbekistan - 2%. The expected ratio between local and transit traffic, as revealed by the macroeconomic indexes, is 1:3 - 1:5 in favour of the transit one. It is evident that the parameters and qualities of the already built and functioning transport infrastructure in the region, as compared to those of other transport routes from East to West, lag behind in creating competitive conditions for attracting traffic.<sup>47</sup>

The significance of the project was further enhanced during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, when 'both the EU and the US supported the development of Corridor VIII, in a bid to boost trade among these states [Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania] and off-set their war-related losses, while allowing NATO valuable access to their territories and airspace.'<sup>48</sup>

*Via Egnatia*, worth 6 billion Euro, passing from Istanbul, through Greek Provinces of Thrace and Macedonia and finishing on the Ionic Sea and from there continuing to Italy by ferry-connections soon after the initiative for the Corridor VIII, which circumvented Greece was announced in the Second Transport Conference in Crete 1994 (Corridor VIII with red, *Via Egnatia* with blue on Fig.19).<sup>49</sup> The Greek project, closely following the ancient route of *Via Egnatia* encompassed a motorway: 680 km long, 24.5 m wide, '1650 bridges, with a combined length of 40 km, 76 tunnels, with a combined length of 49,5 km, 50 interchanges with the existing road network, 43 river crossings and 11

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46 US Trade and Development Agency, 'TDA Awards \$4.3 Million in Transportation Grants In The South Balkans', [http://www.tda.gov/trade/press/dec9\\_98.html](http://www.tda.gov/trade/press/dec9_98.html); accessed June, 2010.

47 Serguey Roussev, 'Environment Management along the Road-Bed of Trans-European Corridor N8 in the Section between Sofia and Skopje', in *Balkans: Politics, Economy, Security* [journal on-line] 2, no. 2 (2000), <http://www.balkanica.org/balkanreview/current/a3.html>, accessed May, 2006.

48 Polina Slavcheva, 'Politics Thwarts Balkan Transport Revolution' in Anna McTaggart and Marcus Tanner (eds.), *Overcoming Balkan Barriers to a European Future Excellence*, Balkan Fellowship for Journalistic, (Sarajevo, 2007), pp. 35-42, <http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/movingon/movingon.eng.pdf>, accessed June, 2010.

49 The ancient Roman road *Via Egnatia* was one of the major transport, trade and military-purpose arteries, connecting the two capitals of the Empire- Rome and Konstantinopolis, stretching for 754 Roman miles (1117km) from the Adriatic port of Dyrrachium (near present-day Durrës, Albania) to the capital- Konstantinopolis. It was constructed in 130 BC and named after Proconsul Gaius Ignatius, who ordered its construction. See also: Francis Carter, *A Historical Geography of the Balkans* (London: Academic Press, 1977), p. 134.

railway crossings.<sup>50</sup> Via Egnatia was often referred as ‘project on a scale never before contemplated in Greece’ and one of the ‘largest road construction projects in Europe’ (see Fig. 18).<sup>51</sup>

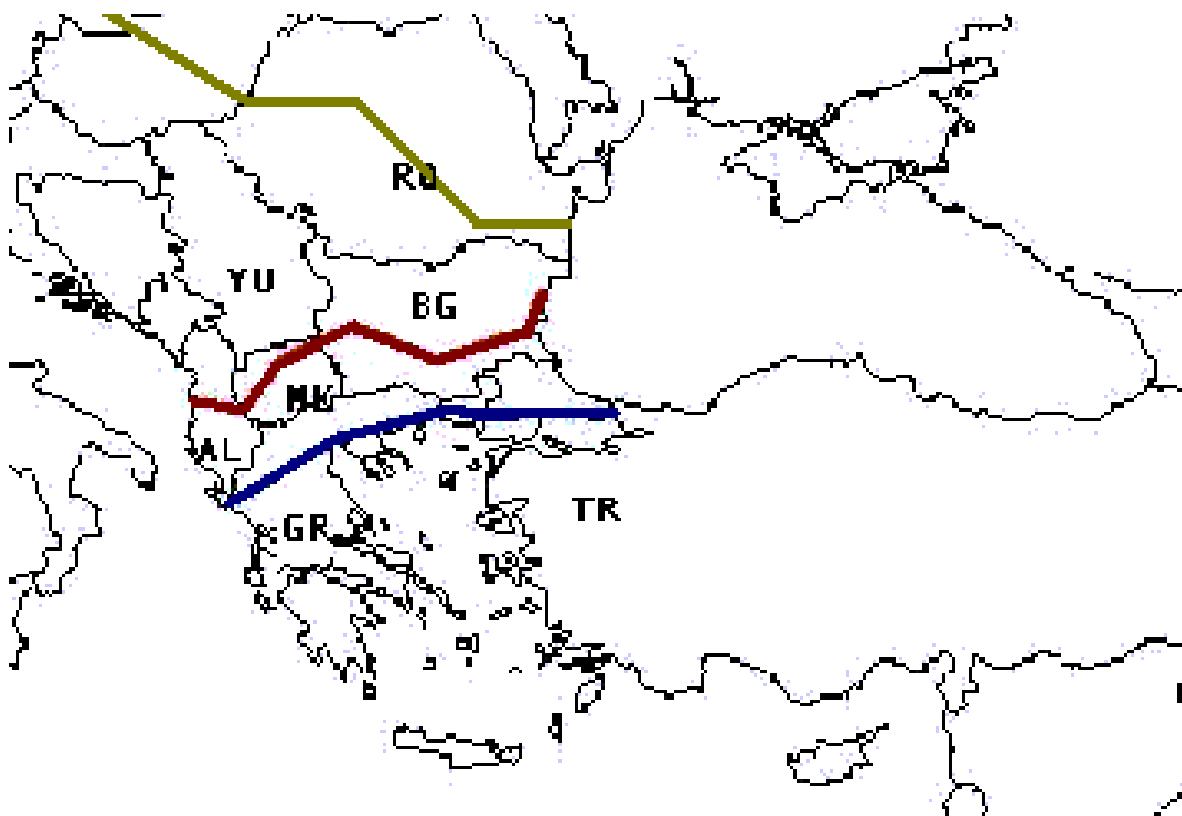


Fig. 19 Corridor N8 vs. Via Egnatia<sup>52</sup>

During the 1990s, despite the common EU framework of the two projects, Bulgarian and especially Greek authorities perceived transport Corridor VIII, as *Paraegnatia*, which means ‘opposite of *Via Egnatia*’. Typical speech of the time is when President Papandreu corrected Albanian journalist during a visit to Albania – ‘in Greece Corridor 8 is named differently ‘ParaEgnatia.’<sup>53</sup> Furthermore Axel Stiris Wallden in *Greece and the New Balkans: Challenges and Opportunities* writes that Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia (marked with red and blue colour in Fig. 19) are mutually exclusive and try to prove their EU partners that the Greek project is much more feasible.<sup>54</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece declares that ‘Via Egnatia is perhaps the most vital road project for the country [...] to link western and southern Europe with the East.’<sup>55</sup> It is clear that for Greece the ancient *Silk Road* should be diverted from Corridor VIII, adopted in Helsinki in 1997 to Via Egnatia. Some Greek intellectuals went even further

50 Egnatia Odos, ‘The Egnatia Motorway Project’ (2003), [http://www.egnatia.gr/flash/en/project\\_about\\_en.html](http://www.egnatia.gr/flash/en/project_about_en.html), last accessed October 2008.

51 Egnatia Odos, ‘The Egnatia’.

52 Source: Author.

53 Albi Qeli, Road ‘Egnatia’ and ‘Corridor 8’ are two different things, *Koha Ditore*, 90/1999.

54 Axel Stiris Wallden, ‘Greece and the Balkans: Economic Relations’, in Van Coufoudakis, Harry J. Psomiades and Andre Gerolymatos, eds., *Greece and the New Balkans: Challenges and Opportunities* (New York: Pella Publishing Company, 1999) quoted in *Greece’s New Geopolitics*, Ian Lesser et al. (Rand, 2001), 82.

55 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, *Foreign Policy*, ‘Transportation’ <http://www.mfa.gr/english/greece/today/transportation/highways.html>, accessed May 28, 2007

portraying the idea of connecting the Black Sea and the Adriatic from Varna to Dures as resurrection of Adolf Hitler's ideas of the 1940s for an East-West axis.<sup>56</sup>

On 22 October 1995, during the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in New York-Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey signed a declaration for Transbalkan cooperation in transport, energy and telecommunications. The main proposed project in the declaration was the construction of a Transbalkan highway Adriatic-Black Sea (Corridor VIII); they declared that such a link would stimulate their economic prosperity by fulfilling the centuries-old hopes of the European countries for a short and direct route to Asia, Middle and the Far East. They also declared that increasing multilateral cooperation aims to facilitate peace on the Balkans.

Three days later, Greece fiercely objected to the declaration and Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias commented 'when there are two parallel axes in a close proximity to each other, priority should be given to the one, which is not a matter of a political discussion'.<sup>57</sup> He also stated the same year that 'work on a major inter-European road network, the Egnatia Highway, planned to span the breadth of Greece from west to northeast and possibly extending to Istanbul, effectively cancelled out plans by four Balkan nations to construct a similar road link through the region.'<sup>58</sup> The same year Greek Transport Minister Evangelos officially dubbed Corridor VIII as the 'para-Egnatia Highway' and expressed his concerns that the suggested highway would run parallel to the Egnatia Highway already under construction in Greece. He described the declaration as an 'abstract and precocious diplomatic effort lacking funding and without a concrete future', while stressing that the Egnatia Highway being constructed on Greek territory, was an EU priority following the Essen summit, and 'in essence nullifies a parallel route at the same exact points'. In the same line of arguments government spokesman Telemahos Hytiris said the government did not attribute special significance to the announcement of plans for a 'para-Egnatia', saying the project lacked solid foundation and 'the project exist[ed] [only] in words', attributing the presence of EU external relations commissioner Hans van den Broek at the joint press conference after the four-states declaration to simple EU 'public relations' activity.<sup>59</sup> The spokesman also said the European Union had not made any decision to either fund such work or finance a feasibility study on Corridor VIII, while Egnatia Highway would be ready in four years' time, with sections of the road going into circulation earlier.

What is interesting in this case is the Greek political elites' perception of the two projects as mutually exclusive and the four-states-agreement of 1995 to build Corridor VIII as a conspiracy against Greece, regardless of the fact that one year earlier in Crete, together with the adoption of Via Egnatia, the corridor VIII was adopted by the EU as a trans-continental project of immense significance. It was devised as Europe's shortest link to Central Asia and the Caucasus. At this early stage Greek governments, perceived Via Egnatia as the only possible East-West axis and anything different was considered 'threat', 'fake', 'economically unsustainable', 'EU's public relations action'. This documentary finding was reconfirmed by majority of the elite interviews of Greek policy makers. Efstathios Politis, Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the city of Serres said 'Only ten years ago we thought in either-or dimension

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56 M. Douroudi, *Egnatia Highway*. Graduate Thesis, Technical Educational Institute of Serres, 1998.

57 Marin Devedzhiev, *Bulgarskite*, p. 185.

58 Athens News Agency Bulletin (724), 'Greece dismisses plans for 'para-Egnatia' highway, Egnatia Highway a major priority for EU', 25 October, 1995.

59 Athens News Agency Bulletin (724), 'Greece', 25 October, 1995.



when we are talking Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia. Only recently we came to believe that they can function perfectly well together.’<sup>60</sup> Thomas Margaritis, mayor of border city Drama noted that ‘during the 1990s, the whole rhetoric of Via Egnatia was in substance defense rhetoric against Corridor VIII, rather than promoting the benefits of Egnatia’s completion’.<sup>61</sup>

As explored in previous chapters, their traditional programmatic beliefs dictated that Bulgarians and Albanians were enemies. Therefore any project connecting Albania to Bulgaria was regarded with greatest suspicion, regardless it was not bilateral, but rather multilateral effort to minimise the regional and European losses from the Yugoslav Wars and in that respect, it would have helped Greece as well.<sup>62</sup> Programmatic beliefs provided normative filter through which they could not see the act as an attempt towards regional cooperation, but perceived the project as clearly detrimental to their own project and by all means competing, since it included traditional foes Bulgaria and Albania. This is evidenced by Papoulias statement ‘the para-Egnatia route is part of the ulterior motives of certain parties’ to the North.<sup>63</sup> Instead of accepting the existence of both Via Egnatia and Corridor VIII as complimentary projects within a broad EU framework, the Greek government responded by increasing the funding and speeding the construction of Via Egnatia, hoping that this will make Corridor VIII obsolete. Even slowing down of the construction was considered national betrayal and the signing of a declaration for Corridor VIII was described by foreign minister Papoulias as a ‘warning shot’ to Greece’s ‘sluggishness’, while expressing hope that the pace of construction of the Egnatia Highway would be sped up.<sup>64</sup> Greek policies and public statements during the 1990s failed short of creating a culture of cooperation in the Balkans, in contrast to the country’s declared commitment to EU values and norms. Furthermore, many Balkan analysts suspected that Greece was sabotaging Corridor VIII, using its privilege position as the only EU-member in the region. Albanian intellectual Arben Kola writes,

However, while the Albanians were most ardent supporters of the Corridor, until recently the Greeks have been its greatest opponents. Athens was afraid that the construction of this Corridor might reduce the importance of the port of Thessaloniki. Being a member of the European Union, which will be the main investor in the Project, Greece tried hard to postpone its realization.<sup>65</sup>

Polina Slavcheva, a Bulgarian analyst writes that ‘Greece wielding regional clout as a longstanding EU and NATO member, Corridor VIII has been allowed to lag behind the other Pan-European corridors that the EU envisaged as links to Southeast Europe.’<sup>66</sup>

To understand even better how Greece and Bulgaria again selected policies of obstruction, we need to explore the perception of the two projects through the traditional programmatic beliefs about the other in the two states. Promoting Via Egnatia and opposing Corridor VIII during the 1990s, was not an ad-hoc improvised act, but part of a Greek strategy for transport development in the Balkans, created decades ago. Such

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60 Efstathios Politis, *Personal Interview*, Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the city of Serres, Serres, 12.01.2008, [in English].

61 Thomas Margaritis, *Personal Interview*, Mayor of Drama, Drama, Greece 14.01.2010, [in English].

62 Theodoros, Karakotsoglou, Charalampos, ‘Egnatia Highway’, pp. 12-18.

63 Albi Qeli, Road ‘Egnatia’ and ‘Corridor 8’ are two different things, *Koha Ditore*, 90/1999.

64 Athens News Agency Bulletin (724), ‘Greece’.

65 Arben Kola, ‘Corridor Eight: Dreams and Interests’ <http://www.aimpress.org/dyn/trae/archive/data/199804/80426-005-trae-tir.htm>; accessed May 2007.

66 Polina Slavcheva, ‘Politics Thwarts Balkan’, pp. 35-42.

strategy was developed in line with Greek national contexts explored in previous chapters. Upon its completion, Via Egnatia would be the first major infrastructure project in Greece along the East-West direction. For decades the country's transport infrastructure has been developed in the North-South direction from Athens through Thessaloniki to Belgrade and Western Europe. (Corridor X-Fig. 2) As an implication of Greece's dedication to its traditional preference to the North-South direction via friendly Serbia (1997), Greek delegation on the Transport Conference in Helsinki, managed to persuade EU partners to adopt a new Corridor X (Salzburg, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Nis, Skopje and Thessaloniki). On the same conference Romania pushed for corridor IV to divert to Constanta, as an alternative to the already-planned route through Vidin-Calafat to Thessalonica. These three developments and namely, Greece's project Via Egnatia (opposed to Corridor VIII, see Fig.19), Corridor X as an alternative to the southern direction of Corridor IV (see Fig. 19) and the alternative Romanian Corridor IVa to Constanta (Fig.19), all of which ardently supported by Greece suspiciously coincide with one Greek geopolitical program, formulated thirty years ago from the Athens Centre of Ekistics. The project *Ecumenopolis 2080* (see Fig.20).<sup>67</sup> defined which Balkan territories should be subject of modernizing, industrializing and urbanizing (marked with black clusters of dots) with three level-scale of investment intensity.<sup>68</sup> According to the Greek hypothesis from 1969, in the time horizon of 2080 the transport directions East-West and North-South should pass through Greece, Serbia and Romania and circumvent Bulgaria, Turkey and Albania. According to this strategy the role of the diagonal projection, the ancient Via Militaris from Istanbul, through Belgrade to Vienna (red diagonal line on Fig.5) that has always been attracting the large amounts of the trade flows between Asia and Europe, even in the Cold War era, should be weakened through the building of the Belgrade-Thessalonica route, Via Egnatia and the Constanta-Budapest road. In this respect, Greek transport strategy was entirely shaped by the traditional programmatic beliefs of friends and enemies, explored in the previous chapters. In *Geography-Arbiter in the Rivalry, Called Balkan Cooperation*, Hristo Genchev reflecting on *Ecumenopolis 2080* in the early 1990s wrote,

I always believed that similar appropriations of geography could only exist only under exclusive circumstances, such as the Cold War. The idea that a single Balkan country-Bulgaria-could be intentionally isolated, seemed to me horrific, but the geopolitical project Via Egnatia, which was planned as a component of the Balkan range of *Ecumenopolis 2080* [...] began to be realized precisely in the years after 1989<sup>69</sup>

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67 'Ecumenopolis 2080', *ACE Newsletter*, 5, no. 5, (December 1969) quoted in Hristo Genchev, 'Geography-Arbiter in the Rivalry Called Balkan Cooperation' in *Makedonia Newspaper*, 34 (1997), 8.

68 Hristo Genchev, 'Geography-Arbiter in the Rivalry Called Balkan Cooperation' in *Makedonia Newspaper*, 34 (1997), 8.

69 Hristo Genchev, 'Geography', p. 8. Translation from Bulgarian.



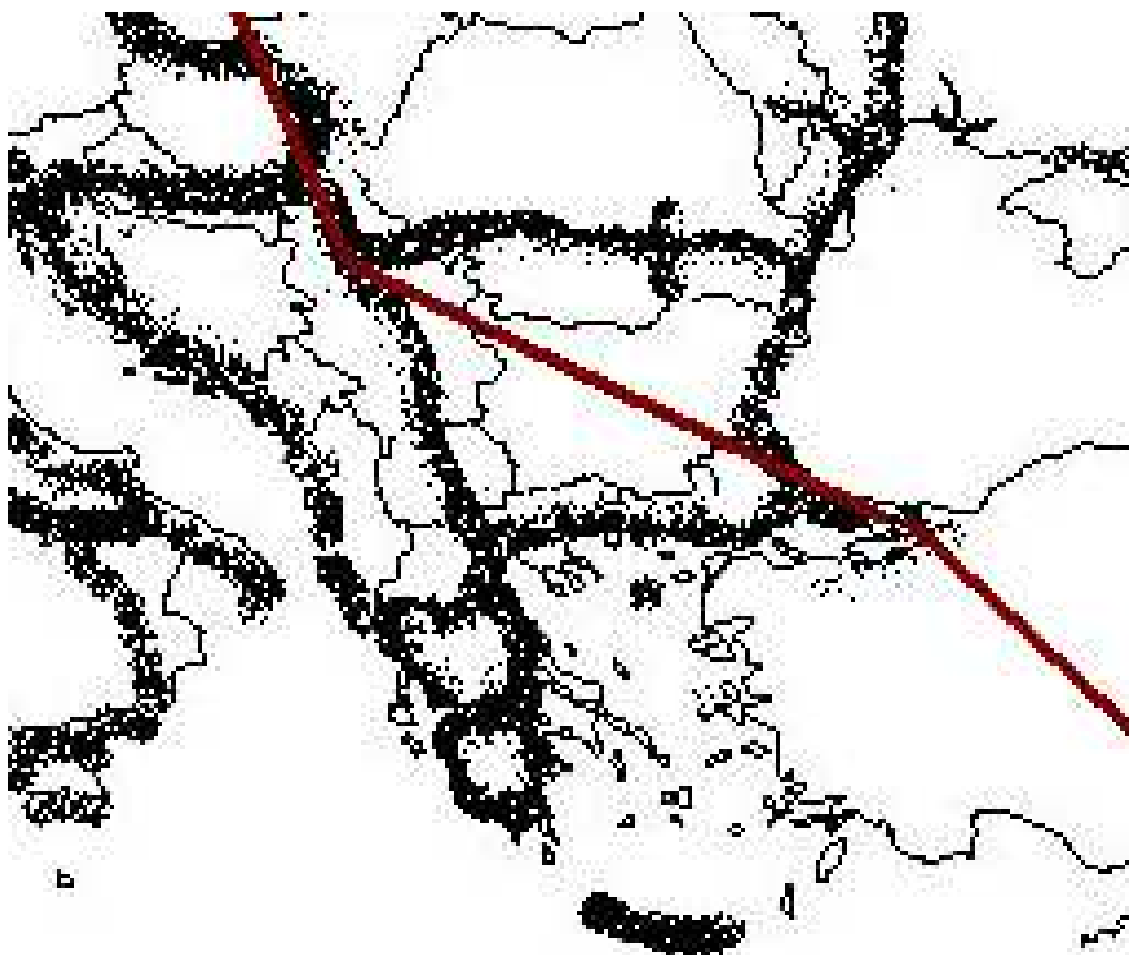


Fig. 20 *Ecumenopolis, 2080: Greek Programme for Development, Urbanizing and Modernizing*<sup>70</sup>

Although such fears might have been somehow exaggerated, as a proof that during the 1990s this ideas were not abandoned is the fact that the Athens Centre of Ekistics, published an updated map of Ecumenopolis in the article of Professor John G. Papaioannou.<sup>71</sup> The new time horizon was the year 2100. From the segment of the map in the article could be seen that the project Ecumenopolis has not changed much even after the global geopolitical transformations after the Cold War and the adoption of Pan-European Transport Corridors. The areas that had to be developed on the Balkans were again Via Egnatia, Thessalonica -Belgrade and Constanta-Budapest routes, circumventing the Great diagonal Istanbul-Belgrade-Budapest. Greek governments during the 1990s, supported exactly those projects, described in the Ecumenopolis 2080 and Ecumenopolis 2100.

Bulgaria in the 'opposite camp' was engaged in developing its own paramount project, and namely 'The gigantic infrastructure project [...] Corridor N8, [which had to] be finished by 2020' according to the prognosis of the American Trade and Economic Development Agency. Bulgaria perceived the intensification of the construction works of the Greek Via Egnatia project as an impetus to further increase the speed of the works on its part of Corridor VIII.<sup>72</sup> After Bulgarian diplomatic efforts on Sep, 9<sup>th</sup> 2002

70 Source: Hristo Genchev, 'Geography-Arbitrer in the Rivalry Called Balkan Cooperation' in *Makedonia Newspaper*, 34 (1997), 8.

71 John Papaioannou, 'Environment and the Role of Ekistics', *Athens Centre of Ekistics*, <http://business.hol.gr/~bio/HTML/PUBS/VOL2/gb-papai.htm>, accessed May, 2007

72 Roussev, 'Environment Management'.

Memorandum for the Completion of Corridor VIII was signed in Bari, Italy, where Bulgaria has again declared that Corridor VIII is a major project of paramount importance for its economy. Although the country insisted that it was lacking funds for construction of the other pan-European corridors it constantly secured funds from the state budget and international donors, such as EIB to exclusively invest in the route Sofia-Burgas, which is part of Corridor VIII. The estimated budget for the project is about 2.2 billion dollars and the section through Bulgarian territory requires 1.2 billion BGN (700 million dollars). On March 16, 2003 Regional Development Minister Valentin Tserovski opened the construction of the new section of the Thrakia motorway [Bulgarian name for the part of Corridor VIII, crossing the country] between Orizovo and Stara Zagora. 'The project is worth about EUR 54 M, eighty percent of which are provided by the European Investment Bank and the rest of the money will come from the state budget. About 3000 workers will be employed in the construction, which is expected to finish in 30 months.'<sup>73</sup>

In other words, the rivalry between Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia during the 1990s was again shaped by the institutionalized ideational legacies of two incompatible ideologies. If constructing Via Egnatia, the road leading to 'Constantinople' was the 'megale project' for Greece, Bulgarians were likewise captured by the vision to build an East-West multimodal corridor, connecting them to their always unfulfilled dream Macedonia. Even, if the great city was forever lost for Greeks they could live their dream by resurrecting the ancient road leading there. If Bulgarians have ultimately been denied of reuniting with Macedonia, they strived for a better passage to their 'cousins'.<sup>74</sup>

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73 'Construction of Orizovo-Stara Zagora Trakia Highway Section', Novinite.Com, [http://novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=20437](http://novinite.com/view_news.php?id=20437), accessed May, 2007.

74 The railway between Sofia and Skopje is the major missing link along Corridor VIII on the Balkans. It is also the most politicized link in the region. More than hundred years after first plans were drawn there are still no trains between Bulgaria and Macedonia. The project was obstructed by Great Powers and suspicious neighbours and never accomplished. Bulgaria's ambitions to annex Macedonia were unwelcome to several Great Powers, which explains their reluctance to allow a railway running from the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, to Skopje, in Macedonia. Instead, they insisted on a line running from Sofia to Niš in southern Serbia, a line that nowadays forms part of Europe's transport Corridor X. An expression of Bulgaria's pretensions towards Macedonia, the line has always been effectively sabotaged, blocked and even destroyed by its neighbours. Within the Ottoman Empire, construction of the line started in 1876 in the direction Skopje-Kyustendil.

After the Bulgarian independence, work was stopped by the Ottomans. Bulgarians completed their section to the border at Gyueshevo on the eve of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) in line with their ideational contexts that Macedonia was the sacred land where Cyrillic alphabet was created, the Bulgarian Jerusalem, the most Bulgarian of all lands that still needed to be liberated. After losing the war and the region's incorporation in Serbia (later Yugoslavia) works were discontinued. During World War I, under the short-lived Bulgarian administration (1941-1943) the construction is renewed and more than 58 tunnels and 60 bridges completed. During the Cold War the remaining 64 km (63km in Macedonia and 1 km in Bulgaria) could not be finished. After the democratic changes Bulgaria pushed for the line construction once again.

The Bulgarian government was first in the world to recognize an independent Republic of Macedonia in 1992. However, Bulgaria failed to recognize the existence of Macedonian language and nation, separate than Bulgarian. This revived fears that Bulgaria still aspired to incorporate the country and work on the project was interrupted again. The two countries have sorted their outstanding disputes in 1999 by signing a declaration on the official languages of both countries, thus diplomatically avoiding to name the language of the declaration, as either Bulgarian or Macedonian. At the same time the rail between Sofia and Skopje was proclaimed as the backbone of Corridor VIII and Transcontinental

## ***Subcase Study 2: New Border Points between Bulgaria and Greece***

Fighting on the side of the Central Powers in World War I, Bulgaria lost its outlet to the Aegean to Greece by the Treaty of Neuilly in 1919. Of all the lands lost, the cutting away from the Mediterranean (through the Aegean) was particularly painful for Bulgaria. At places the border was drawn some 15 km away from the sea nearly that close that it 'could be smelled' (see fig 21).<sup>75</sup> The country reoccupied the region during World War II but had to withdraw fighting on the losing side again. Paris Peace Treaties confirmed the territory had to be returned to Greece and some 150 000 Bulgarians were expelled to Bulgaria. The local autochthonous population of Slavic origin that remained on the other side of the border was subjected to a policy of Hellenization. Since then the border was sealed and from 1944 till 1988, the 500 km common Bulgarian-Greek frontier was served by only one border check point, and namely *Kulata-Promahonas* on the direction Sofia-Athens (marked with N1 on Fig. 21). As a comparison the average distance of border check points between historical foes Germany-France was 7 km. Such policies were consistent on one side with the traditional Greek/Bulgarian nationalist programmatic beliefs of the other as enemy and on the other reinforced by the communist ideological divide. Till the 1990s, informed by such ideas, precluding any form of cooperation, the two countries simply pretended the other just did not exist. A second check point *Petko Voyvoda-Ormenion* was officially opened at the other extreme of the border, only on November 5, 1988. (marked with N5 on Fig.21)<sup>76</sup>

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Corridor Europe-Asia (Traceca) by the EU and the TINA initiative. Seemingly there were no more obstacles and nothing could hinder the project this time since it was out of the Balkan politics realm and was elevated to a supranational level. However, the line is still not operational. Bulgarians tend to ascribe the delay to Macedonia's indecision about its priorities. Since the creation of Macedonia there have been only two or three years when the state was interested in working on this axis. Although a relic of the past, the thinking of part of the Macedonian elite is still that the country can develop either along the Serbia-Greece [Corridor X] or Albania-Bulgaria axis [Corridor VIII], Marin Lessenski, of the Sofia Institute for Regional and International Studies, IRIS, says.

Whether these two strategic alliances are complimentary to one another, however, is doubtful, according to Lessenski: If you have Serbia and Greece as friends, Albania and Bulgaria are your enemies. Still dominated by its Serbian-educated elite, Macedonia preserves the ideational status quo for North-South infrastructure linking her to Serbia and Greece respectively. At the same time the East-West connection, promoted by the EU and the US promises to attract 'huge amounts of ores, gas and other goods expected to flow from the Caucasus region to Western Europe will use the railroad through Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania, as this would be by far more viable than using motorways. If Skopje further delays the construction traffic might be diverted to other corridors going to Austria through Serbia. Elites in Skopje, similarly to Greece and Bulgaria are trapped between EU ideas and nationalism. If in the foreseeable future a train from Sofia terminates at the Skopje station we would know that Balkan political elites will not be 'catching the train for Europe' anymore, since they will be Europe. The journey would have taken 200 km for 132 years.

75 Ekaterina Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 9.

76 Apostolos Hristakoudis , 'Bulgarian-Greek Cooperation in the Sphere of Transport Infrastructure', *International Relations*, 3 (2001), 103.



Fig. 21 Border check points between Bulgaria and Greece. Planned and existing.<sup>77</sup>

In 1995 the foreign ministers Papoulias and Pirinski concluded historic agreements including the opening of border checkpoints between the two countries, the waters of the river Mesta (Nestos), the employment of seasonal workers and an agreement on relocating people. Bulgaria managed to negotiate the opening of the old Roman passes through the Rhodopes at three new crossings in exchange for a guaranteed debit of the waters of the river Mesta for the Greek side (marked with red on Fig. 21). This meant to restore five (two existing and three new) out of seven border points that were used between the two wars of last century and also to adapt them to the modern flow of cars and tourists. Papoulias commented that three new border checkpoints –Ilinden, Elidzhe and Makaza (N2, N3 and N4 on Fig.21) between the cities Drama-Goce Delcev, Xanthi-Roudozem and Komotini-Kurdzhali - would give a new impetus to the movement of people and goods and they will strengthen border trade and bilateral trade and economic relations.<sup>78</sup> The agreement explicitly stated that the three new checking points should be commissioned within three years and not later than the end of 1998. The program PHARE donated DM 24 million exclusively for the fast completion of the Ilinden check point, where the interwar infrastructure was much in place and seemingly only minor efforts were required on both sides to complete the remaining 2 kilometres and erect a new customs building. With funds provided by the EU and a clear agreement between the two countries it seemed nothing could hinder the project. In addition it was beneficial for both countries to speed construction due to the Yugoslav Wars and the European need for routes bypassing Yugoslavia.

However by 1999, works on the crossings had still not even started.<sup>79</sup> It should not be disregarded that in the Balkan context, even the local fauna could be a crucial player.

77 Egnatia Odos, *Driving on the Egnatia Motorway*, <http://www.egnatia.gr/page/default.asp?la=2&id=49>, last accessed October 2008.

78 *Athens News Agency Bulletin* (724), 'Major bilateral agreements with Bulgaria will be signed by year's end', 25 October, 1995.

79 B.K, A.C, T.T, Representatives of Egnatia Odos Transport Company, *Personal Interviews*, Thessaloniki, 08.03.2008, [in Greek].

The Greek ecology organization *Arktouros* sent a protest-letter to the EU Commission, where it expressed its concern that the new Goce Delchev-Drama check point disturbed 'the ecological harmony in the region and threatened reproduction of a family of local brown bears.'<sup>80</sup> As a consequence the project was significantly delayed, as Brussels required new route of the checking point in compliance with the environment. Surely ecological concerns are something not to be disregarded. In this particular case ecological arguments were used to intentionally delay the opening of the new check point Ilinden, as in that region there was hardly any brown bear population. Commenting on the case, the German magazine *Spiegel* wrote,

Greeks had just invented something to delay the commissioning of the checking point. They said that tens or even hundreds of bears passed through exactly that spot...and the automobile traffic would disturb them... on the contrary... in the region there are two or three bear families at most and in the exact spot of the point a single bear has not been mentioned for years...<sup>81</sup>

After two more years of arguments, the new 'ecologically-correct' project provided for a 600 meter-long tunnel, between the two borders. It took another two years and four billion euro to build a special tunnel for the bears.<sup>82</sup> The Special Coordinator for the Stability Pact Bodo Hombach commented that this bear-tunnel is 'senseless'.<sup>83</sup> Many of the elite interviews with Bulgarian policy makers indicate their belief that the real motive behind such obstruction was the fear of the Greek side that eventual new border point would provide for the increased communication between Bulgarians and the Slavic speaking minority in Northern Greece (population considered as 'Slavic-speaking Greeks' by Athens), divided by new state borders after the Balkan Wars 1912-1913.<sup>84</sup> This is confirmed by some of the elite interviews, for example with Anastasios Vavaciklis, Mayor of Komotini, who said that 'the Slavic-speaking population divided by the border has always made Greece suspicious to any opening of that border.'<sup>85</sup> On Bulgarian side the concerns from the new check point opening were connected with the fact that the Bulgarian border region's economically deprived population might emigrate to the Greek labour market. Bulgarian policy makers also accused Greeks that the decade- delay of the new border points was an intentional policy, since 'Greeks did not want to let Bulgaria reach the free Aegean, which was only 20 km from the border' and often reminded that this was a Bulgarian territory till 1920.<sup>86</sup> In one of the elite interviews, Anton Antov, a Bulgarian expert at the Ministry of Transport, discussing the Bulgarian-Greek transport relations during the 1990s, complained 'The Greeks instinctively did not aim at having contacts with Bulgaria, just as the Romanians didn't want bridges over the Danube.'<sup>87</sup>

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80 Ekaterina Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 9.

81 'Tunnel für Meister Petz: Zwischen Bulgarien und Griechenland werden für den Tierschutz Unsummen aus EU-Steuergeldern verbuddelt', *Spiegel*, 48, (2000) quoted in *Makedonia Newspaper*, 2 (2001).

82 Ekaterina Nikova, 'Roads Connecting', p. 9.

83 'Tunnel für Meister Petz', p.2.

84 Kostadin Kostadinov, *Personal Interview*, Deputy Chair of VMRO Party, Sofia, 13.08.2009, [in Bulgarian], Angel Dzhambazki, *Personal Interview*, Sofia Town Councillor on The Security and Defense Committee, Sofia, 15.08.2009, [in Bulgarian], Dora Yankova, *Personal Interview*, Mayor of Smolyan, Smolyan, 05.04.2009, [in Bulgarian].

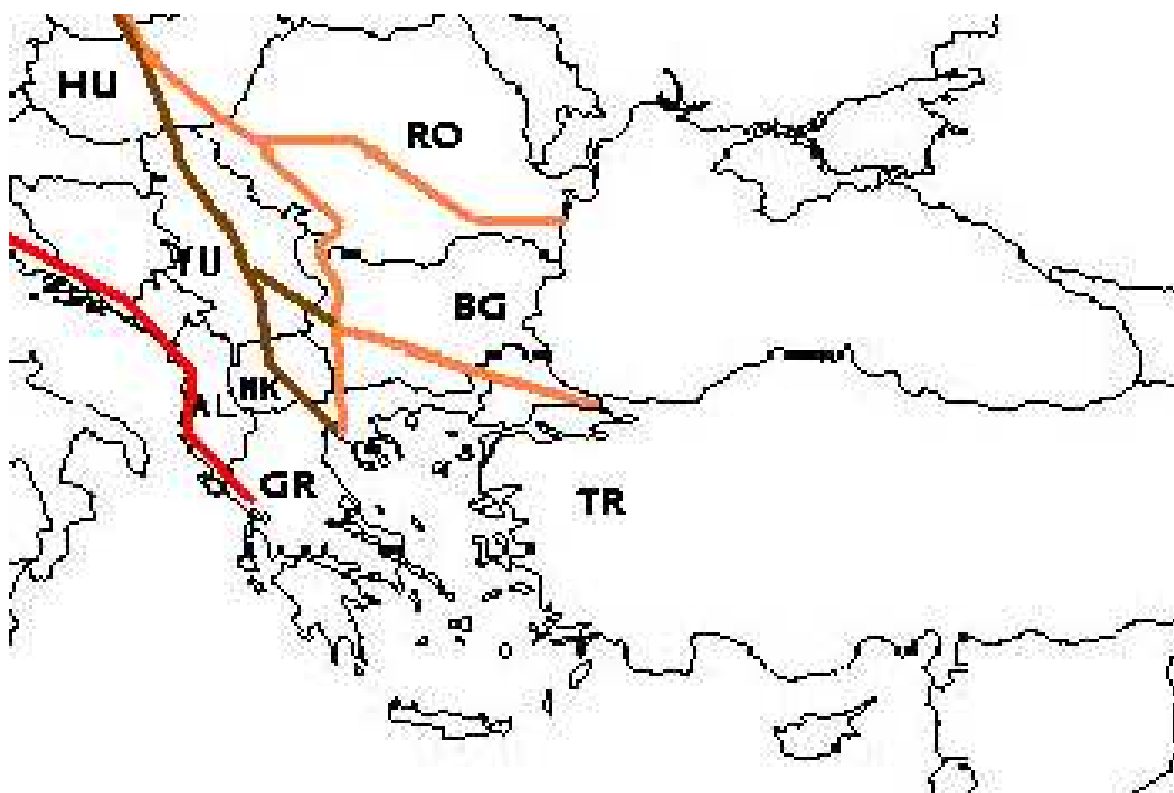
85 Anastasios Vavaciklis, *Personal Interview*, Mayor of Komotini (2002-2006), Komotini, 12.12.2008, [in English].

86 Aleksandar Kravarov, *Personal Interview*, Mayor of Bansko, Bansko, 17.08.2008 [in Bulgarian].

87 Anton Antov, *Personal Interview*, Senior expert at the Ministry of Transport-Bulgaria, Sofia, 30.05.2008 [in Bulgarian].

During the 1990s, regardless of the Bulgarian status as an acceding EU-state and Greece's as an established EU-member state nationalist mentalities of the previous times were still very much alive and the dominant culture was 'fear your neighbour', which resulted in reluctance to open new border points between the two states, rather than engage in overall political, social and economic cross-border cooperation.

### ***Subcase Study 3: Corridor IV vs. Corridor X***



*Fig. 22 Corridor IV vs. Corridor X: Rivalries over the North-South Direction*<sup>88</sup>

During the recent Yugoslav Wars, experts evaluated the traffic interruption as a European 'traffic heart attack'.<sup>89</sup> The Balkans were cut from communication with the West. The whole traffic from the Middle East to Europe had to be redirected through Romania, instead of Serbia. However, Bulgaria and Romania, peculiar enough, possessed a single bridge across their 500 km river border and this facility was their sole rail connection.<sup>90</sup> In comparison, in Budapest alone there were nine permanent bridges spanning between the two shores of the river<sup>91</sup>. Furthermore 'along the total [European], Danube navigable length, 104 bridges are built at an average distance of 21.38 kilometres. The distance between the Danube Bridge at Ruse and the next bridge in

<sup>88</sup> Source: Author.

<sup>89</sup> *Nationalism - Blood and Belonging: The Road to Nowhere – Yugoslavia* (documentary, 1993), at [http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v\\_id=198086](http://movies2.nytimes.com/gst/movies/movie.html?v_id=198086), accessed October 2008.

<sup>90</sup> The bridge at Ruse-Giurgiu, or 'The Bridge of Friendship', as it was called, was opened in 1954 and served the trade relations between the socialist Balkan countries and the USSR. The bridge was a significant element in region's infrastructure, comprising of road, rail, gas and oil connections, serving the north-eastern trade flow, facilitating cultural and military interaction between the states in the region and the USSR.

<sup>91</sup> Tourism Office of Budapest, Bridges, <http://www.budapestinfo.hu/en/sights/hidak.html>, accessed May, 2003



Romania - Veke Bridge is 556.42 km.<sup>92</sup> That is 40 times lower than the average density in the upper part of the river. Moreover the only existing bridge ('Bridge of Friendship' as it was called) was serving the former export orientation towards the USSR and was inconveniently located at the extreme eastern part. After the collapse of communism trade flows were reoriented towards the European Union and the significance of the ancient trade route *Via Militaris* Istanbul-Sofia-Belgrade-Vienna (green on Fig. 23) increased dramatically as the shortest land connection between the Near East, Middle East and Europe. The new international regimes and geopolitical order positioned the European Union as the new major trade partner for the Balkan economies. Another reason for redirection of traffic to the *Via Militaris* route was that lying just south of Bucharest but about 300 kilometres (200 miles) east of Sofia, the Danube bridge's location was inconvenient to access Central Europe through Romania. (see Fig. 23)

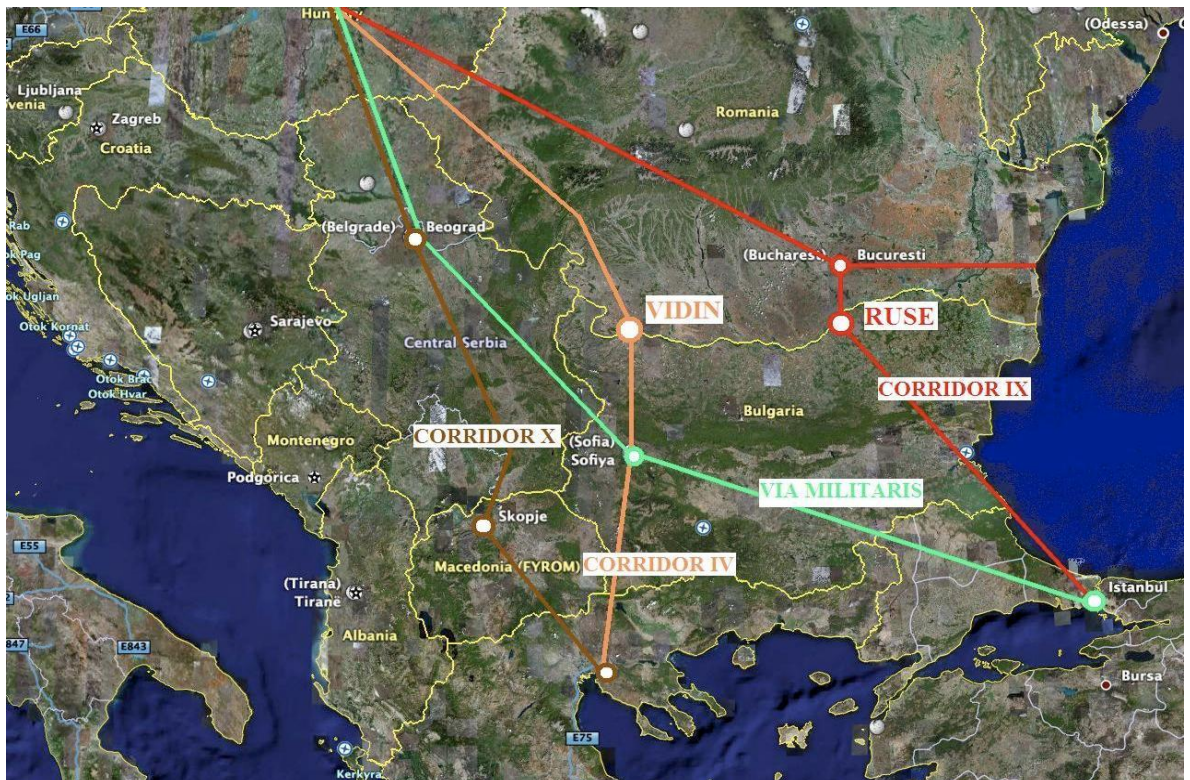


Fig. 23 Corridor IV vs. Corridor X and the location of the two Danube bridges between Bulgaria and Romania<sup>93</sup>

As a result, most Bulgarians, as well as most travellers from Asia Minor and Middle East, took the route through Serbia. However the Yugoslav wars 'virtually made unusable *Via Militaris*, the shortest route from Western Europe to the Balkans and Asia.'<sup>94</sup> Such a state of affairs provoked a frantic search for an 'alternative route to the EU that circumvents Serbian territory' as the losses that the Balkan economies suffered from the embargo on Yugoslavia and the blocked routes amounted billions of dollars.<sup>95</sup>

92 Yordanka Gancheva, 'The Second Danube Bridge: Where is the Problem Actually?', *Institute for Market Economics*, [http://www.ime-bg.org/pdf\\_docs/papers/bridge.doc](http://www.ime-bg.org/pdf_docs/papers/bridge.doc), accessed May, 2003, 1.

93 Source: Author.

94 Gergana Dimitrova, *The Road to Europe: The Symbolic Economy of Self-Representation in the Balkans*, PhD Research Project- work in progress, IRES Department, Central European University, Budapest (2001-2003).

95 Gergana Dimitrova, *The Road to Europe*, p. 24.

By 1996, for Bulgaria alone, the figure was estimated at USD 4 bln losses.<sup>96</sup> During the Yugoslav Wars trucks and cars had to drive many extra miles and reluctantly start using the Ruse-Giurgiu bridge again, lining in kilometer long lines and incurring huge financial losses from the increased transit. At the All European Ministerial Conferences on Transport held in Crete in 1994, the map of the Pan European transport corridors was proposed. It was decided that Corridor IV should be commissioned as an alternative bypass route of the old Via Militaris to secure European flows in case of further Yugoslav conflicts. The Corridor IV (orange on Fig. 22 and 23) links Dresden (Germany) to Istanbul (Turkey) via Prague, Bratislava, Gyor, Budapest, Arad, Craiova, Sofia and Plovdiv. Ways diverge to provide links to Nuremberg, Vienna, Bucharest and Constanta (Corridor IVa). Corridor X (brown on fig 22 and 23) crosses Salzburg (Austria), Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Nis, Skopje, Veles and Thessaloniki (Greece).

The idea to build a second Danube bridge at the west part of the border looked pretty obvious. Negotiations started in 1995 when Bulgaria and Romania decided to build an alternative route to Western Europe, creating a 'strategic bridge that could link the countries of Southeast Europe afflicted by the crisis with the European transport system.'<sup>97</sup> Work was 'put off for eight years while Bulgaria and Romania engaged in a lunatic battle about its location. Bulgaria wanted an upstream site in compliance with European demands and Romania a site downstream, in spite of the already existing bridge at that part of the river. In mid 1990s, the two countries still shared a culture of 'mistrust your neighbour' mentality during the negotiations and chose not to cooperate incurring significant financial losses from missed opportunities to attract trade flows and bigger transit costs.

Romania was supported by Greece, which at the third Pan-European Transport Conference in 1997, lobbied for the adoption of a tenth corridor (Corridor X) as an alternative to Corridor IV, from Greece via Serbia to Western Europe. Peculiarly enough, such proposal came in the height of the Yugoslav Wars, the Embargo and the fact that a convenient corridor from Greece via Bulgaria to Western Europe (Corridor IV-orange on Fig. 22) has already been adopted in 1994. Greece also introduced a second initiative that undermined Corridor IV and namely the project, later known as the 'Dalmatian' corridor (red on Fig.22).

During the wars, due to its vital significance Corridor IV was included among the 14 TEN-T specific projects of utmost importance for the Union, which should have been completed first and would be allocated most funding. However, in spite of the clear EU instruction, pressure, financial support and urgent need of the countries involved and the EU itself, the Corridor's commissioning did not even start during the 1990s, when it was most needed. While Greece did not stop constructing Corridor X, linking her to Serbia, even during the Wars and NATO bombing during the Yugoslav Wars, construction of Corridor IV, which passed entirely through EU member states (Bulgaria, Romania), started only after 2000 after a decade of intentional delay. The reason was the 'fear your neighbour mentality' and traditional nationalist contexts which had their own logic, different than the clear cut European agenda.

While Corridor IV was regarded by EU Commission as a project of utmost importance during the Yugoslav conflicts as a conflict-bypass route, its relevance significantly diminished at the end of the crisis. However to safeguard from possible dependence on

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96 About Bulgaria, 'Economy', [http://www.geocities.com/abstract\\_f/aboutbulgaria.html](http://www.geocities.com/abstract_f/aboutbulgaria.html), accessed May, 2003.

97 Arben Kola, 'Corridor Eight: Dreams and Interests'.



a single route, the corridor was once again reconfirmed its significance, putting it on the list of the 30 priority projects (including the original 14) in the Revised TEN-T guidelines and financial regulation adopted in 2004. After the fall of Milosevic, Greece continued developing the alternative route of Corridor X, despite the fact that this corridor is not on the EU priority list, while construction on Corridor IV via Bulgaria, reconfirmed as a project of utmost importance for the EU was not yet to start till 2000s.

The second Greek initiative, that undermined Corridor IV was the project, later known as the 'Dalmatian' corridor (marked with red line on Fig.22) linking the Italian port of Trieste to the Greek city of Igoumenista, following closely the Adriatic coast via Albania, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Croatia, a project proposed in middle 1998 and estimated to 3 billion dollars.<sup>98</sup> What Athens and Bucharest did not take into account was that after the war conflicts in Yugoslavia were over, the natural trade flows would return along the shortest Via Militaris route from Istanbul-Sofia-Belgrade-Vienna (green on Fig. 23), circumventing both Romania and Greece excluding them from the trade flows geopolitical game. After the normalization in Yugoslavia, the EU, the SPSEE and other international actors were less inclined to financially support a bridge over the Danube, as a replacement of the traditional Via Militaris route. As Gergana Dimitrova wrote the project 'might seem to be losing its outward significance after the end of the Kosovo crisis and the disappearance of the pariah Yugoslavia'.<sup>99</sup> The two countries have missed substantial opportunities to attract some of the trade flows of the Via Militaris route, receive generous support to implement the project from outside donors (such as EIB, the PHARE program in the period 1995-2000), at the time when the project was of high priority for the international community as an alternative route to the one through troubled Yugoslavia due to the old nationalist mentalities dominating transport policies at that moment. Much of the detrimental effects to the economies of all three countries, cause by the traffic blockade would have been offset if the second Danube bridge project (as a link of pan European Corridor N 4 from Thessalonica to Budapest) had been accomplished during the Yugoslav Wars.

Last, in the Corridor IV vs. X case, according to the Greek institutionalized national ideas and logic of appropriateness route from Greece to Europe should have passed through its 'ideational ally' Serbia, rather than through EU member Bulgaria (ideational foe). In the 1990s still acting on its traditional logic of appropriateness, Greece was favouring Corridor X and obstructing the commissioning of Corridor IV, regardless of EU support and funding for the latter. Such Greek position was not altered even during the Yugoslav Wars and the embargo over Serbia, when the link was vital to whole Europe as a bypass route. No work was undertaken and Greece continued building Corridor X, unmoved by Serbia's distant EU perspective, or arguments in support of Corridor IV as shorter and economically more viable route.

Based on the documentary research on government publications, newspaper articles, international memorandums, public speeches, transport doctrines, etc., we have found that during the 1990s, obstruction over the EU-backed cross-border infrastructure projects (Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia, Corridor IV and X, cross border points) was linked to old programmatic beliefs that still shaped normative criteria that cooperation between Greece and Bulgaria was not appropriate. To corroborate the findings, the elite interviews asked 25 key top-policy makers in Greece, operating on regional, national and European level, the following questions:

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98 Eric Cotte, 'Where is the Eight Corridor?'

99 Gergana Dimitrova, *The Road to Europe*, 28.

- Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate before 1990s?
- Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate during the 1990s?

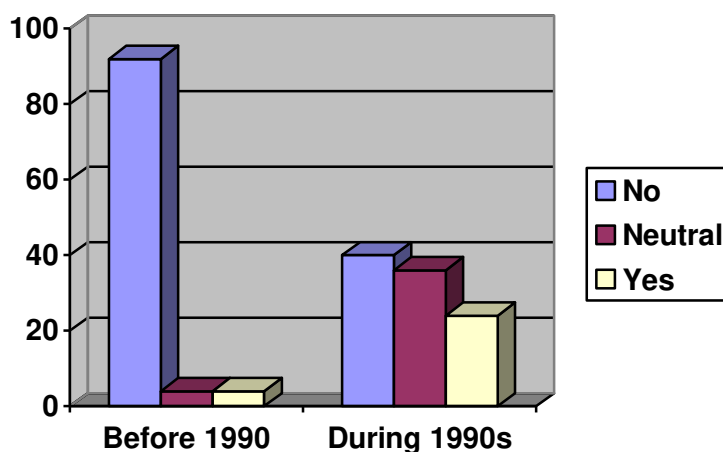
Their 25 relevant Bulgarian counterparts were asked similarly:

- Was cooperation with Greece appropriate before 1990s?
- Was cooperation with Greece appropriate during the 1990s?

The 25 Bulgarian and 25 Greek Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., selected through non-probability purposive sampling, were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interviews mostly during 2006-2009. The analyzed data yielded the following results:

92% (23) of the Greek policy makers claimed that cooperation with Bulgaria was simply unthinkable and not appropriate in the years prior to 1990. 4% (1) were neutral about the issue, and 4% (1) insisted that cooperation was possible in that period. This reconfirms what we found about that period, exploring Greek programmatic beliefs about Bulgarians through documentary research in the ideational chapters. However, after the 1990s, when traditional programmatic beliefs of the other as an enemy were gradually challenged by EU-cooperation ideas, indicate shift of perception. 52% (13) of the Greek policy makers still claimed that cooperation with Bulgaria was not appropriate during the 1990s, but already 36% believe it was neither good, nor bad, while 12% (3) believed that in that period, cooperation between the two states was already deemed appropriate and well-accepted by the public opinion. What is interesting is that policy actors, working on the European and regional level, much faster shifted their ideational set-up from obstruction to cooperation, while actors working on the national level still viewed that during the 1990s, cooperation with Bulgarians was just not appropriate (see Fig. 24).

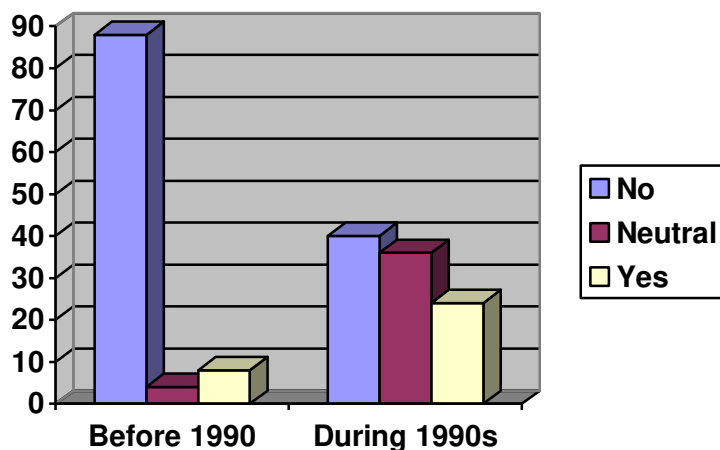
*Fig. 24 Result of elite interviews of 25 Greek policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 1: Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate before and during the 1990s?*

Similarly 88% ( 22) of Bulgarian policy makers perceived that cooperation with Greece was not appropriate, before the 1990s, 4% (1) was neutral and 8% (2) thought it was possible. The elite interviews corroborated the documentary research findings of the ideational chapter on Bulgarian programmatic beliefs towards Greeks prior to 1990. During the 1990s, 40% (10) said cooperation was not possible, already 36% (9) were not sure and 24% (6) believed it was already appropriate and a good thing (see Fig. 25).

*Fig. 25 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 1: Was cooperation with Greece appropriate before and during the 1990s?*

### **Conclusions**

The chapter explored that during the 1990s, political, economic and social cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece (operationalized through three concrete sub-cases of EU-backed cross-border infrastructure projects) could not materialize. The projects were in a situation of impasse, regardless of EU pressure, secured financing and obvious benefits if completed. Bulgaria and Greece adopted competing policies, rather than complementary within a broader European framework, regarding the other as a rival, rather than an ally over the commissioning of the projects. Such policies were linked to old programmatic beliefs that still shaped normative criteria during that period that cooperation with the neighbour was still not appropriate. This was evidenced by the documentary research on government publications, newspaper articles, international memorandums, etc. and corroborated by elite interviews of current Greek and Bulgarian policy makers and their views of that period.

In other words, Greek and Bulgarian elites during the 1990s were so reluctant to cooperate since they still identified obstruction as the normatively appropriate behaviour than instead of calculating the return expected from alternative choices, which corresponded to the normative guidelines and criteria provided by the ideas that Bulgarians/Greeks were enemies and cooperation with the other was at best suspicious.

The following 2000-2010 -chapter demonstrates how after the 2000, cooperation suddenly emerged and very intensive work on the infrastructure projects was undertaken. The immense power of EU-idea and EU's normative agenda was making traditional policies of obstruction ever more inadequate. Bulgarian and Greek elites were increasingly feeling the pressure of regional and supranational levels informing them that continued lack of cooperation in the new condition would produce very

undesired results. If nationalist ideas and obstruction were crucial for their legitimization, popular support and integrity during previous periods, in the new conditions continuation of such policies could have even cost them losing their legitimacy abroad and at home.

To find policy change, the data was collected through archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles. To link such historic policy change to ideational change, as a result of EU leverage, the documentary research is complemented by primary research data of elite interviews.

## **Chapter 6. Second Phase 2000-2010: Europeanization**

### ***Introduction***

The first hypothesis of the study, that Greek-Bulgarian policies of obstruction are shaped by path-dependent institutionalized ideas, was tested in the ideational mapping chapters of Greece and Bulgaria. The task of the two empirical infrastructure chapters is to test the second hypothesis that EU with its normative agenda and conditionality could be such a powerful idea to effectively challenge, for the first time, traditional national-interest mentalities in Bulgaria and Greece and lead to change in obstruction policies.

The previous chapter demonstrated that during the 1990-2000, political, social and economic cooperation between the two states was still rather wary and reluctant, as justified by the common EU large infrastructure projects that were in a state of impasse for a decade, in spite of secured EU funding, proven economic benefits and clear technical specifications. Documentary research, corroborated with elite interviews indicated that decision makers in Bulgaria and Greece still tended to identify and interpret the challenges they faced within the old normative guidelines and criteria and matched problems with solutions they had applied in the past, rather than searching for politically or economically optimal solutions in the new EU-promoted cooperation environment. In other words during that first period traditional programmatic beliefs, although challenged could not be displaced by EU-ideas, as happened many times before. Elite interviews indicated that during the 1990s policy makers at regional and supranational level adopted the appropriateness of cooperation ideas much faster than those, operating at national level.

However, only during the second period (2000-2010), a true breakthrough in obstruction policies occurred. Cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece started to emerge in the economic, political and social sphere and gradually increased with each year, since old ideas and policies of obstruction were yielding more and more unintended results, such as increasing pressure from EU and regional level and they seemed increasingly inadequate in the light of the powerful idea of EU-common membership and normative criteria. That was also manifested by starting work on the long-delayed infrastructure projects and even commissioning some of them towards the end of the period. If the previous chapter found that traditional programmatic beliefs still influenced obstructionist policies over the cross-border infrastructure projects, the task of this chapter is, first, to explore if change of obstruction policies between Bulgaria and Greece occurred between 1990s and 2000s. Second, to link such historic policy change to ideational change through the documentary sources and elite interviewing. Third, to explore why this time, it happened. What made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous 'weaker' ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs?

Data was collected through archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles. To link such historic policy change to ideational change, as a result of EU leverage, documentary research is complemented with primary research data of elite interviews. After we have found policy change and linked it to ideational change, we conclude the 2000-2010 chapter with analysis what made EU-idea so much more

powerful than previous ‘weaker’ ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs.

### ***Sub-case Studies: The politics of infrastructure during the 2000s***

#### ***Sub-case study 1: Via Egnatia vs. Corridor VIII***

If breakthrough in nationalist mentalities was in progress ever since the end of the Cold War, only after the end of the Yugoslav Wars policies have really started to change. Greece has continued to energetically construct Via Egnatia through the Greek government, EU, EIB and the Community Support Framework funding.<sup>1</sup> In the period from February 2000 to early 2006, 480km of the motorway was opened. There are 165km of motorway sections still under construction. The final date for completion is in end of 2010 when the full route should be open to traffic.<sup>2</sup>

The big change was when the project was taken out of narrow national planning contexts and put under an EU framework as a result of discussions carried out between the Greek Government and the European Community during the preparatory phase of the INTEREG II (CSF II) (1994-1999). It was jointly decided by the Greek Government and the EU that the materialization of large infrastructure projects supported by EU funds could not become a reality without modernizing the Greek public works production structures. As a result, the responsibility for the materialisation of the Egnatia Motorway project was assigned to the Egnatia Odos AE Company in February 1997. At that time, the Company also undertook the responsibility for all the works that were currently in progress.<sup>3</sup> At a meeting between the transport ministers of Italy, Greece, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria in September 2003 was accepted the proposal by Greece for priority to be placed on the opening of two vertical axes linking Corridor 8 with the Egnatia motorway at the sections between Krystalopigi-Siatista (with Albania) and Ormenio-Alexandroupoli (with Bulgaria). Within the broader European framework and controlled by the EU, the Egnatia Odos Company adopted in 2006 seven more vertical axes to connect Via Egnatia to Corridor VIII after negotiations with the governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Turkey (Fig. 20).<sup>4</sup>

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1 The Company Egnatia Odos was established under the provisions of art. 5, L. 2229/94. It is a legal entity governed by private law in the form of a Société Anonyme with the Greek State (Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works) being the sole shareholder. The public Sociétés Anonymes were instituted by Law 2229/94 (article 5). Source: Asterios Liolios, ‘The Case of Egnatia Odos Motorway in Northern Greece’, *Design and Construction of Highways in Greece*, [http://www.ssm.org.yu/congress2007/doc%202007/Liolios\\_EGNATIA\\_Profile\\_2007\\_round-table.pdf](http://www.ssm.org.yu/congress2007/doc%202007/Liolios_EGNATIA_Profile_2007_round-table.pdf), accessed September 2008.

2 ‘Egnatia Odos Motorway, Greece’, Roadtraffic Technology, <http://www.roadtraffic-technology.com/projects/egnatia/specs.html>, accessed September 2008.

3 Asterios Liolios, *Design and Construction*, pp. 6-7.

4 Adrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou and Rizos Charalampos, ‘Egnatia Highway and Pan-European Corridor 8: Complementarity or Competition?’, Conference Paper, *46th Congress of the European Regional Science Association: Enlargement, Southern Europe and the Mediterranean* August 30th – September 3rd, 2006 University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece, p. 12.



Fig. 26 Via Egnatia (red) and Corridor VIII (blue), connected by nine vertical axes<sup>5</sup>



Fig. 27 The vertical corridors of Egnatia-Image.<sup>6</sup>

5 Source: Egnatia Odos Motorway, Greece, The Egnatia Motorway Vertical Axes and Their Significance, <http://www.egnatia.gr/page/default.asp?la=2&id=30>, accessed October 2008.

6 Source: Adrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou and Rizos Charalampos, *Egnatia*, p. 13.

This was the high point of EU efforts to install a culture of cooperation. In 1995 Balkan states (Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria vs. Greece) perceived that Via Egnatia and Corridor VIII were mutually exclusive and each country opposed the alternative project. In 2005 political elites were building vertical axes to connect the two corridors in an effort to attract more flows, develop their periphery regions and increase cooperation among them, perceiving that the two projects could work under a common EU framework, and together could bring substantial traffic, funds and benefits to the region. This is also supported by the elite interviews, presented later in the chapter.

Nu mber	Vertical Corridor	Length (in Km)
1	Ioannina – Kakavia (Borders with Albania)	62
2	Siatista – Krystalopigi (Borders with Albania)	72
3	Kozani – Florina – Niki (Borders with FYROM)	94
4	Thessaloniki – Evzoni (Borders with FYROM)	78
5	Thessaloniki – Serres – Promachonas (Borders with Bulgaria)	107
6	Drama – Nevrokopi – Exochi (Borders with Bulgaria)	40
7	Xanthi – Echinios (Borders with Bulgaria)	48
8	Komotini – Nimphea (Borders with Bulgaria)	23
9	Ardanio – Ormenio (Borders with Bulgaria)	134
In Total		658

Fig. 28 The vertical corridors of Egnatia<sup>7</sup>

As another example of policy change, compared to the 1990s, Greece has joined the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of Pan European Corridor VIII, also signed by Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece and Italy in Bari on 9 September 2002, giving way to the realization of the Corridor. The Memorandum of Understanding between governments of the region spelled out details of cooperation at the national level. The Stability Pact played a role in coordinating international donor aid for Corridor VIII as it did for other infrastructure projects throughout the region. Such act of Greek political elites was something unthinkable previously, when seven years earlier, the four initial signatories were perceived as nothing less than conspiring against Greece.

On 22 April 2008, foreign minister Dora Bakoyannis announced that Greece has offered to donate EUR 75 million to Macedonia for construction of Corridor 8 road infrastructure, business investments as well as for gradual visa waiver after the name

<sup>7</sup> Source: Adrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou and Rizos Charalampos, *Egnatia*, p. 13.



dispute between the two states has been resolved.<sup>8</sup> Not only had Greek political elites joined the MoU for Corridor VIII's construction six years ago, but were now offering financial assistance to another country to facilitate the completion of its section.

The early post-communist years in Bulgaria and Greece are characterized with paying lip service to EU and external impetus for integration. Nationalist attitudes still prevailed over Europeanization ideas, evidenced by the elite's position and policy outcomes on the construction of Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia. However, after the end of the Yugoslav Wars and the first truly democratic government taking office in Sofia in 1997, for the first time elites started to accept and internalize the EU normative agenda. This is not to say that new ideas have completely displaced the traditional ones, but it was [and is] a process in the making. The decision of Bulgaria and Greece to build nine vertical axes connecting Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia, Greece joining the Memorandum of Understanding for the Corridor's construction and mostly the financial aid, granted to Macedonia to complete its section of the route are all a sign that policies are changing. Policies are changing as a result of challenged prejudices, as a result of change in perception, change of ideas. The two corridors are gradually perceived by both countries as complimentary within a broad European Framework. They are not necessarily 'mutually exclusive' anymore. A great ideational change has taken place in the span of only ten years. Greek political elites have realized that the corridor is not necessarily a threat to their own project and is much more tangible than a mere EU public relations hoax.

During the 2000s, Greek public discourse did not use the 'para-Egnatia' (opposite to Egnatia) rhetoric anymore, when referring to Corridor VIII. The latter was finally named with its real name. As an implication of the new complementary thinking of the two projects, Theodoros, Michalis and Charalampos wrote in 2006, that if one's destination is 'the region of Caucasus, the Pan-European Corridor 8 is expected to be used... if the destination is Middle East or North-eastern Africa, then Egnatia Highway is likely to be considered as the best choice.'<sup>9</sup> They also stated 'the rise of accessibility in the regions which the two corridors will cross is expected to lead to the tightening of relations between the states of Balkan Peninsula. Specifically the commercial transactions will be greatly profited from such a development...at the same time, the manufacture of the vertical axes that will link these two corridors might terminate the status of isolation for several regions. Moreover, the complementarity of the system of the two axes will be obvious intensely in the case where the origin and the destination of inter-Balkan movements are not on the same axis and do not have direct contact with any of the vertical corridors. This fact "imposes" the use of both axes.'<sup>10</sup>

### ***Subcase Study 2: New Border Points between Bulgaria and Greece***

As discussed in previous case, real change in obstructionist policies between Bulgaria and Greece, started to gradually take place after the Yugoslav Wars in 1997, as a result of internalization of EU normative ideas, which led to change in perceptions and later policies. From a bilateral agreement between Bulgaria and Greece, the opening of the three border points was included in the broader EU supported framework of connecting

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8 Macedonian Information Agency, Athens and Skopje enter in a feud , 22 April 2008, <http://www.mia.com.mk/default.aspx?mId=125&vId=42747649&lId=2&title=euro-atlantic+integration>, last accessed May 2010.

9 Adrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou and Rizos Charalampos, *Egnatia*, p. 15.

10 Adrianos Theodoros, Michalis Karakotsoglou and Rizos Charalampos, *Egnatia*, p. 16.

Egnatia Highway with the Pan-European Corridor 8 with the construction of nine axes. The construction of the border points was supported also through the EU's INTERREG II programme, through which subsidies were granted to Greece with special emphasis on integrating remote regions and those which shared external borders with the candidate countries.<sup>11</sup> Greece and Bulgaria were involved in the INTERREG III A programme. Under the programme between 2000 and 2007 six Greek prefectures (Thessaloniki, Drama, Kavala, Xanthi, Rhodope, Evros) and four Bulgarian districts (Blagoevgrad, Smolian, Kardjali, Khaskovo) were given EUR 264.593.332 million, out of which Euro 186.095.123 were ERDF funds. An additional amount of 5.436.000 €, was allocated to the Programme by the European Union according to the decision C (2002) 1703/26-7-02 as 'Special strengthening of regions bordering the Candidate Countries'.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the generous funding, and EU pressure, it took Bulgaria and Greece ten years to complete the first crossing point at Ilinden in 2006. The 'tunnel of friendship' as it was named linked a road from Ilinden on the Bulgarian side with Exohi in Greece. The two villages were only about 10 kilometers, or 6 miles, apart, but until now were separated by a four-hour drive because the only border crossings were located at the extreme ends of the 494-kilometre border.<sup>13</sup> The event, widely publicized and attended at the highest level, was portrayed as an example of new culture of cooperation in the region. Bulgaria's president, Georgi Parvanov commented 'In this troubled region we are creating truly European relations', while president of Greece, Karolos Papoulias, praised the opening as progress 'on the road to our European family'.<sup>14</sup> Are such speeches just ticking boxes for external legitimating purposes or a true normative change in policy? Is the opening of the Ilinden crossing more an exception, a reluctant act to please Brussels and justify EU funding or part of a policy to truly integrate the region. To answer such questions, we should explore the state of progress and implementation of the other two negotiated border crossings.

The crossing Kurdzhali-Komotini through Makaza is part of the route of Pan European Corridor IX. As of 2008, the Bulgarian part has reached the Greek border and the infrastructure is completed (see Fig. 29).<sup>15</sup> The Greek section of the Makaza crossing point has been recently undertaken by the Greek state owned EGNATIA ODOS AE, awarded on December 15, 2006 with a budget amounting to EUR 85 million. The contractor has been installed and the project is already under construction, starting with the preparation of the tunnel faces (Fig. 29 Green on the map indicates 'national road under construction'). As said the axis is part of Pan-European Corridor IX and has a total length of 24 km. To date, the northern part of the axis has nearly been completed on the first 4 km long and will be upgraded in the framework of the new construction

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11 Interreg III is a Community initiative which aims to stimulate interregional cooperation in the EU between 2000-06. It is financed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This new phase of the Interreg initiative is designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion throughout the EU, by fostering the balanced development of the continent through cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. The Operational Programme Interreg III A / PHARE CBC Greece Bulgaria 2000-2006 was approved by the European Commission on 20/07/2007 according to the E.C. decision number E (2007) 1687 as it was modified by the decision E(2007)1687 COR. Source: *Interreg III*, Community Initiative Interreg, <http://www.interreg.gr/default.aspx?lang=en-GB&page=237>, accessed September 2008.

12 *Interreg III*, Community Initiative.

13 Matthew Brunwasser, 'Greece and Bulgaria open bear-friendly crossing', *International Herald Tribune*, 9 December 2005, available <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/12/09/news/border.php>, last accessed June 2010.

14 Matthew Brunwasser, 'Greece and Bulgaria'.

15 Milena Chervenova, 'Transportni experti', *Stroitelstvo. Gradut Online Magazine*, 'Transportni experti'.

contract. The remaining section up to the Greek-Bulgarian borders, 20 km long, the Greek Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works has prepared designs that EGNATIA ODOS A.E. has undertaken for review and completion. The project is estimated to be completed in the summer of 2010.<sup>16</sup> The Greek side started building their part in July 2007, twelve years after the agreement in 1995. However, both Bulgarian and Greek experts believe Greece will have to meet its latest 2010 deadline to complete its section of Corridor IX, especially as Bulgaria is now a fellow EU member. It is a remarkable change of policy. Bulgarians were frustrated by the fact, that by 2010 it would have taken Greece 15 years to build only 24 km of highway. The popular belief was that 'the Greeks instinctively do not aim at having contacts with Bulgaria, just as the Romanians don't want bridges over the Danube'.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately, old stereotypes and ideas are challenged by the real breakthrough in transport infrastructure policies. Very recently, one more border point between Zlatograd and Termes was inaugurated on 15 January 2010. It is not intended for heavy trucks, but it was open to mostly stimulate people exchange and tourism. The high profile event was attended by Greek and Bulgarian Prime Ministers Boyko Borisov and Georgios Papandreou, who did demonstrate very warm feelings. Papandreou said, that 'this new border point symbolized that in United Europe, we are breaking all walls of the past that separated us and open new roads for cooperation.'<sup>18</sup>

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16 *Egnatia Odos*, 'The Progress of the Project, VA Komotini-Nimfea-Greek-Bulgarian borders', <http://www.egnatia.gr/page/default.asp?la=2&id=254>, last accessed October 2009.

17 Anton Antov in Polina Slavcheva, 'Overcoming', p. 8.

18 Eva Tosheva, *Otkriha Granichnia Punkt Zlatograd-Termes (Zlatograd-Termes Border Point Open)*, available at [http://www.lev.bg/view\\_article.php?article\\_id=34361](http://www.lev.bg/view_article.php?article_id=34361), 10.06.2010.

VERTICAL AXES - PROJECT STATUS AUGUST 2008



Fig. 29 Makaza and Elidzhe Check Points. State of Readiness-August 2008 19

Regarding the Elidzhe crossing point on the Bulgarian side the works are nearly completed and the road is expected to be finished by the autumn of 2008 (Fig. 23 Red coloured roads on the map indicate ‘national road in the stage of design’). On the Greek side the axis, including Xanthi bypass and the link road to the motorway, is approximately 60 km long. Actual work has not started, but EGNATIA ODOS A.E. has undertaken the preparation of designs. The project is to be included in the Interreg IV Programmes with funding provided for 2007-2013.

Similar to the Via Egnatia/Corridor VIII case, progress on the border check points between Bulgaria and Greece was made possible, only after a *normative change* in the political contexts of the two countries. Such change was facilitated by the policies of EU conditionality, coupled with delegating the execution of the project to an institution, managed at a supranational level (in this case Egnatia Odos). However, this was only possible after elites in both countries were convinced that cooperation is appropriate and ‘the right thing to do’. Only after internalizing such ideas, change of policy occurred. As a practical implication of the signed Memorandum of Understanding of 2002, Greek government delegated to EGNATIA ODOS A.E. to undertake the management of design and construction of three core Vertical Axes out of the nine serving the main axis. The first axes that were adopted for construction was the ones, where border points were already existing and they were less likely to be opposed by any side, since the works were mostly reconstruction and improvement, rather than building a new infrastructure.

19 Source: Egnatia Odos, ‘The Progress of the Project’, <http://www.egnatia.eu/page/default.asp?la=2&id=32>, last accessed October 2008.

- **Siatista – Ieropigi/Kristalopigi** (Albania – Pan-European Corridor VIII). Total length: 72km. Construction cost: 320M€
- **Thessaloniki – Serres - Promachonas** (Bulgaria – Pan-European Corridor IV). Total length: 96km. Construction cost: 310M€
- **Ardanio - Ormenio** (Bulgaria – Pan-European Corridor IX). Total length: 124km. Construction cost: 240M€<sup>20</sup>

However, in July 2006, the Greek government has delegated to EGNATIA ODOS A.E to undertake the design and construction of two more Vertical Axes:

- **Komotini – Nimfea – Greek-Bulgarian Borders** (Bulgaria – Pan-European Corridor IX)
- **Xanthi – Echinós – Greek-Bulgarian Borders** (Bulgaria)

Those two axes were precisely the ones, leading to the long delayed border points between Bulgaria and Greece, negotiated back in 1995. Such act indicates a significant change in policy in comparison to the years 1995-2006 and real determination of the two project's completion, indicated by the fast progress on the projects explored above. Moreover, the process is self-enforcing. In November 2007, during a meeting of Bulgarian Minister of regional development Dimcho Mihalevski with entrepreneurs from Bulgaria and Greece was announced that the two countries were negotiating the opening of three more border check points by 2011, in addition to the three existing and the two, already under construction. He also stated that the agreement for the opening of the three newest check points (Zlatograd-Termes, Gorna Arda-Paranesti and Avren-Mitriski) would be signed by the two countries by the end of 2008 or early 2009. This if accomplished, would mean the reopening of all natural cross points that were used before the Balkan Wars.<sup>21</sup> As noted above the first one Zlatograd-Termes was already opened on 15 January 2010.

Mihalevski announced that the Bulgarian government has allocated EUR 250 m for the completion of the border check points and road infrastructure till 2011. Greek government has allocated EUR 30 m under the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB) to improve the infrastructure in the Bulgarian districts, adjacent to the border.<sup>22</sup> Lessons learned from the Balkans indicate that the

<sup>20</sup> *Egnatia Odos*, 'The Progress of the Project, The Egnatia Motorway Vertical Axes'.

<sup>21</sup> *До 2011 влагат 250 млн. Евро в граничната инфраструктура*, (*Do 2011 vlagat 250 m. EUR v granichnata infrastruktura*), *Строителство. Градът онлайн (Stroitelstvo. Gradut Online Magazine)*, N42, November 2007, <http://www.stroitelstvo.info/show.php?storyid=394280>, accessed October 2009 [in Bulgarian].

<sup>22</sup> Having undertaken certain obligations as a member state of the European Union and a member of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Greece committed itself to annual increase of its international development assistance with a view to ultimately achieving the target of 0.33% of its Gross National Income (GNI). Within this framework, the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB), was drawn up for the period 2004-2011. HiPERB is an effort on the part of Greece in its capacity as a donor country to incorporate certain individual initiatives of development assistance into one single plan, and thus promote an integrated development policy. This Plan is, first of all, aimed at political, economic and social stability in Southeast Europe, whereas its ultimate goal is to modernise infrastructure, promote production investments, support democratic institutions and the rule of law, modernise public administration and local government, strengthen the welfare state, redress economic inequalities, and offer professional training to workers and scientists in the recipient countries. The total budget for the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans (HiPERB) comes to 550 million. Source: Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

target 2011 would most likely not be met. However, what is important is the idea for opening of further check points comes under a new approach to regional projects and new policies on the part of Balkan elites and most likely it will take much less than fifteen years to complete this newest crossings.

### ***Subcase Study 3: Corridor IV vs. Corridor X***

Bulgaria and Romania signed an agreement to build the Vidin-Calafat Bridge in 2000 (see Fig. 11). This bridge was the major missing link over the route of Corridor IV. However, tenders for construction were put out only in March 2005. After twelve years of mistrust, obstruction, strenuous negotiations, construction officially began on 13 May 2007 in Vidin in the presence of Bulgarian Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev and Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Erhard Busek.<sup>23</sup> The project's cost was estimated at EUR 236 m.<sup>24</sup> The construction is planned to finish in 2012, with most of the construction done by Bulgarian subcontractors. An evidence of the changing mentalities is the Bulgarian Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev speech during the construction start ceremony: 'The bridge is important not only for Bulgaria and Romania, but also for the European Union, as it is definitely a bridge of the reunion of the European continent.'<sup>25</sup> Greece supported Bulgarian-Romanian negotiations and significantly helped two sides to reach agreement over the project's commissioning. If during the 1990s, Greek policy makers favoured Corridor X through Serbia and significantly delayed their part of Corridor IV, during the 2000s they were already helping Bulgaria and Romania, overcome their outstanding issues, in an effort to commission the project as soon, as possible. As a sign of the new attitude towards the project, Michalis Stelianidis, Mayor of border town of Xanthi in Greece, claimed that 'Corridor IV and the new bridge at Vidin open a whole new dimension for the people of Xanthi and adjacent regions in Greece'. He also stated that 'Before we had to use the much lengthier route via Corridor X, and we never complained, since Bulgaria was a 'black hole' for us. We somehow instinctively did not look for routes through Bulgaria. Now this has changed. We can reach the Danube and Western Europe much more efficiently through Corridor IV and as a sign of our desire for faster commissioning of the project, our government is undertaking sustained efforts to lobby in the EU and the region for that project.'<sup>26</sup>

Representatives of the European commission visited Vidin, Bulgaria on 26 and 27 September to inspect the construction of the Vidin-Calafat bridge. At a session of the

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Greece in the World, HiPERB, <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Economic+Diplomacy/HiPERB/>, accessed October 2008.

23 'Станишев направи първа копка на Дунав мост 2', ('Stanishev napravi purva kopka na Dunav most 2'), *News.bg*, 13 May 2007, Assessed October 2008 [in Bulgarian].

24 70 million euro of the total amount will be granted by the ISPA program. The European investment bank grants a credit for 70 million euro. The German bank KfW offers credit and free help. 5 million euro free support will be granted to our country by the French agency for development. The Bulgarian part in the project will be 60,8 million euro. 10 million euro is planned for before- project studies. After the contract is signed the winner of this auction should construct it for 38 months. Source: 'Ministry of Transport and Communications opened the offers for the project', Bulgarian Properties, 2 October 2006, <http://www.bulgarianproperties.com/bulgaria-article.php?IID=70&long=News+aboout+the+construction+of+the+Danube+bridge+between+Vidin+and+Calafat>, accessed October 2008.

25 'Danube Bridge 2, Bulgaria', Roadtraffic Technology, [http://www.roadtraffic-technology.com/projects/danubebridge/#danubebridge\\_18486](http://www.roadtraffic-technology.com/projects/danubebridge/#danubebridge_18486), accessed October 2008.

26 Michalis Stelianidis, *Personal Interview*, Mayor of Xanthi, Xanthi, 23.11.2007 [in English].

Joint Bulgarian-Romanian committee on the project, which was held in the Bulgarian town of Ruse on 1-2 October was decided to create a joint Bulgarian-Romanian structure of management of the bridge by the end of 2009. A bilateral agreement for the future joint organizational structure for the management of the bridge has been prepared during the meeting. The adoption of this document gives opportunity for the second tranche of the advance payment under the ISPA program to be made.<sup>27</sup> Similar to the border check points and Via Egnatia vs. Corridor VIII cases, breakthrough was only possible when the project was incorporated in a supranational framework, closely monitored by the EU, and controlled through the conditionality mechanism.

At national level ‘fear your neighbour mentality’ was still very much dominant in the 1990s Balkans. At grassroots, at least, it was a very different story. In the municipalities on both sides of the border, there was no sign of historic animosities between ordinary Greeks and Bulgarians. In fact, they have been on increasingly good terms since 1991. EU funds for cross-border initiatives have allowed them to collaborate on a variety of business and cultural initiatives, so that, now, the buses they lay on to transport people to one another’s festivals are packed, as are the courses where they learn each other’s languages.<sup>28</sup> The problem was that ‘local governments are not eligible for larger EU grants that can be invested in infrastructure. And central governments are not always understanding of border communities’ needs and wishes. “We feel things differently,” says Konstantinos Tatsis, prefect of the Drama–Kavala–Xanthi region in northern Greece, complaining that Athens and Sofia view these matters “from a bird’s eye”.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Ideational change***

The three sub-cases, presented in the beginning of the chapter, based on archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles provided an initial overview that as a result of EU leverage, obstruction policy-patterns between the two states have significantly diminished to give way to gradual and steady cooperation during the 2000s. This is evidenced by the intensive work carried on the cross-border projects and the overall public discourse of policy makers during that period. To confirm the initial documentary findings that policy change was linked to ideational change and that the EU-role was critical in that process, I complement the documentary research with primary research data of elite interviews. Interviews with key players were used to corroborate the early findings. In this way, interviews contributed towards the research goal of triangulation, where collected data is cross-checked through multiple sources to increase the robustness of the findings. The interviews yielded the following results:

### ***Analysis of the elite interview-collected data with 25 Greek key policy makers***

Greeks decision makers were asked the following set of questions:

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27 Olga Yoncheva, ‘Bulgarian-Romanian Committee manages “Danube Bridge-2”’, *news.bg*, 3 October 2008, [http://international.ibox.bg/news/id\\_1985998835](http://international.ibox.bg/news/id_1985998835), accessed July 2010, [in Bulgarian].

28 Polina Slavcheva, ‘Overcoming’, p. 7

29 Konstantinos Tatsis, *Personal Interview*, Prefect of the Drama–Kavala–Xanthi region, Northern Greece, Drama, Greece, 17.01.2010 [in English].

- How did you view Bulgaria and Bulgarians before the 1990s? More like friends or like rivals?
- How did you view Bulgaria and Bulgarians during the 1990s?
- How do you view Bulgaria and Bulgarians nowadays?

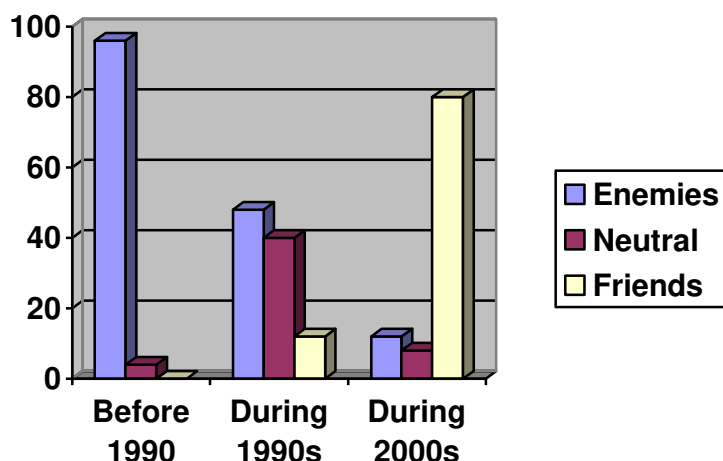
Nearly the whole sample, 96% (24), claimed that they perceived Bulgaria and Bulgarians as ‘enemies’ in the years prior to the democratic changes (see Fig. 30). This reconfirms what we found about that period, exploring Greek programmatic beliefs through documentary research in the ideational chapters. Half of respondents 52% (13) were active in politics during that time and claimed that was their inherent belief at the time, the other half (mostly younger politicians) claimed that they were taught that it was like that in school, by media and the general discourse. They also confirmed they unquestionably believed such claim. One person was neutral on the issue. Those 96%, that believed Bulgaria and Bulgarians were their enemies before 1990, were asked why did they feel/believe so? The semi-structured interviews provided for open answers, but most of them could be summarized with the following five most typical answers: ‘that was natural’, ‘it has always been like that’, ‘this was appropriate’, ‘there was no other way’ and they were ‘historical foes.’ 0% (0) of the sample claimed that Bulgaria/ns were friends at that time.

Going to the 1990s, when EU ideas started to challenge traditional programmatic beliefs, the perception of Bulgaria/ns as enemies was still predominant, but has shrunk twice in comparison to the previous period 48% (12) (see Fig. 30). Such finding correlates with our documentary observation in the previous chapter on infrastructure during the 1990s that traditional beliefs and obstructionist attitude still prevailed during that period. 40% (10) were not sure, or had mixed feelings and 12% (3) already viewed Bulgarians as friends. Most of the sample 88% (22) respondents were already active in politics during that period, unlike the previous period, when only half of them claimed so. While 96% of respondents said that they felt very strong about their position before 1990s, during 1990s, 40% (10) were ‘confused’, ‘not certain’ and ‘in a process of changing opinion’, and only 60% had firm opinion (mostly enemies, some friends). The 48 % (12) that have switched their views to either neutral or positive were asked ‘Why did you change your beliefs?’ The answers could be grouped along the following statements - ‘the EU-idea changed my mind’, ‘there will be no boundaries soon’, ‘we are forced to cooperate, we have no choice’, ‘the idea of friends and enemies changed’, ‘old beliefs were proving increasingly inadequate’, ‘obstruction produced undesired results.’

Remarkably during the 2000s, 80% (20) of the Greek policy makers perceived Bulgaria/ns as friends, 8% (2) were neutral or confused and only 12% (3) still regarded them as enemies (see Fig. 30). All respondents were politically active during that period. Half of those who had positive views and all that had negative views had very strong opinion. The other 10 with positive view claimed they are ‘much more likely to view Bulgarians as friends, than to be neutral’ on the issue.



Fig. 30 Result of elite interviews of 25 Greek policy makers.



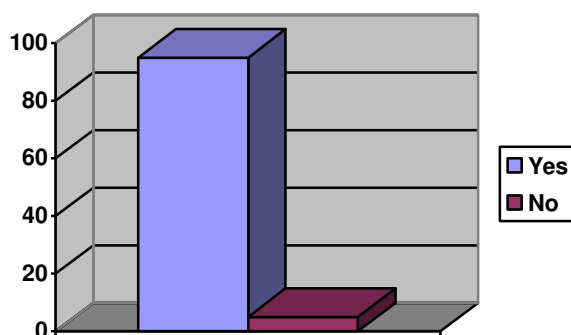
Answers to Set of Questions 1: How did you view Bulgaria and Bulgarians before, during and after the 1990s? More like friends or like rivals?

Compared to the period before 1990, 80% (20) have switched their beliefs from enemies to friends. Those respondents were asked a follow-up question,

- Do you think the EU has contributed to such change of perception?

Remarkably, 95% (19) confirmed that the EU-idea and ‘common future within the EU’ was instrumental in changing their perception. 5% (1) claimed that it was ‘now appropriate’ without giving a specific explanation, why such change occurred (see Fig.31).

Fig. 31 Result of elite interviews of 25 Greek policy makers.



Follow-up to Set of Questions 1: Do you think the EU has contributed to such change of perception?

In turn, the 19 decision makers that confirmed EU leverage, were asked second follow-up question,

- ‘Why do you think EU was able to do that?’

The answers of national policy makers could be summarized with the following arguments ‘we realized obstruction was yielding very negative consequences from local regions and the EU itself’, ‘as Bulgaria also entered the EU, old policies were hard to justify’, ‘the EU changed stereotypes’, ‘under the EU framework old ideas looked more and more inadequate’, ‘we had to work within same institutions under the EU framework’. Decision-makers at the local and EU level were more direct. For them ‘the EU, just offered new agenda which made traditional policies hard to justify and seem very outdated’.

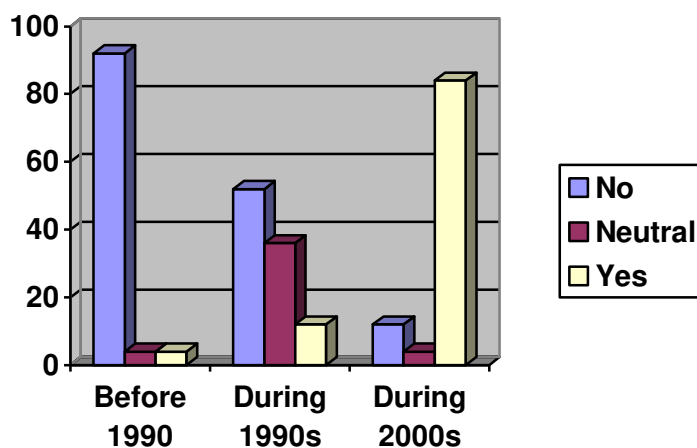
After the first set of questions confirmed that policy change during the 2000s is correlated to change in traditional programmatic beliefs, the second set of questions probed if programmatic beliefs were related to the normative criteria of appropriateness of cooperation with Bulgaria/ns.

Greeks decision makers were asked the second set of questions:

- Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate before 1990s?
- Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate during the 1990s?
- Is cooperation with Bulgaria a good thing today?

92% (23) of the Greek policy makers claimed that cooperation with Bulgaria was simply unthinkable and not appropriate in the years prior to 1990. 4% (1) were neutral about the issue, and 4% (1) insisted that cooperation was possible in that period (see Fig. 32). However, after the 1990s, when traditional programmatic beliefs of the other as an enemy were gradually challenged by EU-cooperation ideas, indicate shift of perception. 52% (13) of the Greek policy makers still claimed that cooperation with Bulgaria was not appropriate during the 1990s, but already 36% believed it was neither good, nor bad, while 12% (3) held that in that period, cooperation between the two states was already deemed appropriate and well-accepted by the public opinion. During the 2000s, only 12% (3) maintained the position cooperation with Bulgaria/ns seemed out of place, 4% (1) were neutral and for 88% (22) it was apt to work together (see Fig.32). These results confirmed that traditional Greek programmatic beliefs for Bulgarians are highly correlated with the appropriateness of cooperation with Bulgaria/ns. This is valid for all periods. Nearly all respondents that viewed unfavourably their neighbours, shared normative prescriptions that co-action was not fitting. Vice versa, when they shifted opinions, suddenly co-action seemed appropriate. Such empirical finding reconfirms our documentary evidence from ideational chapters that linked programmatic beliefs of friends/enemies shaping normative criteria of appropriateness of cooperation, which in turn shape respective policies.

Fig. 32 Result of elite interviews of 25 Greek policy makers.



*Answers to Set of Questions 2: Was cooperation with Bulgaria appropriate before, during and after the 1990s?*

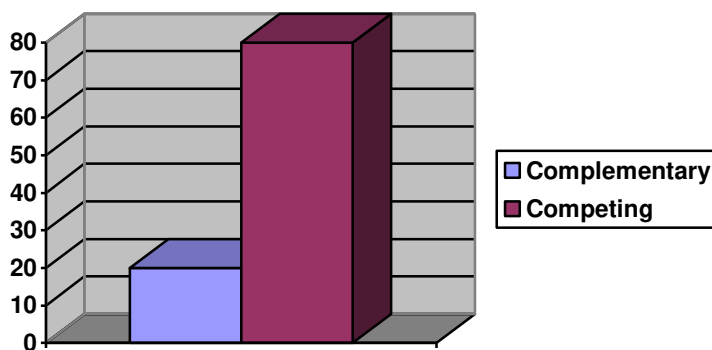
What is interesting is that policy actors, working on the European and regional level, much faster shifted their traditional beliefs of Bulgarians as enemies and their ideational set-up from obstruction to cooperation, while actors working on the national level were much slower in such normative change. Of those 20% that still did not view Bulgarians as friends and 16% that did not think it was suitable to work together, during the 2000s, all were decision makers at the national level. Vice versa, those 12% that first switched their opinion favourably to their neighbours were Greek actors from the regional or European level. This indicates that national elites have been subjected not only to external EU pressure to cooperate with neighbours, but also such pressure was exerted from Greek local and supra-national actors.

The last set of questions directly probed the 25 decision makers' opinion on the three sub-cases under investigation and how they interpreted the projects during the 1990s and 2000s to again link documentary findings with empirical data.

- How do you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia? Competing of complementary?
- Do you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 1990s and in the 2000s?
- Do you think Corridor IV and Corridor X are competing or complementary?

In the 1990s, 80% (20) believed Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia were competing and that favouring one, necessarily meant neglecting the other. Only 20% (5) regarded them as complementary, under a common EU framework and that both could have functioned together (see Fig. 33).

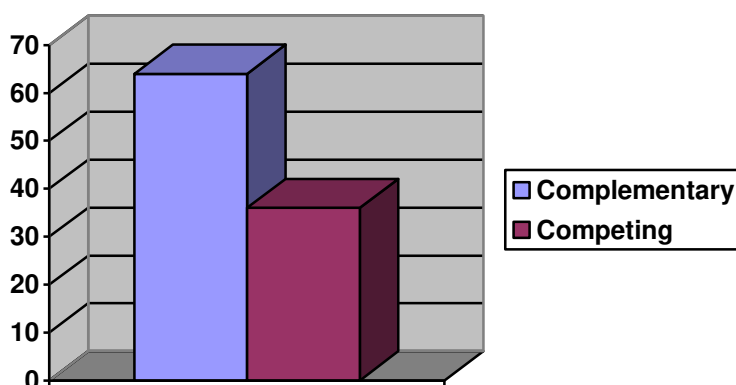
Fig. 33 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers



. Answers to Set of Questions 3: How did you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia during the 1990s? Competing of complementary?

In the 2000s those favouring that projects were competing shrunk to 36% (9), and 64% (16) believed in their mutual use and existence under a common EU framework (see Fig. 34).

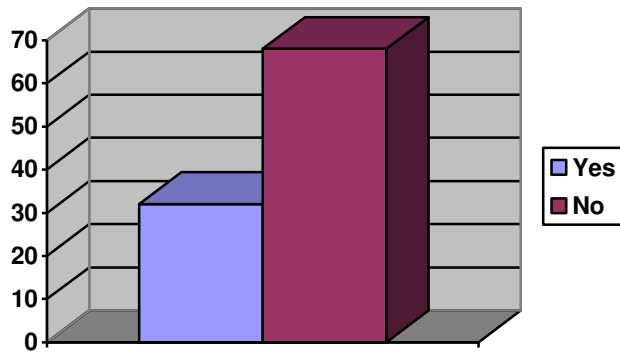
Fig. 34 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.



Answers to Set of Questions 3: How did you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia during the 2000s? Competing of complementary?

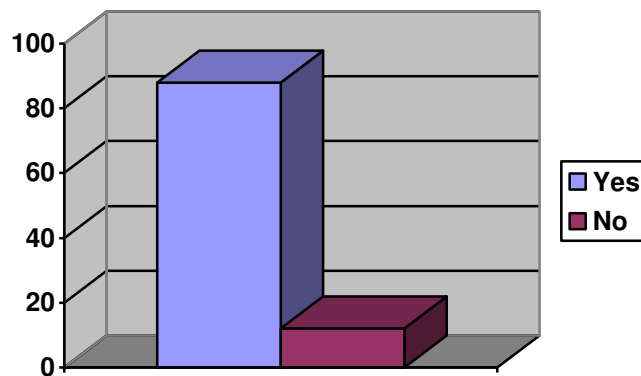
Similarly, in the second sub-case during the 1990s, 68% (32) were against new border points with Bulgaria, while 32% were in favour (see Fig. 35). Only ten years later 88% (22) thought of such move as a good development and only 12% (3) still opposed it (see Fig. 36).

Fig. 35 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 1990s?

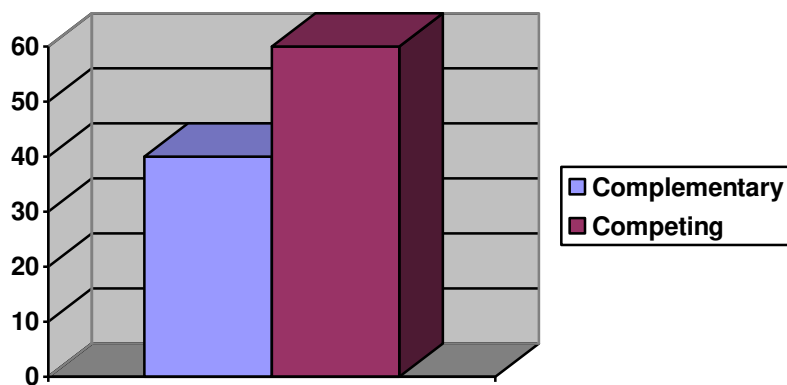
Fig. 36 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 2000s?

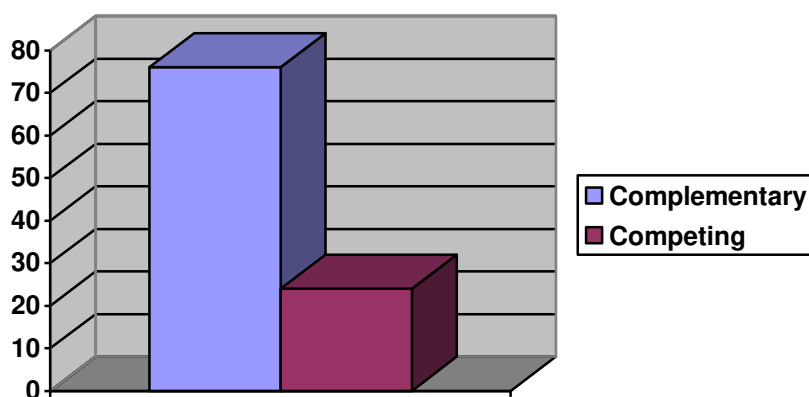
In the last sub-case, like the other two, most respondents significantly changed their opinion between the two periods. If during the 1990s, 60% (15) thought the two projects were competing and mostly favoured Corridor IV through Serbia, during the 2000s, 24% (6) maintained such position and 76% favoured commissioning of the two corridors (see Fig. 37 and Fig. 38).

Fig. 37 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you think Corridor IV and Corridor X were competing or complementary in the 1990s?

Fig. 38 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Do you think Corridor IV and Corridor X are competing or complementary in the 2000s?

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### **Analysis of the elite interview-collected data with 25 Bulgarian key policy makers**

The procedure for Bulgarian key policy makers was similar. They were asked the following set of questions:

- How did you view Greece and Greeks before the 1990s? More like friends or like rivals?
- How did you view Greece and Greeks during the 1990s?
- How do you view Greece and Greeks nowadays?

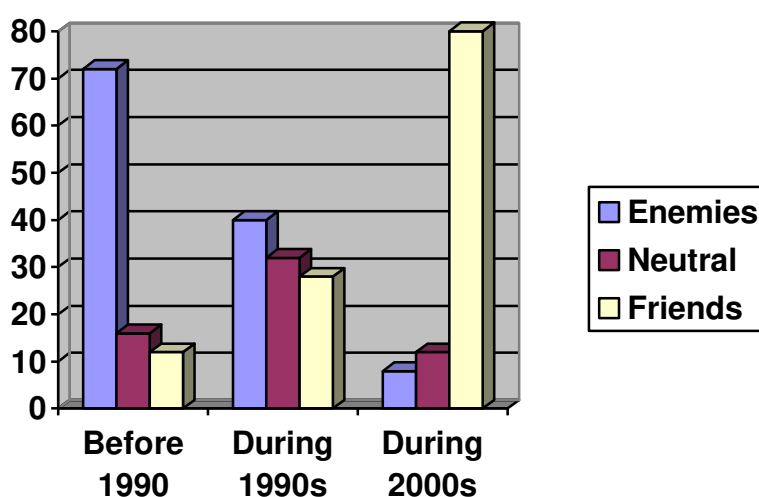
Similar to the Greek sample, 72% (18) of Bulgarian policy makers claimed that they perceived Greece and Greeks as ‘enemies’ in the years prior to the democratic changes (see Fig. 39). This reconfirms what we found about that period, exploring Bulgarian programmatic beliefs through documentary research in the ideational chapters. Those 72%, that believed Greece and Greeks were their enemies before 1990, were asked why did they feel/believe so? The semi-structured interviews provided for open answers, but

most of them could be summarized with the following most typical answers: ‘they always betrayed us in the past’, ‘it was not easy to trust the Greeks’, ‘Beware of Danayans bearing gifts’, ‘we just knew they were historical enemies.’ 16% (4) were neutral or did not want to answer and 12% (3) of the sample claimed that Bulgaria/ns were friends at that time. Like the Greek case, most interviewees were taught by media, school and public discourse to believe in such position.

Going to the 1990s, when EU ideas started to challenge traditional programmatic beliefs, the perception of Greece/ks as enemies was still predominant, but has shrunk twice in comparison to the previous period with 40% (10) (see Fig. 39). Such finding correlates with our documentary observation in the previous chapter on infrastructure during the 1990s that traditional beliefs and obstructionist attitude still prevailed during that period. 32% (8) were not sure, or had mixed feelings and 28% (7) already viewed Greeks as friends. This is twice as much as Greeks’ friendly attitudes towards Bulgarians during that time. It seems Bulgarians were faster in switching attitudes than Greeks, which might be explained by the much greater leverage of EU pressure and conditionality towards Bulgaria. The 48 % (12) that have switched their views to either neutral or positive were asked ‘Why did you change your beliefs?’ The answers could be grouped along the following statements -‘the EU membership perspective’, ‘there will be no boundaries soon’, ‘it is time to finally work together’. The following answers corresponded to Greek policy makers’ answers- ‘the idea of friends and enemies changed’, ‘old beliefs were proving increasingly inadequate’, ‘obstruction produced undesired results’, that confirms our theoretical presumption that the discursive selection of the context and the unintended consequences of certain actions contributed to ideational shift and in turn to shift in policies. Policy makers were more and more getting aware of the inadequacies of their old beliefs.

Remarkably during the 2000s, 80% (20) of Bulgarian policy makers perceived Greece/ks as friends, 12% (3) were neutral or confused and only 8% (2) still regarded them as enemies (see Fig. 39).

*Fig. 39 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



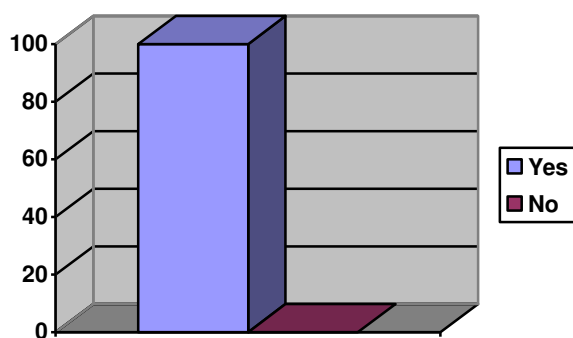
*Answers to Set of Questions 1: How did you view Greece and Greeks before, during and after the 1990s? More like friends or like rivals?*

Compared to the period before 1990, 68% (17) have switched their beliefs from enemies or neutral to friends. Those respondents were asked a follow-up question,

- Do you think the EU has contributed to such change of perception?

All of them confirmed that the EU-idea and ‘common future within the EU’ was instrumental in changing their perception (see Fig. 40).

*Fig. 40 Result of elite interviews of 25 Greek policy makers.*



*Follow-up to Set of Questions 1: Do you think the EU has contributed to such change of perception?*

In turn, the 17 decision makers that confirmed EU leverage, were asked second follow-up question,

- ‘Why do you think EU was able to do that?’

Similar to their Greek counterparts, majority of Bulgarian respondents claimed ‘under common EU framework, they gradually realized such policies produced undesired results and they were under increasing pressure domestically and internationally to discontinue them’. Also ‘the EU agenda slowly, but inevitably made our decade-long beliefs seem ever more displaced and not appropriate’. We not only were losing money, but also popular support, since people did not believe in the Greek ‘enemy’, after the EU was able to tell them a much more plausible story’.

After the first set of questions confirmed that policy change during the 2000s is correlated to change in traditional programmatic beliefs, the second set of questions probed if programmatic beliefs were related to the normative criteria of appropriateness of cooperation with Greece/ks.

Greeks decision makers were asked the second set of questions:

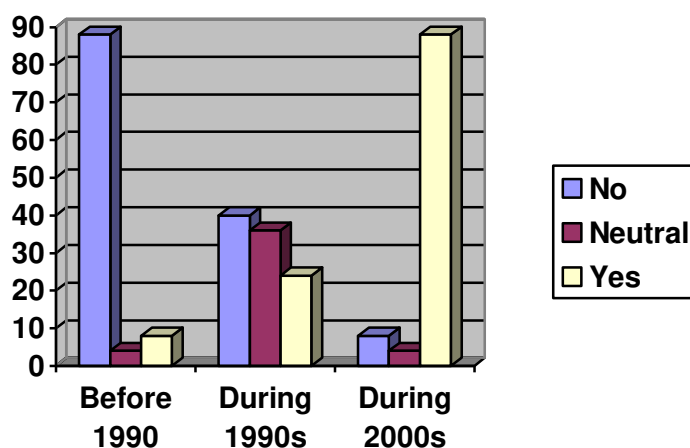
- Was cooperation with Greece appropriate before 1990s?
- Was cooperation with Greece appropriate during the 1990s?
- Is cooperation with Greece a good thing today?

88% (22) of the Bulgarian policy makers claimed that cooperation with Greece was simply unthinkable and not appropriate in the years prior to 1990 (see Fig. 41). 4% (1) were neutral about the issue, and 8% (2) maintained that cooperation was possible in that period. However, after the 1990s, when traditional programmatic beliefs of the



other as an enemy were gradually challenged by EU-cooperation ideas, indicate shift of perception. 40% (10) of the Bulgarian policy makers still claimed that cooperation with Greece was not appropriate during the 1990s, but already 36% (9) believed it was neither good, nor bad, while 24% (6) held that in that period, cooperation between the two states was already deemed appropriate and well-accepted by the public opinion. During the 2000s, only 8% (2) maintained the position cooperation with Greece/ks seemed out of place, 4% (1) were neutral and for 88% (22) it was apt to work together (see Fig.41). These results confirmed that traditional Bulgarian programmatic beliefs for Greeks are highly correlated with the appropriateness of cooperation with Greece/ks. Similarly, to the Greek case, such correlation is valid for all periods. Nearly all respondents that viewed unfavourably their neighbours, shared normative prescriptions that co-action was not suitable. Vice versa, when they shifted opinions, suddenly co-action seemed appropriate. Such empirical finding reconfirms our documentary evidence from ideational chapters that linked programmatic beliefs of friends/enemies shaping normative criteria of appropriateness of cooperation, which in turn shape respective policies.

*Fig. 41 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 2: Was cooperation with Greece appropriate before, during and after the 1990s?*

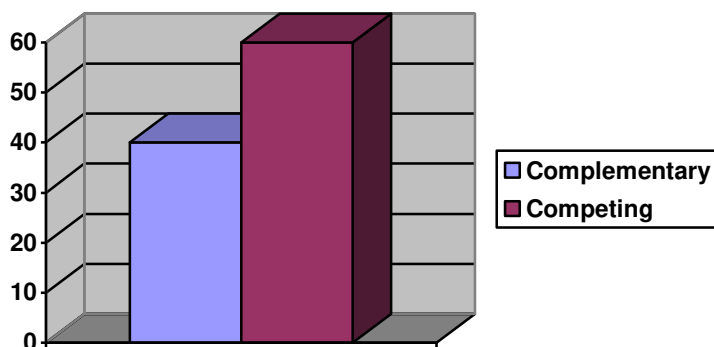
In Bulgaria, even faster than the Greek case, policy actors, working on the European and regional level, shifted their traditional beliefs of neighbours as enemies and their ideational set-up from obstruction to cooperation, while actors working on the national level were much slower in such normative change.

The last set of questions directly probed the 25 decision makers' opinion on the three sub-cases under investigation and how they interpreted the projects during the 1990s and 2000s to again link documentary findings with empirical data.

- How do you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia? Competing or complementary?
- Do you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 1990s and in the 2000s?
- Do you think Corridor IV and Corridor X are competing or complementary?

In the 1990s, 60% (15) believed Corridor VIII and Via Egnatia were competing and that favouring one, necessarily meant neglecting the other. 40% (10) regarded them as complementary, under a common EU framework and that both could have functioned together (see Fig. 42).

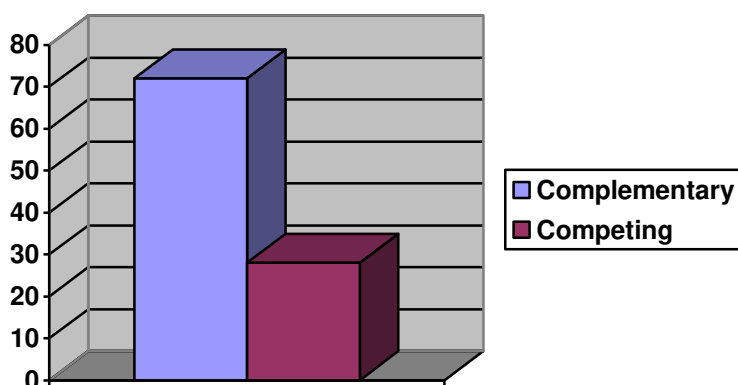
*Fig. 42 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 3: How did you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia during the 1990s? Competing or complementary?*

In the 2000s those favouring that projects were competing shrunk to 28% (7), and 72 % (18) believed in their mutual use and existence under a common EU framework (see Fig. 43).

*Fig. 43 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers*

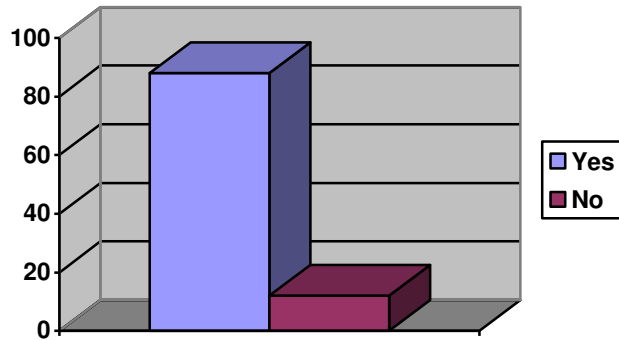


*Answers to Set of Questions 3: How did you view Corridor VIII and Corrdior Egnatia during the 2000s? Competing or complementary?*

Unlike in Greece, in the second sub-case during the 1990s, only 12% (3) were against new border points with Greece while 88% (22) were in favour (see Fig. 44). Ten years later already 100% (25) thought of such move as a good development (see Fig. 45). Such difference with the Greek case, where 68% were against the new border points is not inconsistent with our theory and documentary findings in the other sub-cases, because it was not a result of friendly attitudes towards Greece. Vice versa, Bulgarians perceived the unwillingness of Greeks to open the border points as a proof of their unfriendliness, since it was Bulgarians that needed to get access to the Aegean open sea that was only 20 km away from the closed border. Bulgarians during that period did not

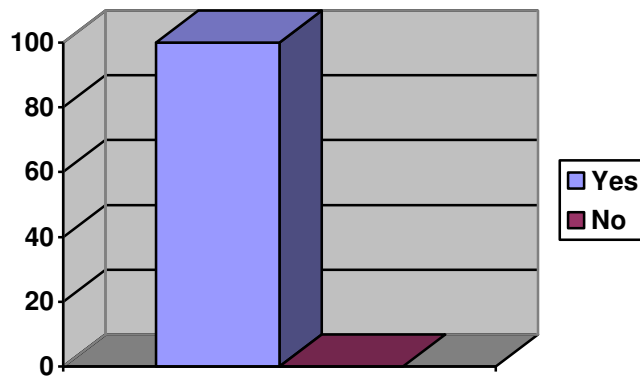
want opening of the border points, because they wanted cooperation with Greeks, but as said because they wanted to reconnect with the Aegean Sea and with the Slav population, split by the border, as evidenced by the interviews. Therefore, in this case correlating Greek position with Bulgarian expectations to open the border points (explored above) is regarded as a proof of ideational change.

*Fig. 44 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 1990s?*

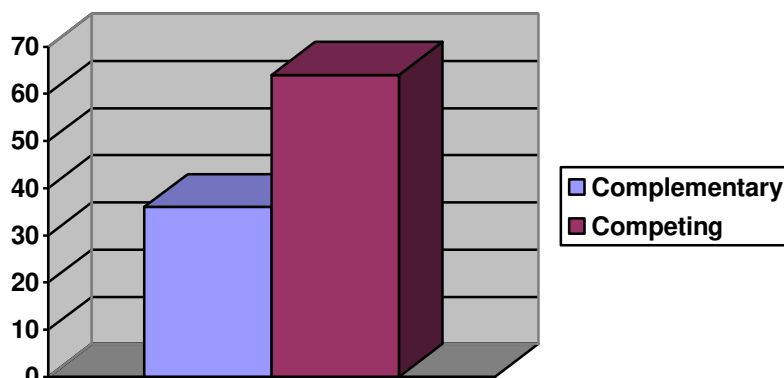
*Fig. 45 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers.*



*Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece in the 2000s?*

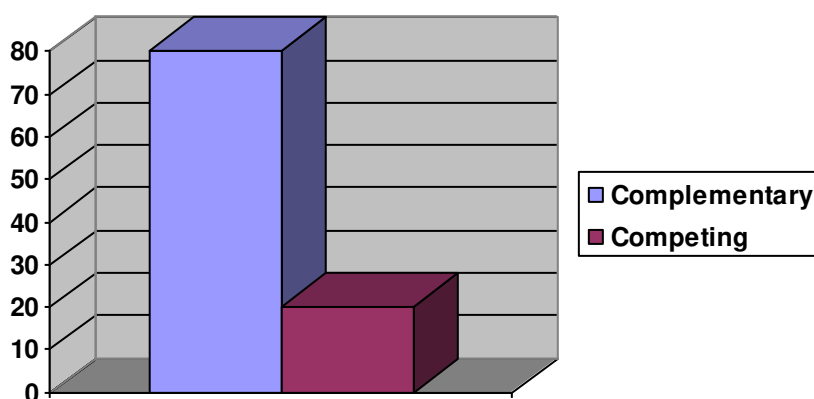
In the last sub-case, like the other two, most respondents significantly changed their opinion between the two periods. If during the 1990s, 64% (16) thought the two projects were competing and mostly favoured Corridor X, during the 2000s, only 20% (4) maintained such position and 80% (20) favoured commissioning of the two corridors (see Fig. 46 and Fig. 47).

Fig. 46 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Did you think Corridor IV and Corridor X were competing or complementary in the 1990s?

Fig. 47 Result of elite interviews of 25 Bulgarian policy makers



Answers to Set of Questions 3: Do you think Corridor IV and Corridor X are competing or complementary in the 2000s?

### **Why the EU-idea was able to challenge traditional path-dependent programmatic beliefs?**

At the beginning of this chapter, we identified historic change in the Greek-Bulgarian traditional obstructionist policies (operationalized with the three sub-cases) between the 1990s and the 2000s. The interview data reconfirmed the documentary findings that there are signs of very significant change in traditional Greek-Bulgarian attitudes and such change is directly linked to the change in policies. The key explanatory variable accounting for the change is the involvement of the EU in the region generally, the EU normative agenda and the perception that the Bulgarian accession compels Greece and Bulgaria to work together. After we have found policy change and linked it to ideational change, the chapter concludes with analysis what made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous 'weaker' ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs in similar critical times in the past, explored in the ideational chapters.

As reflected in the theoretical chapter, Hay developing the dialectical relation of ideational and material, argued that ‘for particular ideas, narratives and paradigms to continue to provide cognitive templates through which actors interpret the world, they must retain a certain resonance with those actors’ direct and mediated experiences’ or in other words ‘...for our ideas and cognitions to continue to inform behaviour they must find and maintain a certain resonance with our experience.’<sup>30</sup> Operationalized with our case, the traditional Greek and Bulgarian programmatic beliefs that the other was an enemy and the cognitive templates they provided –meant cooperation was impossible resulted in certain policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*). The results of such policies maintained resonance with the traditional programmatic beliefs of political actors for decades to come. For example, in Greece policies of Hellenization towards the Slav minority (1913-1974), explored in the ideational chapters, resulted in its emigration to Bulgaria, or assimilation into the Greek nation. Such outcome was in complete resonance with the programmatic beliefs of Greek policy makers at the time that Bulgarians are enemies and the Bulgarian Slav minority in the country is the ‘enemy within’ the country. Such resonance of ideas with the experience provided information that the existing programmatic beliefs were appropriate and reinforced them. Another example, negative propaganda towards the other in Greek or Bulgarian media, school and public discourse resulted in consolidation of the respective population and increasing the hatred towards that neighbour. Such outcome was desired since it directly corresponded to actors’ ideas and expectations, and was a predicted outcome of a specially selected policy

Hay also argued ‘strategy is forged in a context which is strategically selective, favouring certain strategies over others as means to realize specific intentions. Yet, actors have no direct knowledge of the selectivity of the context they inhabit. Rather they must rely upon understandings of the context (and the selectivity it is likely to impose on strategy) which are, at best, fallible. Nonetheless, some understandings are likely to prove more credible given past experiences than others.’<sup>31</sup> In this sense, traditional Bulgarian and Greek understanding of the context that the other was an enemy, based on the Megale and San Stefano perceptions might have been fallible in regards to optimal outcomes but they proved very credible. For example, as a result of such understandings Bulgaria always sided against Greece during the Balkan and the World Wars, instead of making sound judgment of the relative power of competing sides, and was always on the losing side.

‘In this way the context comes to exert a discursive selectivity upon the understandings actors hold about it. Thus, although the relationship is never likely to be one of direct correspondence, there is always some relationship between the context itself and the ideas actors hold about that context. However accurate and inaccurate, such understandings inform strategy and that strategy in turn yields both intended and, inevitably, unintended consequences. Unintended consequences, in particular, provide an opportunity for strategic learning, offering a clue to the inadequacies of existing understandings of the context and inviting revisions.’<sup>32</sup> Traditional Bulgarian and Greek understandings of the other as enemy and the policies of obstruction selected during most of the XX c. and especially after the 1944, yielded mostly intended consequences.

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30 Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 212-214..

31 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 212.

32 Hay, *Political Analysis*, pp. 212-213.

The resulting lack of social, economic and political cooperation was in resonance with the programmatic beliefs of elites. In times of crisis, such as the Balkan Wars, Smyrna Crises, World Wars, Cold War, even though there were new ideas about Greeks or Bulgarians they could not install a new paradigm in Bulgarian or Greek institutions, because old ideas and cognitions that informed behaviour were in resonance with actors' experiences during those periods and such new ideas could not make already existing understandings inadequate. For example, no political party in Bulgaria could adopt a friendly stance towards Greece, reading the press or observing the assimilation and propaganda policies against Bulgarians undertaken in that country. Another example, during the Cold War, no political party in Greece could come to see Bulgarians as friends as such idea completely clashed with reality. Therefore, for ideational change to possibly occur, we need to have at least two factors working simultaneously,

- Old ideas must constantly yield unintended consequences
- There is new idea, that makes existing understandings inadequate

Thus, during most of the XX c. during times of crisis, there were new ideas but they could not make traditional understandings inadequate. There was no powerful ideational carrier that could make others receptive and institutionalize his/her ideas, since the contexts did not provide for such ideational change. Also, during most of the XX c. there were cases when old ideas yielded unintended consequences (for example, the already discussed Bulgarian persistent war siding against Greece, resulting in permanent losses for Bulgaria). However, Bulgarian politicians did not interpret that such unintended consequences were result of inadequate beliefs, because there was no new powerful idea that could have made old beliefs that Greeks were enemies inadequate.

However, only after the 1990s with the EU-idea and leverage in SEE, both pre-conditions for possible ideational change were met. Broadly such new powerful idea in the case of post-communist SEE originated from the crystallization by regional cooperation organizations and mainly by the EU of a normative agenda, based around the articulation of market, liberal-democratic ideology as part of a state-building programme. The key dimensions of this new normative framework, aimed at Central European and South East European countries, encompass the Europeanization, 'normalisation' and becoming 'EU approved' states by promoting sustainable liberal democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, functioning market economy and intensive regional economic, social and political cooperation. It also encompasses institutional building and restructuring as well as general economic and social well being. Very important parts of the normative agenda are institution building and regional economic, political and cultural cooperation. The regional cooperation condition, as set out by the EU, conveyed to local political elites one of the most powerful and influential ideas, and namely-EU membership is only possible, if Balkan countries start to cooperate in all spheres, as current Member states do.

Also, as discussed, powerful new idea, that makes existing understandings inadequate should be brought in by prominent carriers that are able to make others receptive and it should get institutionalized to continue to exert influence. In the EU-case, the EU is the ideational carrier of the powerful EU normative agenda and at the same time is the institution, where such agenda is institutionalized.

Namely, during the 1990s and especially during the 2000s, old policies of obstruction between Bulgaria and Greece started to constantly yield unintended consequences. For example, the decade-long impasse over the infrastructure projects started to inform elites that they incur significant economic, moral, credibility, etc. losses from such policies. The delay of the opening of the mutual border points was adequate before, but under common EU framework, it seemed more and more lunatic with every day passing and harder to justify externally and internally. Bulgarian and Greek national policy makers were pressured by local policy makers that much faster switched attitudes than their national peers. That was justified by the elite interviews. For example, Konstantinos Tatsis, prefect of the Drama–Kavala–Xanthi region in northern Greece, claimed ‘At grassroots, at least, it’s a very different story. In the municipalities on both sides of the border, there is no sign of historic animosities between ordinary Greeks and Bulgarians. In fact, they have been on increasingly good terms since 1991. EU funds for cross-border initiatives have allowed them to collaborate on a variety of business and cultural initiatives, so that, now, the buses they lay on to transport people to one another’s festivals are packed, as are the courses where they learn each other’s languages. The problem is that local governments are not eligible for larger EU grants that can be invested in infrastructure. And central governments are not always understanding of border communities’ needs and wishes. We feel things differently and Athens and Sofia view these matters “from a bird’s eye”. The local authorities are at least keeping up the pressure. It is as a result of our deep collaboration that we managed to help governments complete some trans-border projects faster.’<sup>33</sup>

The internal pressure to national key makers came not only from local level actors, but from Greek and Bulgarian actors, working on the EU-level. Last, but not least, such policies were ever harder to justify in front of EU and European partners. Therefore, old programmatic beliefs and policies they informed were in great dissonance with experience during the 1990s and even more during the 2000 with the gradual integration of Bulgaria in the EU. Such growing unintended consequences, more and more informed national policy makers of the inadequacies of their existing beliefs. The new powerful EU-idea (normative agenda), provided opportunity for strategic learning, offering a clue to the inadequacies of existing understandings of the context and inviting revisions, gradually making old perceptions of enemies and friends obsolete.

Hay noted ‘in this way ideas about the context and the strategies they inform evolve over time. Whether this results in a process of cumulative learning, as might be reflected, say, in more effective policy-making, in an empirical question can be answered only on a case-by-case basis.’<sup>34</sup> In our case, it seems such cumulative learning has resulted in policy shift, as evidenced by the documentary and empirical research of the transport infrastructure chapters during the 1990-2010 periods.

## **Conclusions**

After the fall of the communist regimes, Balkan political elites continued to perceive their neighbour as an opponent, as a ‘subject’ of fierce rivalry. Alternative projects were being proposed, regardless of economic efficiency, technical parameters and geography. The major criteria for policy formation was how a certain neighbour was interpreted through the long held nationalist attitudes which were dictating that cooperation with

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33 Konstantinos Tatsis, *Personal Interview*, Prefect of the Drama–Kavala–Xanthi region, Northern Greece, Drama, Greece 17.01.2008 [in English].

34 Hay, *Political Analysis*, p. 215.

certain neighbours is appropriate and with others was simply ‘not right’ thing to do. In the period, 1990-2000 national governments and business elites on the Balkans were still reluctant to go beyond the scope of national strategic planning, to see the Balkans as an integral part of a broader region and become part of global economic plans. Intra-regional rivalries remained strong, the willingness to compromise – weak.

However, during the 2000s, we identified historic change in the Greek-Bulgarian traditional obstructionist policies (operationalized with the three sub-cases) between the 1990s and the 2000s. Documentary evidence of policy change, based on archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles, etc. was cross checked with empirical data through elite interviewing. The data reconfirmed the documentary findings that there are signs of very significant change in traditional Greek-Bulgarian attitudes and such change is directly linked to the change in policies.

*The second hypothesis that after the 1990s, the EU was such a powerful idea, that for the first time since the Independence revolutions, started to successfully challenge old institutional settings in the region, that have persisted for decades, even centuries has been confirmed by Chapters 5 and 6 through documentary research and elite interviewing.*

The key explanatory variable accounting for the change was the involvement of the EU in the region generally, the EU normative agenda and the perception that the Bulgarian accession compelled Greece and Bulgaria to work together. After we have found policy change and linked it to ideational change, the chapter concludes with analysis what made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous ‘weaker’ ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs in similar critical times in the past, explored in the ideational chapters. Namely, the EU and its normative framework were able to satisfy two conditions that no other new idea could do during critical junctures in the past. Namely, to provide such paradigm through which old ideas constantly yielded unintended consequences and to make existing understandings increasingly inadequate.



## Chapter 7. Conclusions

*There are no longer any barbarians.  
And now what shall become of us without any barbarians?  
Those people were a kind of solution.  
(Constantine P. Cavafy, 'Waiting for the Barbarians')*

In the introduction, we started this research with the danger of Britain becoming Balkanized. To come to a full circle some day Balkanization of Britain might not be considered a bad omen but a good intention. Only if it changes meaning and instead of splitting into small hostile parts becomes a symbol of cooperation and integration. That would represent a complete change in ideas. This study was all about influential ideas and their operationalization as an independent variable, explaining political behaviour. It explored how some of them were able to become and remain a powerful force in politics and looked at how different conditions enable certain ideas to achieve political salience and take on a life of their own, influencing political behaviour over an extended period.

The main task of this research was to outline the objective historical impediments to Balkan regional cooperation, explain why obstruction policies have been so remarkably persistent, regardless of external change and explore if cooperation might be attainable. The introductory chapter identified that large body of literature was devoted to demystifying the Balkan political 'irrationality' puzzle and the persistence of such irrationality. Some authors explained the failure to cooperate through genetic predispositions, ancient hatreds, eternal bloodshed and propensity for perpetual war. Others largely blamed the region's problems to the direct and hidden leverage of the Great Powers or to the West negative stereotypes internalized by local people, while fourth school of thought blames the unattainable, late and uneven modernization of the Balkans. Most of the above approaches taken on their own facilitated greatly our understanding of the Balkans, but many questions still remained unanswered and the region still remained as unpredictable and as lunatic as before we approached it.

To address properly the persistent patterns of obstruction in the Balkans, we needed more than 'ancient hatreds', Great Power meddling in regional affairs and late modernisation explanations. Although most of them offered excellent explanations, a more holistic approach was needed.

To create such approach we had to address problems of ontology. The leverage of Great Powers, ancient hatreds and unattained modernization approaches all pointed at structural or agency-related impediments to regional cooperation. We needed to adapt an ontological assumption positioning ideas and culture as factors in their own right alongside structure and agency. The research explored the casual role ideas play in shaping political behaviour. Path-dependent institutionalized ideas facilitated answers to questions such as why in the region nationalist attitudes proved stronger than other political ideologies, why certain countries in the region have persistently cooperated with one another, regardless of the various changes in external conditions (even when belonging to opposite ideological camps) and vice versa, other countries in the region could not establish fruitful cooperation among themselves, regardless of the fact they belonged to the same ideology and the outside pressure for cooperation. Last, we were

able to see what motivated such selectivity and how regional cooperation could take place after all and how.

The theoretical chapter justified why historical institutionalism, amplified by ideas was advanced as best fit to the case study of path-dependent political behaviour on the Balkans. This study employed the theoretical framework of Sheri Berman's, *The Social Democratic Moment* to explore path-dependent political behaviour in the Balkans, as it represented an exemplary research which acknowledged the transformative power of ideas within historical institutionalist framework.

Through Berman's ideational theory and historical institutionalism, the research offered a new way of understanding decision making and path dependence in the Balkans during the XXth century. Ideational theory predicted that actors strive to make decisions consistent with preexisting beliefs; also, appropriateness (rather than, say, maximization of benefit) is the most important factor, contributing to the choice of policy alternatives. Since what is appropriate remained reasonably constant within a given set of ideas, ideational explanations predicted that *a particular actor will make similar choices over time, even as the environment changes*. Also change is possible, when new ideas are powerful enough to challenge or supplant political elites' own particular ideas about the way the world works. Since actors perceive the constraints and opportunities of the environment through the prism of their ideas, we should find actors with different ideas evaluating similar situations in different ways, judging the feasibility of different alternatives accordingly. Ideational explanations predicted, therefore, that *actors with different ideas will make different decisions, even when placed in similar environments*.

Based on Berman's ideational theory, explained above, and operationalized with respect to that case, the study looked at two major research questions and advanced two hypotheses presented below. After we have derived two hypotheses from Berman's ideational theory, we tested them in the four chapters that were the framework of our Greek-Bulgarian empirical case. The Greek and Bulgarian ideas and behaviour chapters (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), reflected on the first research question to test the hypothesis that Bulgarian and Greek modern states' remarkably persistent mutual obstruction during most of the XX c., regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. The second question and hypothesis if EU idea could lead to ideational and policy change was tested in the two empirical chapters (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6) on transport infrastructure during the 1990s and 2000s.

- *Research question 1: Why and how nineteenth century emerging modern Bulgarian and Greek states, relatively similar in size and population, sharing the same religion, revolutionary ideas, and historical development, having similar political and social conditions, have developed highly antagonistic path-dependent policies of obstruction towards each other, that remained remarkably persistent, regardless of changing external factors during the early XX c., the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War and the 1990s?*
- *Hypothesis 1: Bulgarian and Greek modern state' mutual obstruction, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes. From the very formation of*

*their modern states, Bulgaria and Greece had clashing ideas for development of their states and such institutionalized ideas later informed political elites that cooperation with the other was highly inappropriate.*

#### *Path dependence and Obstruction*

This first hypothesis was tested in Chapters 3 and 4. Each of the two chapters started with a discussion how the idea for the other as an enemy emerged, who were the intellectual carriers of such idea and how it became institutionalized in the institutional set-up of the modern Greek and Bulgarian state respectively. Then each chapter explored how such programmatic beliefs played a crucial role in structuring actors' views that cooperation with the neighbour was not appropriate and reconstructed the process through which the Greek and Bulgarian political actors, shaped by such normative guidelines and criteria decided on the policies of obstruction towards the other during key periods of the XX c., regardless of changing environment. This, in conjunction with a comparative study of the distinctive historical and structural contexts of Greece and Bulgaria uncovered the most important factors influencing the development and decision making of respective political elites during these years.

To acquire data about the programmatic beliefs about the neighbour in Greece and Bulgaria, the two chapters relied on documentary research, using published and unpublished government publications, laws, published national doctrines, strategies and programmes, historical documents, letters, reports, newspaper articles, memoirs, biographies, etc. The data was analyzed through the method of *ideational mapping*. To collect data about the normative guidelines and policies towards the neighbour during the XX c., both primary (participant observation and elite interviews) and secondary (documentary research) were used. The data was analysed through *process tracing* and focus on *decision-making-during-crisis* methods. We operationalized obstruction policies with more concrete *policies of denationalization of the minority of the other and negative propaganda campaign* in the domestic policies (existing/non existing) and *policy of political, social and economic obstruction* (existing/non existing) in the foreign policy during the different periods explored.

The chapters explored if in critical periods, like the two Balkan Wars, two World Wars, the Cold War, the Fall of Communism, etc. (when ideas are most likely to change), we observed a significant change of the *given set of ideas* in Bulgaria and Greece about the other. Then we correlated ideas with the policies between Greece and Bulgaria in that historical moment. In general, if the given set of ideas did not largely change, we could not have expected significant change in the existing policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*). However, if we have found policy change (no denationalization, negative propaganda and existing political, social and economic cooperation) that most likely meant that there was change in the given set of ideas. The analysis yielded the following results:

In Greece the dominant idea was the Megale. It was a crystallized national ideology with a goal of uniting all former territories of the Medieval Byzantine Empire into a modern Greek state. Korais and Velstinlis revived the ancient glories and provoked the interest towards Greek history. Zampelios and Papparregopoulus introduced a tripartite examination of Greek history, ancient Hellenism, medieval Hellenism and modern Hellenism, claiming that Modern Greeks were direct descendants of ancient Greeks and the Byzantium Empire. The ideas of Korais, Feraios, Zampelios and Paparrigopolous

achieved political salience among so many competing ideas through their prominent status in Greek society. They were able to make others 'listen' through their position as government officials, university professors and intellectuals and prolific writers.

Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming intellectual elite of the young Greek state toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances. Korais could do that through his position as university lecturer in Paris and through his numerous literary contributions, sponsored by the Chios merchants. Feraios could make others listen to his ideas through the Greek-language newspaper, *Ephemeris*, published in Vienna through his Revolutionary Manifesto and published poems and books about Greek history that became widely popular. Paparrigopolous could maintain the importance of his ideas through his unique position as the greatest historian of modern Greece, his longevity as ideational carrier through his books, school textbooks, published magazines, university lectures, government appointments, combined with his uncommon talent of writing style. By virtue of such particular talents and long tenure as a public figure, he could exert unparalleled influence over the development of the national narrative of the forming modern Greek state. Megale Idea and not some other idea was adopted since Korais, Feraios, Paparrigopolous and Zampelios were successful through their professional positions and literary scholarship to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Greek state is in line with the Megale Idea.

The particular historical and ideational context, in which Megale Idea crystallized, clashed with the crystallizing national programmes of Bulgarians-San Stefano, since both people were claiming the same lands, mostly in Macedonia. San Stefano and Megale were mutually incompatible. As a result Bulgarians were viewed as enemies through the prism of the Megale Idea and such idea were institutionalized in the modern Greek state and shaped the normative prescriptions that cooperation with Bulgarians was not appropriate, which in turn shaped policies of obstruction during most of the XX c. During the early XIX c. Megale Idea was put to practice and since Bulgarians were perceived as enemies over the future spoils of the Ottoman Empire, cooperation with them was not appropriate and this was the period when in Greece the first policies of obstruction towards Bulgaria were officially adopted as a result of such ideas. The policies included the Hellenization of the Slavs in Macedonia, the negative propaganda against Bulgarians in Greece and among the population of Macedonia and the total lack of political, economic and social cooperation between the two states.

The Smyrna catastrophe marked the end of Megale in its classical form, but it did not alter the already institutionalized beliefs of Bulgarians as an enemy, neither had it changed the normative criteria that cooperation with them is not appropriate, regardless of the very changed external context. During the Balkan Wars, WW I and WW II, Greek political leaders chose to side against Bulgaria, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter. The chapter confirmed that during those periods, policies of Hellenization and negative propaganda against Bulgaria intensified. During the Civil War, the ideas that KKE crystallized did strongly challenge traditional Greek programmatic notions of friends and enemies. Furthermore, they challenged the whole existence of Greek polity. However, they were not able to displace traditional programmatic beliefs due to the short period, intellectual carriers had to propagate their ideas and to the lack of institutionalization in the Greek organizational set-up. During the Cold War the perception of Bulgarians as enemies according to nationalist ideology

was joined by the perception of Bulgarians as enemies according to communist ideology. The period is characterized by complete lack of communication, intense propaganda and continued assimilatory policies.

In Bulgaria, San Stefano is the crystallized national ideology that the Bulgarian state would only be complete by encompassing the three historic provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia, since those were the ethnic territories of the Bulgarian nation, justified by two criteria: Bulgarian language and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate. This idea was reconfirmed through the short-lived San Stefano Treaty that created large state for couple of months, before it was dismembered by the Berlin Treaty. Paisius crystallized the idea that Greek educational and ecclesiastical influence was detrimental to Bulgarian people and they needed to overthrow it. He justified that with the glories of the Medieval Past, when Bulgarian people had their own Empire and did fight with the Greeks to preserve it. Paisius was followed by a number of others and most notably by Sophronius of Vratsa (Sofroni Vrachanski) (1739-1813). Therefore, the whole Bulgarian nationalism was born with the idea of Greeks as 'enemies'. The ideas of Paisius of Hilendar influenced the second wave of ideational entrepreneurs such as Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski (1812–1875). They followed Paisius' ideas and started to propagate the need for Bulgarian ecclesiastical organization independent of the Greek Patriarchate. Similar to the Greek case, the ideas of Paisius, Sofronius, Bozveli and Makariopolski achieved political importance among so many competing ideas through the latter's prominent position in society. They were able to render others receptive to their ideas through their position as ecclesiastical officials, intellectuals and prolific writers. Moreover, they were very persistent during their long careers in articulating their beliefs and manoeuvring the forming Bulgarian intellectual elite's views toward the adoption of particular nationalist stances. Makariopolski influential ideas were maintained through the newspapers *Dunavski lebed* (Danube Swan), *Budushtnost* (Future), *Branitel* (Defender), *Bulgarska starina* (Bulgarian heritage), published in Novi Sad, Belgrade and Odessa between 1855 and 1865.

Similar to the Greek case, Sofronius, Paisius, Bozveli and Makariopolski were better positioned to ensure that their ideas remain a force in politics even after they have left the scene because they were able to build a consensus that the most suitable (only appropriate) development course of the modern Bulgarian state is in line with the educational and ecclesiastical emancipation from Greeks and adherence to the Bulgarian Exarchate. 1870-1878 is the critical juncture, when most of the institutions of the new Bulgarian state were founded and the ideational legacy of carriers that largely shaped the San Stefano idea was institutionalised. And namely, the intellectual entrepreneurs, Paisius of Hilendar and Sophronius of Vratsa influenced profoundly not only the pre-independence network of schools, but their ideational legacy was institutionalised through the schooling system of the young Bulgarian Kingdom. Similarly, the powerful ideas of Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski were institutionalised through the first Bulgarian independent institution, namely the Bulgarian Exarchate and later passed in the ecclesiastical organization of the modern state. Nearly the entire Bulgarian Enlightenment (1732-1878) was marked by the movement to overthrow Greek influence in church and school. Not surprisingly, such ideas passed in the modern Bulgarian state, through carriers and institutionalization, becoming programmatic beliefs, shaping the normative guidelines of Bulgarian political actors that cooperation with Greeks is not appropriate or normatively acceptable explaining obstruction policies during subsequent periods. In the period 1878-1913, as a result of the normative criteria of Greeks as enemies, the Bulgarian state formulated obstruction policies towards the Greek Patriarchate by creating a dense network of schools and churches in Macedonia and by

supporting the cheta (bands) in their armed struggle against the Greek andarts. In addition, the state organized negative campaign against Greece in Bulgarian press and supported campaign against the Greek minority in Bulgaria-Greeks were forced to leave the country and their economic activities were suppressed by the campaign not to buy Greek merchandise.

During the Balkan, WWI and WWII, Bulgarian political leaders persistently chose to side with the factor that was against Greece, following their logic of appropriateness that precluded any form of political, economic and social cooperation with the latter. The Communist period nationalism was blended with Marxist discourse, blended with national ideology further reinforced traditional programmatic beliefs for Greeks as the enemy since now they were enemies not only according to the nationalist but according to the communist ideology as well. This cemented the normative guidelines and criteria that cooperation with them is inappropriate. The lack of any contact and the anti-Greek propaganda in the educational system, media, books, political rhetoric, are typical examples of the obstruction policies of the time.

To summarize at successive historical junctures the dominant ideational framework has been challenged, but traditional programmatic beliefs of mistrust towards each other have remained unchanged. The national ideology has included more than one discourse and has displayed remarkable adaptability to different ideologies and regimes for legitimizing purposes, but perception of the other as an enemy and the inappropriateness of cooperation from the early XX c. to the 1990s did not change. As a result policies of obstruction during that period did not change as well. The first hypothesis that *Bulgarian and Greek modern state' mutual obstruction, regardless of changing external factors and outside pressure could be properly understood by exploring the crucial role, played by path dependent institutionalized ideas (programmatic beliefs) in shaping policy outcomes has been confirmed. That specific nationalist attitudes of Bulgarian and Greek political elites would most likely be path-dependent regardless of the different changes of external environments, if such changes do not produce an idea powerful enough to supplant old ideas and beliefs of what is deemed appropriate was confirmed as well.*

### *Ideational Change and policy change*

*Research question 2: Could nationalist attitudes and decades-long path dependent mutual obstruction between Bulgaria and Greece could be successfully challenged by new EU agenda and the idea of European integration?*

#### *Hypothesis 2:*

*Only when ideas change-does policy changes happen. EU with its conditionality policies, normative agenda in addition to the processes of marketization and liberal democracy could be such a powerful idea- to effectively challenge, for the first time, traditional national-interest mentalities in Bulgaria and Greece and lead to change in policies and make cooperation possible.*

The second research question and hypothesis, were tried in chapters 5 and 6 on transport infrastructure in SEE during the 1990s and 2000s, respectively. The justification for

such selectivity was backed by the observation that a significant difference between the two periods in terms of political, social and economic cooperation could be observed.

The empirical chapter on transport infrastructure during the 1990-2000 outlined that political, social and economic cooperation between the two states was still rather wary and reluctant, as justified by the common EU large infrastructure projects that were in a state of impasse for a decade, in spite of firmly-secured EU funding, proven economic benefits and clear technical specifications. Documentary research, corroborated with elite interviews indicated that decision makers in Bulgaria and Greece still tended to identify and interpret the challenges they faced within the old normative guidelines and criteria and matched problems with solutions they had applied in the past, rather than searching for politically or economically optimal solutions in the new EU-promoted cooperation environment. In other words during that first period traditional programmatic beliefs, although challenged could not be displaced by EU-ideas, as happened many times before. Elite interviews indicated that during the 1990s policy makers at regional and supranational level adopted the appropriateness of cooperation ideas much faster than those, operating at national level.

After the 1990s, traditional obstructionist programmatic beliefs between Bulgaria and Greece were gradually challenged by the EU normative agenda. Greek and Bulgarian political elites could only start cooperating, only after an idea powerful enough (EU-idea) was able to challenge old programmatic beliefs of friends and enemies and old normative criteria if cooperation was possible, in spite of the fact that impetus for cooperation and possible benefits from such cooperation were often an available option long before the 1990s. However, that was very hard to materialize in the old ideational set-up. This is not to say that 'Europeanization' ideas have completely displaced old ideas, rather it is a process in the making. This was possible due to the role of the EU as a powerful ideational carrier, longevity of such ideational pressure, the appeal of such EU idea making old beliefs increasingly inadequate and the undesired results old policies and ideas started to increasingly cause.

Such increasing unintended results were a consequence of the fact that during the 1990s, Greek and Bulgarian political elites had to engage in a multiple level game-Euro-Atlantic solidarity and conformity on the international arena and nationalist discourse, according to old ideas on the domestic. In Bulgaria, during the 1990s, governments (mostly former Communist Party in power) informed by traditional nationalist ideas payed lip service to EU's demands for reforms and did not engage in completion of common infrastructure projects or any form of cooperation with the only EU-neighbour country, Greece. However, only with the election of a truly democratic government in 1997, the supranational and national level could converge towards a common agenda, when the normative criteria of the EU and EU conditionality started to influence Bulgarian polity at regional, domestic and international level. This also challenged the programmatic beliefs of Greeks as enemies and the normative ideas cooperation with them is not appropriate due to the latter's membership in EU and NATO, so coveted by Bulgarian governments of that time. Similarly, in Greece it is not until the involvement of the EU in SEE in the 1990s and the Bulgarian perspective for EU-membership that there emerged a normative/ideational challenge with sufficient power to challenge the traditional attitudes displayed by the Greek elites towards Bulgaria. After a decade of ideational struggle between the discourses of nationalism and Euro-Atlantic supranationalism, by late nineties political elites in the region started to increasingly translate and promote the Euro-Atlantic agenda into their domestic contexts. Institutions also started to feel the ideational challenge. This was evidenced by the fact that after

1999, all Bulgarian political forces reached an agreement on the Euro-Atlantic's agenda centrality in the Bulgarian geopolitical aims and started EU accession negotiations.

Such developments correspond to the Greek case, discussed in the previous chapter, where by late nineties, there was an ideational turn towards perception of Bulgarians as possible allies within the EU and NATO and its normative framework started to significantly challenge old nationalist contexts and displace decades-old national ideas. Such change in perception, as evidenced by the documentary research and elite interviews in the following chapters was to a large extent possible through the appeal of the EU membership idea and the imposing of the EU's normative agenda. Unlike in Bulgaria, Greek elites were not subjected to such direct conditionality, but they were indirectly taught to cooperate. Both Bulgarian and Greek elites were increasingly feeling the pressure of regional and supranational levels informing them that continued lack of cooperation in the new condition started to produce undesired results and was making traditional policies of discord ever more inadequate. For example, Bulgaria's EU entry was delayed for the failure to satisfy conditionality, while Greek governments were ever more being criticized both by supranational EU-level and domestic regional level for the lack of progress of infrastructural projects between Bulgaria and Greece, the delay of the opening of new border points and economic backwardness of the border regions.

The three sub-cases, presented in the two transport chapters, provided an initial overview, based on archival and documentary research on government publications, memorandums, agreements, transport strategies and programmes, reports, newspaper articles, that as a result of EU leverage, obstruction policy-patterns of the 1990s have significantly diminished to give way to gradual and steady cooperation during the 2000s. This is evidenced by the intensive work carried on the cross-border projects and the overall public discourse of policy makers during that period. To confirm the initial documentary findings that policy change was linked to ideational change and that the EU-role was critical in that process, I complemented the documentary research with primary research data of elite interviews. Interviews with key players were used to corroborate the early findings. In this way, interviews contributed towards the research goal of triangulation, where collected data is cross-checked through multiple sources to increase the robustness of the findings.

Elite interviewing was undertaken after careful non-probability purposive sampling of relevant top-policy makers in Bulgaria and Greece, operating on regional, national and European level. Why non-probability sampling was selected? When the goal of a study is to generalise from a sample to the wider group the sample is drawn from, then some form of probability sampling is essential for the robustness of such generalisations. Without the randomness that probability sampling entails, it would be impossible to be certain that the sample was not selected in a biased manner, and that the selection rule is not in some way related to the variables being used in the study. However, when such interviews are employed not to generalise about the characteristics, beliefs or actions of the full population of relevant actors, but rather to use the testimony of those who were most closely involved to construct a theoretically informed narrative of the process of interest then the subjective judgements in the selection of the sample is a plus. While the sample should be representative of the wider population to the extent that it does not systematically exclude a set of actors who played an important role, it does not need to be drawn from the population through random selection as the purpose is not to generalise findings from the sample to the population. When 'using process tracing, the most important issues to consider when drawing the sample are that the most important



and influential actors are included in the sample, and that testimony concerning the key process is collected from the central players involved. In such circumstances, random sampling will be a hindrance rather than a help, as the most important actors of interest may be excluded by chance. Instead, the goal with process tracing is to reduce randomness as much as possible, and work to ensure that the identities of the most important actors are established, and that they are approached directly for interview.<sup>35</sup> In our case, probability sampling enables us to interview key actors in Bulgaria and Greece that shaped decision making vis-à-vis the other in regards to political, social and economic cooperation in the period 1990-2010. Through elite interviews based on non-probability sampling, policy change could be linked to possible change of ideas of actors directly, involved in the decision-making of the explored process. This is used to corroborate the documentary findings. Among the types of non-probability sampling, each has varying rules for selecting the final sample.

25 Bulgarian and 25 Greek Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., were interviewed through semi-structured open-ended interviews mostly during 2006-2009. They were selected through purposive and chain-referral sampling. Purposive sampling is a selection method where the purpose of the study and the researcher's knowledge of the population guide the process. The basic assumption of purposive sampling is that with good judgement and an appropriate strategy, researchers can select the cases to be included and thus develop samples that suit the needs of the study.

The chain-referral, sampling method involves identifying an initial set of relevant respondents, and then requesting that they suggest other potential subjects who share similar characteristics or who have relevance in some way to the object of study. This second set of subjects is then interviewed, and also requested to supply names of other potential interview subjects. The process continues until the researcher feels the sample is large enough for the purposes of the study, or until respondents begin repeat names to the extent that further rounds of nominations are unlikely to yield significant new information. One of the dangers with snowball sampling is that respondents often suggest others who share similar characteristics, or the same outlook, and it is thus also incumbent on the researcher to ensure that the initial set of respondents is sufficiently diverse so that the sample is not skewed excessively in any one particular direction. In our case, 10 Bulgarian and 10 Greek key policy makers were selected through purposive sampling based on their position and the other 15 in each case respectively were recommended through chain-referral sampling of their peers, based on their relevance for the case explored.

The 50 Bulgarian and Greek key decision makers were asked probing, theoretically-driven questions, exploring their ideas, opinions/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory and background to the past and present attitudes towards the neighbor, appropriateness of cooperation with that neighbour, how they felt about the infrastructure projects (our three sub-cases) between the two countries, if the EU had to do with the change of perception towards the neighbour (if there was such) and why it was able to do that.

The data reconfirmed the documentary findings that there are signs of very significant change in traditional Greek-Bulgarian attitudes and such change is directly linked to the change in policies. The key explanatory variable accounting for the change is the involvement of the EU in the region generally, the EU normative agenda and the

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35 Tansey, *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing*, p. 11.

perception that the Bulgarian accession compels Greece and Bulgaria to work together. After we have found policy change and linked it to ideational change, the chapter concludes with analysis what made EU-idea so much more powerful than previous 'weaker' ideas that were not able to significantly change nationalist programmatic beliefs in similar critical times in the past, explored in the ideational chapters.

### *Why EU could challenge old perceptions?*

Operationalized with our case, during most of the XX c., the traditional Greek and Bulgarian programmatic beliefs that the other was an enemy and the cognitive templates they provided that cooperation was impossible resulted in certain policies of obstruction (*denationalization of the minority of the other, negative propaganda and lack of political, social and economic cooperation*). The results of such policies maintained resonance with the traditional programmatic beliefs of political actors for decades to come. For example, in Greece policies of Hellenization towards the Slav minority (1913-1974), explored in the ideational chapters, resulted in its emigration to Bulgaria, or assimilation into the Greek nation. Such outcome was in complete resonance with the programmatic beliefs of Greek policy makers at the time that Bulgarians are enemies and the Bulgarian Slav minority in the country is the 'enemy within' the country. Such resonance of ideas with the experience provided information that the existing programmatic beliefs were appropriate and reinforced them. Another example, negative propaganda towards the other in Greek or Bulgarian media, school and public discourse resulted in consolidation of the respective population and increasing the hatred towards that neighbour. Such outcome was desired since it directly corresponded to actors' ideas and expectations, and was a predicted outcome of a specially selected policy

However accurate and inaccurate, such understandings inform strategy and that strategy in turn yields both intended and, inevitably, unintended consequences. Unintended consequences, in particular, provide an opportunity for strategic learning, offering a clue to the inadequacies of existing understandings of the context and inviting revisions.<sup>36</sup> Traditional Bulgarian and Greek understandings of the other as enemy and the policies of obstruction selected during most of the XX c. and especially after the 1944, yielded mostly intended consequences. The resulting lack of social, economic and political cooperation was in resonance with the programmatic beliefs of elites. In times of crisis, such as the Balkan Wars, Smyrna Crises, World Wars, Cold War, even though there were new ideas about Greeks or Bulgarians they could not install a new paradigm in Bulgarian or Greek institutions, because old ideas and cognitions that informed behaviour were in resonance with actors' experiences during those periods and such new ideas could not make already existing understandings inadequate. For example, no political party in Bulgaria could adopt a friendly stance towards Greece, reading the press or observing the assimilation and propaganda policies against Bulgarians undertaken in that country. Another example, during the Cold War, no political party in Greece could come to see Bulgarians as friends as such idea completely clashed with reality. Therefore, for ideational change to possibly occur, we need to have at least two factors working simultaneously,

- Old ideas must constantly yield unintended consequences
- There is new idea, that makes existing understandings inadequate

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<sup>36</sup> Hay, Political Analysis, pp. 212-213.

Thus, during most of the XX c. during times of crisis, there were new ideas but they could not make traditional understandings inadequate. There was no powerful ideational carrier that could make others receptive and institutionalize his/her ideas, since the contexts did not provide for such ideational change. In addition, during most of the XX c. there were cases when old ideas yielded unintended consequences (for example, the already discussed Bulgarian persistent war siding against Greece, resulting in permanent losses for Bulgaria). However, Bulgarian politicians did not interpret that such unintended consequences were result of inadequate beliefs, because there was no new powerful idea that could have made old beliefs that Greeks were enemies inadequate.

However, only after the 1990s with the EU-idea and leverage in SEE, both pre-conditions for possible ideational change were met. Namely, during the 1990s and especially during the 2000s, old policies of obstruction between Bulgaria and Greece started to constantly yield unintended consequences. For example, the decade-long impasse over the infrastructure projects started to inform elites that they incur significant economic, moral, credibility, etc. losses from such policies. The delay of the opening of the mutual border points was adequate before, but under common EU framework, it seemed more and more lunatic with every day passing and harder to justify externally and internally. Bulgarian and Greek national policy makers were pressured by local policy makers that much faster switched attitudes than their national peers. That was justified by the elite interviews. In the municipalities on both sides of the border, there was no sign of historic animosities between ordinary Greeks and Bulgarians. In fact, they have been on increasingly good terms since 1991. EU funds for cross-border initiatives have allowed them to collaborate on a variety of business and cultural initiatives, so that, now, the buses they lay on to transport people to one another's festivals are packed, as are the courses where they learn each other's languages. And central governments were not always understanding of border communities' needs and wishes. Respondents claimed they felt things differently and Athens and Sofia view these matters "from a bird's eye". The local authorities were at least keeping up the pressure.

The internal pressure to national key makers came not only from local level actors, but from Greek and Bulgarian actors, working on the EU-level. Last, but not least, such policies were ever harder to justify in front of EU and European partners. Therefore, old programmatic beliefs and policies they informed were in great dissonance with experience during the 1990s and even more during the 2000 with the gradual integration of Bulgaria in the EU. Such growing unintended consequences, more and more informed national policy makers of the inadequacies of their existing beliefs. The new powerful EU-idea, provided opportunity for strategic learning, offering a clue to the inadequacies of existing understandings of the context and inviting revisions, gradually making old perceptions of enemies and friends obsolete. In our case, it seems such cumulative learning has resulted in policy shift, as evidenced by the documentary and empirical research of the transport infrastructure chapters during the 1990-2010 periods. *The second hypotheses that after the 1990s EU was such a powerful idea, that for the first time since the Independence revolutions, started to successfully challenge old institutional settings in the region, that have persisted for decades, even centuries was confirmed in Chapters 5-6 through the documentary research and elite interviewing.*

We could conclude that the two hypotheses formulated in the theoretical chapter were largely confirmed by Chapters 3 through 6 and provided a good evidence of the predictive power of ideational theory as tool for explaining political behaviour. Independent power of ideas was demonstrated by exploring persistence of ideas

regardless of changing external environments. The research argued new way of understanding Balkan politics and regional discord in general, through the power of ideas, creating a coherent framework explaining both continuity (chapter 3 and 4) and change (chapter 5 and 6). In addition to explaining persistent discord the project concentrated in the often overlooked pattern of persistent cooperation. Therefore the research explored not only 'deviant cases of obstruction', but 'deviant cooperation'. This research provided an answer as to why some actors in the Balkans and other region's could 'irrationally cooperate' according to their internalized logic of appropriateness regardless of external events. Competing explanations were struggling to account for certain 'irrational' policies that were beyond explanation and often attributed to lunacy, genetic hatreds and even doomed geography. Such new understanding of the casual role path-dependent ideas played in shaping policies in the Balkans could possibly be used as a map to decipher other regions' intricacies by making seemingly lunatic policies very rational according to ideational contexts dominating certain society. Not only such approach advances our understanding of Balkan or other region's impediments to regional cooperation but it could also help us understand the development of modern states. The research applied historical institutionalism to understand political behaviour and decision making in a new way by incorporating ideas within the HI framework, allowing accounting better for explaining stability and change. HI has rarely been applied to both nationalism studies and Europeanization theories and this research is a step in that direction. However further research is needed, since positioning of ideas and culture as major explanatory factors alongside structure and agency opens the door for a new interpretation of political behaviour and decision making for scholars on nationalism and Europeanization. The research was not only an endeavour to study the EU's role in the Balkans, but to contribute to the understanding of evolution of modern EU states.

In addition the analysis encompasses the period until late 2010, where the situation on transport infrastructure discord was gradually being overcome and some of the projects were already in their final stages towards completion. The research predicted that based on new EU cooperation institutionalized ideas the cooperation over such projects would be enhanced. Further research could explore the progress of the three case studies and related projects and if their development would further prove the theory. Another research testing the theory with different cases, time, place and contexts is needed and if the predictive power of the theory is confirmed, this would facilitate comparative research studies on nation building and state building, cooperation and discord through the role of ideas. For example, this theory could be tested by a study exploring Bulgarian and Serbian traditional programmatic beliefs. It would be interesting to observe if Serbia, that is behind its EU-ization process would still be likely to give preference to old beliefs, rather than EU-ideas, that would further give credibility to the EU's instrumental role in rooting out old beliefs. Such hypothesis is confirmed by a recent article, published in one of the most influential Serbian newspapers, describing attitudes towards neighbours. Describing Bulgaria, it says 'Well, it is a historical fact that Bulgaria, during the two World wars, was on the opposite side of Serbia and during the First World War tangled in the most difficult moment by blocking the corridor for the withdrawal of Serbian troops and thus, the following folk tale appeared: "Son, when there is war and you do not know which side to take, hit Bulgarians, this way- you will never be wrong"'.

The historian Serdzhan Tsvetkovich says it is not all difficult to find the vertical line in the Bulgarian-Serbian enmity because since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the two countries have *always* been enemies in *all* wars...The Macedonian question from its onset, brought Bulgaria and Serbia into numerous wars and these relations, practically, continue today.

The most difficult moments were during the Second Balkan War when Serbian forces came out victorious in the battle of Bregalnitsa. Serbia took predominantly Bulgarian – populated Macedonia and since then Bulgaria feels damaged.’ The article supports the thesis’ findings that the root of present Balkan politics could only be seen by ideational mapping of historical ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ and precisely by mapping out, how such ideas originated in a critical period in the past and how after their institutionalization, they continued to affect policy makers for decades to come. Only with the EU-idea, we had such a powerful idea that increasingly rendered old perceptions of enemies and friends inadequate and contributed to policy change.

One more interesting phenomenon emerged in the Balkans, during the writing of this study, which could present another opportunity to test historical institutionalism plus ideas, accounting for stability and change. Namely, that is the name dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece, where one idea was used in such a way that it completely changed policies and ideas of enemies and friends. While Macedonia was part of ‘friendly’ Yugoslavia it was considered friend since it was loyal to Serbia and Macedonians were not claiming ancient history, sticking to their Slav origin. However, after 1992 and the independence of FYROM, Macedonians needed to legitimize their new state, surrounded by states with century-old historical narratives and introduced the idea that they are direct descendants of Alexander the Great and ancient Macedonians. This was perceived by Greece as ultimate threat, since the latter still had large partially Hellenized Slav minority in Northern Greece. By appropriating such ancient past ideology and appropriating Greek symbols, Macedonians not only liquidated their inferiority historical complex, but could directly claim back the minority in Northern Greece. The lunacy in Skopje to erect ancient statues in front of the Parliament building, to look for ancient king’ descendants in Pakistan and rename their airport to Alexander the Great, provoked complete change in Greek perception of enemies and friends. Greeks during Yugoslavia times were supporting the Serbian theses as Macedonians distinct from Bulgarians, in line with ideology of Bulgaria as the historical foe. However after Skopje started to incorporate Greek history and symbols, Greece started to publicly speak that Macedonians are Bulgarians and are stealing both Bulgarian and Greek past, which was unthinkable in the decades before.

At the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty first century, the Balkans are entering a new era. The situation in the region in the aftermath of the Cold War and the Yugoslav Wars is principally new. In a unifying Europe and a globalizing world the Great Powers of the past are gone. The very algorithm of Balkan history has changed. The prospect of EU membership puts an end to the vulnerability and scuffle of the small Balkan countries, of their fear of the Great Powers’ interventions or the ‘treacherous’neighbours’ mischiefs. In a longer perspective the region is facing a historic opportunity to advance toward genuine peace, cooperation and prosperity. Such progress will not come easily or quickly. The challenge ahead is to get rid of the nineteenth century phobias, manias and provincialism, to forget the long list of historical grievances, the legacy of hatred and distrust and confrontation and be ready to sacrifice them for a better future. A future, when the Balkan ghosts would finally be put to rest.

## **Appendices:**

### **N1. Sample logic of 50 key policy makers in Bulgaria and Greece, interviewed through elite interviewing**

#### **Sampling logic:**

*25 Greek and 25 Bulgarian Members of European Parliament, ministers, local mayors from different political parties, NGO activists involved in Bulgaria-Greece Cross-border cooperation, academics, etc., operating on regional, national and European level were selected through careful non-probability purposive and chain-referral sampling. Initially 10 Bulgarian and 10 Greek key policy makers were selected through purposive sampling based on their position, while remaining 15 in each case, were recommended through chain-referral sampling of their peers, based on their relevance and influence over the case explored.*

#### **Type of interviews:**

*Mostly standardized semi-structured open-ended interviews, plus some informal, conversational interviews;*

#### **Types of topics in questions:**

*The 50 Bulgarian and Greek key decision makers were asked probing, theoretically-driven questions, exploring their ideas, opinions/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory and background to the past and present attitudes towards the neighbor, appropriateness of cooperation with that neighbour, how they felt about the infrastructure projects (our three sub-cases) between the two countries, if the EU had to do with the change of perception towards the neighbour (if there was such) and why it was able to do that.*

#### **Timeframe:**

*Interviews, held between 23.11.2007 and 17.01.2010 (most in 2008 and 2009);*

### **N2. Protocol of the elite interviews**

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Set of Open-ended Questions

- How did you view Bulgarians/Greeks before the 1990s?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
  
- How did you view Bulgaria/Greece and Bulgarians/Greeks during the 1990s?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?

- What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
- How do you view Bulgaria/Greece and Bulgarians/Greeks nowadays? More like friends or like rivals?
  - If answer 'Friends' today and answer 'Enemies' before, a follow-up question: Do you think the EU has contributed to such change of perception?
  - If answer 'Yes', a follow-up 'Why do you think EU was able to do that?'
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Set of Open-ended Questions

- Was cooperation with Bulgaria/Greece appropriate before 1990s?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
- Was cooperation with Bulgaria/Greece appropriate during the 1990s?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
- Is cooperation with Bulgaria/Greece a good thing today?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Set of Open-ended Questions

- How did you view Corridor VIII and Corridor Egnatia during the 1990s? Competing or complementary? Why?
- How did you view Corridor VIII and Corridor Egnatia during the 2000s? Competing or complementary? Why?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?

- What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
  
- Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece during the 1990s? Why?
- Did you favor opening of new border points between Bulgaria and Greece during the 2000s? Why?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?
  
- Did you think Corridor IV and Corridor X were competing or complementary projects during the 1990s? Why?
- Did you think Corridor IV and Corridor X were competing or complementary projects during the 2000s? Why?
  - Regardless of the answer ask three follow-up questions: Were you active in policy making during that time?
  - How firm were your positions at that time?
  - What contributed to your perception? How your position crystallized?

***N3. Secret Report of the Greek Security Service on the need of a new institution to facilitate the assimilation of the Slav minority in Northern Greece;***

Security Service  
 HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
 Top secret

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY  
 NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE

Athens, 16 February 1982

.....

Number of protocol 6502/7-3042....



## (.....) INTRODUCTIONS

a. The Skopians' activities for the autonomy of Macedonia may be efficiently confronted mainly by wiping out the use of the idiom, in the regions near the borders. This opinion is based on the realizations that also other regions that in older times were the center of "Macedonism", like Kastoria, are not hit by the Skopian propaganda, because there the use of the idiom has been almost wiped out.

b. This element by itself would be enough to exclude any thoughts of repatriation of the P/R (political refugees) who now reside in Yugoslavia and who have been brought up with the "Macedonian idea", the "Macedonian language and culture", independently of their participation or not to the organizations SNOF, NOF and activities taken for detaching Greek territories, during the period 1946-1949.

c. As for the above it is imperative to:

1. The creation of a state institution that will depend from the Prefectures of the regions near the borders, lined with the suitable and specially trained to the "Plot against Macedonia" subject, personnel. This institution will engage itself only with this subject, with the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will collaborate closely, but in secret, with the Security Authorities and all the public services (Tax office, Schools, Army, Church, etc.).

2. In the public services and especially in the educational institutions the employees who will be in service have to be ignorant of the local idiom.

3. The establishment of special enlightenment seminaries, for all the public service employees and the clergy who are in service in the sensitive region of Macedonia.

4. The establishment of motivations for the obligatory residence of the public servants and other employees, in the quarters of their service (example: payment of the rent, extra pay, etc.).

5. Establishment of Cultural Association, like "ARISTOTELIS" in Florina and economic help to them, for the realization of events and the publishing of books, newspapers, magazines, etc. and afterwards these will be sent to the Diaspora abroad who has origins from the regions of the senders. This will boost their national sentiment and they will be protected from the anti-Hellenic propaganda that is been practiced by S/M (Slavmacedonians) organizations.

6. Insertion of various obstacles (non-recognition of diplomas, postponement of military service, etc.) for the Greek students who wish to study in Skopje.

7. Marking in each village of persons who, due to their kin bounds and their personality, influence a large circle of co-villagers and with any means (even with money payments) get close to them and use them properly so they will behave as the fighters of the use of the idiom in their circle. To this direction a very positive and effective role can be that of the Youngers of the political parties, by the judgment and coordination of the Government, when a between parties agreement will be reached.

8. Recruitment in the Armed Forces, in Police Bodies, in the public services and Organisms of employees with origins from Florina region, by exception, and their obligatory location in other areas of the Country.

9. The encouragement, by the leadership of the Army, of meetings and marriages of Army officers, who are on duty there and have origins abroad, with women that speak the idiom. (...)

THE CHIEF DIMITRIS KAPELARIS ANT/GOS

Αθήνα 16 Φεβρουαρίου 1982

ΠΑΣΟΚ

(...) 7 ΕΙΣΗΓΗΣΕΙΣ

α. Οι ενέργειες των Σκοπιανών για αυτονομία της Μακεδονίας μπορούν να αντιμετωπισθούν αποτελεσματικά κυρίως με την εξάλειψη της χρήσης του ιδιώματος, στις παραμεθόριες περιοχές. Η άποψη αυτή στηρίζεται στις διαπιστώσεις ότι και άλλες περιοχές, οι οποίες παλαιότερα αποτελούσαν επίκεντρο του "Μακεδονικού", όπως η Καστοριά, δεν βλάπτονται από την Σκοπιανή προπαγάνδα, γιατί εκεί έχει εξαληφθεί σχεδόν η χρήση του γλωσσικού ιδιώματος.

β. Το στοιχείο αυτό και μόνο θα ήταν αρκετό να αποκλείσει οιαδήποτε σκέψη επαναπατρισμού των Π/Π (πολιτικών προσφύγων) που είναι εγκαταστημένα στην Γ/Βία, οι οποίοι έχουν χλαουκηθεί με την "Μακεδονική ιδέα", την "μακεδονική γλώσσα και κουλτούρα, ανεξάρτητα με την συμμετοχή τους ή όχι στις αυτονομιστικές οργανώσεις ΣΝΟΦ, ΝΟΦ και ενέργειες απόσπασης ελληνικών εδαφών, κατά την περίοδο 1946 - 1949.

γ. Προς τούτο επιβάλλεται:

1. Η δημιουργία ειδικού κρατικού φορέα, εξαρτουμένου από τις Νομαρχίες της παραμεθόριου περιοχής, πλαισιωμένου από κατάλληλο και ειδικώς εκπαιδευθέν στο θέμα "Επιβουλή κατά της Μακεδονίας" προσωπικό, ο οποίος φορέας να ασκείται αποκλειστικά και μόνο με το θέμα αυτό, με έμπνευσα του ΥΠΕΞ και να συνεργάζεται στενά, αλλά αφανώς, με τις αρχές Ασφαλείας, καθώς και με όλες λοιπές δημόσιες υπηρεσίες (Εφορία, Σχολεία, Στρατό, Εκκλησία κλπ.).

2. Στις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες και κυρίως στα εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα να ηγρηταεί υπαλληλικό προσωπικό, το οποίο να αγνοεί το τοπικό ιδίωμα.

3. Η καθιέρωση ειδικών διαφωτιστικών σεμιναρίων για όλους τους δημοσίους υπαλλήλους και τους κληρικούς που υπηρετούν στην ευάλωτη περιοχή της Μακεδονίας.

4. Η καθιέρωση κινήτρων για την υποχρεωτική παραμονή όλων των δημοσίων και λοιπών υπαλλήλων στις έδρες των υπηρεσιών τους (π.χ. καταβολή ενοίκιου, επίδομα κλπ.).

5. Δημιουργία Πολιτιστικών Συλλόγων, όπως ο "ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΗΣ" Φλωρίνης και οικονομική ενίσχυση αυτών, για την πραγματοποίηση εκδηλώσεων και την έκδοση βιβλίων, εφημερίδων, περιοδικών κλπ. τα οποία να τα αποστέλλονται ακολούθως στους ομογενείς του εξωτερικού, που κατέχονται από τις περιφέρειες των αποσταλέων, για την τόνωση του εθνικού φρονήματος και την θωράκιση τους έναντι της ανθελληνικής προπαγάνδας που ασκείται από τις Σ/Μ (Σλαβομακεδονικές) οργανώσεις.

6. Παραβολή διαφόρων εμποδίων (μη αναγνώριση πτυχίων, αναβολή στράτευσης κλπ.) στους προτιθέμενους να φοιτήσουν στα Σκόπια Έλληνες.

7. Επισήμανση σε κάθε χωριό των ατόμων που λόγω των συγγενικών τους δεσμών και της προσωπικότητάς τους επηρεάζουν ευρύ κύκλο συγχωριανών τους, και η με κάθε τρόπο (έστω και έναντι χρηματικής αμοιβής) προσέγγιση αυτών και χρησιμοποίησή τους κατάλληλα, ώστε να γίνουν φορείς καταπαλημέσεως της χρήσεως του ιδιώματος στο κύκλο τους.

Προς την κατεύθυνση αυτή θετικό και αποτελεσματικό ρόλο μπορούν να παίξουν οι νεολαίες των Κομμάτων, κατά την κρίση και με συντονισμό της Κυβέρνησης, αφού επέλθει επί αυτού διακομματική συμφωνία.

8. Πρόσληψη στις ένοπλες δυνάμεις, Σώματα ασφαλείας, στο Δημόσιο και στους οργανισμούς υπαλλήλων καταχωμένων από την περιοχή Φλωρίνης, κατά εξαίρεση, και τοποθέτησή τους υποχρεωτικά σε άλλες περιοχές της χώρας.

9. Η ενθάρρυνση εκ μέρους της ηγεσίας του Στρατεύματος σύναψη γυναιμιών και γάμων στρατιωτικών, που υπηρετούν εκεί και κατέχονται εκτός Ελλάδος, με γυναίκες που ομιλούν το ιδίωμα. (...)

Ο ΑΡΧΗΓΙΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ ΚΑΠΕΛΑΡΗΣ ΑΜΤ/ΙΟΣ

***N4. Notes on the ethnic macedonian national minority of northern greece, published by Party of the Macedonian Slav Minority in Northern Greece - Rainbow (Vinozhito), member of Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) and the European Free Alliance - European Political Party (EFA-EPP). Source: Office of Rainbow-Lerin(Florina), presented at the OSCE Conference 'Human Dimension Implementation Meeting'-Warsaw, 29 September-10<sup>th</sup> October 2008.***

### **1. Greek government attitude towards the ethnic Macedonian Slav minority**

The Greek state denies the existence of a Macedonian minority within its borders. Moreover, in line with Greek nationalist ideology, successive Greek governments have failed to acknowledge the existence of a distinct Macedonian ethnic identity and Macedonian language. The attitude of Greek authorities to the very concept of minority rights deserves particular attention. For example, on one occasion an official Greek government representative, Mr Georgios Ayfantis, when asked before a PACE Committee why Greece has yet to ratify the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, stated that Greece considers that the FCNM was "a useful tool for the disintegration of the Soviet Union" and for the "bringing down of the Milosevic regime" but is irrelevant today (Note: it should be noted that the FCNM did not exist at the time of the break-up of the Soviet Union). He also added that if Greece were to ratify the FCNM, ".there would be no improvement for the man on the street just more work for the Greece in the Council of Europe." On must agree that in today's Europe, to view the implementation of minority rights as a laborious task is not only disappointing, but also of great concern.

### **2. The denial of the right to freedom of association**

In 1990, a group of Greek citizens decided to form a non-profit making organisation called the "Home of Macedonian Culture" in the town of Florina/Lerin. The group proceeded to register the association with the Florina Court of First Instance. The court rejected application asserting that the objective of the association was to promote the idea that ".there is a Macedonian minority in Greece, which is contrary to the national interest an subsequently contrary to the law". A subsequent appeal to the Salonika Court of Appeal also failed. In 1994 the highest court in Greece upheld the decision of the Court of Appeal. The applicants then appealed the matter to European Court of Human Rights. In 1998, the court found that there was a violation of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights in the case of Sidiropoulos and Others vs. Greece, ECtHR, 57/1997/841/8107. Following the Strasbourg ruling the applicant tried once again to register the association but again failed. On December 12, 2003, the local court in Florina again refused to register the association on the same grounds as previous - there is no Macedonian minority, etc. The matter was then appealed the regional court which just a few months ago decided to uphold the decision of the Florina court, again ignoring the Strasbourg ruling. So deplorably, almost ten years after the Strasbourg judgement and more than 17 years after the initial application, the Home of Macedonian Culture, remains unregistered. Thus, the Greek state is denying members of its ethnic Macedonians the right to freedom of association.

### **3. Discriminatory laws targeting ethnic Macedonian refugees from Greece**

During the Greek Civil War (1949-1949) thousands of Greek citizens fled Greece. Following the end of the war, all those who left Greece during this period were stripped of their Greek citizenship and property. In 1982 the Greek government passed an amnesty law (Law no. 106841) which declared that political exiles who fled during the

Civil War and were stripped of their citizenship are allowed to return provided they are "Greeks by genus". In 1985, Law 1540 was enacted which granted political exiles who fled during the Civil War to reclaim confiscated property, provided they are "Greeks by genus". The term "Greeks by genus" is a reference used by the Greek government for all those who identify themselves as ethnic Greeks. Hence, ethnic Macedonians and others who left Greece under the same conditions as the ethnic Greeks and had their citizenship and property confiscated are excluded from enjoying the rights granted under these laws. This severely questions the very standing of the laws based on the grounds of equality and fairness. Moreover, the construction of the wording as relating to these laws is not benign, it has a clear intent to discriminate against all those who belong to the category of people classified as political refugees and who are not "Greeks by genus". Given that ethnic Macedonians predominantly make up this category of people, it is indisputable that they have been the ones targeted by this exclusivist definition and the ones who have suffered the most. The individuals excluded by these two laws mostly reside in the Republic of Macedonia, Australia and Canada. The term "Greeks by genus" in these two laws (which are still in force today) are in breach of the fundamental principle of non-discrimination.

#### **4. Absence of Macedonian language education**

Despite the existence of a Macedonian speaking population northern Greece, the Macedonian language is not recognised by the Greek state and thus children of members of the Macedonian-speaking minority do not enjoy the right to learn the Macedonian language within the framework of the Greek education system. Members of the Macedonian linguistic minority have written to the Greek Ministry of Education on several occasions requesting a meeting to discuss the issue however the Ministry has refused to even acknowledge receipt of the correspondence, let alone even meet with them.

#### **5. Denial of linguistic rights with respect to the use of traditional names**

The recognition of traditional place names, the rights of minorities to use their first name and surname in their own language is currently prohibited by the Greek state. In the period between World War 1 and World War 2, Greece enacted a number of laws which replaced all non-Greek names of towns, villages, rivers and mountains with Greek names. These traditional toponyms, which still exist in unofficial use among the population, are not given official recognition by the Greek state. Also during the inter-war period, during the 1930s, the personal names of the Macedonian-speaking population were also forcibly changed. Macedonian personal names were replaced with Greek ones. One family whose name was changed was the Filipov family whose name was changed to "Voskopoulos". In April 2005, Mr Pavlos Voskopoulos made an application to the local prefect in his home town to change my surname back to my family's traditional Macedonian name "Filipov". The Prefect (local government authority) consulted with the Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs which issued a written opinion on the matter:

"The change of the applicant's surname from a Greek to a "foreign" name should be rejected because to allow such an act might result in confusion as to the nationality of the applicant and thus might result in difficulties in matters and contacts between the applicant and Greek authorities."

Thus my application was rejected due to the "advice" of the Greek government." The matter is now before the Supreme Court of Greece. Applications concerning other individuals have also been rejected by Greek authorities.

## **6. The need for a national census regarding linguistic and ethnic diversity**

In various international forums, Greek government officials have repeatedly conceded the existence of individuals in Greece of a non-Greek ethnicity, culture, or language. For example, on 22 November 2005, the Greek representative in the Council of Europe claimed that "there is a small number of people speaking a Slavic dialect or idiom in northern Greece" referring to the Macedonian speaking community. Furthermore, there is a tendency on the part of the Greek government to equate the size of the Macedonian minority with the political affiliation of the citizens as expressed in the elections. That is, to say that the number of votes for the European Free Alliance - Rainbow (a political party of the ethnic Macedonian minority of Greece) is equivalent to the number of ethnic Macedonians in Greece. However Macedonian speakers vote for many parties and not just exclusively for EFA-Rainbow. The most democratic and accurate way to measure the number of persons belonging to a linguistic or national minority is not through elections but through the national census. Unfortunately the right to express one's linguistic or national identity is not possible through the Greek census. The Greek government should be strongly encouraged to make this possible at the next census in 2011.

## **7. Refusal of the Greek government to engage in dialogue**

Some of the above mentioned issues have been addressed in many reports monitoring Greece's compliance with international human rights standards. One of these reports was that of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, which in December 2003 made the following recommendation:

"ECRI strongly recommends the Greek authorities to open a dialogue with the Macedonians' representatives in order to find a solution to the tensions between this group and the authorities, as well as between it and the population at large, so that co-existence with mutual respect may be achieved in everyone's interests."

Sadly however, no such dialogue has been opened. EFA-Rainbow has attempted on numerous occasions to meet with Greek government authorities to discuss the above mentioned issues. Since the election of the Karamanlis government in March 2004, EFA-Rainbow has written to the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Communication and Mass Media, and Greek State Television, however all correspondence requesting meetings (sent by registered mail for which evidence exists) has and continues to remain unanswered. This is a conscious effort on the part of the Greek government to exclude and marginalise the party and the minority.

Twice in 2005 EFA-Rainbow sought an intervention on the part of its European partner organisations, namely the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) and the European Free Alliance - European Political Party (EFA-EPP). On 5 September 2005, General Secretary of FUEN wrote to the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs requesting a meeting to discuss linguistic diversity in Greece. On 3 November 2005, the Ministry responded and agreed to a meeting. On 4 November 2005, the Secretary General of FUEN thanked the Ministry for its positive reply and informed it that at the meeting, the FUEN delegation would be accompanied by representatives of the Greek member organisation, Rainbow. Three days later on 7 November 2005, the Ministry responded by stating that:

"At no point did the Ministry accept the participation to the said meeting of representatives from "Rainbow". We consider Rainbow to be neither a relevant participant nor a valid interlocutor to a discussion regarding linguistic diversity in

Greece. We are not prepared to accept any member or representative of "Rainbow" to the scheduled meeting."

In a similar incident, Bernat Joan I Mari, a Member of the European Parliament together with a delegation from the EFA-EPP visited Greece on a fact finding mission with regards to the situation of the ethnic Macedonian minority. A meeting was requested with Greek government representatives from the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace. While, Mr Bernat MEP and the EFA-EPP delegation was accepted, "the representatives of the Rainbow-Vinozhito party were not allowed to participate in this meeting". Thus, members of EFA-Rainbow were not permitted to meet with our own government. EFA-Rainbow is a legal registered political party. EFA-Rainbow is not a separatist party, nor has ever engaged in acts of violence, therefore there is no legitimate reason not to meet or to start a dialogue with them. The policy of the Greek government to refuse to engage in basic dialogue with EFA-Rainbow as particularly alarming.



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