



The Impact of Nationalism on Democratization in Central and South-Eastern Europe

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Abstract

This paper builds on Hirschman and Bugajski's nationalism related theories and tries to explore the relationship between nationalism and democratization in six countries in Central and South East Europe. Acknowledging the existence of various relationships between a people and a state, the paper classifies these into *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies and analyzes them comparatively in relation to democracy and nationalism, respectively. More specifically, the paper explores nationalistic policies pursued by these countries during their democratization processes and argues that democratization is more likely to succeed in cases where civic nationalism prevails over ethnic nationalism. Democratization seems to be impaired and prolonged in cases where at least one ethnic community involved adopts ethnic nationalism.

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1. Introduction

Central and South-Eastern Europe (CSEE) was and is undergoing multiple transitions. These include state- and nation-building processes whereby democratization and treatment of minorities continue to be issues of concern for the whole region. Scholars debate whether democracy and nationalism are complementary or mutually exclusive (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 25; Resler, 1997: 89; Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998: 3), and no single theory seems able to provide a clear-cut answer. Experience demonstrates that nationalism has been persistent during the democratization process yet Central European countries in particular have made a remarkable democratic progress. Nationalism, however, did hinder democratization in some of these countries by restraining certain rights to specific groups of people. Thus, this paper will address the question: under which circumstances may nationalism contribute to or hinder the democratization process in CSEE. The paper will base its hypothesis on the theories of civic and ethnic nationalism and argue that democratization is more likely to emerge and consolidate where civic rather than ethnic nationalism was pursued.

The paper shall first provide basic definitions of democracy, democratization and nationalism. Thereafter a theoretical framework will be developed by merging the five variants of Janusz Bugajski's nationalism into three typologies of Albert Hirschman, i.e. *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies. The key question of the paper will then be answered in comparative terms through the theories of ethnic and civic nationalism in six distinct cases: *exit* strategy in Estonia and Croatia, *voice* strategy in the case of Hungarians in Slovakia and Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia/Serbia, and *loyalty* strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia) and Montenegro. The question will be tackled by briefly elaborating on nationalism and democratization related developments in these countries individually, and only at the end of each strategy comparing these developments to the derived hypothesis. Finally, the paper will conclude by suggesting that democratization is more likely to succeed in circumstances where civic nationalism prevails over ethnic nationalism.

2. Definitions

Scholars have used various criteria in defining democracy and as a result the term throughout time has gained different meanings and names such as formal, liberal or illiberal democracy, direct and representative democracy, etc. This paper is concerned with liberal democracy which in a wider sense can be defined as a political system of a state that requires an open and fair contestation for political power; a system that is accepted by the overwhelming majority of people living in a state and where conflict is resolved within the rules of that system (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 3-5). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this paper, democracy shall be defined in a narrower sense and in the light of liberal democracy as a form of political system that guarantees individual and collective human rights, political, social and economic freedoms and the rule of law that guarantees those rights and freedoms (Sartori, 1998: 7-11). Democracy is directly related to the state, in that when a group of people is not prepared to accept a state as its own, it may potentially lead them to join or create a different independent state (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 7). Democracy today implies the opposite to dictatorship, authoritarianism or totalitarianism, and transition from such regimes towards democracy is referred to as democratization.

Nationalism holds that political and national units should be congruent (Gellner, 1983: 1; Kupchan, 1995: 2). Nationalism equally entails a direct relationship with a state, for through its forms of collective and/or individual identity it creates an affective relationship between a people and a state. Nationalism can be divided into ethnic and civic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism argues that nations are built on primordial ethnic ties including blood, kinship, belief, etc (Geertz and Shils in Mortimer and Fine, 1999: 4). Consciousness about these ties and national belonging creates an affective relationship between a people and a state, for which people mobilize and are prepared to sacrifice. Ethnic nationalism is inward-looking aiming at upholding one's own values and interests regardless of other ethnic groups living in the same state (Kupchan, 1995: 4).

Civic nationalism, on the other hand, claims that nations are social constructs of the modern era as a result of industrialization and modernization of societies (Gellner, 1983) and that intellectuals invent and shape national identity (history, culture, tradition, symbols, etc) in

order to mobilize the mass in nationalistic movement (Guibernau, 1999: 90-1). Civic nationalism conceives nations in terms of citizenship by offering equal rights to all citizens regardless of ethnicity (Kupchan, 1995: 3).

These definitions require an important caveat. Nationalism and democratization are very complex phenomena, which may be explored from different angles and in different contexts. The analysis of these two phenomena is closely related to and dependent on the case studies under scrutiny; therefore, the above definitions are specifically related to the question of this paper and should be viewed only in that light.

3. Under what Circumstances is Nationalism Conducive to Democratization?

Scholars have developed various typologies of nationalistic strategies and the relationship between a people and a state in general. Two such relevant theories will be utilized here. Hirschman's theoretical typologies of *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* (Hirschman, 1970; Goble, 1995: 126) are built on market economy relationships, but they are very much relevant to political science, which led many scholars to use and adapt his typology to nationalism studies (Goble, 1995; Moore, 2001). The second theory refers to Bugajski's five variants of nationalism: cultural revivalism, political autonomism, territorial self-determinism, separatism and irredentism (Bugajski, 1994: 105).

The theories of Hirschman and Bugajski are utilized in this paper as they provide a framework for categorization of nationalistic strategies pursued by dominant and minority groups in CSEE countries. Hirschman's theory was initially devised for economic studies and its best adjustment and augmentation to the purpose of this paper is to merge it with Bugajski's theory. Bugajski's theory on its own, however, does not explicitly contemplate possibilities for loyalty of a people towards a state. Therefore, these two theories will be merged as follows:

Exit is pursued by a specific community when its position is perceived unfavourable and it deteriorates to the extent that is no longer bearable (Hirschman, 1970: 96). This concurs to a large extent with three of Bugajski's nationalism variants: territorial self-determinism, se-

paratism and irredentism, which in one way or another call a people to secede from a particular state. Thus the latter will be merged into a single *exit* strategy.

A particular community may prolong its *exit* claims if it is convinced that *voice* strategy will reach the aimed effects, and *voice* agents are the most likely community to *exit* in case of a deteriorated situation (Hirschman, 1970: 37, 47). This suggests that *exit* is usually used as a last resort and only in unbearable circumstances. Under such conditions the assumption is that when *exit* is pursued on ethnic nationalistic grounds, there is a high likelihood for a violent conflict which in turn may prolong the democratization process.

Voice strategy on the other hand functions as an alarm bell. Members of a particular group will consistently articulate '... discontent with the way things are going and ... will fight to make their voice effective' before considering any form of exit (Hirschman, 1970: 84). Bugajski's cultural revivalism and political autonomism equally entail a struggle of a people for particular rights within a state rather than formation of an independent state or joining a 'motherland'. Therefore, these forms of nationalism shall be joined into the *voice* strategy. The theoretical assumption under such circumstances is that if a state acknowledges and attempts to address the *voice* of an unhappy ethnic community, the likelihood for violent conflict becomes lower and the democratization process is facilitated. Otherwise, the voice of the dissatisfied community may become stronger and even transform into the *exit* strategy whereby the likelihood for violent conflict becomes higher and democratization hindered.

Bugajski has taken less account of *loyalty* in his typology thus this Hirschman's category shall be adapted to nationalism. A *loyalty* strategy is the commitment of an ethnic group to a state, and it may prevent a particular community from exiting. In presence of *loyalty*, *exit* remains as a less likely option (Hirschman, 1970: 77). Therefore, the logical expectation would be that loyalty disables violent conflicts and facilitates the democratization process.

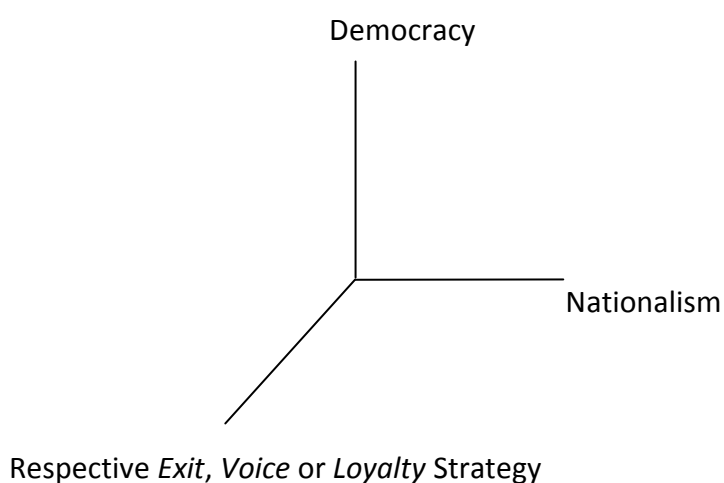
The paper acknowledges that *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies are likely to exist concomitantly in any society and/or community, however for the purposes of this research a domi-

nant strategy shall be used in each of the countries concerned. Yet, it is important to highlight that dominance of one strategy does not exclude the existence of the other two. These strategies may fluctuate depending on the relationships between different ethnic communities, and as it will be noted in the analysis below, a number of countries have changed their strategy as a result of deteriorating situations.

The analysis of these typological strategies shall be applied in six states of CSEE in order to comparatively evaluate the circumstances under which democratization is more likely to emerge: where ethnic or where civic nationalism predominates. *Exit* strategy shall be applied in the cases of Estonia and Croatia as two opposite cases of secessionism. *Voice* strategy shall test nationalism in the case of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia/Serbia, which also represent two distinct cases of nationalism-based claims. Finally, *loyalty* strategy shall test nationalism in the cases of Montenegro and Bosnia, which have been loyal to Yugoslavia and Serbia respectively, but experienced different outcomes.

Amalgamation of these two theories provides a postulation for development of a specific theoretical model necessary to address the research question. This model is developed in a form of a triadic framework that will assess the relationship between democracy, nationalism and *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies respectively, as presented in the Figure 1.

Figure 1: Relationship between democracy, nationalism and *exit*, *voice* or *loyalty* strategy



Analyses of the theoretical assumptions of *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies within the developed triadic model leads to derivation of the three following hypotheses:

H1: The higher ethnic nationalism claims for exit, the higher likelihood for violent conflict and hindrance of democratization.

H2: The less a state acknowledges voices for protection of minority rights, the higher likelihood for ethnic nationalism, violent conflict and hindrance of democratization.

H3: The less loyal ethnic groups are to the state, the higher likelihood for ethnic nationalism, violent conflict and hindrance of democratization.

Violent conflict and absence of democratization are not necessarily equivalent concepts, but empirical evidence suggests that inter-ethnic violent conflicts hinder democratization processes and make consolidation more difficult. Linz and Stepan (1996: 430) hold that violence may lead to civil wars (between various ethnic groups within a state) or conflict with the usually neighboring homeland of minorities. These forms are incompatible with liberal democracy defined above; thus this paper suggests that utilization of coercive means and violent conflict hinder democratization.

The relationship between the three variables (i. democracy, ii. nationalism and iii. *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies respectively) is difficult to assess primarily because of the difficulty in measuring their intensity. In order to tackle this challenge, the intensity of the three strategies shall be assessed through a brief examination of policies and politics of the countries concerned. The level of democratization shall be based on the reports of international organizations and institutions, such as Freedom House, the European Commission (EC), etc. Nationalism shall be placed on a continuum between low and high intensity, whereby low intensity represents civic while high intensity represents ethnic nationalism. It is important to emphasize that visualization of the examined policies and strategies in a diagrammatic form is only to provide an impression of how they relate to one another, and should in no way be viewed to represent the precise level of their respective intensities.

This is a comparative study between six CSEE countries, namely Estonia, Croatia, Slovakia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Montenegro, which have adopted nationalistic approaches through *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* strategies respectively. The research is based primarily on literature review on the subject of nationalism and democratization, including academic books, journal articles, reports and web sites of various international organizations and institutions. The collected information was cross-examined from various available sources before coming to a conclusion. Some statistical data were used in this paper, however considering that this is primarily a qualitative research, no quantitative or statistical methods were used to analyze the data.

3.1 Exit strategy

Exit strategy involves calls for secession through territorial self-determinism, separatism or irredentism. This shall be applied in the cases of Estonia and Croatia, both of which pursued secessionist strategies; the former seceding from Yugoslavia and the latter from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Estonia

After the collapse of USSR, Estonians and Russian ethnic groups in Estonia held conflicting positions as to the political future of the country. Estonians were pro-independence and anti-Russia while the Russian minority was pro-Russia and in favour of merging Estonia with Russia.

Estonians perceived themselves to have been subject to severe political and economic injustices by the USSR and the Russians in Estonia, who compared to the ethnic Estonians were better-off economically, were seen as representatives of the USSR and the foreign occupiers. The Popular Front of Estonia (PFE) was a major political alternative that led the Estonian independence movement and the establishment of the Republic of Estonia. PFE came into power as a moderate political party prepared for compromises with the Russian minority, but in 1992 it won only 15 per cent of the seats and its influence declined. The opposition Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP) had a considerable influence on Estonians in

creating ethnic exclusive sentiments, primarily against the Russian minority. After the independence, more nationalistic parties were founded, gained greater control and influence and ultimately formed a majority coalition in 1992 elections (Bollerup and Christensen, 1997: 190; Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998: 94). Before the declaration of independence in 1991, the Estonian leadership paid little attention to Russian minority interests and largely neglected their demands. Similar policy was pursued also after independence by adopting national language and symbols and a variety of discriminatory laws. This included for example the citizenship law that granted citizenship only to those who were Estonian citizens before the war of 1940 as well as their descendants, whereas others had to reside for two years in the country, take an oath of loyalty and pass a language exam in order to obtain Estonian citizenship. This made the Russian minority vulnerable with regard to a number of fundamental rights and liberties, such as the right to vote in parliamentary and local elections and other forms of political participation, property rights, employment, social and health care (Bollerup and Christensen, 1997: 193-210; Linz and Stepan, 1996: 415-18; Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998: 91-7).

The Russian ethnic minority in Estonia initially held a contending position aiming to preserve the status quo, but soon after Estonia's independence minority leaders accepted the new status and sought their rights and interests by becoming committed to the new state and thus serving conciliatory policies (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 414). Despite Estonian ethnic nationalism that deprived minorities from their political and cultural rights, Russians in Estonia preferred negotiations and other democratic measures over coercive means of conflict resolution.

Why have Russian minorities adopted this strategy? The most notable explanation seems to be that the ethnic consciousness of Estonian Russians was low compared to, for example, Russians in Moldova or Chechnya. They realized that their economic interests would be best achieved within an Estonian state whose economic standards were higher than the USSR average. In addition, they have never been victims of Estonian persecution and thus perceived no threat of potential suppression or injustice (Bollerup and Christensen, 1997: 140, 194-213; Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998: 80-3). Most strikingly, deprivation from political

rights (citizenship and suffrage) did not concern them too much and they felt proud of being residents of Estonia (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 410-11).

In its path to democratization, Estonia marked significant progress in terms of minority rights by adopting legislation that allows the use of minority language in local government where ethnic minorities constitute a majority (Freedom House, 2002a). Estonia has lately also introduced free classes for improvement of Estonian language skills among ethnic Russians. Yet, Estonia is criticized for discriminatory language policies against Russians in Estonia (EC, 2003a: 19, 35; OSCE, 2003: 4-8). These criticisms were followed by further deterioration of tense relations between Estonia and Russia over the recent relocation of the Soviet Bronze Soldier¹ monument of World War II from downtown Tallinn (Amnesty International, 2008a), border disputes, or the request for financial compensation for the damages caused to Estonia during the Soviet occupation (Freedom House, 2005a and 2009a).

Estonia has made a remarkable progress in the democratization process and for some time now is considered to be a free and democratic country. Numerous post-communist local and parliamentary elections in Estonia were assessed as free and fair, and alteration of government occurs peacefully in a democratic manner. Authorities abolished the Estonian language requirements for candidates who run for local and central level elections (OSCE, 2003: 4). Furthermore, it is the first country in the world that enabled its citizens to vote over the internet. Free press and the freedom of speech are respected in private and public media, and programmes are broadcasted in Estonian as well as Russian languages. The judiciary is also independent, with rare occurrences of suspects being intimidated by police; it possesses the most developed e-governance system in the world, whereby transparency is ensured by publishing government decisions on the internet and enabling highly interactive communication with citizens (Freedom House, 2006a). Successful democratic reforms and

¹ The Soviet Bronze Soldier monument was inaugurated by the Soviet Army three years after occupying Tallinn in 1944.

compliance with the Copenhagen criteria² led the country to integration into the EU as well as NATO in 2004.

Croatia

Similar to the Estonians in USSR, Croats in Yugoslavia felt marginalized and endangered by Serb domination in terms of their culture and language as well as economy which was above the Yugoslav average. This strengthened the already strong Croatian ethnic consciousness and led to aspirations of an independent state of Croatia. Serbs in Croatia resisted such secessionist claims as they feared this would lead to their economic, cultural and political marginalization. Serbia was officially favouring preservation of the Federation in which Serbs dominated but behind closed doors, Slobodan Milošević and the Yugoslav army had prepared since 1988 either to retain Croatia within the Federation or carve some of the Croatian territory in order to create a Great Serbia (Gagnon, 1994: 122-5; Bugajski, 1994: 113).

In April 1990, Franjo Tuđman as leader of the Croatian Democratic Union (CDU) came into government, consistently stressing the primacy of Croatian national identity and interests, which for Serbia and Serbs in Croatia was compared to a return of the Ustashe's genocidal policies of Second World War.³ Serb claims for autonomy in the Serb majority region of Krajina were rejected by Croats who perceived the region as their ancient land and feared that it could unite with Great Serbia. Serbs on the other hand felt that Krajina is their sacred place which they defended against Ottomans for a long time. Under the injustices and deprivations feared for the future, they organized a referendum for Krajina's independence in 1990 and joined Serbia. Serbs in Krajina had lower economic standards during the Yugoslav epoch and were concerned that under the Croatian government the situation may get even worse. However, they were not politically deprived; they had a rather privileged status by being overrepresented in the Republic Communist Party for example. When CDU came to power, however, disarmament of Serb policemen and systematic dismissal of Serbs from

² The Copenhagen Criteria include political, economic and legislative criteria on the basis of which the EU appraises whether a country is eligible for joining the EU.

³ Ustashe were the Croatian fascist movement, which supported the idea of a Great Croatia. During the Second World War, in collaboration with the Fascist and Nazi forces, Ustashe carried out attacks on those who opposed their ideology.

public offices left Serbs afraid of further deprivation in independent Croatia (Bollerup and Christensen, 1997: 231-9; Djilas, 1995: 88-98; Morrison, 2009: 90).

After the unilateral declaration of independent Croatia in 1991, Serb forces backed by the Yugoslav army clashed with Croatian forces, resulting in destroyed villages, massacred civilians and exterminated members of the other ethnic community (Gagnon, 1994: 125; Djilas, 1995: 96). Croatia had adopted constitutional and legal guarantees of equal rights for all its citizens (an imposed precondition from Western powers in order to recognize the independence of Croatia). The Government also ratified the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; however, a vast number of human rights violations and arbitrary arrests were reported by international organizations (see for example Amnesty International, 1998; or Freedom House, 2002b). The Croatian leadership neglected Serbian demands for cultural autonomy; in contrast, Croatian national symbols (coat of arms, flag, etc) referred to Croatian ethnicity and Cyrillic in public places was replaced by Latin alphabet. Tudjman in addition tried to downplay the persecution of Serbs by Croats during the Second World War. These nationalistic policies as well as Serbs' ethnic nationalism only strengthened the already antagonistic relationship between Croats and Serbs and fuelled inter-ethnic hatred amongst the population (Bollerup and Christensen, 1997: 237-9; Campbell, 1998: 9).

The autocratic regime in Croatia ended with the death of Tudjman in 1999. Subsequent free and fair elections brought in new government leaders: Prime Minister Ivica Račan and the President, Stipe Mesić. The new government introduced a number of constitutional amendments restricting the powers of the President, initiated reforms in media, judiciary, etc. The government also started their cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for war crimes, which was one of the pre-conditions for Croatia's European integration process (Freedom House, 2002b). Ivo Sanader managed to return the nationalistic party CDU to power in 2003. As a result of his commitment to enhancing minority rights (Amnesty International, 2004) and cooperation with the ICTY, Croatia's application for membership in the EU was accepted in 2004 and the negotiations started the following year. Furthermore, Croatia joined NATO in 2009. The tense relation-

ship between Croatia and Serbia is also softening; in 2006 the two neighboring countries agreed a visa-free travel regime for their citizens (Freedom House, 2007a; EC, 2009a: 18).

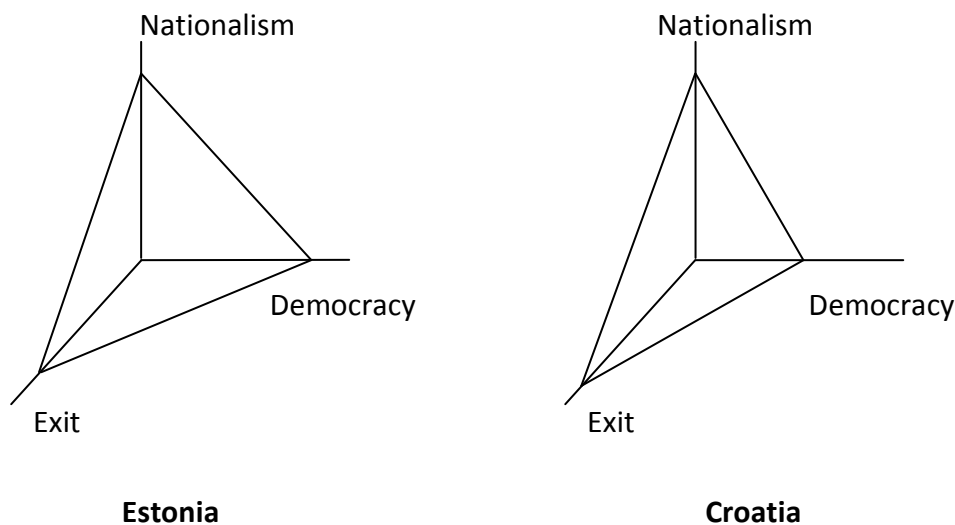
Freedom of expression and free media were enabled only after the change of regime. The national television HRT and the news agency HINA were transformed into independent institutions. Yet, the media remains politically influenced and journalists are intimidated when dealing with issues of war crimes, corruption or criticizing government officials. Despite constitutional guarantees for basic human rights and liberties, ethnic minorities continue to be marginalized in terms of political representation, employment, freedom of movement, etc (EC, 2009a: 47, 55). Furthermore, ethnically motivated murders and attacks still occur, although declining in the recent years (Amnesty International, 1999; Freedom House, 2006b).

Corruption and biased judiciary remain the most serious challenges to Croatia's democratization process. Croatia was ranked between 70 and 62 out of 180 countries in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Indexes over the last seven years. However, the arrest of Ivo Sanader in 2010 for involvement in corruption scandals as well as the commitment of the Croatian government to prosecute war crimes regardless of ethnicities indicate positive trends in this regard (Freedom House, 2010a; EC, 2009a: 55-64).

Comparison

Figure 2 compares the two cases. It presents the relationship between democracy, nationalism and exit strategy in a triadic framework and as can be noted results differ. Estonia and Croatia have both opted for an exit strategy, aspiring to secede from the USSR and Yugoslavia, respectively. They both had a high intensity of nationalism, i.e. pursuing inward-looking ethnic nationalism and neglecting demands and interests of other ethnicities. But the democratic outcome of this process varies considerably, with Estonia successfully democratizing and becoming a member of the EU and Croatia experiencing stagnation in the transition process to democratization, which accelerated only after the fall of Tudjman's regime with high intensity of ethnic nationalism.

Figure 2: Relationship between democracy, nationalism and exit strategy in Estonia and Croatia



This refutes hypothesis 1 for Estonia which, despite its high exit claims on ethnic nationalism basis, managed to consolidate its democracy, while it confirms it in the Croatian case where high exit claims on the basis of ethnic nationalism led to a violent conflict that considerably delayed its democratization. Why is this so?

Democracy as defined above requires two to tango; it is a political system that guarantees political, social and economic rights and freedoms for all its citizens. A democratic system is maintained and developed when accepted by the overwhelming majority of citizens, which tend to resolve conflict within the rules of that system. Secession happened in a rather democratic form, through referendum and parliamentary procedures, but reaction to independence and the following nationalistic policies pursued by majority and minority groups varied and this is key to understanding the difference between the two cases. Russia accepted the independence of Estonia and did not interfere much in Russian minority rights. Belgrade on the other hand did not recognize independent Croatia, but rather encouraged ethnic nationalism among Serb minorities and supported and organized military attacks on Croatia. The Russian minority showed commitment to the new state and reacted to Estonian exclusive nationalistic policies in a rather peaceful and democratic manner by trying to address their concerns through the rules of the game set by the Estonian government. The

Serb minority, in contrast, reacted violently even before the declaration of Croatian independence and intensified attacks thereafter.

In addition, Russians had less developed ethnic consciousness, not having experienced any persecution by Estonians in the past and despite Estonian ethnic nationalism felt no economic or political threat in the new state. Croats and Serbs, on the other hand, had long nurtured their ethnic consciousness and their relationship is characterized by mistrust and long historical resentments, which ended up in war. Consequently, Estonia has achieved significant progress in the democratization process and joined the EU in 2004. Croatia's transition to democracy increased in pace only after the regime change and after significant reforms were introduced, including improvement of minority rights. This facilitated Croatia's membership in NATO and opened the path for its integration in the EU.

3.2 Voice strategy

A *voice* strategy is characterized by calls for cultural and/or political autonomy rather than formation of an independent state or joining a 'motherland'. The following shall test nationalism in the case of Hungarians in Slovakia and Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia/Serbia both of whom raised their voices for more rights, but were met by different responses from the dominant population.

Slovakia

Slovak national revival in the 1980s and 1990s was related to the process of state-building and the perceived economic and socio-political domination by Czechs during the Czechoslovak era. The reasons for the adversarial approach towards Hungarian minorities were the tendencies of Hungarians to support federalist link with Czechs in order to protect themselves from potential suppression by Slovaks but also due to historic resentments. In different historic periods of the Hungarian Kingdom, Slovaks have undergone the Magyarization process, i.e. learning the Magyar language and adjusting their culture and tradition, which raised their anti-Hungarian feelings. On the other hand, during the Czechoslovak era Hungarian and other minorities were suppressed by the communist idea for creation of a pure Czech and Slovak state (Ishiyama and Breuning, 1998: 52-4).

Vladimir Meciar came to power in 1991 and stressed the primacy of the Slovak nation and its sovereignty by pursuing systematic ethnic nationalistic policies towards Hungarians. The constitution of 1992 linked the new state with Slovak history of the nineteenth century (the Great Moravian state) and the national right to self-determination, recognizing ethnic minorities as citizens of the Slovak Republic and guaranteeing freedom to all its citizens (Leoussi and Grosby, 2007: 171-2). The constitution, however, demanded compulsory use of the Slovak language at central and local level administration and did not make reference to any minority rights. Bratislava changed district boundaries to reduce the number of districts where Hungarians constituted a majority, introduced a threshold of 5 per cent for parliamentary elections (which made Hungarian parties join into a single unit) and called for repatriation of ethnic Hungarians from Slovakia, which was subsequently rejected by the Hungarian authorities. Furthermore a law was adopted protecting the Slovak state language and extending Slovak language teaching in Hungarian schools, including the teaching of history and geography by Slovak teachers (Fowkes, 2002: 124-5).

Hungarians felt threatened by these policies and challenged the authority of the Slovak regime and the legal framework on minorities, calling for equal rights and representation in state institutions, protection of cultural, educational and religious freedoms and an expansion of minority activities in media and publishing activities. However, they stressed that they did not seek secession nor was their nationalism challenging the democratization process (Bugajski, 1994: 109).

The Hungarian government became involved to protect the rights and interests of their compatriots in Slovakia by offering reconciliation, which led to the signature of the Slovak–Hungarian Friendship Treaty in 1995 and by threatening to veto Slovakia’s membership to the Council of Europe. The Hungarian Parliament adopted the Status law allegedly privileging Hungarians in Slovakia over other Slovakian citizens. In addition, the Hungarian Prime Minister, Jozsef Antall, further increased tensions when stated that he was spiritually the Prime Minister of all ethnic Hungarians wherever they may be. This raised serious concerns and was interpreted by Slovaks as an encouragement to irredentism. As some scholars argue, these actions meant a commitment to discourage immigration while calling ethnic

Hungarians to remain on lands that were fundamental to Hungarian national narratives (Fowkes, 2002: 113-26; King, 2010: 164-6).

Apart from ethnic nationalistic policies, Meciar's government infringed also other democratic processes of Slovakia, such as reforms in the rule of law, intimidated free media, etc. After the 1998 elections, the opposition formed a new government and Meciar's nationalistic policies came to an end. The new government initiated important judicial and economic reforms, it undertook the first anti-corruption measures and actively engaged in Slovakia's Euro-Atlantic integrations (EC, 2003b: 8-14).

As result of substantial improvements in the democratization process, Slovakia joined NATO and the EU in 2004. Hungarians are now represented in the Slovakian Parliament and are also granted special educational and health benefits. The government adopted the European Charter of Regional Minority Languages and passed a new minority language law, reinstating the state of 1990 which allowed use of minority languages in areas where minorities constituted at least 20 per cent of the population, which was again contested by Hungarians. Further legislative amendments in 2009 obliged the use of Slovak language in official communication, but allowed that Hungarian place names are used in Hungarian language in minority textbooks (Freedom House, 2010b). Although 'it may be safely affirmed that the bitter confrontations of the early 1990s with the Hungarians have come to an end' (Fowkes, 2002: 126), relations between Slovakia and Hungary worsened after inter-ethnic violence in a football game in Slovakia in 2008.⁴ Slovakia also lags behind in respecting the rights of Roma minorities, who are consistently marginalized and discriminated against (Freedom House Report, 2009b; Amnesty International Report, 2006; CoE, 2009: 35-6). Freedom of expression and free media are constitutional guarantees in Slovakia. Nevertheless, journalists are facing intimidation and political interference. The Slovakian Parliament has lately adopted a new media law granting the government powers to censor and fine inappropriate reporting. Despite these interferences in the freedom of media, Slovakian media are considered to be largely free (Freedom House, 2010b). Slovakia was ranked 56 out of

⁴ In November 2008 violence broke out at a Slovakian Championship football game between AC Dunajska Streda and Slovan Bratislava. The incident occurred in Dunajska Streda which is known as one of the most important centres for ethnic Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

180 countries in the 2009 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. Corruption along with a biased judiciary remains among the biggest challenges in Slovakia (Freedom House, 2010b).

Kosovo

Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia were treated not as a nation (*komb* or *narod*) but rather as a nationality (*kombësi* or *narodnost*) and Kosovo had an inferior status as an autonomous province as opposed to a Republic in the Federation. Consequently its political, economic and cultural rights were considered marginalized and Kosovo Albanians continuously raised their voice for more equal treatment in a number of areas, including the status of Republic, more autonomy in economic terms, the right to university education in Albanian language, etc. The constitutional amendments of 1974 addressed most of these demands but kept Kosovo as an autonomous province of Serbia and failed to upgrade its status to Republic.

The economic situation in Kosovo was dire; unemployment rates were the highest in Yugoslavia and the economy was focused mainly on production of raw material making Kosovo dependent on other parts of Yugoslavia. The economy was declining compared to other Federal units' economic standing and the investments for tackling regional disparities were insufficient. In addition, Serbs in Kosovo were overrepresented in all realms of public life (Mertus, 1999). Economic underdevelopment, dependency on Serbia and the feeling of being second-class citizens led continuous Albanian demands for the Republic. Protests and demonstrations in 1980s were related primarily to gaining more equal rights within the federation (Lippman, 2006) and irredentist claims for joining Albania are conspiracy theories that had little influence (Mertus, 1999).

Milošević and other Serbian politicians, on the other hand, sought centralization of power (Gagnon, 1994: 120; Breuilly, 1993: 360) and in 1990 revoked the autonomy of Kosovo, imposed nationalistic Serbian policies in Kosovo and increased its political, economic and cultural persecution on ethnic grounds. Albanians resigned from public positions (including the Communist Party) and engaged in a liberalization movement 'Democratic League of Kosovo' which has been trying for over a decade to find a peaceful settlement to the problem. As the

peaceful means showed no results and repression was increasing, Albanians organized militarily, ultimately leading to the war at the end of 1990s and expulsion of Serb Government from Kosovo. The war caused thousands of displaced persons and massacred civilians as well as destroyed houses, cultural and religious buildings/monuments.

Kosovo under Milošević's regime was harshly suppressed. Democratization processes began only after the end of the war under the supervision of the international community, which gradually transferred powers to local authorities. Most of the post-war period was characterized with attempts to reconcile various ethnic groups, democratize the society as well as resolve the final status of Kosovo. After several unsuccessful rounds of negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia with the mediation of the international community, Kosovo declared its independence in 2008 and was recognized by some of the most powerful countries in the world (Freedom House, 2010c). Decentralization of government in Kosovo, as an imposed compromise for the independence granted ethnic Serbs the rights incomparable to any other ethnic community in Kosovo. Despite this and the opinion of the International Court of Justice in July 2010 that the declaration of independence is not in violation of international law, Serbia does not recognize Kosovo as an independent country. In addition, the Serbian government set up parallel institutions in municipalities where ethnic Serbs constitute a majority in Kosovo (Freedom House, 2008a; EC, 2009b: 11, 44), which undermine the territorial integrity and sovereignty, especially in the north of Kosovo. In addition, Serbs in Kosovo instrumentalized by Serbia⁵ are hardly prepared for cooperation and instead strive to either return to or divide a piece of territory and join Serbia.

Kosovo is undergoing a number of reforms in all sectors of society, in pursuit of international standards and eventual integration in the EU. Elections in Kosovo were generally assessed as fair and free and alteration of government occurs in peaceful and democratic manner. However, both general and local elections were predominantly boycotted by ethnic Serbs, with the exception of the last couple of rounds (Freedom House, 2010c).

⁵ This is the case in the north of Kosovo in particular. Creation of Serb-majority municipalities in the inner parts of Kosovo, as part of the decentralization process, initiated greater Serb participation in Kosovo institutions.

Minority right and freedoms, although constitutionally guaranteed, are violated in practice. Ethnically and politically motivated intimidations have been consistent phenomena in Kosovo (EC, 2009b: 10, 18-19). This culminated in the March 2004 riots in which nineteen people were killed, and many more homes and churches were destroyed (Bock and Phum, 2006: 115). It is noted that sensational media reporting fueled the March riots (Freedom House, 2007b). Although the media is considered to be independent, journalists continue to undermine journalistic ethics. In addition, journalists face political interference and (EC, 2009b: 13-14) are frequently harassed and threatened (Freedom House, 2009c).

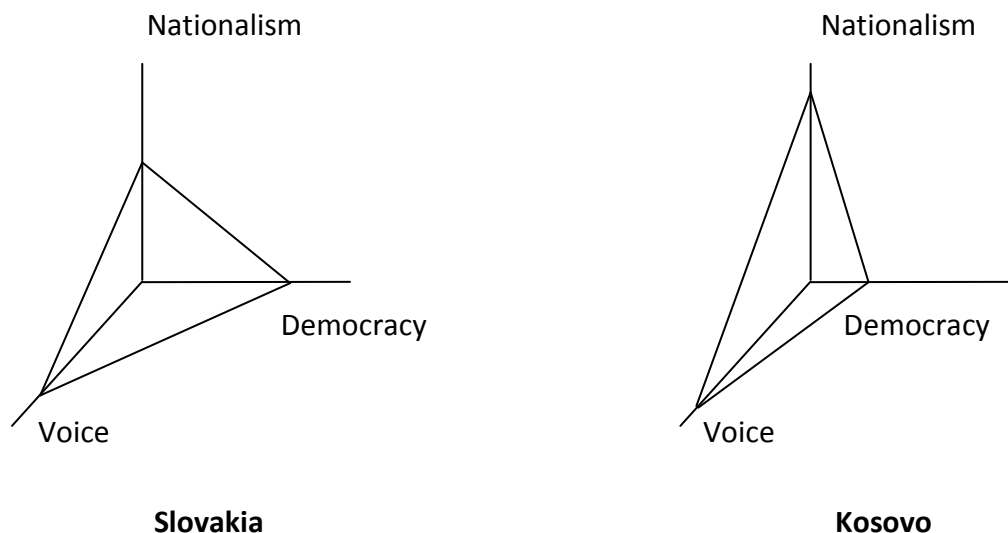
Serb parallel institutions keep Kosovo's education segregated on ethnic grounds, while public administration suffers from lack of professionalism and political affiliations (EC, 2009b: 8, 17). Organized crime and corruption are considered to be among the most serious challenges for the country, and the judiciary remains hampered by political influence and ethnically biased rulings (Freedom House, 2008a; EC, 2009b: 10-11, 47). The EU has deployed a rule of law mission known as EULEX in order to help Kosovo institutions fight organized crime and ensure law enforcement (Freedom House, 2010c; EC, 2009b: 5).

Comparison

The analysis of policies and politics pursued in these two cases are presented in Figure 3 in the tri-dimensional relationship between democracy, nationalism and *voice* strategy and as it can be seen results differ enormously.

Both Hungarians and Kosovo Albanians have opted for a *voice* strategy, aspiring for more rights and equitable treatment and pursuing rather civic nationalism without trying to infringe the rights of other ethnic groups. However, they faced different levels of nationalism in Slovakia and Yugoslavia/Serbia respectively. Both states neglected demands of their minorities, but Yugoslavia/Serbia in addition to cultural and economic exclusive policies also used physical persecution (Mertus, 1999). The democratic outcome varies considerably. Slovakia successfully democratized and became a member of the EU while Kosovo (now an independent state) experienced no transitional process to democratization until after the war.

Figure 3: Relationship between democracy, nationalism and *voice* strategy of Hungarian and Albanian minorities



Kosovo Albanians were rejecting second-class citizens' status and demanding more political, economic and cultural rights, but as Serb nationalistic repression was getting worse, Albanian *voice* and demands for independence increased. This supports hypothesis 2, i.e. the less the state acknowledges the voices for protection of rights and liberties of an ethnic minority, the higher the likelihood for violent conflict and stagnation of democratization process. The Slovakian case refutes hypothesis 2, because despite ignoring Hungarian claims for cultural protection Slovakia consolidated its democracy. If hypothesis 2 was to be confirmed, the level of Slovak democracy in this case should have matched its moderate nationalism.

Hungarians and Albanians equally voiced anti-secessionist claims (although there were celebrations of the Prizren League anniversary⁶; Mertus, 1999), but the explanations for this difference may be that Hungarian claims were mainly related to cultural revivalism (cultural, educational and religious freedoms, expansion of minority activities in media and limited claims on political representation). Albanians on the other hand were demanding more cultural and political autonomy (recognition of the nation and status of the Republic, economic

⁶ The Prizren League called for unification of all Albanian-inhabited territories in the Ottoman empire.

autonomy, university education in Albanian language). Post-war Kosovo continued to face ethnic nationalism. Belgrade insisted on keeping Kosovo as part of Serbia while Kosovo Albanians promoted the independence of the country. This clash of ideas contributed to the infringement of the country's democratization process and, as pointed out in a recent Freedom House report, 'the actual level of democratization remains low' in Kosovo (2009c). Ethnic nationalism in Slovakia did not pursue persecution and did not provoke the escalation of Hungarian nationalism that could lead to more violent confrontations or compromising democratization process in the EU accession process. Involvement of the Hungarian government was perceived as threatening and interfering in internal issues of Slovakia, but this did not lead to further deterioration of the situation, which proves that Slovakian nationalism was rather moderate compared to that of Yugoslavia/Serbia.

3.3 Loyalty strategy

A *loyalty* strategy is the commitment of an ethnic group to the state, and as Hirschman put it '...presence of loyalty makes exit less likely...' (1970: 77); but one should test under which conditions this is the case. In order to provide an answer, this part of the paper shall test hypothesis 3 in the case of Bosnia and Montenegro and analyze whether the loyalty of an ethnic groups to a state indeed enables emergence of civic nationalism and facilitates transition to democracy.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia has historically been part of different empires and countries; after the Second World War it became part of Yugoslavia and it was the prime example of multi-ethnicity and loyalty to the new state. Its multi-ethnicity had always caused fears of potential atrocities but while in 1980s other republics had ethnic problems, Bosnia set an example in this respect and until 1990 showed loyalty to Yugoslavia in protection of *brotherhood and unity* (Rustempašić, 2008). Government policies, sports, literature and the highest number of inter-ethnic marriages in the Federation demonstrate the level of ethnic tolerance. 'Cosmopolitanism was the main characteristics and Sarajevo was always the first to criticize appearance of nationalism' (Andjelić, 2003: 20-40).

Taking power, Milošević and Tudjman with their nationalistic ideas changed all this. While Slovenes, Croats and Serbs were in confrontational politics, Bosnia was undecided on the way forward, tried to keep out of conflict and keep every side happy. Circulation of media from other republics, allowed in order to better inform Bosnian citizens, promoted nationalist interests of Croats and Serbs which were planning to split Bosnia; Bosniaks on the other hand were accused of aspiring to a Muslim state in a Yugoslav confederation. However, public surveys in 1990 show that the majority of the Bosnian population wanted Bosnia to remain part of the federal Yugoslavia and that few were thinking about independence. There were even parties in favour of the federal Yugoslavia running in the first multi-party elections in 1990 (Andjelić, 2003: 96-102; Kofman, 2001: 47-9). There were no ethnic politics and no nationalist played any major role; the struggle was between liberal and traditional political streams instead. At the time Alija Izetbegović announced his intention for political organization but did not call publicly for citizens to join. In contrast to expansionist politics of Serbia and Croatia, the Bosnian leadership was divided between those believing in *brotherhood and unity* and those who called for a modern Yugoslav federation who reaffirmed such intentions also during and after the war (Andjelić, 2003: 111-56; Campbell, 1998: 47-8).

After the stalemate in Croatia, turmoil began in Bosnia and the international community through the Lisbon Agreement, instead of de-ethnicizing the conflict, proposed a division of Bosnia in three units along ethnic lines, which Izetbegović (after initial acceptance) rejected, realizing that international recognition of independent Bosnia would be achieved anyway (Djilas, 1995: 99; Campbell, 1998: 14). Serbs pursuing the policy of Great Serbia declared an independent Serbian Republic of Bosnia, and soon after Bosnia held a referendum declaring independence which was contested by the Serbs. The war broke out in April 1992 with Serbs expelling and exterminating Bosniaks and Croats from the Serb Republic. Later Croats also turned against Bosnia with their national aspirations and proclaimed Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. The war resulted in over two million refugees and over 100,000 perished (ICTY, n. d.). In contrast to Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, the Bosnian government was unprepared for war and Izetbegović had hoped that the Yugoslav army would protect Bosnia (Bugajski, 1994: 114-15; Breuilly, 1993: 361; Kofman, 2001: 48; Masters, 2003). The Dayton Agreement ended the war in 1995 and it imposed a power-sharing system that makes Bos-

nia ineffective. Today Bosnia is populated mainly by Bosniaks and Croats in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbs in the Republika Srpska, all under supervision of the international community. The post-war democratization process is characterized by continuous ethnic tensions and ethno-politics with Bosniaks aiming to create a unitary state, Serbs hoping to preserve the status quo or even join Serbia and Croats advocating for creation of a third Croat entity (Freedom House, 2009d).

Among the first marked events in the Bosnian path of democratization was the gradual taking over by Bosnian authorities the competencies for organization of general elections (Freedom House, 2002c). 2006 elections, in contrast to the previous ones, were characterized by emergence of less nationalistic parties. Yet, after the independence of Kosovo, Serb politicians in Bosnia began claiming full statehood for the Republika Srpska. The nationalistic discourse was further strengthened over the territorial structure of the country as well as in the campaign of the subsequent general and local elections (Freedom House, 2010d; Amnesty International, 2007).

Under such conditions, attempts for creation of a unitary state progressed slowly and only with the assistance of the international community which created centralized government ministries of transportation and justice, unifying the three ethnically based intelligence services, and creating a statewide VAT system. This was furthered with the establishment of a voluntary military force under a unified single ministry of defense. These reforms along with the long-awaited unification of police forces and the reformed public broadcasting system (allowing each entity to have their own public television stations) opened the way for signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU (Freedom House, 2006c; Amnesty International, 2008b). In 2010 Bosnia marked another progress towards EU integration, by benefitting from the visa-free travel to the Schengen zone. Nevertheless, attempts for constitutional reforms with the aim to strengthen Bosnian central institutions were unsuccessful followed by demonstrations across Republika Srpska, whose institutions remain committed to undermine central Bosnian institutions (Freedom House, 2009d; EC, 2009c: 5-10).

Widespread corruption at all levels of government slowed economic reforms, reduced the public trust in public institutions and remains one of the most significant challenges to Bosnia's democratization process. The Bosnian ranking by the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Indexes in recent years have been oscillating between 82 and 99 out of 180 countries surveyed. Several high level politicians were accused of corrupt practices and organized crime, including Milorad Dodik – the Prime Minister of Republika Srpska. The judicial system remains under high influence of the government and the nationalist political parties, and unbiased judicial staff experiences various forms of harassment (Freedom House, 2010d; EC, 2009c: 14).

Although the constitution guarantees equal rights and liberties for all its citizens, ethnic or religious groups find it difficult to exercise their rights. High levels of discriminations are reported in employment, public services, etc, especially in geographical areas where these groups constitute a minority (Amnesty International, 2007; EC, 2009c: 21). Incidents involving religious sites or religious ceremonies occur very often from all three ethnic groups. Moreover, political pressure, threats and physical attacks against journalists who criticize the government have recently increased (Freedom House, 2010d; EC, 2009c: 17).

Montenegro

Unlike other units of the federation, Montenegro was characterized by peaceful coexistence of different ethnicities during the Yugoslav wars, mainly due to a multi-ethnic tradition, the existence of multi-ethnic parties that actively participated in political processes and moderate minority demands (Šístek and Dimitrovová, 2003: 177). Many Montenegrins identified also as Serbs and showed loyalty to Yugoslavia and Serbia throughout most of 1990s with some minor oscillations. In the first multi-party elections in 1990, the Serbian National Movement represented by Momir Bulatović and Milo Djukanović through the Communist Party (later renamed to Democratic Party of Socialists) won the majority and pursued strategy of loyalty to Serbia and Milošević while trying to preserve Montenegrin identity. Moreover, in the 1992 referendum for the establishment of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia over 95 per cent of Montenegrins remained loyal to Yugoslavia (Bieber, 2003: 11-21; ICG, 2000: 5; Morrison, 2009: 85-105).

The wars in Croatia and Bosnia and international sanctions on the already dire economic situation created the first deterioration of the relationship between Serbia and Montenegro, which was restored in 1993 after enormous political, military and economic pressure from Belgrade and finally after the end of the war in Bosnia. These developments caused divisions also within Montenegro between supporters of Serbian nationalism and the initial voices for Montenegrin independence, such as Liberal Alliance of Montenegro. Such pro-independence voices were further pursued by Djukanović in later periods when he split from Bulatović in 1997, which also marked the beginning of direct confrontation with Belgrade. The pro-independence block campaigned for conscientious politics and it enjoyed the support of Bosnian and Albanian minorities. The pro-Serb political tried to mobilize the support of tribal affiliations and the Serbian Orthodox Church despite their loyalty to Yugoslavia and calls for brotherhood and unity. The two blocks thereafter held about half of the political power each, which kept the situation stable (Bieber, 2003: 24-41, ICG, 2000: 1-3; Morrison, 2009: 96-100).

The conflict between Djukanović's block and Bulatović with his supporters and the Serbian leadership on the other side steadily increased until the EU brokered an agreement in 2002 for the creation of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro, which obliged Montenegro to refrain from referendum for secession for minimum three years. In 2006 Montenegro held the referendum and with the support of minorities' votes finally seceded from the Union. The latest constitutional amendments proclaimed Montenegro constituted not by an ethnic community but rather by all its citizens. Ethnic minorities, apart from political parties have also their own associations and media in their languages, but Albanian, Bosnian and Croat minorities are claiming more equal treatment (Freedom House, 2009e).

The democratization of Montenegro faced difficulties throughout the 1990s mainly due to political struggles against the Milošević's regime and involvement in wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Installation of the new regime after the fall of Milošević in 2000 created conditions for faster democratization of the country, and maintained Montenegrin loyalty to Yugoslavia despite secessionist claims. This kept alive political struggles between pro- and anti-independence and represented one of the main obstacles in the democratization process of

the country. Despite these struggles and ethnic divisions, Montenegro managed to avoid inter-ethnic conflicts that characterized the Balkans since 1990. Although the EU brokered the agreement for the creation of the new Union of Serbia and Montenegro, Montenegro managed to set its own monetary, tax and customs systems. Belgrade was unsure whether to pursue EU accession on its own or together with Montenegro (Freedom House, 2004a).

The country organized a series of free and fair elections, which by and large were won by Milo Djukanović, who is among the rare politicians in the regions that managed to remain in power for over 15 years (Morrison, 2009: 229). Under his leadership, the country attracted high levels of foreign investments (especially Russian capital) and noted steady economic growth. Nonetheless, the country struggles with high levels of corruption, whereby high-ranking officials seem to be involved, including Djukanović himself (Amnesty International, 2009). Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Montenegro 69 out of 180 countries in 2009, compared to 97 out of 146 countries in 2004. Although improvements have been noted, the judicial system is subject to political influence when dealing with corruption and other similar phenomena (Freedom House, 2010e; EC, 2009d: 11-13).

Montenegrins are constitutionally guaranteed the basic human rights and liberties; nevertheless, the government continuously increased the control over the media, and journalists are often harassed or even assassinated, especially when critical of government affairs (Freedom House, 2008b; Amnesty International, 2009; EC, 2009d: 15). The government managed to keep various ethnic groups integrated in the society; however it triggered dissatisfaction of Serbs when recognizing the independence of Kosovo (EC, 2009d: 20) or when introducing Montenegrin as an official language of the country. This made Serbs demand separation of classrooms and the use of Serbian language by their children in schools. Furthermore, the adversary among Montenegrins and Serbs over the Orthodox Church still persist today, followed by occasional protests (Freedom House, 2010e).

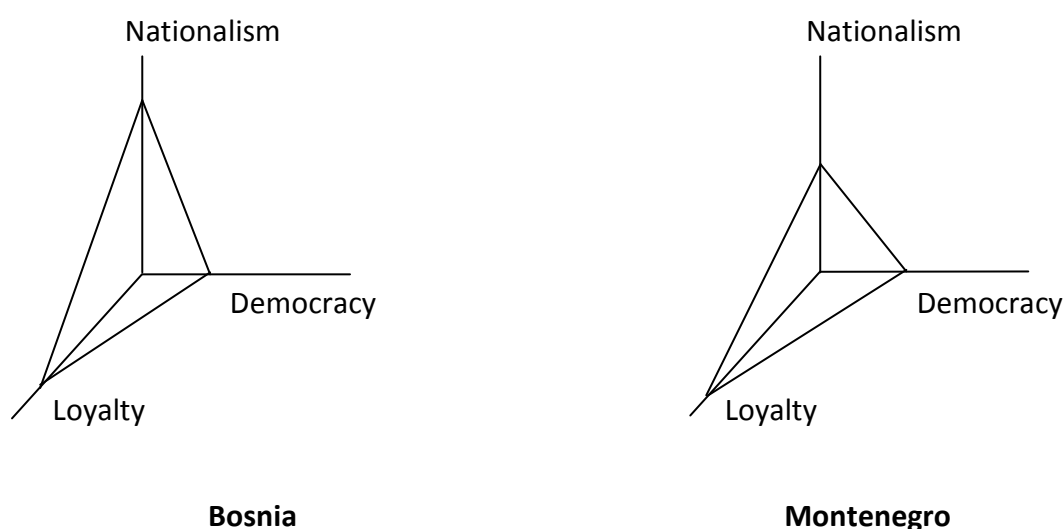
Despite the ups and downs, Montenegro made significant progress in terms of Euro-Atlantic integration by joining the NATO Partnership for Peace Program in 2006, signing the EU Stabilization and Association Agreement in 2007 and subsequently submitting an application

for EU membership (EC, 2009d: 4-5). In 2009 the EU adopted Schengen visa liberalization policy for Montenegro.

Comparison

Bosniaks and Montenegrins opted for a *loyalty* strategy towards Yugoslavia and/or Serbia respectively but faced different levels of nationalism from the other side and as presented in Figure 4, the results differ notably.

Figure 4: Relationship between democracy, nationalism and *loyalty* strategy in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro



Bosnia showed full loyalty but faced irredentist interests of Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats as well as strict ethno-nationalistic intentions of Yugoslavia/Serbia and Croatia, i.e. to incorporate pieces of Bosnian territory to Serbia and Croatia respectively (Bugajski, 1994: 114). The moment Bosnia realized these intentions (although with huge delays) it triggered concrete Serb ethnic nationalist acts which in turn encouraged Bosnian ethnic nationalism and demands for secession. Consequently, ethnic nationalism present in Bosnia nowadays hinders not only reconciliation of different ethnic communities, but it also ‘presents a major obstacle to the country’s integration’ (Freedom House, 2010e) and consequently democratization processes. The Bosnian case refutes hypothesis 3 that the more loyal ethnic groups are to a state, the higher likelihood for civic nationalism and transition to democracy. The

main explanation for this seems to be that loyalty, should it be effective, should come from all ethnic groups and aim at the same objectives, which was clearly lacking in Bosnia.

The case of Montenegro on the other hand suggests confirmation of hypothesis 3, in that the higher loyalty to the state, the lesser the likelihood for ethnic conflict and thus easier transition to democracy. While Bosnia faced an even more increased intensity of Serb ethnic nationalism after the change of strategy, Montenegrin transformation of loyalty to exit strategy did not have the same experience. Although both Bosnia and Montenegro pursued civic nationalism ideals, i.e. building an independent state inclusive of all ethnic groups, they faced different level of Serb nationalism. This might have been for a couple of reasons. Firstly, Montenegro has been Yugoslav/Serbian partner throughout most of the time when the later was involved in wars, and a great proportion of the Montenegrin political spectrum was either supporting or not confronting Serb expansionist policies. Secondly, Montenegro and Serbia have established historical links and had supported each other since the Ottoman Empire throughout the two World Wars. Thirdly, many Montenegrins identify as Serbs and they also share the same Orthodox religion with Serbs (Djilas, 1995: 95; Andjelić, 2003: 8; Morrison, 2009: 56-91). Lastly and most importantly, the downfall of Milošević in 2000 brought more pro-Western politicians who in light of democratization and EU membership ambitions compromised in the Agreement for the Union of Serbia and Montenegro and ultimately recognized the independence of Montenegro. The empirical evidence suggests that Montenegrin independence would have been much more difficult had Milošević remained in power. Montenegrin independence would certainly have been much more difficult should its ethnic minorities not have backed it.

4. Conclusion

The paper carried out systematic analysis of three sets of variables: nationalism (placed in the continuum of low-civic and high-ethnic nationalism), democracy and *exit, voice* and *loyalty* strategies in the cases of Estonia, Croatia, Slovakia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Montenegro. Drawing from studies of these countries, the above analyses show that:

Hypothesis 1 was confirmed in the case of Croatia in that the higher the *exit* demands on ethnic nationalism basis the bigger the chances for violent conflicts and thus stagnation or delay of democratization. Estonian high *exit* demands on ethnic nationalism basis disprove hypothesis 1 mainly due to Russian civic nationalism, which did not confront Estonian ethnic nationalism and avoided violent conflicts.

Hypothesis 2, i.e. the less the state acknowledges the *voices* for protection of minority rights, the higher likelihood for violent conflict and stagnation of democratization was confirmed in the case of Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia/Serbia, but not in the case of Hungarians in Slovakia due to civic nationalism of Hungarian minorities and rather moderate ethnic nationalism of Slovaks.

Hypothesis 3, which suggested that the more loyal ethnic groups are to the state, the higher likelihood for civic nationalism and transition to democracy, was refuted in the case of Bosnia due to disloyalty of Serbs and Croats to the same ideals. Montenegro on the other hand proves that loyalty did not inflame conflict that would hinder democratization process and this is mainly due to Montenegrin and Serbian close primordial ties.

Inter-relating the three strategies, one can conclude that in general democratization is hindered in conditions where ethnic nationalism predominates, which is more prone to create aversion among ethnic groups and lead to violent conflicts, such as in the cases of Croatia, Kosovo and Bosnia. Civic nationalism on the other hand, if it does not escalate, can even soften ethnic nationalism of majority ethnic groups and facilitate consolidation of democracy as it did in Estonia and Slovakia. Finally, as Schopflin puts it: 'In order for democracy to operate effectively, the majority of the population must feel committed to it and must have an active interest in sustaining it' (Schopflin, 1995: 59). In cases where such interests and commitments, channeled through civic nationalism, are genuine and are not impaired, this may lead to a consolidated democracy.

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